



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Kenya NiWajibu Wetu  
NIWETU



WOMEN IN KIBRA, NAIROBI ATTEND A WOMEN'S CVE FORUM. IN SWAHILI, "KIBRA NIWAJIBU WETU" TRANSLATES TO "KIBRA IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY." PHOTO: HANK NELSON/NIWETU

## CVE AND THE JOURNEY TO SELF-RELIANCE IN KENYA

USAID's Kenya NiWajibu Wetu (NIWETU) activity leads USAID's countering violent extremism (CVE) efforts in Kenya by improving CVE capabilities to identify and respond to violent extremism (VE) threats. It accomplishes this goal through a series of activities grouped under two key objectives: enhancing community mobilization to address VE, and improving government responsiveness to VE. NIWETU takes an innovative, systems-based approach to CVE, working with four key entry points into the system: government, influencers, civil society organizations (CSOs), and communities.

At its launch in 2016, USAID's Kenya NiWajibu Wetu (NIWETU) activity entered a highly dynamic and relatively nascent countering violent extremism (CVE) landscape. Earlier in 2016, the Government of Kenya (GOK) had launched a National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism and had developed the country's first CVE County Action Plans, which devolve certain prevention activities to the county level.

In this rapidly changing CVE landscape, the GOK was clearly indicating its commitment to launching locally-owned CVE initiatives. However, many government entities, CSOs, communities, and individuals tasked with leading these initiatives as part of a whole-of-society approach lacked the capacity to do so. Since 2016, NIWETU has worked with these stakeholders to strengthen capacity, advocate for greater commitment to Kenyan-led and -owned CVE activities, and catalyze partnerships between these groups.

Within Kenya's devolved governance system, it is important for NIWETU to strengthen the capacity of national, county, and local government to carry out CVE initiatives. NIWETU is supporting the Kenya School of Government (KSG) to develop a center for the study of VE and a CVE curriculum that KSG will use to train incoming civil servants. These officials will take their new CVE knowledge and skills to their posts across different departments and regions, mainstreaming CVE within the GOK. At the same time, KSG's ownership of the center and new curriculum demonstrates the GOK's commitment to supporting sustainable CVE initiatives.

NIWETU has also supported government commitment to long-term CVE initiatives at the county level. For example, the Mandera county government has committed to using public funding to support and train 620 local CVE champions in all six sub-counties. This government-sponsored activity is using NIWETU's technical expertise—including its Champions for Change (C4C) curricula and CVE Facilitation Guide—to train the champions, but is otherwise funded and implemented by the county government. In its core counties and at the national level, NIWETU continues to support government commitment through skills transfer and encouraging partnerships with communities.

Complementing its close work with national, county, and local governments in Kenya, NIWETU strengthens the capacity of CSOs and community influencers to lead CVE initiatives. Since 2016, NIWETU has partnered with 39 local organizations to co-design context-specific CVE activities across Kenya. This co-design process strengthens the technical skills of local CVE implementers, while also ensuring that these organizations and individuals fully own the initiatives that they lead. For example, NIWETU supports 52 CVE C4Cs across five counties in Kenya through training, mentorship, and continuous technical support. The C4Cs volunteer their time and receive relatively little funding for activities, but have been able to institutionalize their work by registering their local organizations in each county and building strong networks with other CVE actors, including government officials. NIWETU and the C4Cs co-designed each county's C4C action plan, with NIWETU sharing its technical expertise but encouraging champions to develop CVE activities that reflect their own strengths and can continue without USAID support.

Across Kenya, NIWETU and USAID are strengthening the capacity and catalyzing the commitment of key stakeholders to continue implementing locally-sustained CVE initiatives.



SOFIA GEDI, HEAD OF WAJIR HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, SPEAKS AT THE LAUNCH OF THE NIWETU-SUPPORTED WAJIR COUNTY ACTION PLAN TO COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM. NIWETU ENSURES THAT WOMEN'S VOICES ARE INCORPORATED INTO CVE INITIATIVES. PHOTO: HANK NELSON/NIWETU.



C4CS FROM TWO COMMUNITIES IN NAIROBI BRAINSTORM THE ROLE THEY MIGHT PLAY IN LOCAL CVE INITIATIVES. IN ADDITION TO STRENGTHENING C4CS' CAPACITY, NIWETU ENCOURAGES LEARNING AND SHARING GOOD PRACTICES ACROSS DIFFERENT HOTSPOT AREAS. PHOTO: HANK NELSON/NIWETU.