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Matching needs with resources

**National Police Reserve and community security
in Kenya's frontiers**



Esther Njuguna, James Ndung'u and Kyalo Musoi
November 2015

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About the project

In January 2014, with the support of Finland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Saferworld began implementation of a two-year project to address the problem of misuse of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in Kenya, building on previous work on arms reduction. Partnering with the Kenya National Focal Point on SALW (KNFP), Security Research and Information Centre (SRIC), SIKOM and Isiolo Peace Link, Saferworld asked local communities in selected sites in West Pokot and Isiolo County to identify their major SALW security concerns. These communities prioritised their access to security services and their ability to hold local government institutions to account, especially in the use of firearms. On this basis, one of the key pillars of the project has been improving government weapon stockpile management at the local level, using locally managed electronic registers to maintain easily accessible records backed by appropriate monitoring of the National Police Reserve (NPR) involved in providing community security. The project also focused on the need to build the capacity of the NPR to effectively implement their mandate.

This report focuses on the problems faced by the NPR, particularly in relation to their ability to respond to public demand for effective security provision. The findings of this report are based on field research as well as project activities that brought together stakeholders from Isiolo and West Pokot Counties, as well as national-level security actors. It highlights the challenges faced by the NPR and identifies lessons and opportunities for improving the professionalism and accountability of the NPR as a key security agency in Kenya's arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL).

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List of abbreviations

| | |
|--------------|--|
| AP | Administration Police |
| ASAL | Arid and semi-arid lands |
| CBOs | Community-based organisations |
| FGD | Focus group discussion |
| IPL | Isiolo Peace Link |
| KII | Key informant interview |
| KP | Kenya Police |
| NGO | Non-governmental organisation |
| NPR | National Police Reserve |
| NPS | National Police Service |
| NPSC | National Police Service Commission |
| OCPD | Officer Commanding Police Division |
| OCS | Officer in Charge of Station |
| SALW | Small arms and light weapons |
| SIKOM | SIKOM Peace Network for Development |
| SRIC | Security Research and Information Centre |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |

Executive summary

IN KENYA'S ASAL, the NPR is often the primary security provider for communities, reflecting the government's decision to invest responsibility for community security provision within ASAL largely in the NPR. However, this significant task has not been backed up by a needs-based injection of resources to enable the NPR to carry out important aspects of their role. Indeed, despite their importance to supporting police efforts in these regions, the NPR has faced numerous challenges, related to poor supervision, management and overall coordination of NPR officers. These challenges have crippled their ability to provide security to communities.

This report examines critical issues related to the level of investment that would be required to effectively manage the NPR including costs of proper kitting, training, pay and allowances. It outlines how the NPR has evolved without an effective framework for the overall management of their mandate, operations and the firearms they hold. This report highlights that despite the challenges facing the NPR, officers have continued to undertake their core functions even though their effectiveness is often compromised. An analysis of these challenges reveals that this has greatly contributed to the lack of accountability within the NPR to the communities they serve.

This research was conducted between May and August 2015. The findings are based on field research with data collected from Isiolo and West Pokot Counties, with the Isiolo and West Pokot Police Divisions as the specific study sites. The focus of the research was the communities and NPR within the jurisdiction of the two police divisions where the project was being implemented. The field work was further supported by a literature review of similar studies on the NPR.¹

¹ A detailed methodology section is set out in the introductory chapter.

This study revealed the following key findings:

- An investment of KES 2,130,700,000² (Kenyan shillings) annually by the Government of Kenya, which represents only three per cent of the current National Police Service (NPS) budget, would be sufficient to radically improve the management and operationalisation of the NPR to effectively deliver security to the communities they serve.
- In ASAL areas of Kenya, the NPR is one of the most important security providers especially due to their ability to navigate difficult terrains and their knowledge of the context.
- Women are increasingly gaining acceptance from the pastoralist communities to enlist in the NPR despite traditional barriers.
- Kitting (uniform, identity cards and communications equipment) issues are considered a high priority by the NPR for facilitating service provision to communities.
- Despite the NPR being mainly a voluntary entity, monthly pay and allowances for its members are crucial for their welfare and motivation as well as in enabling them to perform their duties.
- Lack of an operational policy to manage the NPR has led to its misuse by private business, diverting its mandate away from protecting communities.
- Training for the majority of the NPR has been inadequate and is manifested in a lack of basic skills especially for the use of firearms (safety handling, cleaning, stripping and assembling of a firearm), protocols on firearms accountability, human rights, community policing, communication skills and public relations.
- While the NPRs are currently managed by respective OCPDs and OCSs, local chiefs and assistant chiefs continue to play a key role in the management of NPRs especially in very remote areas where police presence is very low.
- The adoption of electronic arms registers for record keeping and monitoring was found to improve police accountability and effectiveness in the management of the NPR and their firearms in the two pilot counties – Isiolo and West Pokot Police Divisions.

Responding to the above findings, this report includes a series of recommendations geared to push forward transformation of the NPR into an accountable and professional component of the NPS. Key to this is the need for the Government of Kenya to commit the required resources to re-engineer the NPR. In addition, the government and the respective police agencies (National Police Service, National Police Service Commission) should adopt a bottom-up approach to policing in Kenya's ASAL, in which local security needs, concerns and dynamics are placed at the centre of national policy on policing priorities. It is also crucial to ensure that transformation of the NPR is done in tandem with ongoing police reform in Kenya to ensure a comprehensive restructuring of the NPS as a whole. This report concludes by stressing that proper resourcing of the NPR and the development of a policy framework to better govern its activity would enable it to play an important role in addressing insecurity and SALW proliferation in Kenya's ASAL.

² This would cover all the areas where the NPR is deployed as the primary security provider in the ASAL.

1

Introduction

SEVERAL STUDIES HAVE EXAMINED THE ROLE OF THE NPR in security provision in Kenya, but analysis on the needs and investment required to make the NPR an effective security agency has remained lacking. This study has attempted to address that gap by undertaking a needs analysis of the NPR to determine what level of investment would be appropriate to make the NPR a more effective outfit for community security in the ASAL, where Kenya has long been confronted with serious insecurity.³

The minimal provision of security by the state in ASAL areas has increased the demand for firearms, with communities taking on the traditional role of the state in security provision. This has resulted in a proliferation of illegal firearms possession and attempts by communities to assume a role within the auxiliary security structures established by the National Police, as police reserves are drawn on a voluntary basis from communities. Moreover, leakages from government armouries, an influx of refugees from war-torn neighbouring countries, and uncontrolled border points have facilitated the proliferation of SALW.

As a response to the problem faced by the NPR, successive governments in Kenya have launched various reform initiatives, but with mixed success. This report provides an overview of NPR experiences in Kenya in an attempt to identify lessons and provide recommendations that should reinforce Kenya's legislative and policy frameworks for managing the NPR. The first section of the report begins by setting out the historical evolution of the NPR both in the colonial and post-colonial eras, and their deployment in various roles and functions. An overview of the current NPR structure and the legal and policy frameworks underpinning their management is also presented in this section. The third section of the report presents quantitative data accompanied by qualitative narratives explaining in detail the significance of NPR in securing communities; the role of women in the NPR; the extent of financial investment required to facilitate training needs; and effective management of NPRs including kitting and basic remuneration. More analysis on record keeping; monitoring and inspection of the NPR is then presented. The paper ends by noting that it will require the government to invest only three per cent of the National Police Service budget to bring about the much-needed order in managing NPR to effectively deliver service to the communities. The final section draws some conclusions and provides recommendations to the Government of Kenya and other key stakeholders working on or supporting changes to the way that security is provided in the ASAL by the NPR.

³ Kenya's ASAL make up more than 80 per cent of the country and are mainly found in the Rift Valley. They are home to approximately four million pastoralists, who constitute more than ten per cent of Kenya's population. The ASAL areas have the highest incidences of poverty and the least access to basic services compared to other parts of the country.

Context

One of the first formal attempts to deal with longstanding security issues in rural areas, especially among pastoralists, was the establishment of the voluntary police service, the Kenya Police Reserve (KPR), by the colonial government in 1943.⁴ In the post-colonial period the KPR, under the wider Kenya Police Service, continued to exist but without the effective overall management of their operations that had prevailed during the colonial period.⁵ Despite the amalgamation of the Kenya Police and Administration Police Forces into a single National Police Service (NPS) in 2010, and the subsequent change of the KPR to National Police Reserve (NPR), the challenges related to the management and accountability of the NPR persist.

NPR officers are recruited and armed by the police but receive hardly any training, rarely receive equipment or uniforms, report back to police stations irregularly and generally do not hand in their weapons for the police to store safely. The nomadic nature of the pastoralist communities makes NPR monitoring difficult. Furthermore, unauthorised possession and misuse of small arms have consistently undermined the governance capacities required to make broader development endeavours work. There has been appreciable evidence of diversion of government-owned firearms and ammunition to private hands as well as worrying levels of misuse of firearms by police and especially those owned by the NPR.⁶ Challenges to the control and management of arms proliferation have proved difficult for the government to address and have undermined security provision by the state (for example in West Pokot and Isiolo). Currently, a majority of police stations have minimal recorded information on the enlistment of the NPR, firearms in their possession and personal details. This has been a significant challenge as the lack of records poses a problem for the government in identifying the numbers and location of NPR officers, type of firearms issued and the amount of ammunition issued.

The recruitment of the NPR has also been affected by politics. Politicians often influence the selection process of NPR officers for their own political advantage. Hundreds of guns have been issued to communities on this basis. Consequently, the institution of the KPR has been ethnicised and often serves ethnic interests.⁷ The lack of a clear policy direction and implementation has contributed to uncoordinated command and control structure, inadequate supervision and oversight, poor records, lack of proper training, uncoordinated recruitment and deployment, poor kitting and overall inadequate funding. These challenges have significantly affected the NPR's abilities to effectively deliver services to the communities they serve.

Scope and methodology

The study targeted the NPR in pastoralist communities in Isiolo and West Pokot Counties, specifically Isiolo and West Pokot Police Divisions and the respective communities within these jurisdictions where the project was being implemented. The methodology for this research process involved a desk review of different studies conducted by various researchers in order to highlight key security issues facing the NPR and how the service has been managed since the colonial period. A review of project documentation was also undertaken, involving analysis of activity reports from the project sites.

The review of project documentation was complemented by 20 key informant interviews (KIIs) in Nairobi, Isiolo and West Pokot counties, as well as two KIIs and focus group

⁴ The use of the term KPR applies to the period between 1943 and 2011 when the NPS Act was enacted, establishing the National Police Service. The new Act now refers to the KPR as the National Police Reserve (NPR).

⁵ This seems to have marked the beginning of a systematic deterioration in the management of the NPR.

⁶ See Mkutu K, Wandera G (2013) 'Policing the Periphery: Opportunities and Challenges for Kenya Police Reserves'; Ndung'u J (2010) 'A Reserve Force in Decline: Dilemmas of Supporting Community Security through Auxiliary Police in Marsabit District'.

⁷ *Ibid* Ndung'u J (2010).

discussions (FGDs) in Isiolo and West Pokot. At the county level, the KIIs engaged senior police officers, representatives from CBOs, NGOs, NPR officers, elders, women, and youth. At the national level, five KIIs were conducted with the KNFP, senior officers in the NPS and the Ministry of Interior, and Coordination of National Government.

To compare and validate data obtained from KIIs, two FGDs were conducted in both Isiolo and West Pokot Counties. The aim of the FGDs was to get first-hand information on several subjects related to their community security concerns, responsiveness and importance of NPR in security management, their basic needs, control and management, and policy options. The participants of the FGDs were carefully selected from elders, members of peace committees, community policing committees, religious leaders, women leaders, youth leaders, NGOs, CBOs and law enforcement agents, including junior police officers. NPR members themselves, as well as police officers at county level, were asked about the NPR's direct priorities related to their capacity and functionality. Participants throughout the study sample were asked questions relating to the role of women in the NPR. Senior police officers at county and national level responded to questions related to the control and management of NPR and policy recommendations.

The primary data collected were grouped and analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software and also Microsoft Excel to give summaries, on which interpretations and conclusions were based. Secondary data collected were analysed through content analysis and used to complement interpretation of the primary data.

This research was conducted between May and August 2015.

2

The history and evolution of the National Police Reserve

THE NPR HAS PLAYED A KEY ROLE providing security and policing services in Kenya, particularly in the ASAL regions. NPR officers, whose history is closely tied to the evolution of the NPS, have been part and parcel of later government efforts to boost security and policing at the community level, particularly pastoral communities prone to cattle rustling, highway banditry and inter-community raids. During the colonial administration they began as largely informal conscripts in the 1920s, known as ‘Askaris’, and served on a voluntary basis.⁸ In 1943, the National Legislative Council passed the National Service Act, which formally recognised the existence of the KPR and allowed for compulsory conscription of Kenyan nationals. This Act was amended in 1944 under the Auxiliary Police Ordinance, creating provisions for conscripts to serve in the National Service as auxiliary units, mainly to boost police efforts at maintaining law and order.⁹ In 1948, the colonial government reformed the police force, leading to the formalisation of the KPR as an auxiliary police unit to support police efforts in combating crime and maintaining law and order.¹⁰ KPRs were mainly deployed in troubled regions. They had a clear command structure and were fully equipped and uniformed, much like the regular police force.

Following independence in 1963, the NPR continued to play a role in service provision. However, in 2004, the Government of Kenya disbanded them in urban areas, stating that various city units had become corrupt and unmanageable.¹¹ Today, NPRs operate mainly in rural areas, especially in the arid and semi-arid regions, whose main economic activity and livelihood is pastoralism. These regions are characterised by frequent violent conflicts mainly over grazing fields, water, cattle raids and human/wildlife competition intensified by high proliferation of illicit firearms.¹² In most of these regions NPRs are the most visible and dependable form of security and they are the first in line of defence against bandits and cattle raiders.

⁸ Askaris were used to provide security and guard property for the colonial masters, for instance during the construction of the Kenya-Uganda Railway, to protect construction materials and manpower, and business empires such as the Imperial British East African Company.

⁹ It is believed that the regular police force was under pressure for wartime commitments.

¹⁰ ‘The Kenya Police Strategic Plan 2003–2007’.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Mkutu K, Wandera G (2013) ‘Policing the Periphery: Opportunities and Challenges for Kenya Police Reserves’.

**A National Police Reserve
officer in West Pokot County**
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The NPRs are mostly recruited from pastoral communities. They speak the local language, understand the local security context and are familiar with the geography, terrain and climate. This makes them suitable for reinforcing security in these areas. Some of the counties that rely on the NPR include Marsabit, Samburu, Moyale, West Pokot, Isiolo, Mandera, Garissa, Wajir, Tana River and Turkana, many of which have suffered from years of conflict. However, the reserves continue to face a range of internal issues, including poor accountability, poor professional standards and lack of clarity around their composition, management and deployment.

Current structure and management of the NPR

Legal framework and guidelines

Until 2011, the KPR was guided and regulated by the 1948 legislation. While there had been suggestions to review their regulating policy guidelines and frameworks in 2005 following the disestablishment of the urban KPR, this was not taken forward. In 2009, the National Task Force on Police Reforms made recommendations for the reconstitution of the KPR, which included proposals suggesting the recomposition of the reserve; the appointment of additional reserve officers; period of service in the reserve; and deployment. These recommendations were taken up in the National Police Service Act 2011, which now provides a new legal and institutional framework for the reserve as an integral part of the NPS.

According to the NPS Act 2011, the reserve may be deployed in Kenya to assist the Kenya Police Service or the Administration Police Service in their respective mandates including in the:

- maintenance of law and order
- preservation of peace
- protection of life and property
- prevention and detection of crime
- apprehension of offenders
- enforcement of all laws and regulations with which the service is charged

Sections 110–115 of the NPS Act set guidelines on the recruitment, training, deployment, command and structure, discipline and remuneration of NPR. While the NPS Act 2011 has put in place legislative and institutional provisions to operationalise the NPR, the challenges facing the reserve require clear policy direction, particularly on matters of management and coordination. The challenges have led to the development of an NPR Policy Framework that sets out policies and reforms for the reconstitution, management and supervision of the reserve. It focuses on command and control, composition,

appointment, discipline, funding and overall management of the NPR including training and period of service.

However, the policy is yet to be formally approved by the Kenyan Government. The problems related to the control and management of the NPR have thus persisted. Currently, there is a general lack of control over the NPR in terms of recruitment, supervision, and record keeping as well as command and structure of the reserve. In addition, there is lack of an operational mandate that has led to the treatment of the NPR as a private security agency for local businesses, NGOs, and wildlife conservancies. In addition, the misuse of state firearms in the possession of the NPR as well as manipulation of the reserve for political and or economic gain have been rampant, mainly due to the coordination and management challenges experienced by the authorities.



The OCPD in Isiolo conducts an inspection exercise of the NPR under his jurisdiction. The management of NPR is currently under the OCPD. This office is in charge of identification and training of new recruits, as well as issuance of firearms and maintenance, in consultation with the Office of the Inspector General of Police. Additionally, chiefs play an integral part in the day-to-day management of NPR. The chiefs are engaged because police officers are transferred regularly, while chiefs are based at the community level, and know NPRs by location and name.

PHOTO: © SAFERWORLD/JUOZAS CERNIUS

3

Effectiveness of the National Police Reserve: Key findings

THIS CHAPTER PRESENTS FINDINGS FROM FIELD RESEARCH on problems faced by the NPR, particularly in their ability to respond to public demand for security provision.

NPR and local security provision

Field research shows that communities and local leaders in West Pokot and Isiolo believe the NPR has a strong and important role to play in local security provision. In addition to supplementing the work of the police, the NPR also provides quicker response at the local level where the presence of police is minimal.¹³ This observation resonates with 88 per cent of respondents sampled from the NPR, elders, members of peace and community policing committees, religious leaders, women and youth, NGOs, CBOs, and police officers in both Isiolo and West Pokot Police Divisions.

Asked why the NPR is important in security response, 42 per cent of respondents said this was because they felt the NPR understood the local geography better than parts of the police. Considering that the reserve officers are recruited from the local communities, they possess the knowledge and relevant skills to effectively navigate the context that has been crucial for providing security in the ASAL. The table below indicates that knowledge of the terrain within which they operate was the main reason why both the members of the community and the police value the role played by the NPR in these regions. NPRs were also found to be necessary in supplementing the numbers of the few police officers deployed in those areas as per their legal mandate outlined in the NPS Act.

¹³ 'The police' here refers to the Kenya Police and Administration police officers.

Figure 1: Do you think the NPR is a useful component of security within pastoralist communities?

| Importance of NPR | Percentage |
|---|-------------|
| Understand the terrain better than police officers | 42% |
| Counteract the inadequacy of police numbers in the counties | 21% |
| Pastoralist communities are more vulnerable to incursions from neighbouring communities/even across the borders | 18% |
| Understand the community traditions and beliefs better than police | 12% |
| Share early warning information (on planned cattle raids) | 6% |
| Do not know | 1% |
| Total | 100% |

The role of women in the NPR

In pastoralist communities such as those in Isiolo and West Pokot Counties, there has traditionally been a lot of resistance to involving women in security provision. This is slowly changing, with study results suggesting that women were increasingly gaining acceptance from pastoralist communities to work within the NPR. Indeed, 38 per cent of respondents felt that women had a role to play in the service, while women focus group participants also expressed interest in working as NPR officers. One participant commented on the specific contribution they believed women could make within the service:

“... female NPRs could help in handling women suspects, gathering intelligence or early warning information, undertaking inspection of women at the roadblocks and even undertake undercover surveillance duties”¹⁴

A woman leader from the Pokot community discusses security issues with two NPR officers.

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¹⁴ An FGD participant's remarks during one of the sessions held in West Pokot Division.

Women are increasingly enlisting as NPR officers in both Isiolo and West Pokot counties, a trend that has emanated from other counties.

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Views about the potential roles women play or could play in the NPR were heavily influenced by cultural beliefs about ‘appropriate’ gender roles. For example, participants said that women had a particular role to play in gathering early warning information, because of their status as mothers and wives in the community. Overall, however, 52 per cent of respondents considered women to be unfit for NPR duties and responsibilities. It was said that pastoralists’ culture and beliefs do not value or recognise the role of women in security provision, which is mainly considered men’s responsibility as the protectors of the community. It was observed that this perception has been detrimental in promoting active participation of women in NPR because it was believed that the women were incapable of performing certain duties such as working at night and pursuing bandits in rough terrain compared to their male counterparts.

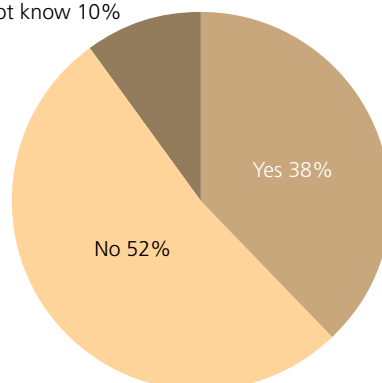
This perception is, however, slowly but progressively changing, mainly as a result of awareness raising and sensitisation processes on the importance of including women in security provision. Some participants observed that with equivalent training for women and sensitisation of local communities on women’s potential role in security, women would be able to take on all police functions. In ongoing work supported by Saferworld in the two counties – Isiolo and West Pokot – women have also proved to be instrumental in disseminating information and mobilising the community on supporting greater accountability in the use of SALW within their respective communities.

The study revealed that this involvement of women in security initiatives has also facilitated the engagement of female reservists in the police, as well as supporting the recruitment of more women in the NPR in the two counties to improve on the current gender balance as envisioned in the constitution.

Considering that both Isiolo and West Pokot have culturally been very conservative about the role of women, the respondents felt that the same could be replicated in other regions to promote the inclusion of more women in security initiatives.

Figure 2: Whether women should be recruited as NPRs

Do not know 10%



Uniform and identification

The provision of standard uniforms was identified as the most important deficiency according to 40 per cent of NPR interviewed, while 12 per cent felt the priority was identification cards. Uniforms have an important role in identification, legitimacy, and even professionalism.¹⁵ Despite being a requirement under the NPS Act, the majority of those NPRs surveyed lacked a proper uniform or identity cards to aid in their identification. This was reported to frequently lead to confusion and sometimes fatalities during operations where NPR officers without uniform were mistakenly shot by fellow police officers. Where they do have uniforms, these are not standardised, with officers operating in a variety of uniforms from the army, the police, or other security personnel.

In Isiolo County, for example, the NPRs working under wildlife conservancies are given uniforms by the Northern Rangeland Trust (NRT) while those in the community are supposed to get their uniform from the police, but this does not happen.¹⁶ There are therefore disparities when it comes to proper identification and visibility of the NPR in their respective localities.

The majority of NPRs lack proper and standardised uniforms; this has undermined the reserve's image as a security unit.

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Remuneration and welfare

Thirty two per cent of the NPR considered monthly allowances for security services to be crucial for their welfare and motivation. The officers are engaged on a voluntary basis and as such they do not receive salaries from the government.¹⁷ Analyses of findings revealed that there was a great deal of resentment among reservists at the lack of reliable pay.¹⁸

For example, the NPR have been engaged in providing security during political events such as the 2005 referendum on the proposed constitution, the 2007 general elections, the National Census of 2009, the 2010 national referendum on the adoption of the constitution and the 2013 general elections.¹⁹ At no stage during these events were the NPRs paid.²⁰ An NPR officer reported that even in cases where they fell sick during such activities, the government rarely assisted in covering their medical expenses.

¹⁵ Mkutu K, Wandera G (2013) 'Policing the Periphery: Opportunities and challenges of for Kenya Police Reserves, a working paper of the Small Arms Survey', available online at: www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/F-Working-papers/SAS-WP15-Kenya-Policing-the-Periphery.pdf

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Since the NPR serve as volunteers, they are not entitled to any compensation from the government. However the NPS Act provides for reserve police officers to be paid remuneration and allowances determined by the National Police Service Commission in consultation with the Salaries and Remuneration Commission. Some may receive cattle as compensation after their successful recovery (Survey, KIA, Nairobi, September 2011).

¹⁸ Findings from the implementation of the two-year project.

¹⁹ Notes from a meeting with NPRs of Isiolo and West Pokot Counties. Assertions corroborated by administrators in the two counties.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

In West Pokot County, an NPR officer reported that:

“... an NPR was found dead in a polling station during the 2013 general elections and we were forced to contribute and find means of transport and meet the mortuary expenses ... it was sad because no one seemed interested in determining the cause of the death as no post-mortem was conducted due to unavailability of funds ...”²¹

It was found that the lack of remuneration for the NPR has been a factor that has led to the misuse of the NPR by private businesses, conservancies, NGOs and others. In Isiolo, for example, NPRs hired by the wildlife conservancies are entitled to compensation, a situation that has led to inequality among the NPRs. It was also observed that the NPR were often engaged in providing services for private agencies rather than focus on their mandate to provide security to their communities, thus breeding resentment in the communities.

A lack of motivation has been a significant challenge for the NPR that is also linked to the absence of proper remuneration and welfare. When asked how much basic pay the NPR should be entitled to, there was concurrence that a monthly allowance of KES 10,000 was sufficient motivation among the NPRs. This amount was calculated based on the basic personal needs of the NPR such as food, accommodation while on the road, transport and other necessities related to the discharge of their functions.

Training needs and requirements

Another key need was training, identified as a priority by seven per cent of respondents. The NPR and the NPS emphasised the need to equip the reserve officers with elementary skills especially on the use of firearms, safety handling, cleaning, stripping and assembling of a firearm, parts of a firearm, human rights, community policing, basic communication skills and public relations. It was noted that a majority of the NPR are enlisted and handed government weapons without proper training. This was observed as a significant challenge that has particularly contributed to the poor management of firearms possessed by the NPR. For example a majority of the NPR did not know that their firearms should be stored in the police station while off-duty for safekeeping. In addition, the police officers in both police divisions raised concerns that the lack of basic skills in policing undermined the quality of services provided by the NPR to the community.

An NPR officer in West Pokot checks the safety features on his firearm after a basic training conducted by the NPS.

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²¹ An NPR's remark on a fellow officer who had died during the last general elections and whose family was not compensated by the government. Interview conducted in May 2015 in West Pokot County.

Communication and firearms

Communication tools such as mobile phones were highlighted at six per cent. High frequency radios were considered by the NPR as very important especially in areas without access to regular mobile networks. Only three per cent identified weapons as a priority, though a much greater number of people had concerns about the type of weapons currently being issued to officers. The study found that the firearms issued to NPRs fell into three categories: Mark 4, AK-47 and G3 assault rifles. It was found that NPRs prefer the G3 rifle to the AK-47 since it was easy to maintain, had a longer range and ammunitions were more easily available²².

Figure 3: NPR needs in order of priority

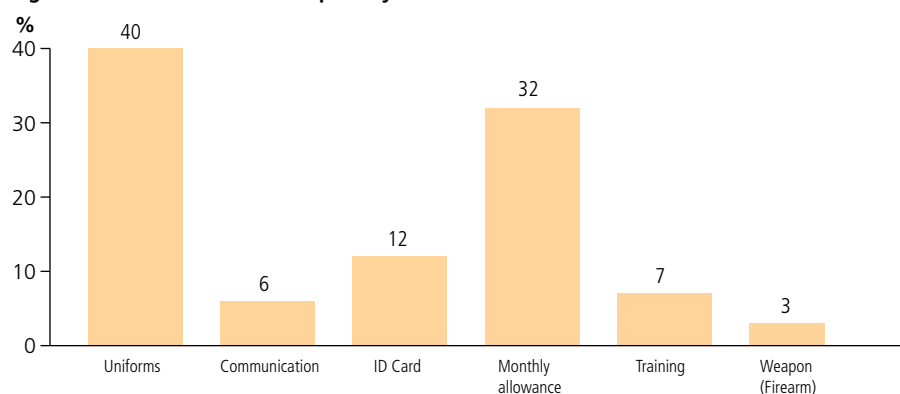


Figure 4: Minimum NPR requirements

| Item category | Specific item | Cost per set (KES) | Total cost |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Uniform | Trousers | 1,600 x 2 | 3,200 |
| | Shirt | 1,000 x 2 | 2,000 |
| | Jacket | 2,000 x 2 | 4,000 |
| | Shoes | 2,000 x 2 | 4,000 |
| | Jungle hat | 1,000 x 2 | 2,000 |
| | Webbings | 3,500 x 2 | 7,000 |
| ID Cards | | 200 | 200 |
| Allowance | | 10,000 x 12 x 3 | 360,000 |
| Communication | Mobile phones | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| Total (KES) | | | 387,400 |

Assuming that the total number of NPR still stands at 16,500 as established in 2013 by Mkutu and Wandera,²³ then the total cost of managing NPRs for a span of three years will be KES 6,392,100,000, which translates to an annual budget of KES 2,130,700,000.²⁴ Going by the NPS budget allocation of KES 66.2 billion, (2014/2015),²⁵ the minimal NPR needs annual budget would represent 3.22 per cent of this budget.

²² Interview with a senior police officer in Kapenguria, Makutano, West Pokot County held in February 2015.

²³ Mkutu K, Wandera G (2013) 'Policing the Periphery: Opportunities and Challenges for Kenya Police Reserves'.

²⁴ This does not include the cost of arms and ammunition because, as the study found out, this is one area where the NPR has well been covered.

²⁵ See more in an article by Ann Kagumu titled, 'Which sectors bagged larger share of Kenya's trillion budget' available at: <http://awakeafrica.org/which-sectors-bagged-larger-share-of-kenyas-trillion-budget/>

The contribution from national government would significantly reduce if for example it worked closely with county governments, which have already shown an interest in supporting the NPR. This investment would go a long way in improving community security in those areas, as more would be expected from a remunerated NPR.

On communication, the government may in future consider investing in high frequency radio calls, which cost around KES 60,000, and also invest in training the service. Communication and training of the service was identified as a key area, which the government needs to focus on in a bid to professionalise the service. Indeed, training is a continuous process whose level of investment varies with the type of training, the knowhow of the targeted group among many other factors. The study found that the government, through the KNFP, had already developed an NPR training manual to standardise training. Findings revealed that the training manual had already been shared with the OCPDs and that training programmes were being developed.

Management of NPR

NPRs work under the OCPDs and the OCSs. The study found that chiefs and their assistants also play an important role in the management of NPR. They are mostly used to mobilise the officers for recovery missions in case of cattle raids. It was also noted that in some areas where police posts were too far away, owing partly to the poor infrastructure and terrain, some NPRs opted to deposit their firearms with the chiefs and assistant chiefs for safekeeping. The presence of chiefs and assistant chiefs in management of NPRs was evident in the very remote areas where police presence is low.

According to a key informant in this study:

“... NPRs in far and extremely remote areas work well under the supervision of the chiefs and the assistant chiefs... this should be maintained in the spirit of the devolved governance, mostly due to the fact that they operate in distant places far from the police, and the chiefs are the nearest administrators they can quickly get direction from.”²⁶

In some other areas where there are Administration Police (AP) posts, it was also found that the NPRs at times worked under the APs. In some of the locations, the NPRs were found to have organised themselves into groups and subscribed to some form of ranking system, which includes constables, sergeants, corporals and inspectors. The seniors help with planning and work arrangement. This finding corroborates outcomes of a 2013 UNDP report, which indicated that the NPRs in one of the areas the study was conducted in (Marsabit) reported that there was an NPR inspector who worked with the OCPD, and that in almost all locations there was a corporal and a sergeant with more than 24 constables working under them.²⁷

Supervision of NPRs

According to article 11A of the National Police Service Act 2011,²⁸ most of the NPR responsibilities including vetting, determining the numbers of NPR, trainings and so on are placed under the National Police Service Commission (NPSC). However, the study established that this is yet to be operationalised, leading to a misunderstanding or lack of clear control structures in the two counties sampled for this study. In some areas, control and leadership of NPRs were placed under the chiefs, KPS and even sometimes under the APS, leaving some in a state of confusion about reporting lines.

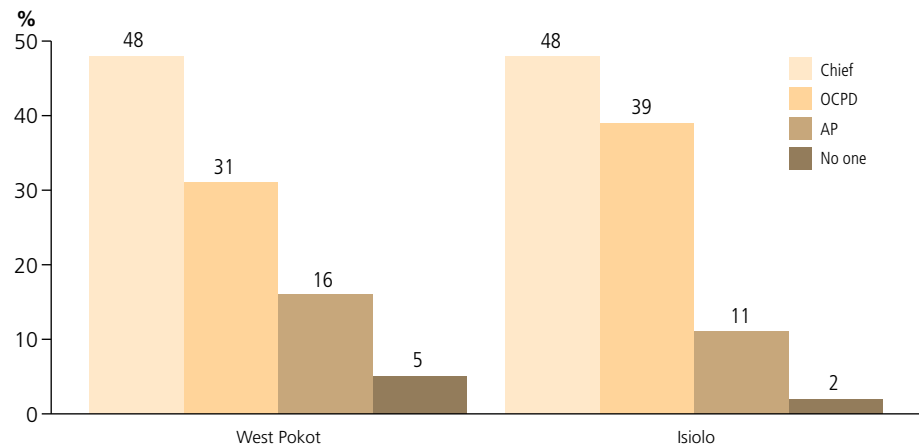
²⁶ KII remarks in West Pokot. Interview conducted on 15 January 2015.

²⁷ UNDP (2013) 'National Police Reserve study', available at: https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=4&ved=0CDMQFjAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.undp.org%2Fcontent%2Fdam%2Fkenya%2Fdocs%2FPeace%2520Building%2FNational%2520Police%2520Reserve%2520Study%2520Report.doc&ei=Fw82VZPGFdLbavC6gPgC&usg=AFQjCNGjbOao5v8Hyuv7o9q3Y5SgntnZdw&sig2=Bi8JLjmULPwZ8jzSL3_Zw (direct download)

²⁸ Laws of Kenya, National Police Service Act, No. 11A of 2011, available at: www.icla.up.ac.za/images/un/use-of-force/africa/Kenya/National%20Police%20Service%20Act%202011.pdf

The study sought to understand to whom the NPR reported; as shown in figure 5 below, 48 per cent reported to chiefs. However, according to senior police officers interviewed during the study, more NPRs were increasingly reporting and sharing information with them, thereby increasing trust between the two services.

Figure 5: NPR reporting authority



It was interesting to note that there were some NPRs who seemed to be unaware of any reporting authority and indicated that they reported to no one in particular, as indicated by five per cent and two per cent of the respondents in West Pokot and Isiolo counties respectively. This could be interpreted to mean that they were either unsure of whom to report to and therefore reported to whomever would be available.

NPRs also mentioned APs as a reporting authority, as indicated by 16 per cent and 11 per cent in West Pokot and Isiolo counties respectively. This could be understood to mean that they may have been operating in areas where AP posts were nearer than any other authority.

Record keeping and monitoring of NPR

The application of proper record keeping systems through the adoption of electronic arms registers was found to improve police accountability and effectiveness in the management of firearms in Isiolo and West Pokot Police Divisions. The police officers interviewed highlighted that the availability of the records on the personal details of the NPR as well as their firearms had improved the way police monitor arms movement, management, and use within their respective jurisdictions.

The NPS register NPR-owned firearms in West Pokot County.
© SAFERWORLD/SIKOM



**Arms are registered on
a digital record in
Isiolo County.**

© SAFERWORLD/JAMES NDUNG'U



Before the commencement of the project, these police divisions had very minimal recorded information on the enlistment, firearms and personal data of the NPR. The records now have readily available data on the NPR including bio data, type of firearm issued, amount of ammunition issued and the location of the NPR.

Due to the nomadic lifestyles of pastoralists, the study established that it was difficult for the NPR to report to the police stations as required. This is quite a challenge in ensuring proper oversight of the NPR by the police, especially in the use of state firearms. It was, however, noted that as a result of the project implementation in Isiolo and West Pokot Counties, the OCPDs were carrying out monthly inspections of the NPRs to assess the condition of their firearms, do minor repairs and also monitor firearm use.

4

Conclusion and recommendations

Conclusion

THIS STUDY HIGHLIGHTS THAT NPRs have been effective in helping law enforcement officers secure pastoralist areas. Many rural citizens value the role of the reserve officers in security provision in the ASAL, reflecting the continued importance of the NPR in securing pastoralist areas and the very low deployment of NPS officers to those locations.

Overall, however, the NPR has evolved and continued to operate without an effective framework for its overall management. The lack of an operational policy has further undermined the management of the NPR, leaving it vulnerable to political manipulation, criminal co-option and misuse by private businesses. Even within a context of ongoing reforms within the NPS, it was observed that the same old challenges relating to lack of accountability, low professional standards and poor service delivery were present within the NPR. Challenges related to identification (uniforms and identity cards), remuneration, firearms use and issuance, and the establishment of a proper command and control structure in particular persist. The study found that resources to facilitate proper kitting of the service – including firearms, uniforms and other equipment, training, allowances, and proper supervision of NPRs – are urgently needed. Gaps have contributed to challenges around responsiveness.

The study also established that the morale of NPRs was quite low due to perceived neglect by the government and lack of any form of incentives and compensation, though their attitude towards their work was positive.

It was positive to note the increasing role of women in security service provision within the NPR, a role traditionally preserved for the men. The study established that though there were many barriers facing women in pastoralist communities, there was a slow but progressive change to accept women volunteering as NPRs. The study noted that with the appropriate training for women officers and sensitisation of communities, women could dispense their duties as effectively as their male counterparts. Currently, women have played specific roles such as intelligence gathering and handling of female suspects – roles that have largely been influenced by cultural beliefs and traditions regarding gender-appropriate roles.

Finally, the study established that it will cost the government approximately KES two billion annually to effectively manage NPR for better security in pastoralist regions. This study therefore concludes that with the proper policy framework and resources to govern the management of the NPR, the government can begin to effectively address the problems related to insecurity and particularly SALW proliferation in Kenya's ASAL.

Recommendations

This report recommends that the Kenyan Government puts in place proper frameworks for the management and operation of NPR, with an emphasis on fast-tracking implementation of the National Police Service Amendment Act of 2014. The amendments include: provisions for allowances, recruitment and training, uniform and identification, firearms management, issuance and maintenance.

To the Government of Kenya

- Set aside at least three per cent of the annual budget allocation to the NPS towards meeting the identified needs of the NPR. This can be done on an incremental basis. The investment is not so substantial considering the sizeable territory in which NPRs are deployed.
- Adopt a bottom-up planning and budgeting approach for allocation of resources required to manage the NPR by local police divisions and stations. This will allow the police to identify and prioritise their basic operational needs and the necessary resources required to strengthen and build the capacities of the NPR so as to fulfil their duties and obligations to the community.
- Demonstrate political goodwill and support to transform the NPR into a responsive and accountable security agency in Kenya. The re-engineering of the NPR should be done in tandem with the police reforms in Kenya to ensure a comprehensive restructuring of the police as a whole.
- Adopt a community-oriented approach in order to ensure that local security needs, concerns and dynamics inform both local and national policing priorities. National efforts should ensure inclusive processes that are informed by local priorities to positively transform the NPR into a professional service.
- Fast-track the finalisation and implementation of the draft NPR Policy Framework, which will be crucial in providing strategic guidance and structure in the management and control of the NPR as a professional and accountable arm of security provision.

To the National Police Service

- Adopt and promote effective record keeping systems in local police stations to improve the management of the NPR and the firearms in their possession. Digitised and modernised systems for recording data and tracking weapons and ammunitions issued to NPRs will help determine the exact number of weapons and ammunitions in circulation. In addition, it would help determine the amount of ammunition used and replenished. This will contribute to wider efforts of institutionalising overall accountability of official government firearms and ammunition as well as tackle the proliferation of illicit firearms.
- Establish mobile armouries in areas without local police stations for storing firearms allocated, recovered and returned by NPRs for effective physical security of stockpiles.
- Regularly train NPRs on firearms management and maintenance protocols, crime control, human rights issues, customer service and conflict management strategies.
- Provide standardised uniforms and identity cards for the NPRs to ease identification during operations.
- Institute a ranking scheme that will ensure clear command structure among the NPR to avoid creation of informal ranks by the NPR.
- Establish deployment boundaries/procedures to improve relocation of NPRs in vast counties. Movement of armed NPRs should be regulated so that not all of them move away from their location in search of pasture at the same time, to allow security continuity in their villages.

- Promote the role of women in policing through relevant training and kitting so as to build their capacities to effectively dispense their duties; as their male counterparts.

To the National Police Service Commission

- Enhance coordination and harmonisation with the NPS to promote better management and control of the NPR. This is particularly important in their enlistment, vetting, remuneration and welfare.
- Reform recruitment processes for NPR personnel to ensure a gender and ethnic balance, and discourage comparisons among different pastoralist groups. This study noted that different communities seemed to associate the number of NPRs with supremacy of their communities. There is therefore need to ensure transparency during recruitment and also guarantee that the exercise is informed by security needs of local communities.
- Set clear age limits for NPRs to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. This should include regular vetting of the officers with a view to retiring those who are too old to be effective.
- Improve the welfare of the NPRs, including providing compensation in cases of injury or death in the line of duty.

To donors and development partners

- Ensure security sector reform programmes are informed by evidence on best practice, and by emphasising community-based approaches to improving long-term security.
- Recognising that lack of political will is a key obstacle to reform, engage with the Kenyan Government to promote their support and leadership in accountable and responsive security provision.

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Partner profiles



About Saferworld

Saferworld is an independent international organisation working to prevent violent conflict and build safer lives. We work with local people affected by conflict to improve their safety and sense of security, and conduct wider research and analysis. We use this evidence and learning to improve local, national and international policies and practices that can help build lasting peace. Our priority is people – we believe in a world where everyone can lead peaceful, fulfilling lives, free from fear and insecurity.

We are a not-for-profit organisation with programmes in nearly 20 countries and territories across Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Europe.

Saferworld's regional conflict prevention work in Africa consists of the Sudan and Great Lakes programme and the Kenya and Horn of Africa programme.



SRIC

SRIC is a Kenyan organisation specialising in SALW control and security sector reforms. It has been in existence for over 15 years, working in Kenya, and it hosts and coordinates the Kenya National Action Network on Small Arms (KANSA). SRIC has implemented many projects since it was founded in 1999. Among these are various research projects, grassroots peace and security projects including establishing and training of District Peace Committees, facilitating inter- and intra-communal dialogues, for example in Tana River (between Orma and Pokomo), in Upper Eastern especially in Marsabit and Moyale (Borana and Gabra), in Isiolo (Samburu, Somali, etc.), and in Northern Kenya (Turkana, Pokot, Samburu) and conducting training on small arms and conflict management in the same areas.



KNFP

The KNFP is a national SALW coordination mechanism established under the Nairobi Protocol on SALW. The KNFP is under the Office of the President and is responsible for coordinating action against the proliferation of SALW in Kenya.



Isiolo Peace Link

In addition to facilitating community dialogue and settling disputes at the local level, IPL is part of local early warning and early response structures that work closely with the National Steering Committee on Peace Building and Conflict Management, which coordinates national action on peace. IPL interfaces between the government and community in responding to conflict and security situations in Isiolo County.



SIKOM

SIKOM is a local network of community-based organisations in West Pokot County. It focuses on cross-border community dialogue and reconciliation, arms control and community policing. SIKOM has been very instrumental in supporting local efforts on voluntary disarmament that has seen former armed warriors surrender their weapons and start engaging in productive activities at community level.

Saferworld is an independent international organisation working to prevent violent conflict and build safer lives. We work with local people affected by conflict to improve their safety and sense of security, and conduct wider research and analysis. We use this evidence and learning to improve local, national and international policies and practices that can help build lasting peace. Our priority is people – we believe in a world where everyone can lead peaceful, fulfilling lives, free from fear and insecurity.

We are a not-for-profit organisation with programmes in nearly 20 countries and territories across Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Europe.

COVER PHOTO: Weapons owned by the National Police Reserves are registered by the National Police Service using an electronic arms register developed with the support of Saferworld. The misuse of state-owned small arms and light weapons in Kenya has significantly contributed to people's insecurity. © JAMES NDUNG'U/SAFERWORLD



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