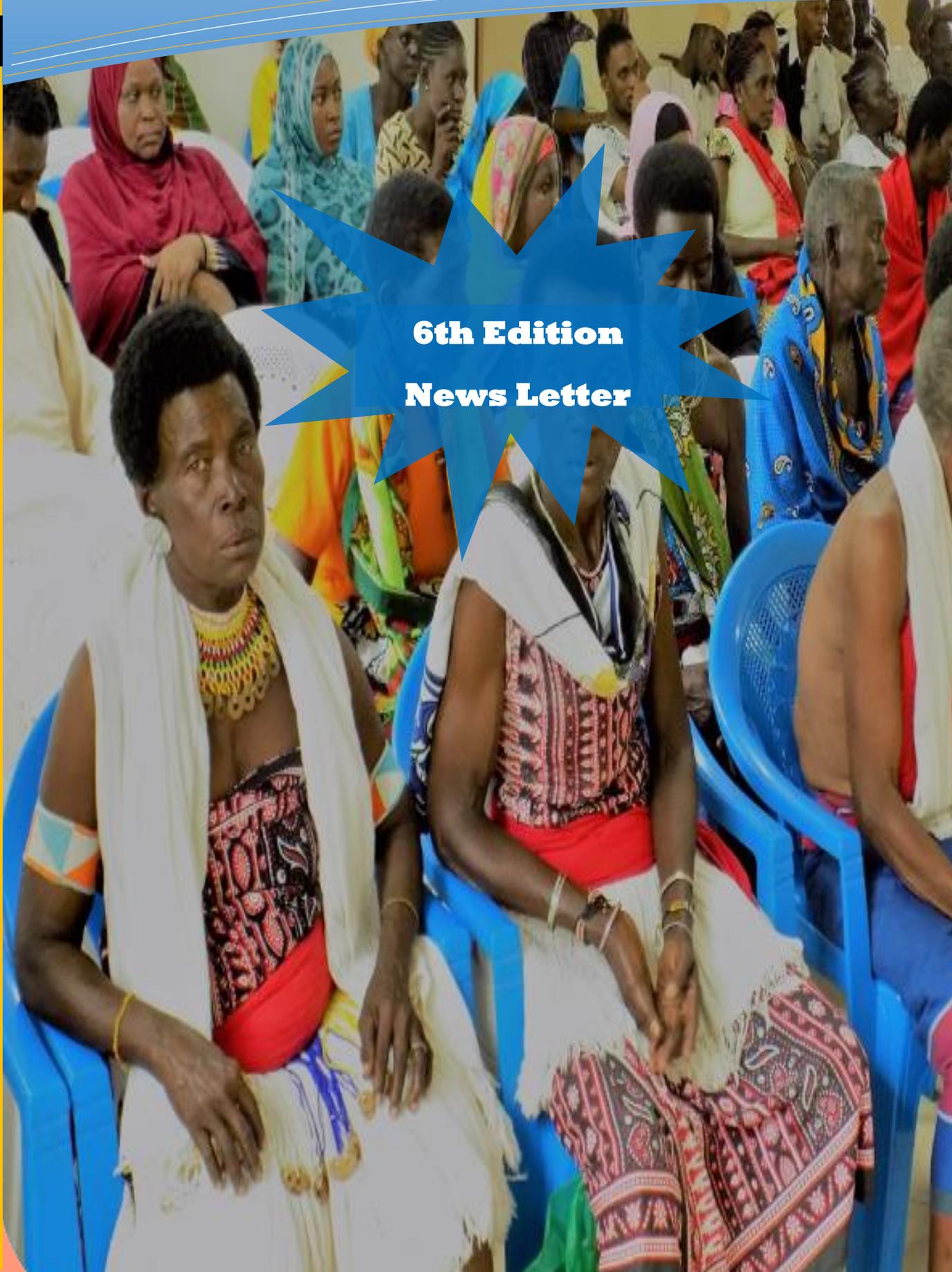




Mwito Wa Amani

Sixth Edition



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News Letter**



Coast interfaith Council of Clerics (CICC) Trust is a non-profit faith based organization that works with clerics; religious leaders and faith communities from diverse faiths to promote tolerance, peaceful coexistence; good governance and democracy; environmental management and conservations through inter faith dialogues. Currently CICC is undertaking the following projects; dialogue and action project (DAP), Jamii Thabiti project (both projects performing in Kilifi County) and entrenching resilience to violent extremism in communities project performing at Mombasa County, Tana River County and Kwale County. Each project has its own goals and objectives.

IN THE QUEST FOR A SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR CHILDREN

Child marriage is considered to be one of the most persistent forms of sexual abuse of girls. Some of the factors that lead to child marriage are; poverty, gender inequality and socio-cultural practices. In the Coast region, Kilifi County records the highest number of child marriages in Kenya. Child marriage limits young girls' skills, resources, knowledge, social support, mobility and



autonomy. Young married girls have little power in relation to their husbands and in-laws. They are therefore extremely vulnerable to domestic violence, abuse and abandonment. Violence may include physical, sexual or psychological abuse. Agnes**, a 13 year old girl was married off to a 35 year old man. Her parents saw this as a means to end their poverty and more so the burden of having to take care of her. She dropped out of school in Class 7 and became a wife at a young age. She suffered a lot of abuse at the



Figure 2: religious leaders from the kauma and Chonyi communities in a dialogue over the the Ngombeni – Vyambani Boundary

hands of this man. Being young, she did not know what to do and even handle marriage life. She was identified by one of the caregivers who introduced her to Coast Interfaith Council of Clerics (CICC) in Malindi. Agnes was 4 months pregnant by the time she was rescued. CICC together with the children's department organized for her to be placed in a rescue home as the case was ongoing. Agnes later joined school of dressmaking and graduated with grade III. Dialogue and Action Project bought her a sewing machine which she is currently using to earn a living and take care of her child.

The story of Agnes is synonymous to many others in Malindi which happens to be the target area for Dialogue and Action Project (DAP). Many girls are dropping out of school to get married. In as much as boys are getting married at a young age, it is worth noting that girls are more vulnerable to early marriage.

CICC has been implementing an interfaith approach to child protection project with the kind support of Catholic Relief Service (CRS-K). The project aims to create a safe and secure environment for the children at the Coast where they are free from early marriage and sexual abuse. Dialogue and Action Project seeks to use different interventions to reach its goal. It is targeting Children (girls and boys in school as well as out-of-school girls); parents; schools, religious and other

community leaders; and the general community members of different religious (Christian, Muslim, and Traditionalist) and ethnic backgrounds in Malindi Sub County of Kilifi County. CICC has been using a variety of interventions in order to address the issue of child marriages and sexual abuse. The project has been focusing on strengthening and expanding child protection mechanisms that have proved effective in past two phases, including school justice and peace clubs and interreligious action for child protection. CICC has been working with police, county offices, chiefs and their assistants, the children department, religious leaders, teachers, caregivers and of course the children. CICC has also been moving into schools to strengthen and even establish justice and peace clubs.

For the past three months, the DAP III project has been able to rescue over 13 girls from marriage, established 4 new peace clubs in 4 schools which happen to be the target schools for this project, built the capacity of chiefs, assistant chiefs, police, religious leaders and even staff. CICC is seeking to expand her scope of work so as to reach needy children and create a platform for the community to engage in protecting the children. The story of Agnes and many others will be a story of triumph and not hopelessness.

** Not her real name



PEACEFUL SOCIETIES FOR A STRONGER AND UNITED KENYA

*"No one is born hating the other person because of the color of his skin, or his background or his religion. People **must learn to hate**, and if they can learn to hate, they **can be taught to love**, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite - Nelson Mandela.*

CICC has been in the forefront advocating for peaceful, harmonious and secure communities in the Coast region through her many projects. One of these projects is Jamii Thabiti project where CICC has been addressing the inter-communal violence in Kilifi County with an aim of improving community security. The organization has conducted a variety of activities through this project with the aim of improving the community capacities in addressing inter-communal conflicts in the county. Some of these interventions have been towards addressing the inter-ethnic conflict between the Chonyi and Kauma communities over

Hoping to continue with these dialogues until will bring this matter to a conclusion," says

The Ngombeni – Vyambani Boundary. The conflict has been previously directed to the government institutions for solving with no much success. The elders from both the communities have also been invited prominent people in the country to solve the issue.

The conflict has raised a lot of concerns hence CICC took the responsibility of ensuring that this matter is resolved using the inter-ethnic dialogue strategy, with the religious leaders taking a leading role in this process so as to be the voice of reason to their communities as they strive to see this matter

Mary the Jamii Thabiti Project Officer.

resolved. The forums have also brought on board the youths and women to be part of these forums in resolving this conflict.

After extensive deliberations, the elders agreed to nominate some members from the councils to sit in the dialogue forums together with religious leaders, women and youth leaders, other CSOs working in the area and the ward administrators in resolving the matter. This team will act as the steering committee for all the processes until the matter is resolved. "This may take some time but CICC is making grounds in this communities and we are



MY VOICE MY WEAPON- THE SUCCESS STORY OF EUNICE TSUMA, A WOMAN AMBASSADOR

One pillar of Coast Interfaith Council of Clerics (CICC), is to strengthen the important role of women in peace and security matters. Eunice Tsuma is among the women beneficiaries who have benefited from CICC Trainings on Alternative to



Figure 1: Eunice Tsuma (Centre)1

Dispute Resolution Mechanisms (ADR), Early Warning Early Response (EWER) and the role of women in peace building within their communities. She has shown great impact and yielding result through her initiative in her community. Eunice's social responsibility has changed greatly. She is able to solve conflicts in her family; something she was not able to do before.

Originally, when misunderstandings arose between her and her husband she used to run away or ask her brother who is a Bishop to mediate in the issue. Further, her attitude towards her immediate neighbors has

also changed as she has managed to have good relationships with them at Marengo village of Sokoni ward in Kilifi County. Before, it was hard for her to do so but with the conflict management skills that she acquired, she has stopped getting angry and developing animosity towards others if a misunderstanding or conflict arises but rather uses her new skills to resolve the problem. Through the skills gained, Eunice says 'I am able to sit down with my neighbours and sort out our issues immediately; I have learnt how to forgive and mediate in our small differences with the neighbors'. Her major achievement is the solving of serious marriage issue of one of her friends who had run away from her home because of serious misunderstanding with her husband. When she came back to pick her items, she decided to go to Eunice to bid her goodbye. Eunice was able to mediate in the domestic conflict and managed to reconcile the family together and are doing well up to date. The community as well has not been left behind in realizing the capacity of Eunice for being vocal on peace issues and so

she has gotten invitations to speak in forums in the County. The Catholic women for example invited her with some other women beneficiaries to speak to the Catholic women association (CWA) during their quarterly meeting that was held in Kilifi. She has also received invitations by PLWD Watamu, various chief barazas to discuss peace issues. Eunice has realized that her voice is her weapon to deal with many issues that women face. She has vowed to engage women starting with her village through women 'chamas' and other available platforms. She has been in the fore front organizing and implementing women awareness forums with other women beneficiaries in both Kilifi North and South which most of them have been done from their own local initiatives. It is through her efforts that she has formed a group within her village of single mothers who are doing projects in collaboration with the netball women leader in Kilifi County. The group is also in the process of starting a saving and lending account where the women can be able to support themselves financially.



THE POWERFUL ROLE OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Women form an integral part in peace building processes within the any community. CICC has established a women desk where women religious leaders have been empowered to reach out to other women at the grass root level with an aim of mobilizing women to make their voices heard and included in decision making processes. The religious women have also been trained and have acquired necessary skills for conflict management and are creating awareness to other women at the grassroots. The women have become change agents within their families and within their surrounding communities becoming the epicenter of hope for their families and their communities as well. CICC has established three Women Desks; Kwale, Tana River and Mombasa. This has been made



Figure 1: A women baraza facilitated by the Women Desk in

possible through Civil Peace Service Germany who have been supporting the various trainings for these women

The purpose of the trainings in to empower the women religious leaders to take up initiatives in the community with the purpose of cohesion and in the quest to enable communities be resilient to violent extremism. CICC found it wise to bring on board the women religious leaders so that they can cover the ground that male religious leaders

cannot. The issues of women and their frustrations can easily be handled by women in whom they can relate to and feel free to talk to. CICC has facilitated the Women Desk to conduct some activities among the communities they work in. the Mombasa Women Desk has had two community awareness forums in which they took the lead. Tana River and Kwale Women Desks have activities scheduled under CICC facilitation. However, Tana River Women Desk has been able to visit various women groups in which they have used every opportunity to encourage tolerance and cohesion bearing the fact the sensitive nature of Tana River County. These women have done this as their own initiatives.

ELECTIONS AND RE-ELECTION...

Peace is the rain that makes the grass grow and war the wind that dries it out.

There were tensions and fears caused by the coming of general elections that was held on 8th August 2017. There had been reports of leaflets being circulated in various places within Mombasa including Likoni and Kisauni area threatening tribes with origin from Kenya's upcountry. The police reported arresting a number of people suspected to be distributing the leaflets. The Government, the peace structures, Civil Organisation together with religious institutions embarked on vigorous peace campaigns in the villages. Talking to communities and parents to restrain their youths from engaging in violent and incitement activities that could disturb the peace within their villages. These efforts strengthened the communities' will to protect

themselves from violent activities and encouraged the reporting of any suspicious individuals to the authorities for investigations and actions.

In preparation for the elections, CICC with the kind support of Civil Peace Service Germany undertook an activity in which clerics were trained as voter observers. CICC was able to apply for IEBC accreditation of 300 clerics in the 6 counties both



Figure 2: IEBC official training CICC clerics in preparation election observation

long and short term observers which was implemented in collaboration with the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC). Together with voter observation was also civic education for clerics and the communities. This project was rolled out in the six counties of the Coast region: Lamu, Kilifi, Mombasa, Kwale, Tana River and Taita Taveta.

These observers were trained and distributed to different polling stations with some being mobile and giving support to the stationed observers. The clerics were expected to fill checklists and submit their findings to the CICC office who will in turn write a report to the IEBC.

The final report was handed to the IEBC and the activity of observation was a success. Many clerics



reported that the process went on well. Despite 2 people being killed in Tana River, Maumau Secondary School, peace prevailed and there were no retaliatory attacks.

However, a lot has happened since the elections of 8th August 2017. The

re-election of President Uhuru Kenyatta was overturned and the Supreme Court ordered the IEBC to conduct elections in 60 days. There has been a lot of uncertainty and people have confessed that they are confused.

CICC has used every opportunity in the various platforms to reach out to the community to call for calm and cohesion among the people of the Coast region.

BUILDING RESILIENCE AGAINST VIOLENT EXTREMISM AT THE COAST

“Let us eat out of the same spoon and drink from the same cup.”

Kenya has had security challenges that emanate from terror attacks within the country. Since 2010 when Kenya Defense Forces moved into Somali, the number of terrorist attacks within Kenya increased. It is worth noting that the Kenya Coast has been adversely affected with many youth moving into Somali to be trained as militia. The presence of radical preachers who imparted radical teaching into the minds of the youth has also made the coastal people very vulnerable to violent extremism. These preachers have made them believe that there is need to deal with the *kafir* if they need better lives. The scenario created is

for the youth to move into Somali and this is worse because of the poor manning of the border.

placed in the resource centers for future reference. This activity seeks to deter young leaders from pushing out older clerics from their places of worship with the reason that there are being left out.

CICC in partnership with Institut Fur Auslandsbeziehungen is undertaking the “Entrenching Resilience against



Figure 3: A youth baraza in Kwale

The ERVECO project also undertakes women barazas whose purpose is to bring women religious leaders on board in the fight against violent extremism. The women bring experience from different levels of the society that they engage in from the family, society, to places of worship.

The project has been undertaking many other activities; youth barazas which target



Figure 4: A planning session by clerics

Violent Extremism in Communities at the Coast Project’ (ERVECO) with the view of enabling communities resist radicalism that eventually leads to extremist acts. This project is being implemented in Mombasa, Kwale and Tana River.

Youth with the purpose of creating dialogue platforms for the young generation; inter-religious dialogues are done among the religious leaders for the sake of creating mutual understanding and respect. The IRD dialogues discuss various issues especially around what religious texts teach about certain topics like leadership, neighborliness, peace; village peace barazas target the larger society in which issues of peace are discussed. In this discussions, people’s political affiliations have surfaced. However, people have implored each other for soberness especially as elections are just a few days away.

that of religious war.

The society’s structure is destroyed when families are broken and this has been propagated by the movement of bread winners to join extremist groups. The fact that Somali borders the Coast region creates an avenue

The most interesting activity is the preaching events which create the platform for young preachers to participate in religious institutions activities, they are offered a chance to preach in churches and mosques. The young preachers are mentored by older clerics before they deliver any sermon. The sermons are later



INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE: AN IDEOLOGICAL TOOL AGAINST VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Even though you disagree, do not refuse to listen

Coast Interfaith Council of Clerics has been undertaking inter-religious dialogue forums as a major tool for fostering mutual respect and understanding among people of different faiths. Inter-religious dialogue is a powerful tool for clerics and even followers to converse about their faiths; commonalities, differences and even issues that



affect society as whole. Faiths also have grey areas that need to converse about and this calls for courage to speak of them. This aims at ensuring people speak with one voice and disagreement in minimal

especially people of similar faiths. Inter-religious dialogue seeks to create a platform for conversations.

In the coast region, violent extremism has been an issue that has adversely affected the communities here. Terror attacks have happened not only in other areas of Kenya but also in the coast region. These attacks have happened in the name of Islam as most perpetrators align themselves to this faith. This has caused a lot of suspicion and mistrust from people of the Christian faith who have borne the brunt of these attacks. Muslims have come out condemning this acts and making it categorical that their faith does not condone or propagate such acts. The Muslims who have stood out have also been targeted by the so called hardliners. It is from this scenario that CICC has taken an

interfaith approach with an emphasis on inter-religious dialogue. This is for different faiths to come together and talk about these issues. The dialogue creates a platform a Muslim to understand the Christian faith and the Christian to understand the Islamic faith.

CICC has been undertaking conversations in mosques and churches where people of different faiths meet in a places of worship and converse about certain issues. In this quarter, issues discussed were mainly on what the role of religious leaders in countering violent extremism. The conversation have also been around what the people of faith can do to contribute towards peaceful elections. CICC is confident that the communities at the coast will live in harmony despite their diversities and instead seek to complement each other's' strengths and weaknesses

MEMORABLE QUOTE

Wars are created by people too old to fight for those too young to die – African Proverb.

It is time the young people worked towards a worthy future where they are no manipulated to take in bad Introducing...

IDOVE (Interfaith Dialogue on Violent Extremism) Project which CICC will undertake in Lamu County. The project will target the youth and aims at enabling the younger

decisions that will make them regret for the rest of their lives.

generation build resilience against violent extremism.

Ongoing activities:

Entrenching resilience to violent extremism in communities project: Mombasa, Kwale and Tana River

- Preaching events
 - Women Barazas
 - Youth barazas
 - Inter-religious dialogues
 - Radio programs
 - Peace Village meetings
- Jamii Thabiti: Kilifi County



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|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Sports activities | DAP III: Kilifi County, Malindi Sub County | - Training Justice and peace club patrons |
| Cultural events | | |
| Inter-religious dialogues | | |
| Inter-ethnic dialogues | - Justice and peace club sessions | Civil Peace Service |
| Women Ambassadors | - Caretaker agribusiness training | |
| Youth accountability forums | - LAAC reflective meetings | - Women Desk capacity building on women in leadership |
| | - Out of school girls support group meetings | - Staff capacity building |

Mission/Vision

Our Motto

Enduring peace and liberty.

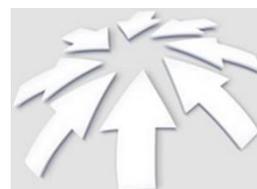
Our Vision

A divinely peaceful, just and harmonious Kenyan Society.

Our Mission

To be a reputable interfaith organization that supports the growth and maintenance of a culture of peaceful co-existence amongst all people and the environment through interfaith dialogue in Kenya.

Our Values



Fear of God

Non-partisanship

Religious tolerance

Integrity

Social responsibility

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