



Chapter 2

Policing for the community? The mismatch between reform and everyday policing in Nairobi, Kenya

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During an afternoon walk in the spring of 2018 with three men living in Mathare, one of the larger 'ghettos' of Nairobi, Kenya, we discussed the prevalence and normalisation of intimidation, abuse, violence and killings by police officers. They narrated how the state police as a whole (thereby referring to the various units that make up the National Police Service) only serve a minority of the population. Moreover, they do so in a fickle and unpredictable way, very often driven by self- and economic interest. When asked whether they would turn to the police for protection or assistance, their eyes opened wide, expressing disbelief and shock. Shortly thereafter, they broke into laughter and one of them said: 'The police do not protect us, they kill us!'

This experience, of an oppressive police force that does not serve all of its citizens, is held by many Kenyans, especially those residing in the numerous lower socio-economic strata of the city. During interviews and periods of participant observation conducted by all three authors, the police were primarily portrayed as a corrupt, untrustworthy and despotic group of officers that were feared and abhorred, and other studies confirm this perspective (Omenya & Lubaale 2012; Musoi et al. 2013; International Alert & Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance 2016; Price et al. 2016; Van Stapele 2016; Jones et al. 2017). This reigning experience points towards ongoing tensions with the state discourse on 'people-centred policing' that has steered the police reform project in Kenya.

Police reform in Kenya has been extensive, especially since the establishment of the new Constitution in 2010. In the wake of progressive legislative changes, new command structures and monitoring institutions were founded to improve the behaviour of the police, and an array of other initiatives have been implemented, such as the creation of new training curriculums. In combination, the fundamental aim has been to transform the culture and mindset within the

National Police Service from 'state-centred' towards 'people-centred' policing. Central to this shift has been the implementation – ironically – of various state-led community policing initiatives to (re)establish confidence in the state police and build trust between police officers and citizens. These initiatives often coincide or clash with existing local security provision across the country, ranging from resident associations in the more affluent regions to informalised patrol systems organised by tenant associations in the urban peripheries (Anderson 2002; Heald 2007; Andhoga & Mavole 2017; Ayiera 2017; Colona & Diphoorn 2017).

Yet, despite the various institutional changes that have been implemented towards engendering reform, the levels of police violence and extrajudicial killings in many parts of Nairobi paint a very different picture. In areas such as Mathare, Kawangware, Kibera, Majengo and Eastleigh, everyday life is marked by violence, crime, fear and insecurity, and the police are widely considered to be implicated in all of these phenomena. Embroidered in larger structures of social exclusion and stigmatisation, policing in these parts of the city is very often defined by corruption, criminality and the illegal use of (lethal) force, as the three men from Mathare also made clear. Furthermore, instead of acting as the protectors of people, property and peace, as their formal mandate upholds, it is especially state police officers that are regarded by residents as the prime perpetrators of violence. Their role as perpetrators has been extensively documented by numerous non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (KNCHR 2008; MSJC 2017). Against this background, community policing efforts in these neighbourhoods have not led to better relations between the state police and citizens. Furthermore, these state-led initiatives have either not been implemented, or have been instigated in ways that lead to more police control by merging with local and highly exclusive security groups that serve the interests of the police (and themselves), rather than residents. Alongside these few cases of co-optation, most ghettos of Nairobi are home to different types of community-based security groups that often work outside (and sometimes against) state police structures. Similar to what has been identified elsewhere (Bailey 2006; Hills 2008), it seems that police reform efforts in Kenya have not localised and have not trickled down to police stations as hoped for, especially those in the peripheries of large urban centres such as Nairobi.

Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork conducted by all three authors working on different but complementary research projects on policing in Nairobi, we argue that, despite the numerous reform efforts that have been implemented by the Kenyan state, everyday policing in poor areas in the city reveals an opposing reality on the ground. We explore these contradictions by focusing on local security efforts in Mathare and Majengo, two poor areas in Nairobi. In Majengo, we see how excessive and (mostly) illegal police violence has flipped community policing from a 'people-centred' endeavour to one that brings about more state control. In Mathare, such violence has prompted local security initiatives that have more legitimacy than the state police units that visit these neighbourhoods on a daily basis.

To these ends, in the first section of this chapter we briefly discuss the core institutional changes brought about by police reform in Kenya. In the second section, we analyse the key role that community policing plays in most police reform initiatives across the globe and make apparent how this is also the case in Kenya, while also highlighting how the focus in this context has been a shift from 'state-centred' towards 'people-centred' policing. In the third section, we analyse two cases, Mathare and Majengo, and through these examples show that state-led community policing efforts have only reached a few low-income neighbourhoods, and frequently in ways that are detrimental to the 'people-centred' objective. Furthermore, areas where state-led initiatives are operative are characterised by intense state surveillance and the successful co-optation of local security efforts, particularly in the context of the War on Terror. In most other low-income neighbourhoods in Nairobi, community policing is non-existent and residents rely heavily on local non-state security providers for safety in their own streets, thereby allowing for divergent local security efforts. We end this chapter with some concluding remarks about the need to consistently question the objectives, implementation and impact of state policing efforts in Nairobi.

Transforming the police

Police reform is a broad concept used to refer to the various ways that police forces across the globe are 'transforming' in a myriad of ways. Generally speaking, it refers to 'far-reaching efforts to restructure and re-conceptualise policing and internal security within a society' (Call 1999: 27). Most studies on police reform tend to focus on countries that have gone through some form of political transition, such as South Africa, Sierra Leone, Guatemala and Northern Ireland, to name but a few (Glebbeek 2003; Brogden 2005; Marks 2005; Ellison 2007; Krogstad 2012). Within this attention on transitional societies, the emphasis lies with the democratisation of policing and establishing police forces that respect the rule of law and are transparent and accountable to the public (Hinton & Newburn 2009).

In Kenya, the idea of police reform emerged under the Mwai Kibaki government in 2002. Within a key government plan, namely the Economic Recovery and Wealth Creation Strategy, security and policing were centralised and regarded as crucial to economic growth (Ruteere 2011). Furthermore, a particular programme, the Governance, Justice and Law and Order Sector Reform Programme, was established to transform the security and justice sector, and a task force on reform was created by the state police in 2004. The optimism that accompanied this programme quickly dwindled as the report on police reform never reached the public or resulted in concrete programmes. Furthermore, numerous police operations conducted under the Kibaki regime, most notably the crackdown on Mungiki, a religious ethno-nationalist movement, between 2004 and 2009, made it apparent that police reform was far from under way.¹ In the eyes of many, the state

1 For more information on Mungiki, see Rasmussen (2010).

police remained an instrument for control by and for the political elite (Akech 2005; Hills 2007).²

This perception of the state police was reaffirmed when it became known that police officers had played a crucial role in the widespread violence that occurred after the presidential elections in 2007 and 2008 (referred to as the post-election violence). A Commission of Inquiry into the Post-Election Violence (CIPEV) was set up after these unfortunate events and concluded that 1 133 people died and over 660 000 had been displaced. More specifically, over 400 of these deaths were the direct result of police actions. Furthermore, police officers and other security agents were found culpable of other crimes as well, such as sexual violence.³ The CIPEV report, and many others, reaffirmed the idea that substantial police reform was needed. As a consequence, in 2009 the National Task Force on Police Reforms, chaired by Philip Ransley, was established, and the final outcome of this task force later came to be known as the Ransley report. The task force made more than 200 recommendations, and in 2010 the Police Reforms Implementation Committee was set up to oversee the implementation of these recommendations.

The National Police Service Act of 2011

Most of the recommendations were channelled into the new Constitution of 2010, and this included a vast number of legislative changes. Perhaps the most crucial change was the establishment of the National Police Service (NPS) Act of 2011.⁴ This Act entailed transforming the Police Force into the Police Service, and restructuring the police and its commanding structures. An independent inspector general was instated to command over the entire police service, which now merged two existing forces. In Kenya, state policing emerged under British colonial rule and the corps was divided into two sectors: the Administrative Police and the Kenya Police Force. The latter is regarded as the 'regular police' or the Kenyan police, more generally, and has been engaged with more traditional policing duties such as crime prevention and investigations. The Administrative Police was known as the 'tribal police' and is still widely regarded as a political tool to support provincial administrations and chiefs. For many decades, the Administrative Police largely dealt with the rural areas and informal urban settlements, while the Kenya Police Force was responsible for policing the urban centres (Ruteere 2011).

Historically, the two police units often operated rather distinctively, and the reform intended to change that and unite them under one command. With the NPS Act, the Kenya Police and the Administrative Police are both mandated to assist the public, maintain law and order, and protect the lives of Kenyan citizens. At the

2 For a critique on this perspective of the state police as a force in the service of its regime, see Ruteere (2011).

3 The CIPEV report can be accessed at: www.nation.co.ke/blob/view/-/482958/data/46262/-/attnbm/-/CIPEV+Report.pdf.

4 For a more encompassing overview of the various changes that were part of police reform, see Osse (2016).

same time, the Kenya Police remains responsible for preventing and investigating crime, while the Administrative Police has the primary duty of border security and the protection of government buildings. Yet, despite these unifying efforts, they are still seen as two separate police forces that operate independently from each other. In Mathare, for example, the Administrative Police is primarily involved in conducting raids, while the Kenya Police is seen to be more engaged in 'regular' policing and tackling crime-related activities. Many interlocutors, especially police officers, identified this persistent divide as a major impediment to police reform in Kenya. During interviews they discussed how competition and rivalry between the two forces hamper cooperation and influence police operations. Recent developments suggest that this distinction will soon disappear since, at the end of July 2018, public statements by the NPS suggested that the Administrative Police was facing 'disbandment' and that most of the officers would be merged with the Kenya Police, leaving only the very specialised units to operate separately (People Daily 2018).

Police oversight

Another fundamental change that was crucial to the police reform project was the setting up of two oversight agencies to oversee police conduct: one for internal and the other for external oversight. For internal oversight, the Internal Affairs Unit (IAU) was set up under Section 87 of the NPS Act. The unit is responsible for handling police (mis)conduct internally and, although it is supposed to act as an independent body from the two police services – the Kenya Police and the Administrative Police – its director reports directly to the inspector general. The main goal of the IAU is to receive and investigate complaints against police officers, and these complaints can come from both members of the public as well as police officers themselves.

For external civilian-led oversight, the Independent Policing Oversight Act of 2011 was decreed, and an oversight agency, the Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA), was established as a result of this law. The agency is an independent state institution that has the primary mandate of regulating and monitoring police violations. Specifically, it is required to investigate police misconduct, especially deaths and serious injuries caused by the police; review the functioning of internal disciplinary processes; monitor and investigate policing operations and deployment; and conduct inspections of police premises. The IPOA can be compared to oversight authorities established elsewhere, such as the Independent Police Investigative Directorate in South Africa, the Independent Police Complaints Board in Sierra Leone, and the Independent Office for Police Conduct in the United Kingdom. On this global comparative level, the agency is regarded as highly progressive, having an extensive mandate that exceeds other oversight authorities. In addition to these two oversight institutions, the National Police Service Commission was created to oversee the recruitment, transfer, discipline and remuneration of police officers. Since the inception of the commission, the vetting of police officers has been its core (and most public) activity.

People-centred policing: Police reform from above

In addition to changes of command and the implementation of oversight bodies, a key part of police reform has been the implementation of state-led community policing. Globally, community policing is an appealing and widely employed strategy aimed at enhancing public security and safety and improving relationships between the police and the community. The general rationale is that regular encounters between police officers and citizens will enhance trust and result in the exchange of information and experiences, and in this way reduce crime. The first initiatives that were termed community policing emerged in the 1970s in North America and Britain, and were largely aimed at restoring police–minority relations in particular neighbourhoods (Fielding 2005). Since then, ‘community policing’ has become somewhat of a popular term in the policing domain, acting as both a philosophy and an operational strategy.

Across the globe, we can identify various community policing initiatives and determine that it is difficult to define what community policing actually is (Brogden & Nijhar 2005). Community policing is a ‘chameleon concept’ (Fielding 2005: 460) and is used to refer to particular styles of policing, such as reassurance policing, problem-oriented policing and community-oriented policing (Makin & Marenen 2017); particular activities, such as conducting regular patrols and engaging in consultative meetings; or an expression capturing specific organisational units ranging from neighbourhood watches driven and organised by citizens to community policing forums (CPFs) that are managed by police stations. In fact, some argue that community policing refers to initiatives that are state-led, and that other initiatives, driven by community members, should be seen as forms of citizen-based policing or community-led forms of security provision (Ruteere 2017). Research on community policing on the African continent tends to confirm this divide, reaffirming the empirical distinction between top-down initiatives implemented by states and police forces, and bottom-up undertakings that are initiated and maintained by civilians (Buur 2006; Baker 2008; Cross 2014; Di Nunzio 2014; Kyed 2018).

In Kenya, community policing has also been a major component of the police reform project and driver of the shift to ‘people-centred’ policing. In their widely cited article, Mutuma Ruteere and Marie-Emmanuelle Pommerolle (2003) discuss how the concept of community policing gained momentum in 1999, when the Vera Institute of Justice proposed to support two projects run by civic organisations in Nairobi – the Kenya Human Rights Commission and the Nairobi Central Business District Association. In their analysis of this situation, they discuss how these community policing initiatives did not achieve what they had set out to: they largely ‘fail[ed] to address or deliberately ignore[d] the wider political context’, and did not fully embrace the ‘meaning of democratization in policing matters’ (Ruteere & Pommerolle 2003: 602–603).

Nevertheless, community policing was then picked up by the Kenyan state, and in 2004 to 2005 community policing was formally launched by the National Police Force. Following that, several projects were initiated around the country, but a

nationwide strategy aimed at diminishing crime never materialised. With the new Constitution of 2010 and the NPS Act of 2011, community policing became constitutional: under Section 10(1)(k) of the NPS Act, the inspector general is authorised to provide guidelines on community policing to all police officers and to ensure that there is cooperation between police officers and communities in combating crime. Despite these various efforts, largely propelled by donor support, the nationwide roll out of community policing only happened in 2016.

In the meantime, community policing took a different turn in 2013 after the Westgate Shopping Mall attack in Nairobi. The response this time around was the launch of the countrywide Nyumba Kumi initiative, and the president set up a task force to oversee the implementation of this scheme. Largely imported from a Tanzanian experiment, the system intends to bring security to the level of the 'household' by creating clusters of ten houses (as the name implies in KiSwahili – *nyumba* [house] *kumi* [ten]) comprised of local residents and stakeholders. The idea is that these clusters meet regularly (twice a month), share information with one another and, when needed, provide this information to relevant levels of the national administration. In contrast to the previous community policing programme under Kibaki, Nyumba Kumi does not operate through police structures, but through the colonial system of the provincial administration, i.e. the chiefs and sub-chiefs. It thus acts as a parallel structure to the police, and many police officers shared feelings of resentment towards the scheme, as can be seen from the following quote from a high-ranking male police officer: 'The aim of Nyumba Kumi was to snatch community policing from the police and bring it to the administration to make the chiefs more powerful.'⁵

Over the past few years, Nyumba Kumi has been enforced in some places. Several interlocutors discussed its success, primarily in the rural areas. In the urban centres, it largely exists in lower-income neighbourhoods and poor urban settlements that face high terror-related incidents. However, ultimately, Nyumba Kumi never really took off as was intended and informants cite the lack of police involvement as the main reason for this. In fact, during interviews with police officers, it became apparent that they saw a need to 'reclaim' community policing.

This reclaiming was primarily instigated by the launch of a new and improved community policing programme in August 2016. In May 2016, three key booklets were launched to give direction to police officers: (1) *Community Policing: Inspector General's Guidelines to Police Officers* (National Police Service 2016a); (2) *Community Policing Forums and Committees: Handbook* (National Police Service 2016b); and (3) *Community Policing Information Booklet* (National Police Service 2017). Once handed out across the country, police officers would possess uniform instructions on how to enforce community policing. In this new community policing programme, community policing is defined as 'an approach to policing that recognizes [the] voluntary participation of the local community in the maintenance of peace', and consists of a 'partnership between police and the

5 Interview: male police officer, 20 February 2018.

community in [the] identification of issues of crime and general insecurity' (NPS 2016a: 8). Furthermore, within this collaboration the police 'need to be responsive to the communities and their needs, with its key elements being joint problem identification and problem solving while respecting the different responsibilities the police and the public have in crime prevention and the maintenance of order' (NPS 2016a: 8).

To set up community policing, two main structures are key: the community policing committees and the CPF. The committees act as elected governing entities that administer the activities and exist at all levels: county, sub-county, police station/ward, location and sub-location. The forums refer to the meetings or gatherings of residents 'for the purpose of discussing their security and policing matters' and these 'should be inclusive and represent all the stakeholders of the area' (NPS 2016a: 5). Each police station/ward is responsible for deciding which activities should be undertaken, with the following activities suggested: 'foot patrol, community meetings, door-to-door visits, public education programs, outputs/unit bases, neighbourhood watch programmes, neighbourhood town meetings, and mobile police stations' (NPS 2016b: 17–19). The new community policing programme thus has the objective of bringing all community policing activities, including Nyumba Kumi, under one framework. According to a few of the officers responsible for designing this programme, existing Nyumba Kumi structures are to be incorporated and to operate as committees at the sub-location level.

Although this recent attempt by the NPS endeavours to provide a uniform, coherent and all-encompassing programme for community policing, it is too soon to assess which direction it will take. In the meantime, it remains an ambiguous concept that is interpreted in a multiplicity of ways. Furthermore, the role of the police within these initiatives is often not clear – in the eyes of many police officers, community policing is about gathering information from the public, and rests on a rather traditional Westphalian assumption that policing and crime prevention are the sole responsibility of the state police. It is the state police, as such, that intervenes, monitors and controls the situation, and residents are to act as abiding partners that provide assistance and intelligence.

Combined, these three changes – the NPS Act, the establishment of police oversight bodies, and the redesign and implementation of community policing – have the fundamental objective of transforming the Kenyan state police into a transparent, accountable and democratic law enforcement agency that serves all of its citizens. However, although some Nairobi citizens voice optimistic sentiments, we more frequently hear voices of critique and pessimism. For many, the entire process is regarded as a 'reform-façade' (Osse 2016: 910). This critique is most strongly heard from human rights organisations and members of civil society who have documented the vast number of police killings and violence that characterise the everyday lives of many inhabitants of the urban peripheries of Nairobi. One such organisation is the Mathare Social Justice Centre (MSJC), a grass roots community-based movement operating in Mathare whose members argue that extrajudicial killings continue to rise (MSJC 2017).

‘The police do not protect us!’: Community policing in the urban periphery

In this section, we discuss local security efforts identified in Majengo and Mathare, two areas of Nairobi often referred to as ghettos. The intent here is to show how community policing takes on different forms in both areas, particularly the relationship between state-led community policing projects and local security efforts. In Majengo, we see how both Nyumba Kumi and community policing efforts have been implemented and are effective to some measure, yet they have, due to local circumstances, morphed into something else. In Mathare, community policing efforts are largely absent. Rather, we can identify a range of (informalised) security actors that provide security for the community, but through actions that would not be characterised as ‘community policing’ by either the state police or local residents.

The role of key individuals in community policing in Majengo

Majengo, a neighbourhood east of the city centre, is a sea of rusty brown low-rise structures that lie in the shadow of a magnificent and enormous mosque, which was the epicentre of Al Shabaab activity in Nairobi until recently (Amble & Meleagrou-Hitchens 2014). The neighbourhood emerged as a home to Muslims from the coast during the colonial era, and later people from other ethnic and religious backgrounds also settled there (White 1990). Majengo has always had a reputation for being rife with crime, drugs and sex work, ever since soldiers from the barracks nearby frequented the area during colonial times. Several major terrorist attacks have taken place in this neighbourhood and many people from Majengo have joined Al Shabaab (and in recent years also the Islamic State). At the same time, the area is plagued by police violence and brutal surveillance by intelligence organisations (Villa-Vicencio et al. 2016). Many young people (mostly men) have lost their lives or have disappeared after being taken into custody by state officials.

One of the men we interviewed, Daddy, was a known youth leader in Majengo, despite his age. His years ‘were pushing’, as he said, but he remained a resourceful role model for many youths. He had lost two brothers and many friends to the War on Terror, and had lost count of how many other friends had been killed as crime suspects. For close to two decades, Daddy had put great effort into coming up with economic alternatives to crime, and later also to terrorism, for the many youths in his circle of influence. He walked tall in his part of the neighbourhood, always sporting long, sleeveless baseball shirts and matching shorts reaching over his knees. On the day we spoke to him he wore a Muslim cap to cover his greying hair. With confident strides, he approached a small wooden table-cum-shop where more than ten of his young friends huddled together behind the table, all chewing fervently on the green *muguka* leaves (a strong variety of khat, a stimulant comparable to coca leaves) which they kept in small, rough, brown envelopes. One of them stood up from time to time to sell cigarettes or peanuts to customers, but the rest sat in motionless silence apart from moving their jaws. Daddy disturbed

their peace with his loud entrance. He shook hands, exchanged brash greetings, and shoved two men away to sit down on a brick behind the table.

He began to discuss a dialogue that had occurred two weeks prior as part of a project organised by different community-led and international organisations to reduce police violence in Nairobi ghettos. Daddy said: 'During the dialogue [between youth groups from Majengo], the three from Nyumba Kumi, huh, one of them, he is okay.' Others nodded in agreement. He continued: 'Yesterday I saw him, Mike, late at night, haha, he just stands there.' Daddy pointed to a kiosk across the road. 'You can't believe he has that courage. That street is bad. It is dark, dark. When you put a camera, you can shoot a movie there. And he just stands there, every night!' Daddy explained why in his view Mike was good, especially in comparison to the other Nyumba Kumi members, whom he branded as bad. He raised his voice: 'The others, all others, they sell you to the police. You could not even sit together – they think you are thieves. But Mike knows us, he still has that youthness in him, like me, so he makes sure the others also understand us.'

Majengo is one of the few ghettos in Nairobi where Nyumba Kumi is fully operational. A functioning Nyumba Kumi was largely established due to the high levels of police surveillance in this part of Nairobi, following several terrorist attacks and the discovery of local Al Shabaab recruiting programmes (Gisesa 2012). Alongside the common state security actors (i.e. the Kenya Police and the Administrative Police), this neighbourhood has a constant presence of officers from various other units, most notably the Anti-Terrorist Police Unit, the Directorate of Criminal Investigation, and the National Intelligence Service. These officers can be spotted regularly gathering intelligence and measuring the mood of the neighbourhood. Most stand out to local residents because they generally seem taller, bigger bodied and more formally dressed than other men walking the streets of Majengo. The existence of such an intense and multi-level surveillance infrastructure created a conducive environment for Nyumba Kumi to thrive, as it merely built on an already existing experience of 'being watched'. Most residents know who the 30 (or thereabouts) mostly male Nyumba Kumi members are, what their mandate is and how their work is organised. Each member is responsible for a cluster of ten houses and reports any relevant development at the household level to the chief during monthly meetings.

During an interview with Mike later that day, he explained that most Nyumba Kumi members volunteered to join, and sometimes received compensation fees of around KES 2 000 (\pm USD 20) from the provincial administration. Nyumba Kumi members are also often invited to meetings with NGOs and the government with the promise of per diems. It is common practice among NGOs and government bodies in Kenya to pay participants to attend trainings and seminars. Such per diems are often referred to as transport money, but these payments mostly exceed transport costs by a significant margin. Furthermore, members wield some level of power in their own neighbourhoods due to their close relationship with the chief, which they can manipulate to their own advantage, for instance in the case of land disputes.

Mike could almost always be found hanging out at a carwash he had started with youth who had reformed from crime, roughly 500m from Daddy's hang-out. He explained:

But Nyumba Kumi is not community policing, Nyumba Kumi is *Nyumba Kumi*, it looks at ten houses each. I am the founder of community policing in Majengo. We collaborate with the regular police, not the Administrative Police (AP) like Nyumba Kumi – that is with the chief. We started our work in 1997, as [criminal] reformists. Now the [Kenya] police they collaborate with us ... no not before; before it was just us, but that is also community policing.

Before Mike and his crew began to officially collaborate with the police, they provided security in their neighbourhood as a youth group of reformed criminals. Nevertheless, they only began to refer to their work as 'community policing' from the moment when their activities were incorporated into the state-based initiative. Patrolling the streets at night had always been part of Mike's wide array of youth group activities, which included garbage collection and selling water. Today, however, over 40 members of the Community Policing Committee in Majengo patrol the streets in shifts every night to protect their particular part of the neighbourhood against crime. Most carry a heavy wooden club or a steel pipe and fully charged phones filled with phone credit to call the police, who are on standby in case a problem occurs that cannot be solved by the patrollers. Mike gives an example: 'I cannot fight a thief with a gun. Then I call so and so. The police on duty have called me earlier to say they are on duty. When I call, they rush to where I am to deal with the matter. But most cases we can solve ourselves.'

A year earlier, an interesting incident revealed what 'solve ourselves' entails, and why young men and older youth leaders like Daddy trust Mike in a context where trust is in short supply, especially for Nyumba Kumi and members of the local Community Policing Committee, who are considered 'traitors' (*watiaji* in Sheng) by most young male residents. Mike was sitting on a rickety bench near one of the many projects he had started to help young people and himself earn a sustainable income outside of crime. He was joking around with a woman who sold sexual services from her doorstep. A teenage boy rode by on his bike. This on its own was not uncommon, but the reason why he stood out was that he was wearing a balaclava and a cap in sweltering hot weather. Mike spotted him and swiftly jumped up and raced to stop his bike. He started yelling at the boy in rude language. The boy, visibly shaken, turned around and walked away with his bike. When Mike sat down again he let out a long sigh:

When you want to help they ignore you. That boy may be dead by tonight. A police officer, he is a friend of mine, told me they are looking for him. I know this boy, I know his mother. So, I went to him and said you have to go to [your rural home] and hide until things cool down. I even gave him some money to go. He went, and now he is back, ah trying to hide his face, not to me ... huh.

He is back because he misses the ghetto, his friends, no, that is his death, right there!

Mike was known to use his position and relationships with different police officers to warn local suspects when their names appeared on 'death lists'. He has also financially supported several local crime suspects to go into 'exile' and has negotiated with police on behalf of other suspects to have them arrested instead of killing them. Most importantly, he has been instrumental in the release of many youths arrested without reason during the frequent police raids in the area, and this has solidified his support among large segments of Majengo residents. At the same time, Mike has been able to retain his relevance to the police by regularly providing information on criminal and terrorist activities in Majengo. His ability to engage in such a dangerous balancing act makes him stand out among regular members of community policing committees and Nyumba Kumi. His exceptionality reveals several critical points about community policing in Nairobi.

First, this case shows how formal interventions, very often led by the state, have been adapted to fit local contexts and incorporate existing activities to become relevant in particular settings. Mike and his team had been patrolling the area for nearly a decade before the formal community policing programme was rolled out, and they continued doing so under the new umbrella that requires monthly meetings with the police. Accordingly, the community policing programme formalised their activities and strengthened their connection with the police (and, as such, they enjoyed more powerful back-up than before). The effect, however, was not 'people-centred' policing, but increased control of Majengo by the police through its co-optation of Mike's group. Second, community policing seems to rely heavily on individuals' personal abilities to navigate often contradictory fields of power and legitimacy (for instance between young men and the police). Mike provided information to the police about criminal and terror suspects and simultaneously advocated for them to be arrested instead of killed. His success in doing the latter earned him some respect from young men who were engaged in crime, which made his work a bit safer and easier. Third, Nyumba Kumi and the Community Policing Committee may have overlapping members, indicating a possible conflict of interest and a potential concentration of local power among certain individuals. In Mike's case, this led to slightly improved relationships between the police and residents, even if only in particular circumstances. This does not negate the fact that Mike, and key individuals like him, can at times abuse their power and strategic relationships to develop personal projects and target specific individuals regarded as competitors. This may result in highly exclusive forms of policing that aim to control and target specific people and groups – i.e. those who are deemed a threat or who are considered of less use to crucial individuals such as Mike.

Plural security provision in Mathare

Recent work on plural security provision in Nairobi makes evident the growing number of non-state actors who play a role in enforcing and enhancing safety in poor urban settlements in the city. Though the state's preoccupation may be the 89 'criminal

gangs' recently banned in Kenya (Zadock 2016) – including the Gaza Boys, Taliban and Swat – residents of settlements such as Mathare recognise the many actors and the multifaceted nature of security provision in the area, which, notwithstanding the scale and power of the police nationally, have more weight and a mandate in this area. This is especially so given that the police in the ghettos are seen as primarily embodying violence and extortion, as discussed earlier. Additionally, Mathare is the site of a number of different security provision mechanisms that are adapted to the demographic and social realities of each particular locality in ways that national strategies for community policing are unable to do.

A recent community-based initiative anchored in the MSJC, a local social justice community-based organisation (CBO), has proposed bringing all of the security actors in the area together to institute and operationalise common security standards. Both this local work and a recent survey by Kimari and Jones (2016) recognise that various groups have been identified as providing security in the area, although this is not always dependable, accessible to all or free (see the Majengo section earlier for similar dynamics). These include actors such as security groups (sometimes referred to as vigilante groups), the police, village elders, youth groups, CBOs and NGOs (such as *Médecins Sans Frontières*, which has a clinic in the area), *askaris* (security guards), informants, family and friends. Institutions such as the County of Nairobi (known locally as *Kanjo* and which often collects arbitrary and exorbitant 'taxes' from small businesses), the General Service Unit (GSU) and the Administrative Police, which are, perhaps, formalised security actors, are understood by many locals as also bringing insecurity. In this regard, the GSU and Administrative Police officers are usually called in to enforce brutal martial actions, as in the 2015 raids against illegal alcohol and even 'Operation Kosovo', launched in 2007, ostensibly to rid Mathare of 'criminals'. While there is national reference to Nyumba Kumi, and it inevitably becomes a 'sign post' for the local administration to enact surveillance, our research shows that this strategy has not been operationalised to great effect in this area.

The constellation of security actors listed, principally those located in the community, offers some form of combined, competing and sometimes disconnected security infrastructure against the very real challenges experienced by residents. Furthermore, these actors evidence an understanding of security as encompassing more than just the protection of persons and property, but also including infrastructure (for example, adequate lighting, housing, roads, toilets and ablution blocks), health and job security, among other interconnected factors. While some security challenges are more pronounced at particular moments in time, for example ethnic violence during the lead-up to elections, most of these issues are part of the daily life of residents in Mathare, and intersect in very sinister ways with broader social, political, ecological and economic structural violence. Perhaps, as a consequence, there is even a significant overlap between the groups that manage water stations, toilets or carry out garbage collection, and those that provide security. Without a doubt, these interconnections highlight a more comprehensive understanding of security and community safety in poor urban settlements, one that cannot be resolved by national strategies of and for 'community policing'.

One may ask: How then, given all these actors with different interests, can security work in Mathare? These diverse security providers doubtlessly act on different but connected scales. For example, mothers, youth groups and village elders can all work to deter delinquency and deal with minor misconduct by speaking to those involved in these small breaches. In this regard, one group of women interviewed shared that they 'talk' to the 'boys' they suspect of being involved in small-time criminal activity, and even 'chase them away' from an area if they deem this to be a security solution.

Paid security groups, on the other hand, usually collectives of youth who are hired by residents and patrol the area, may use violence or their connections with the police to deal with what may be seen as more serious security violations, such as robbery, assault or threats to others. At the same time, both the police and local youth security groups are often implicated in gross abuses that favour landlords, business persons or more prosperous tenants in the area. It is these acts that allow residents to question the legitimacy of local paid security, while also recognising the monopolies of power they have in the constituency, especially in view of their ability to mobilise forces to ensure ends that are, primarily, satisfactory to themselves.

Churches, CBOs and NGOs also play a role in security provision. This is usually by mediating between police and/or more powerful local security groups and other residents, seeking to give those involved in crime 'alternative' futures, and documenting the human rights violations often attendant upon formal security operations – usually acts by the Kenya Police.

While common security standards are being pursued in Mathare, there is a clear difference in opinion from ward to ward about the possibilities of state and non-state security actor collaborations – a core objective of formal community policing initiatives. At the same time, our inference is that there is a desire to create a long-standing solution to the security issues in Mathare, and, therefore, that residents will do what it takes to ensure this. Notwithstanding the role that all of these groups are carving out for themselves in terms of security provision, we still see the clear domination of the police and informal security groups – even amidst the many contradictions in their services. What is also obvious is that, though the situation seems severe, all of these groups, as is the case in Majengo, perform functions that offer levels of imperfect 'community policing'. They essentially provide a multi-level safety net that begins at the domestic level and extends to paid local groups, CBOs and, when necessary, the police – in the face of the grave security challenges that characterise this area.

Conclusion

We have tried to demonstrate the ongoing tensions between the state strategy of 'people-centred policing', which has acted as the guiding mantra of police reform in Kenya, and the reality of everyday policing in many urban peripheries of Nairobi. More specifically, the Kenyan state has focused on the creation and implementation

of community policing efforts, yet these have either not been implemented (as in Mathare), or they have co-opted existing local structures that eventually end up operating differently than intended (as in Majengo). To complicate matters further, community policing has also been convoluted by the state's own instigation of a community policing type-programme – Nyumba Kumi. Combined, this has produced a complex constellation of local security provision in the urban peripheries, forcing us to question whether police reform has entailed a shift to people-centred policing and whether the 'people' (whoever they may be) lie at the 'centre' of policing.

In addition to the tremendous impact that such state-based policing efforts have on the lives of Nairobi's residents, we can also identify three other major issues that emerge or are amplified due to the mismatch between reform and everyday policing. The first pertains to oversight: with such a multi-actor security infrastructure, oversight is practically impossible. Although the IPOA has the mandate to monitor all 'policing operations', including community policing, how can such an institution regulate and monitor such a complex phenomenon that takes on different shapes and sizes across localities? As a consequence, groups that may have overextended their mandate, often the case with police and larger security formations such as paid security groups, are rarely held accountable.

Second, we need to question why community policing, or even Nyumba Kumi for that matter, has been operative in some areas but not in others. With specific regard to our case studies, the question arises: Why are neither Nyumba Kumi nor community policing operative in Mathare, while they seem, to some extent, to be imperfectly functional in Majengo? One explanation is related to the threat of terrorism in Majengo, which has led to more financial and political power to incentivise local security providers to become an integral part of the surveillance apparatus there. In Mathare, which lacks the threat of terrorism, the financial and political power needed to incentivise this national strategy is likely not a priority, and, as a result, state-based forms of community policing have not taken off.

We thus see that community policing is prone to becoming part of the state control apparatus rather than a partnership geared towards improving police–citizen relationships. In these instances, mitigation of such 'state-centred' community policing is only achieved, to some extent, through the intervention of key individuals who are able to delicately navigate contradictory interests, i.e. of the state vis-à-vis communities, and stay alive. Notwithstanding their ability to do so, this is far too weak a foundation for people-centred policing to build on, and concentrates too much power in the hands of these community figures. As the title of this chapter suggests, we need to critically question whether policing is for the community, and what initiatives are needed to streamline police reform in such a way that it is beneficial to the people for whom it is intended.

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