Part D: CRIME IN THE SOCIETY

UNDER SCRUTINY: COMMUNITY POLICING AND THE FIGHT AGAINST ALBINO KILLINGS AND ARMED ROBBERIES IN TANZANIA

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Abstract

Community policing has achieved international fame and has been embraced by an epistemic community of researchers and criminologists. Community policing approach has found growing support also among Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) of developing nations. Tanzania is one of the latest developing countries to have embraced community policing. The Tanzania Police Force (TPF) is undergoing an ambitious five-year reform programme aimed at establishing a professional, modernised and community-centered Force that supports maintenance of public safety and security. This article seeks to examine how the community policing approach has thus far been practiced within the context of ongoing reforms of the Police Force. The initial acid test to the TPF's community policing initiatives were the problems of albino killings and armed robberies that gripped the country and dented its hitherto good image as an 'island of peace', when the fourth phase government under President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete took over the reign of power. The approach employed involved analysing progress made versus the situational analysis of crime trends and people's perception on the general performance of the Police Force. The central argument is that even though relative successes have been made particularly in reducing the wave of albino killings and armed robberies, people's confidence in the Police Force remains relatively low. The article reveals that despite a promising start, the TPF is still a long way to bridge the gap between its vision and mission of community policing and the actual practice and behaviour of its men and women in uniforms. Several incidences of invasion of police stations by civilians, and mob justices that have gained prominence across the country, and the low confidence in the police as illustrated in several surveys, point to the general discontent with the country's current policing services. A caution is made that if not addressed, public distrust of the police can prove to be a major stumbling block to the success of the police reform programme. This article notes that the vigorous campaign to popularise community policing among the public is a timely intervention. Nonetheless, ongoing public awareness programmes may not bring the desired outcomes if the community policing philosophy is not ingrained in the police officers themselves, thereby positively changing their way of delivering policing services to the community. The best time to inculcate the philosophy of community policing is at the entry point, i.e.

when police recruits are being trained.

Key words: Scrutiny, community policing, Albino killings, armed robberies.

Introduction

Traditional policing, conventionally defined as an act of "addressing social disorder by using a hierarchical, quasi-military contingent of armed men and women with the permission to use force on behalf of the state" (Gowri, 2003, pp.595-6), has been under the spotlight over the past three decades. Driven by the need to improve policing services and crime prevention strategies; scholars, practitioners and commentators engaged in an edifying debate, which among others led to a multitude of policing approaches being proposed. One of the approaches that has also found growing acceptance by the Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) of developing nations, is 'community policing'. A brief review of the literature on policing and criminology would be enough to inform one that the debate on the notion of community policing is complex and enlightening. In fact, the debate has just received renewed interest as the attractiveness of community policing appears to spread like wildfire and has been embraced by policing organisations in rather unfamiliar grounds like Sub-Saharan Africa.

There are chiefly two debating camps. One camp consists of those who have grappled with the question of what community policing entails. These have done a great deal to either propose or analyse definitions, strategies and programmes associated with the concept of community policing. The other cynical group strives to portray community policing as merely a new variant on an old paradigm of policing. Found in this group are those who also recognise the term 'community policing' as a catch-all phrase embracing a wide range of policing interventions, most of which are hardly indistinguishable from traditional policing. Henceforth, in what follows I do not attempt to arbitrate the divergent views and claims that have been made by various scholars and commentators. I rather appreciate there is no single meaning of the concept and avoid being tied in the definitional fight by settling on its philosophical account about the role and functions of the police in collaboration with the community it purports to serve.

Tanzania is one of the latest countries to have embraced community policing as its new policing philosophy. The article, therefore, seeks to examine how this approach has thus far been practiced within the context of ongoing reforms of the Police Force. Special interest is on the extent to which the community policing approach has been put to use in dealing with the problems of albino killings and armed robberies that gripped the country and dented its image as an 'island of peace', when the fourth phase government under President Kikwete took over the reigns of

power. The central argument is that even though relative successes have been made in reducing the wave of albino killings and organised armed robberies, people's confidence in the Police Force remains low. The article reveals that the Tanzania Police Force (TPF) is still a long way to bridging the gap between its vision and mission of community policing and the actual practice and behaviour of its men and women in uniforms. Several incidences of invasion of police stations by civilians, and mob justices, that have gained prominence across the country, and the low confidence in the police as illustrated in several surveys, point to the general discontent with the country's current policing services. A caution is made that if not addressed, public distrust of the police can prove to be a major stumbling block to the success of the police reform programme.

Organisation of the Article

This article examines community policing within the context of ongoing reforms of the TPF. It specifically presents a case study of the fight against Albino killings and armed robberies in Tanzania. For an easier following of the subject under discussion, the article has been divided into seven sections. Following the introductory part, section two revisits the various meanings attached to the central concept of community policing, as well as its goals and potential benefits. Section three dwells on the TPF and its reform programme with a bias to the community policing cluster. An attempt is made in this section to highlight progress made versus the situational analysis of crime trends and people's perception on the performance of the Police Force. Explanation on the causative factors and scale of the problem of albino killings constitute section four. This is followed by a focus on national and international responses to the sudden rise of horrendous crimes committed against people with albinism.

Section six presents measures taken to curb the wave of armed robberies from the end of 2005 to date. The final section is the conclusion.

Community Policing: Its meaning, Goals and Potential Benefits

No term has received much attention and been susceptible to numerous definitions and interpretations in the literature on criminology and policing in the past three decades than 'community policing'. Much of the fascination about the term that has drawn the attention of several commentators is not only due to the fact that it highlights different policies, principles and strategies in the field of criminology, but also on the fact that there is debate about what the concept really entails. As there is no consensus on a single description of this concept, then it will rightly serve the purpose of this article to revisit some of the definitions of community policing whilst desisting to be drowned in the definitional debate.

Seagrave (1996) has provided a useful summary of definitions and interpretations of community policing as they obtain in the academic literature. They are mainly in five categories, namely first, those projecting community policing as a meaningless rhetorical term including any initiative and one that evokes metaphors. Second, definitions that present community policing as a philosophy centred on the police and community working in partnership to influence the management and delivery of police services. Third category includes more focused interpretations that see community policing in operational terms as a series of programmes featuring increased contacts between the police and the community. These include foot patrols, community consultative groups, neighbourhood watch and crime prevention initiatives. Fourth, definitions that portray community policing as a clandestine approach to penetrate communities to acquire information, and thus eventually turning up to be a mechanism for social control. Fifth, imprecise category which recognises the term as a catch-all amorphous concept embracing a wide range of policing strategies, most of which are indistinguishable from traditional policing, leaving the term open to numerous definitions, and ultimately rendering it as a meaningless expression.

From the above categories, the philosophical definition of community policing is the one most commonly discussed in the academic literature over the past two decades (Seagrave, 1996). In this conceptualisation, community policing not only emphasises on a partnership between the police and the community to solve community problems, but also interactions with other agencies with responsibilities for preventing and reducing crime. While the key feature of community policing remains to be the interaction between the police and communities, ideally it is the quality of this interaction that matters most. Community policing initiative, in this sense, ought to be systematically linked not merely to crime prevention but also community development. Henceforth, besides crime control other goals of community policing relate to improving the quality of life, reducing the level of social disorder and the fear of crime (Roh and Oliver, 2005). It is unfortunate that in most countries where it has been introduced positive results are hard to find and if any are largely adverse, mainly because community policing practices are not being cognizant of local community conditions or state of local police services (Brogden and Nijhar, 2005; Somerville, 2009).

As rightly remarked by Somerville (2009), “Where police-community partnerships exist, they cannot be said of equals because it is the police who make all the real decisions” (p. 266). Essentially, community policing builds on the idea that crime can effectively be addressed via a working partnership between members of the law enforcement agencies and residents to solve community problems. This is the reason Palmiotto et. al

(2000) proposed that for successful implementation of community-oriented policing (COP) activities, police officers need to be exposed to training programmes that support its philosophy. Training programmes ought to go beyond preparing a police officer to perform police work mechanically. It also has to enable him to understand his community, the police role and the criminal justice system (Palmiotto et. al, 2000). As police academies are important initial arenas of occupational socialisation for police recruits, it is justifiable for Palmiotto et. al. to advocate for reconstruction of police training models to support the philosophical outlook of community policing, which will eventually become the police department's culture and operating philosophy in the delivery of police services to the community.

However, review of the police training programme is just one side of the coin because success in curbing crimes cannot be adequately brought about by reform of the police force on its own. Indeed, "What must happen simultaneously are processes that raise the quality of the community's self-policing and processes that transform policing organisations into networks of self-regulating teams. The prospects for such a development depend critically on strategic political decisions about the development and resourcing of such communities," (Somerville, 2009, p. 269). In summary, this is the reason for believing that community policing ideally "derives its political support from the community and its legitimacy from the law" (Wiatrowoski and Vardalis, 1994, p. 47).

In general, community policing has achieved international fame and been embraced by an epistemic community of police researchers and criminologists. The philosophy of community policing has been adapted by established democracies of the West, for instance within the European Union whose police experts in 2003 agreed that it should form the basis of the organisational development of its Member States' police bodies (CEU, 2003). The notion of community policing has also received interest from countries deemed to maintain centralised police systems or with authoritarian governments like China (Paun, 2008). In parts of the developing democracies, like in Sub-Saharan Africa, community policing has also been viewed as a way of instituting democratic policing. To Paun (2008), "The idea of a police run by the community instead of a police separate from the community resembles the democratic idea of a state run by the society instead of a state separate from society" (p. 36).

Likewise to Bayley (2001), the Police can significantly contribute to the development of democracy (herein referred to as 'democratising effect' of the police) in a given society if their actions are in tandem with the following four norms: First, the police must give top operational priority to servicing the needs of individual citizens and private groups. Second, the police must be accountable to the law rather than to the government. Third, the police must protect human rights, especially those that are required for the sort of unfettered political activity that is the hallmark of democracy. And

fourth, they should be transparent in their activities.

As can be observed from the above list, the key concepts are *responsiveness, accountability, protection and transparency*. These are considered to be the hallmarks of democratic policing. In the first place, a responsive, service-oriented policing is a boon for a government intent on instituting genuine democratic reforms in a country. This assertion simply stems from the fact that a Police Force that adequately responds to the needs of the individual citizens "enhances the legitimacy of government by demonstrating daily and practically that the authority of the state will be used in the interests of the people" (Bayley, 2001, p. 17). The issue of accountability in this case relates to the extent to which police execution of its statutory functions is governed by the rule of law rather than the 'rule of men'.

To put it in another way, to what extent does the Police Force not act in accordance with the whims of politicians and people entrusted with public authority? I concur with those who hold the view that the Police Force is a government agency and as such must account to the government. Nonetheless, it cannot be taken as a sweeping statement that would authorise the police to heed indiscreetly to the directives of the regime in power no matter how arbitrary they may turn out to be. Indeed, "a democratic Police Force is accountable to the law, and not a law unto itself"(Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, 2006, p. 26). Protection of civil and political rights like freedom of speech, association, and movement; freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention, and exile and other rights entrenched in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as set forth in articles 2-21 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, is also important for the sustenance of a democratisation process. Backtracking in the efforts to protect and promote these rights would constitute scuttling the democratisation process itself.

There is no gainsaying that the norms of *responsiveness, accountability* and *protection* of human rights will only be regarded as bringing the desired outcomes as far as the operations of the Police Force are concerned if they are complemented by the *transparency* norm. Just by applying simple logic, how well are we going to know that our Police Force is doing well on aspects of responsiveness, accountability and protection if its work is not open to regular scrutiny? This is to suggest that achievement in fulfilling the three norms is facilitated by the forth norm: transparency. Nevertheless, I am not at all implying that there is a hierarchy of these four norms. The point I am striving to make is that these norms ought to be adhered to as a complete package. That is to say, there is no benefit of implementing them in a piecemeal fashion. Other scholars of criminal justice have added a fifth norm of 'professionalism' to the above list. However, an expanded conceptualisation of the accountability norm would have incorporated the aspect of professional conduct by the police. Henceforth, this paper assumes that adherence to a strong professional code of ethics and high

standards of conduct would be treated as an integral element of police accountability.

The Tanzania Police Force and Community Policing

The centrality of greater community participation in policing is at the core of the vision and mission of community policing of the TPF. The vision of community policing according to the TPF (n.d.) is to "enable communities and other stakeholders have direct involvement in setting day to day local police priorities in exchange for their cooperation and participation in efforts to prevent and reduce crimes and the fear of crimes in the communities". It can be observed here that the vision envisages a give-and-take approach whereby the police force opens its doors to communities and other stakeholders to have a direct stake in policing with the expectation that their cooperation would be forthcoming. Enlisting the cooperation of communities and other stakeholders is, however, not automatic as envisioned. Sturdy efforts have to be employed to realise the vision. As such the TPF mission of community policing is to "establish an active, strong and functional partnership between the police, community and other stakeholders through which crime, police service delivery and police community relations can jointly be analysed and appropriate solutions designed and implemented" (n.d.). The foregoing vision and mission statements of community policing resonate well with the overall vision of the TPF Reform Programme (2009/10-2013/14), which is to have a *professional, modernised and community-centered Force* that supports maintenance of public safety and security in the country, and supported by the mission of establishing *a more dispersed, visible, accessible, and service-oriented Police Force, which interacts freely and gently with its community* in protection of both life and property of all the people, all the time (Emphasis mine).

Community policing is, therefore, one of the three major interlinked clusters of the ongoing reform programme of the TPF. The other clusters are professionalism and modernisation. According to the Tanzania Police Force, *Professionalism* in the context of the ongoing reforms refers to enhanced knowledge, skills and expertise in performing police functions. The goal is to create a professional workforce that will act as a vehicle in the improvement of police service delivery to the public. Modernisation of the Police Force entails policing infrastructure facilities such as office and staff accommodation, operational and transport equipment, and use of information communication technology.

It is also the belief of those in the high command structure of the country's Police Force that community policing is closely linked to democracy. The Inspector General of Police, Said Mwema, argues that "in a democratic society, law enforcement is a shared responsibility between law enforcement organs and the community" (Mwema, 2008, p. 9). While Tanzania is a long

way from being labeled a 'democratic' country, the foregoing remarks point to the fact that even police practitioners, at least in theory, believe that policing does not need to be disconnected from the overall democratic dispensation. The core objective of community policing within the TPF is to establish a strong partnership between the police and community with the aim of preventing and reducing crime as well as fear of crime in the society. At the same time, increased attention is on changing police behaviour in order to keep the Police Force closer to the public as reiterated by Mwema (2008): "What we are envisaging is a change of attitude of police officers towards their duties. The Police Force will be oriented towards meeting the needs of civilians and institutions of democratic society for policing services of a high standard guided by the principles of integrity and respect for human rights, non-discrimination, impartiality and fairness" (p. 9).

As alluded to earlier, the TPF is undergoing a relatively ambitious five-year reform programme. We should be cautioned in this instance that however successful any reform agenda within the Police Force turns out to be, it would not automatically determine democratic growth. It means the causal relationship between police reform, as a democratising agent, and democratic government is not straightforward. It is worth making further inference to the enriching work by Bayley (2001):

> It should not be presumed that enacting these reforms will lead inevitably to political democracy. Police actions, however "democratic," are not determinative of democratic growth. Indeed, the causal connection runs strongly in the other direction: Democratic government is more important for police reform than police reform is for democratic government. Police reform is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for democratic government. The police tail cannot wag the government dog (p. 16).

Rightly put, the police tail cannot *squirm* or *shake* the government dog! Police reform on its own cannot transform an undemocratic government into a democratic one. Pointedly, in Bayley's terms, it is not even a case of it-takes-two-to-tango. Police reform must be part of other broad-based national policies and sector-wide reforms. We believe this philosophy has underlined the current police reform programme which is sector-specific but carried along with other broad-based national policies and programmes. These include National Development Vision 2025; Zanzibar Development Vision 2020; National Poverty Eradication Strategy and Poverty Reduction Strategy; the Public Service Reform Programme; Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP); Public Financial Management Reform Programme (PFMRP); National Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan; Legal Sector Reform Programme (LSRP) and Business Environment Strengthening (BEST).

Even though preparations for reforms of the Police Force began in earnest in the 2006-2007 period, measures involving the public with a view to cope with rising policing challenges amid limited human and physical resources can be traced as far back as 1991. In this year, numerous *Police Outposts* were established thanks to the collaboration of the government and the public. This idea of Police Outposts is similar to the Japanese *Kobans*, which among other things, seeks to reduce the distance between the police and the general public and at the same time allow close collaboration between them in preventing and fighting crime. Japanese Kobans are very small police stations often having an appearance of a kiosk with an open or glass door and few police officers working inside (Roberg et al. 2000; Paun, 2007). A few police officers are posted to these relatively small Police Stations to provide normal police services but go beyond the Kobans set up, in that the officers are also expected to offer guidance and professional leadership to the local militia groups, which emerged spontaneously as a reaction to rising crime (Mwakamboja, 2008). Moreover, members of the public are urged to contribute voluntarily towards the construction of these Police Outposts within their localities.

At the time of introducing the idea of Police Outposts, there was generally positive reaction by the public to the request by national leaders to contribute in building them, a move which went further to pave way for active participation of local communities in overcoming policing challenges. The mood was so positive that in some of these Police Outposts residents participated in night patrols. However, the TPF has been forced to review the idea of Police Outposts as it is struggling to find adequate manpower and basic working and living facilities, services and equipment for the proper functioning of each new Outpost built. It ought to be noted that the TPF faces a massive shortage of manpower as one Police officer serves 1,300 civilians whilst the standard international ratio is one Police officer for 450 people (1:450). For Kenya, one Police Officer serves 821 people (1:821) (Masha, 2009). Efforts are already underway to do away with the current proliferation of Police Outposts. The new idea is to set up fully-fledged Police Stations and between 8 and 10 living quarters for Police officers for each Ward (Masha, 2010). The Police Force has already completed architectural drawings for the same.

Another measure was the establishment of a Crime Stoppers Unit within the police force in 1995. This was a scheme operated by the police through telephones. People are encouraged to pass on information about crimes which have been committed or about to happen without disclosing their identities. In return, cash prizes are offered to those who pass on valuable information leading to prevention of the crime or apprehension of culprits. This measure had limited impact initially as civilians were reluctant to volunteer information on criminals for fear of retribution in the event their

names were revealed to rogues by some corrupt elements within the police force. All the same, despite these attempts of involving the public more in fighting crime, crime rates continued to surge. More specifically armed crime levels escalated in the period before and immediately after the 2005 general elections. The rising crime trends coincided with a drop in public trust and confidence of the Police Force (Mwema, 2008).

The Police Force's immediate response to set up a Task Force, instituted by the new Inspector of Police in January 2006 managed to temporarily bring the situation under control and hence restored some confidence among the general public. This was reflected in a Research for Education on Democracy (REDET) Poll conducted in May 2006. REDET is a programme under the Department of Political Science and Public Administration (DPSPA) at the University of Dar es Salaam aimed at contributing to the democratisation process through research, documentation and education interventions. The REDET Poll, among other issues, aimed to gather people's perceptions concerning how the government of the newly-elected President Kikwete had dealt with several important issues during its first 100 days in office. Questions asked included those on banditry, famine disaster, electricity problem, the police force, corruption, employment, poverty and HIV/Aids. The issue that pleased people most was about dealing with banditry. Eighty (80) per cent of 1, 350 interviewees were of the view that the government of President Kikwete dealt with banditry 'well'. 59.5% among them said that this issue has been dealt with 'very well' and 20% said that it has been dealt with 'averagely'. It is only 2.9% of the interviewees who said that it had been 'badly dealt' with (REDET, 2006).

In comparative terms as shown in table 1 (below), constituting relevant findings of surveys conducted by REDET, people's opinion on the performance of the Police Force has more or less remained the same since 2006. In three years (2006, 2007 and 2009) about 62 percent (i.e. the 'very satisfied' and 'satisfied' responses combined) of respondents have expressed that they are impressed with the performance of the Police Force. On the other side, the group of people who are dissatisfied with the performance of the Police Force has also remained the same, sticking at 31%. However, it has to be noted that the number of respondents who are very satisfied with the work of the police has disappointingly been below 30%. In fact, the percentage of respondents who are very satisfied with police work slightly slumped by 2% since 2006 when preparations for the police reform programme were presumed to have started.

Table 1: People's Opinion on Police Force Performance in 2006, 2007 & 2009

Institution	Poll Year	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Don't Know	Total
Police	2006	26.2% (339)	36.4% (470)	31.1% (402)	6.3% (81)	100% (1292)
	2007	23.8 (307)	38.3 (495)	30.9 (399)	7.0 (91)	100 (1292)
	2009	24.3 (314)	38.2 (493)	30.5 (394)	7.0 (91)	100 (1292)

Source: REDET Opinion Polls no. 12, 14 and 15.

While public confidence in the Police Force has remained at a lowly 31 percent, criminal offences have continually been on the rise in the same period (2006-2009). Official figures show that about 509,462 crimes were committed in 2007 compared to 428,629 crimes in 2006, indicating an 18.9 percent increase. As shown in table 2 below, there was a slight decrease, of less than one percent (506,030 crimes), in 2008, but figures rose again in 2009 with 567,288 crimes reported, which is an increase of 12.1 percent. In 2010 there was a drop in crime of a mere 4 percent. This discouraging trend in crime may serve as a pointer to in-depth difficulties facing the Police Force in implementing the reform programme within its ranks in general, and community policing in particular. In spite of a vigorous media campaign to popularise community policing among the general public, confidence in the police is relatively low signifying that the Police Force has to be more concerned with the performance of its officers. Indeed, there are many dynamics at work when it comes to policing and the desired outcomes in crime prevention.

Table 2: Crime rates 2006-2010

YEAR	NO. OF CRIMES	DIFFERENCE	%
2006	428,629		
2007	509,462	80,833 more	18.9
2008	506,030	3, 432 less	0.7
2009	567,288	61, 258 more	12.1
2010	543,358	23,930 less	4.2

Source: Budget Speeches by the then Minister of Home Affairs to the

Tanzania Union Parliament between the financial years 2006/07 and 2008/09.

As articulated by Oliver and Bartgis (1998), there are influences that come from outside the Police Force (exogenous factors) as well as factors that are endogenous to the Police, those they can control or exert some influence over. Admittedly, the available police training facilities within the TPF are highly inadequate and ill-equipped and the Police officers are poorly remunerated and as claimed by the Tanzania Inspector General of Police, all these can compromise human resource development within the Police Force leading to poor delivery of police services (Mwema, 2008). While the TPF may have limited control over these constraints, it has to focus and work hard on factors endogenous to the police that can influence changes in police behaviour. Since community policing entails a change in the prevailing police philosophy, one of the most important internal influencing factor is the "adoption of a community-orientation, rather than a law enforcement mentality" (Oliver and Bartgis, 1998, p. 502). It is a mentality that calls for a change in policing values within the police department/organisation that would make police officers witness, before they can believe, any organisational change in support of community policing (Oliver and Bartgis, 1998).

It has long been recognised that: "It is police behaviour that will determine if community policing will see implementation and whether or not it will be successful. Although community policing is a collaborative effort between the police and the community, line officers have the capability of ignoring, circumventing, or sabotaging the desires of both the police and the community" (Oliver and Bartgis, 1998, p.503). Several incidents of invasion of police stations by the public in mid-2009, which alerted the Tanzanian President, were very much indicative of the negative outlook the people had of police behavior, especially when handling crime suspects. President Kikwete challenged the Police Force to make an internal inquest as to why some members of the public would storm police stations, beat up police forces and destroy police property, and in grievous cases set buildings ablaze. The President remarked:

> "….niwaombe muitafakari hali ya sasa na hasa matukio ya baadhi ya watu kuvamia vituo vya Polisi, kushambulia askari na kuharibu majengo. Je inaashiria nini kwa maana ya imani ya wananchi hao kwa jeshi lao. Je ni wahuni tu watu hao? Je ni watu waliochochewa na watu wakorofi?...." [May I ask you to review the current situation and in particular incidents of invasion of police stations by some people, attacking police officers and destroying buildings. What does it entail in terms of the people's confidence in their Police Force? Are they just hooligans? Have they been incited by some

firebrands?- *unofficial translation*] (Kikwete, July 23, 2009).

In the next section the article focuses on the problem of albino killings in Tanzania that shocked the world and presented one of the earliest acid tests to the TPF's recently endorsed community policing approach.

The Prevalence of Albino Killings

It is a well-established fact that 'albinism' or medically known as hypopigmentary disorder is a genetic disease. The disease has two main forms: oculocutaneous albinism and ocular albinism. The former is the most common form whose symptoms appear on the skin, eyes, and hair, while the latter accounts for 10 to 15 per cent of albinism cases whereby those affected lack pigmentation in the irises and experience vision problems (Albinism Statistics, 2010, March 1). Tanzania happens to be host to the largest population of people living with albinism, commonly known as 'albinos'. There are currently no official government statistics on the population of albinos in Tanzania. However, available estimates range between 150,000 (BBC, April 3, 2008; *The Telegraph*, May 6, 2010) and 170,000 (Chang et. al. October 2, 2009, *Habari Leo*, May 1, 2010). Surprisingly, only 8,000 are registered with the Tanzania Albino Society (TAS). It is in this country where heinous killings of albinos produced headlines in the local and international media in the past four years. The wave of albino killings started in 2006 and peaked in 2008. The Police Force arrested 47 people suspected of being involved in albino killings between 2007 and October 2008, a period in which 28 murders of albinos took place (Kikwete, 2008, October 19). By April 2009, a total of 38 albinos had been killed on superstitious grounds (Pinda, 2009, April 18). Seventeen of the 47 suspects were arrested in Mwanza, a region leading in butchering of people with albinism.

Poverty and prejudice are among the factors deemed to spur the slaying of albinos. However, the most prominent causative factors have been superstition and ignorance. Some of those involved in committing these horrifying acts to albinos believe that albino organs possess mystical powers that can make them rich within the shortest time possible. The stigma associated with albinism, based on superstition is exploited by witchdoctors, their helpers and some middlemen. They use prized albino parts to concoct wealth-enhancing charms. The starting price for albino blood, hair, limbs and palms is said to be at $ 2,000 (Ntetema, 2008, July 24).

In the first half of the past decade, the stigma associated with albinism was partly fuelled by myths that an HIV-infected man may be cured by sleeping with an albino woman and thus becoming victims of rape (Machipisa, 2003, January 4). To date, albinos have been subjected to persecutions, killings and dismemberment. There were reports of some fishermen who had woven

albino hairs in their fishing nets sparked by the belief that they would obtain more fish catch (Gettleman, 2008, June 8). In general the killings have caused apprehension among the surviving albino community. Even though most of these shameful crimes occurred in Tanzania, in the early 2000 demand for human organs, for instance human skin, gathered momentum in southern African countries, namely Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and South Africa where it attracted between 168,000 Tanzania shillings (approximately US$ 134.4) and 672,000 T.shs. (approximately US$ 537.6) at the time (Ground Report, 2008, May 12).

National and International Responses to Albino Killings

The wave of albino killings that gripped the country in the second half of the 2000s shocked the international community and was an embarrassment to the Tanzanian government. The prevalence of these despicable crimes on albinos perpetuated by organised gangs hired by witch-doctors attracted international attention. The European Parliament and UNICEF strongly condemned the killings and offered their support to the Tanzanian government in its efforts to crackdown on perpetrators (European Parliament, 2008; Chang et. al, October, 2009). The government on its part repeatedly described albino murders as disgraceful to the country and conceded that they have actually dented its image (Ground Report, 2008, May 12). Internally, there was growing discontentment among Members of Parliament (MPs) with government's response to the albino killings. While some MPs expressed their support to human rights activists, who demonstrated in Dar es Salaam at the peak of the killings in 2008, opposition MPs were lining up to table a motion calling for the Prime Minister to 'take responsibility' amid his earlier remarks that albino killers should also be killed.

A series of measures were undertaken to bring to a standstill the wave of albino killings and which were also geared to restore the country's image before the international community. The President ordered a crackdown on witch-doctors linked to albino killings in his end of the year address on December 31, 2007, and May 4 was declared as the National Albino Day. These measures were immediately followed by revoking of licenses of all traditional healers in January 2009. Some traditional healers were arrested for defying the ban. The ban has since been lifted by the government amid criticism from the traditional healers association (*BBC News*, 2009, February 2). The President also made two important decisions. First, President Kikwete nominated Ms Al-Shymaa Kwa-Geer, as the first albino Member of Parliament, a move commended by the European Parliament. He announced a national-wide secret 'referendum' (exercise) asking the public to name those behind albino killings. The exercise was carried in zonal phases and commenced with the Lake Zone regions of Mwanza, Kagera, Mara and Shinyanga where 44 out of the 45 albino murders took place (*BBC News*, March 2, 2009). The TPF which managed the exercise

has not yet released results of the secret 'referendum' by the time of writing this paper.

Statistics show that about 86 arrests were made between July 2008 and July 2009 (Masha, 2009). Four people were sentenced to death for the killing of a 50-year old albino in Shinyanga region. The slow pace of dealing with court cases involving suspects of albino killings has concerned an international non-governmental organisation, *Under the Same Sun,* that promotes the rights of the albino community. The NGO noted that more than 60 cases have been reported but only few have led to convictions, which comparatively is in sharp contrast to the situation in Burundi where 12 of 14 cases led to convictions between 2008 and 2009 (*The Telegraph*, May 6, 2010). The NGO's disappointment also came following the not-guilty ruling by the Tanzania Appeal Court, Tabora zone, as the police could not submit evidence adequate enough to convict three suspects of albino killings in Tabora region (Bulizya, November 25, 2010).

As rightly observed by the *Under the Same Sun* NGO, some of the arrests have led to convictions amid the slow pace in concluding court cases. In September 2009, the High Court of Tanzania, sitting in Shinyanga region specifically to preside over cases involving albino killings convicted and sentenced to death Masumbuko Madata (42), Emmanuale Masangwa (28) and Charles Masangwa (42). The trio were found guilty of conspiring and killing an albino boy, Matatizo Dunia (13), on December 1, 2008 at Bunyihuna village in Bukombe District, Shinyanga region, as per Section 16 of Criminal Act. No. 196 (*The Guardian*, September 24, 2009). In July, 2010 High Court Judge Projest Rugazia sentenced to death by hanging one Kazimili Mashauri, 50, for killing and drinking the blood of a five-year old albino girl, Mariam Emmanuel. The murder of the albino girl occurred on January 21, 2008 in Nyangh'olongo Village, Misungwi District in Mwanza Region (Chilongola, August 5, 2010)[5]. These cases point to the fact that it has taken quiet a long time for the justice system to conclude albino murder trials. As can be noted the above murders took place in 2008 and convictions came in 2009 and 2010 respectively. This may be partly due to the difficulty facing prosecutors to table strong evidence to prove charges leveled against the accused.

The implementation of community policing by the TPF got to a fine start as the Police successfully enlisted the cooperation of the community to curb albino killings. This was through a vigorous media campaign mostly in the electronic media.

Through the support and collaboration of different government ministries and departments, the campaign focused on deploring atrocities committed

5 The convict had since lodged an application to the Court of Appeal of Tanzania challenging the High Court verdict.

against people with albinism while emphasing the need for the general public to name witchdoctors and other culprits who instigate such crimes.

The government was quick to acknowledge that the clamp down and eventual arrests of suspects associated with this menace was largely due to cooperation of the public. The public has also been involved in the ongoing exercise undertaken by the TPF, of preparing the lists of all albinos and where they live within the country. The TPF has been undertaking these initiatives in close collaboration with the defence and security councils at regional and district levels.

It has to be noted, however, that the ordeals which the albino community faces are very poorly exposed. It is, indeed, an uphill task for the Police Force which is relatively handicapped in terms of personnel and modern operational equipment to unearth and prevent crimes of this nature. Public awareness on the problem of albino killings is high but that does not mean it has been eliminated altogether. In 2010 a much publicised arrest of a Kenyan, Nathan Mutei, in Mwanza, following a remarkable sting operation by police officers, resulted in a 17-year jail sentence and a $50,000 fine for the culprit handed by the Mwanza Resident Magistrate, Angelus Rumisha (*BBC News*, 2010, August 18). The nabbing of Mutei who pleaded guilty to the charge of albino (human) trafficking is a credit to the Police Force and informers, and thus rationalising the much-touted police-community partnership, but it also serves as a reminder that there is no room for complacency thus far.

Curbing the Wave of Armed Robberies

As mentioned earlier, community policing forms one of the main pillars of the ongoing police reform programme. The sudden surge in armed robberies immediately after the Kikwete government took office in December 2005 provided yet another challenging test for the community policing approach, which had just received an official endorsement from the top police leadership. Armed robberies were so rampant in the largest commercial city of Dar es Salaam and other urban areas of Mwanza, Arusha, Kilimanjaro, among others. It reached a point whereby a day could not pass without hearing reports of incidents of armed robberies. Dar es Salaam City's image as a 'habour of peace' (Bandari ya Salama) was in jeopardy due to the frequent attacks by armed gangs. The situation at the time pointed to the fact that crime syndicates constitute the best illustration of the multiplicity and inter-penetration of repertoires of violence.

Following the sudden wave of armed robberies that coincided with country's political transition after the conclusion of the third multiparty general elections in 2005, the Police Force undertook a series of measures to address the situation. First, a Special Task Force was set up and appropriately equipped to confront armed robbers. Members of the Special Task Force were seen publicly patrolling the streets of the major cities,

particularly Dar es Salaam, on motorbikes for easy movement during rush hours.

Fugitives of bank heists had often used motorbikes to beat the traffic and disappear into the sprawling and remote dwellings of the Dar es Salaam city[6].

Following implementation of this measure there was more police presence on the streets especially at the junctions of major highways of the urban centres of Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Arusha and Kilimanjaro.

Second, the Police Force decided to fast-track implementation of its newly-adopted community policing approach whose core objective was to forge a working police-community partnership in order to prevent and reduce crime as well as the fear of crime. According to the TPF's 2010 report, this has been done through a series of measures, namely; a) sensitisation of the public on community policing initiatives through the mass media i.e. televisions, radios, and all the major local papers; b) security awareness programmes on crime detection, prevention and solving have been extended to religious leaders; c) creation of neighborhood security network programmes in communities, with a total of 2,832 neighborhood watch groups established all over the country since the year 2005; d) revival of Ward/Shehia[7] Safety and Security Committees (Kamati za Ulinzi na Usalama za Kata-KUU Kata) to work hand in hand with neighborhood security groups in their respective localities, and d) initiating partnership with the business community with the aim of soliciting their participation and support in fighting crime, especially in areas of mutual concern (TPF, 2010, pp. 37-38; Mwema, 2008, p. 15; Nahodha, 2011, p.2).

The foregoing initiative to involve stakeholders from the private sector has been possible through the establishment of what is known as Police-Private

Partnership Forum (3P-F). It is through this Partnership Forum whereby the business community has responded to inadequacies in policing equipment by offering various operational tools police officers need in executing their

6 Some of the major bank heists which alarmed Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) took place in the first half of 2006. They include the 7th January, 2006 armed robbery at the National Bank of Commerce (NBC-T) LTD, University of Dar es Salaam branch, whereby bandits made away with Tshs. 8,762,915 (8 million shillings). Another robbery took place on 2nd February, 2006 when about ten armed individuals stormed the NBC at its Ubungo branch and disappeared with Tshs. 123,000,000, 16,128 US $, and 50 euros. The Standard Chartered Bank, at its Life House branch was another target of a bank heist. This time armed robbers snatched cash worth 300 million shillings from a customer who was about to make a deposit at the bank. The bank robbery that shook Dar es Salaam residents occurred on 20th April at the busy junction of the Morogoro, Sam Nujoma and Nelson Mandela highways. Robbers, who were armed with heavy war weaponry, attacked a convoy of the National Microfinance Bank (NMB) cars belonging to its Bank House branch. The convoy was transiting cash amounting to Tshs. 1 billion from the NMB Bank House Dar es Salaam to NMB Wami, Morogoro branch. In this incident, a police officer and one NMB staff lost their lives. The police managed to recover Tshs. 850 out of the 1 billion shillings. See Mwapachu, H. B. (2006), Hotuba ya Waziri waUsalama wa Raia, Akiwasilisha Bungeni Makadirio ya Mapato na Matumizi ya Fedha kwa Mwaka 2006/07.Retrieved June 30, 2011, from http://www.moha.go.tz/index.php .

7 A Shehia is the lowest government administrative structure at the community level in Zanzibar.

tasks, such as those required for communication, transportation and

investigation. On its part, the Police Force has been conducting workshops and seminars on community policing initiatives to the security personnel of private companies, and thus maximising cooperation between the LEAs and the business community without compromising the formers' delivery of policing services. The impact of Task Force-led operations and community policing initiatives, according to the TPF, has been a reduction in armed robberies and carjacking by 10.6% as compared to the situation in 2009 (TPF, 2010, p. 52).

Notwithstanding these achievements, the Police Force still faces daunting internal and external challenges. Internally, despite the general public support in fighting crimes being forthcoming, as pointed out earlier, people's confidence in the police is still shaky. I hasten to note here that the public are wary of incidences of corruption within the Police Force. A total of 1,244 people died as victims of mob justice in the last ten years (*Daily News*, 2011, June 17). Majority of those incidences of mob justices committed are due to lack of trust in the law enforcers in handling crime suspects than anger of the general public. According to a survey conducted by the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC), a Tanzanian NGO, in 2010, factors like ignorance of the law, lack of police stations and lack of trust in the police force attributed to this form of injustice. Importantly, "All the incidents were carried out by angry citizens who felt the Police Force was not doing enough to enforce the law" (James, June 1, 92011).

There is more evidence indicating that corruption is still a serious concern within the TPF. For instance, in the 2008/2009 period, 15 policemen were discharged due to corruption (Masha, 2009). According to the US Department of State Human Rights Report, in 2010 about 350 police officers were relieved of their duties and five others were demoted in Mainland Tanzania alone on disciplinary grounds (US Embassy Dar es Salaam, 2011, April). A Special Department has been set up to deal with the general public complaints against law enforcement agencies under the auspices of the Ministry of Home Affairs. In the 2009/2010 Financial Year, this Department received 125 complaints, most of which were directed at the Police Force itself (Masha, February 22, 2010). Those who sought redress following those complaints cited unethical police behaviour specifically related to incidences of fabricating offences or cases and deliberate delays in instituting investigations on reported criminal offences (Masha, 2009). As urged by the Tanzania Prime Minister, the Police have to clean their act first before they look outside the Force for excuses (Pinda, 2009). The message is clear here: the Police Force ought to undertake resolute efforts

to get rid of corrupt elements within its ranks. This can go a long way to immensely increase public support to the police reform programme.

Conclusion

As noted in the foregoing sections, the community policing approach adopted by the TPF has its goals, namely to enlist the cooperation of communities and other stakeholders with the specific aims of preventing, reducing crime, and lessening fear of crime. These goals are envisaged as a means towards the main target of the ongoing reforms of the Police Force: to set up a community-centred force built on an active, strong and functional partnership between the police, community and other stakeholders. Having discussed specific measures undertaken by the TPF to address two sets of crimes, i.e. albino killings and armed robberies, it can be concluded that the Police Force has managed to attract some form of cooperation from the community and other stakeholders (actors in the private sector/business community). The general public has been quiet supportive in providing crucial information on suspects, including participating in secret referenda to name individuals who have been involved in atrocities against albinos. The public has also been enthusiastic in heeding to the TPF's clarion call to establish neighbourhood security groups throughout the country. These local security groups work with the police officers who had been deployed at the Ward/Shehia level.

The outcome of these numerous efforts, jointly undertaken by the LEAs, the Tanzanian government, community and business community, has been a general reduction in albino killings and the wave of armed robberies that gripped the country from the end of 2005. This means albino killings and armed robberies continue to happen. Since the said crimes have not been stopped altogether, the fear of crime has also not faded away. Albinos in the country continue to live in constant fear of persecution from greedy members of the public. On a more positive note, the lessons and experience acquired from dealing with albino killings and armed robberies through community policing ought to be used as a yardstick in all efforts aimed at crime prevention. The experience should be extended particularly to the frequently committed offences of motorcycles theft, burglary; rape, unlawful possession of cannabis, cattle-rustling, possession of illicit liquor, and arson as reported in the TPF 2010 report (p.51). This will not only spur community policing initiatives into success but will also raise the public confidence in the police force.

It is refreshing to see that the TPF has recognised the need to improve the quality of the community's self-policing. The recently initiated campaign by the Police Force known as "voluntary respect of laws without force", which was launched by the Chief Justice, is a move in the right direction. This timely campaign by the police to enlighten the public on the importance of

adhering to the established laws and regulations, however, would do little to stop or reduce incidences of mob justice unless people see genuine change in the delivery of policing services. The TPF acknowledges the importance of sensitising the public on the benefits of community policing, by spearheading a vigorous awareness campaign via the mass media. This article has made the argument that the vigorous campaign to popularise community policing among the public is a timely intervention. Nonetheless, ongoing public awareness programmes may not bring the desired outcomes if the community policing philosophy is not ingrained in the police officers themselves, thereby positively changing their way of delivering policing services to the community. As previously underscored, the best time to inculcate the philosophy of community policing is at the entry point: i.e. when police recruits are being trained.

Additionally, "to implement organisational change; there must be an unambiguous commitment to that change" (Weisburd et. al., 2002, p.105). The change must be supported both from within the Police Force itself and "through the provision of resources sufficient to carry out the changes proposed" (ibid.). The Tanzania government threw its full weight in the campaign to curb the sudden wave of albino killings and armed robberies soon after the fourth-phase government under President Kikwete took office. It paid close attention to the sudden surge in social disorder and accordingly committed enormous resources to the TPF basically because its international image was in tatters. It is high time the government and TPF pay equal amount of attention and tenacity in addressing the issue of public distrust of the country's LEAs. Left unattended, public distrust of the police can pose a stumbling block to the overall police reform programme. Ideally, lowering public distrust also involves building social capital which can be a catalyst for civic engagement geared toward combating crime (Pino, 2001). Accordingly, social capital is central to issues of trust, consultation and partnership between policing organisations and communities.

The discussion in this article has revealed that the TPF is still a long way to bridge the gap between its vision and mission of community policing and the actual practice and behaviour of its men and women in uniforms. Several incidences of invasion of police stations by civilians and mob justice that have gained prominence across the country, and the low confidence in the police as illustrated in several surveys, point to the general discontent with the country's current policing services. The TPF performance in overseeing protection of civil and political rights, particularly freedom of association, is uninspiring and does not serve best its image before the public. The manner in which the police have recently been handling political rallies and demonstrations staged by the country's opposition parties leaves a lot to be desired and sends a negative message to the public: That the police are accountable to the government in power rather than the law.

Conversely, the Police Force ought to be accountable to the law and not the law unto itself. The police have to earn the trust of the communities they serve in all their encounters with them. They cannot appear to be close to the people when hunting down perpetrators of albino killings and armed robberies, whilst appearing to drive a wedge between them and the people when it comes to protecting the latter's civil and political rights. For the sake of genuine policing reforms, the Police Force cannot afford to become a nimble chameleon that responds to the image it has generated, virtually as the shrimp responds to the atmosphere it has created. A patch-and-mend approach is simply inimical to the ongoing police reforms.

Finally, should the ongoing implementation of community policing be undertaken as a clandestine approach to penetrate communities so as to exercise social control, it will sooner dawn on the public that the concept has been adopted as a method of 'strategic buffering'. As asserted by Somerville (2009), strategic buffering ensures that traditional law enforcement goes on as much before, and in the meantime, community policing is employed as an excellent Public Relations (PR) tool for an organisation that cannot fight crime but which seeks to assure the community that it is 'doing something' (Brogden and Nijhar, 2005:78)

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