An investigation into factors contributing to

DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG THE YOUTH

in Lamu County, Kenya
Drug and Substance Abuse Among the Youth in Lamu County
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LAMU COUNTY
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Dr. Evangeline Njoka, MBS  
Secretary General, Kenya National Commission for UNESCO
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<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOM</td>
<td>Board of Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CID</td>
<td>Criminal Investigation Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EACC</td>
<td>Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GoK</td>
<td>Government of Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPOA</td>
<td>Independent Police Oversight Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNATCOM</td>
<td>Kenya National Commission for UNESCO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAPSET</td>
<td>Lamu Port and Lamu - Southern Sudan Ethiopia transport corridor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSD</td>
<td>Lysergic Acid Diethylamide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAXQDA</td>
<td>Software for Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOEST</td>
<td>Ministry of Education, Science and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NACADA</td>
<td>National Authority for the Campaign Against Drug Abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCS</td>
<td>Officer Commanding Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTA</td>
<td>Parent Teachers Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTI</td>
<td>Technical Training Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVET</td>
<td>Technical and Vocational Educational Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children Fund</td>
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<td>UNODC</td>
<td>United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime</td>
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ABSTRACT

The World Drug Report notes that globally, one in twenty adults between the ages of 15 and 64 years abused at least one type of drug in 2014. The purpose of the study was to investigate factors contributing to drug and substance abuse among the Kenyan youth in Lamu County, along the coastal region of Kenya. The objectives of this study were to: investigate the demographic factors contributing to drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County; establish the level of awareness about drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County; find out the socio-cultural, policy, institutional and economic factors contributing to drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County; establish the effects of drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County; find out the challenges encountered in curbing drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County; and establish strategies of curbing drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County. The ecological systems theory developed by Bronfenbrenner has been used to guide this study. The study employed mixed method approach and adopted a survey design. Independent variables for the study were; demographic factors; level of awareness of drug abuse; factors contributing to drug abuse; effects of drug abuse; and challenges in curbing drug abuse. The dependent variable was healthy and empowered youth. Random and non-random sampling procedures were adopted for selection of samples from the target group. The sample involved primary, secondary and Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) students, teachers, pupils, community leaders, religious leaders, county officers, education officers and drug addicts. Questionnaires, focused group discussions and interview schedules were used to collect data from the respondents. Data collected was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings revealed that all respondents were unanimous that males predominantly abuse drugs as opposed to females by age group; and those between 16-20 years were more likely (41%) to abuse drugs closely followed by those between 11-15 age bracket. Six out of the nine (67%) of the secondary school principals and one of the two managers of technical training institutes that were surveyed, confirmed awareness of drug and substance abuse in their institutions and demonstrated the widespread problem of drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County as the communities helplessly witnessed their children and neighbours sinking into this malaise, with little hope in sight for corrective action. In conclusion, there was high awareness about the widespread problem of drug and substance abuse among the youth in Lamu County including the areas that were most affected, types of drugs that were abused and their sources. The study recommended that the National Government and County Government of Lamu should urgently allocate more funds for rehabilitation services under the health budget for equipping the rehabilitation centers with sufficient facilities and resources including specialized staff. Law enforcement agents who deal with narcotics should be constantly vetted and reshuffled as a strategy to break the cycle of corrupt practices and compromise by the drug barons in the enforcement of the anti-narcotic law. They should also be provided with adequate means of transportation for surveillance.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY
I.1 Background

The World Drug Report notes that globally, one in twenty adults between the ages of 15 and 64 years, abused at least one type of drug in 2014 (UNODC, 2016a, pp: xi). This number translates into a quarter of a billion people, which is roughly equivalent to the combined populations of France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom. In addition, an estimated 207,400 of these people succumbed to drug-related deaths. Furthermore, drug abuse has a negative impact on the psycho-social, economic and physiological development of the abusers. Meanwhile, the special session of the United Nations General Assembly of 19-21 April 2016 on the world drug problem noted that efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to effectively address the world drug problem are complementary and mutually reinforcing (UNODC, 2016b, pp:3). It is also worthy to note that most surveys show that the prevalence of drug abuse among young people is higher than among adults (UNODC, 2016a).

In Kenya, drug abuse is one of the top-ranking problems confronting the nation today. This menace has strangled the youthful population, reducing them to zombies and drooling figures wasting away at the prime of their lives when they should be investing their energy in personal and community development ventures. Consequently, the Government of Kenya (GoK) in recognition of this problem enacted the Kenya Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Control Act Number 4 of 1994, revised in 2012 and the National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse Act Chapter 121B (NACADA Act). Among other initiatives, the NACADA Act established the National Authority Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NACADA) charged with the mandate of coordinating activities of individuals and organizations in the campaign against drug abuse, and developing an action plan and initiating public education campaign aimed at curbing drug abuse.

The extent of drug abuse in the coastal region of Kenya is alarming compared to other regions in the country. In Mombasa County, one in every ten people indulges in some drug abuse and the percentage is higher among the male population (Korir, 2013). A local Kenyan daily newspaper; The Daily Nation of Saturday 19th December 2009, reported the arrest of a Ghanian national with five kilograms of heroin in the Mikindani area of Mombasa County. In Lamu County, the Governor Issa Timamy noted that many youths are heavily hooked on narcotics, making them unproductive and easily prone to crime, leading to rise in insecurity and consequently vowed to make Lamu a drug free zone (Appendix I: The Coast, 31 August 2015, Lamu). Likewise, the Lamu County Commissioner Mr. Ndambuki noted that the use of marijuana and cocaine among the youth was on the rise particularly in Lamu town and Lamu East Sub-County (Daily Nation Newspaper, 30th August 2015). Meanwhile, the most commonly abused drugs among the youth are alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, solvents and other stimulants (Mugusia, 2009). A significant proportion of these young people eventually get
addicted to the drugs, posing a threat to their own health and safety, while creating difficulties for their families and the public at large. Despite these grave scenarios, it appears that the youth lack a clear understanding of the overall effects of drug abuse on their own bodies, families and the community in general.

1.2 Statement of the problem
Despite the intensive interventions by the Government, religious organisations, non-state actors and many other stakeholders to curb the problem of drug abuse in Kenya, the menace seems to be escalating by the day. Given this situation, it appears that there is no clear understanding of the contextual factors that continue to fuel the upsurge in drug abuse among the youth. Consequently, it was in the interest of the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (KNATCOM) to address this issue urgently as it is impeding the progress of the youth in Lamu County. Through the education programme, KNATCOM sought to address this issue of drug abuse through a study. Specifically, the study focused on establishing the factors contributing to drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County.

1.3 Purpose of the study
The purpose of the study was to investigate factors contributing to drug and substance abuse among the Kenyan youth in Lamu County along the coastal region of Kenya.

1.4 Objective of the study
The objective of this study was to investigate factors contributing to drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County along the coastal region of Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to:

i) investigate the demographic factors contributing to drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County;
ii) establish the level of awareness about drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County;
iii) find out the socio-cultural, policy & institutional, and economic factors contributing to drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County;
iv) establish the effects of drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County;
v) find out the challenges encountered in curbing drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County; and
vi) establish strategies of curbing drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County.

1.5 Significance of the study
Findings from this study will help the Government of Kenya, NACADA and other stakeholders to better understand the current situation in relation to drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County. This will enable them to come up with appropriate strategies for addressing the underlying factors that contribute to drug abuse among the youth in the County. Among other things, it will enable them to take measures, both preventive and corrective, towards elimination of this menace by dealing with the drugs barons, peddlers and others who are involved in initiating the youth to drug abuse.

1.6 Scope of the study
The study was carried out in the Lamu County located in the northern part of the coast region of Kenya.
1.7 Limitations of the study
The sample of schools, teachers, students, community opinion leaders, and Government officers, used in this study was representative of the population. This sample represented the homogeneous aspect of the of the Lamu county population. The study focused only on factors contributing to drug and substance abuse among the youth in Lamu County, Kenya.

1.8 Assumptions of the study
It was assumed that the samples of target population involved in the study are aware of the issue of drug and substance abuse in Lamu County. It was also assumed that the participants co-operated and provided honest responses to the questions. Also, it was assumed that the number of questionnaires that were returned was enough to enable the researcher to arrive at informed decisions and conclusions on the status of drug and substance abuse in Lamu County.

1.9 Theoretical framework
The ecological systems theory developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) has been used to guide this study. Bronfenbrenner’s work was very important in understanding a systematic approach of human and social development. His bioecological theory has provided links to why each child develop differently and what aspects of development are in the child’s control and which are not. It looks not only into the biological aspect of development, but also the ecology behind it and the environment involved. His theory is important for educators to understand because it allows the educator to build fundamental relationships with their students and create a communication rich classroom that involves the parents. Bronfenbrenner’s work also displays how the community and culture that the children are surrounded by greatly influence their development as well. Things such as media, school and state policies, or a child’s neighborhood can shape how he or she develops. Bronfenbrenner creates three separate systems; microsystem, exosystem, and macrosystem, that can all act individually on the child, but also can act in unison on the child. The child has control over the events in his or her microsystem, but the exosystem and macrosystem are out of the child's control. Bronfenbrenner clearly states how each system is vital for every child's development and from that, real life events can be related back to a certain system. Events such as relationships between peers, parents, and teachers all are shaped in a child's microsystem. Events that take place in a child's neighborhood or community all are shaped in a child's exosystem. Societal expectations and norms all are shaped in a child's macrosystem. From Bronfenbrenner's theory, it has provided a framework for parents and teachers to build effective relationships from and surround the child with a positive environment. With immediate relationships and a positive environment, it will allow the child to develop and succeed to his or her fullest potential possible.

1.10 Conceptual framework
Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework that guided this study. This framework postulates that, to design effective strategies for curbing drug abuse in Lamu County, it is important to understand the underlying issues that contribute to this menace. To understand the underlying issues that are associated with drug abuse require unearthing; the demographic factors of drug abusers, awareness
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of drug abuse among residents of Lamu County, factors contributing to drug abuse, effects of drug abuse, challenges in curbing drug abuse and strategies for curbing drug abuse in Lamu County. Essentially, these factors are considered as the independent variables in this study. Effective stakeholder interventions in elimination of drug abuse in Lamu County and strategies of curbing drug abuse are intervening variables. A healthy and empowered youth in Lamu County is the expected outcome which is therefore considered as the dependent variable in this study.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework for the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables</th>
<th>Intervening variables</th>
<th>Dependent variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographic factors</td>
<td>Effective stakeholder interventions in elimination of drug abuse in Lamu County</td>
<td>Healthy and Empowered Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of awareness of drug abuse</td>
<td>Strategies of curbing drug abuse</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Factors contributing to drug abuse</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Effects of drug abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Challenges in curbing drug abuse</td>
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1.11 Operational definitions of terms

Awareness of drug abuse: Knowledge of the prevalence of illicit drugs and drug abuse among residents or individuals in a certain locality

Challenges in curbing drug abuse: Barriers including socio-cultural, policy & institutional and economic that derail efforts to reduce drug abuse

Drug abuse: Consumption of illegal drugs and substances or use of prescription drugs other than for medical purposes

Effects of drug abuse: Physiological and behaviour changes in an individual because of drug abuse

Factors contributing to drug abuse: Factors that predisposes an individual to the likelihood of drug abuse

Strategies of curbing drug abuse: Interventions for preventing access to illicit drugs and corrective measures to reduce drug abuse among affected individuals
Drug and Substance Abuse Among the Youth in Lamu County
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1 Demographic factors contributing to drug abuse

Demographic factors such as age, gender, occupation, religion, marital status and education often influence the decision to indulge in drug abuse. Studies have shown that men are more likely to engage in maladaptive behaviors such as drug abuse. Age is also a major factor which influences the onset of drug abuse. A case study on factors contributing to drug abuse in Bamburi Location of Mombasa County, Kenya found out that, some teenagers take drugs to 'appear old', a desire to be perceived and perceive themselves as adults (Kasundu, Mutiso, Chebet & Mwirigi, 2012). Educated individuals are known to make self-enhancing decisions which are less harmful to themselves as compared to uneducated ones who might be frustrated and hence end up comforting themselves through drug abuse. Religion also plays a bigger role in socializing the individual by guiding them on the pros and cons of one's behaviour and social interaction.

A study on drug abuse and associated demographic factors of freshman in a Chilean University found that increased consumption of alcohol and marijuana was more associated with male than female students (Seguel, Gama, & Ramos, 2012). However, the onset of drug and alcohol consumption did not differ significantly by sex. The frequency of alcohol consumption on faculties has significant differences between men and women. Meanwhile, the variables "where you live" and "who lives" was significantly related to consumption of amphetamine and marijuana. Existing studies have found a high correlation between adolescent abuse and becoming a problem drug user in adulthood. Therefore, it can be inferred that many problem drug users start abusing drugs at an early age. Additionally, accidental and intentional fatalities that are associated with drug and alcohol use represent one of the leading preventable causes of death for the 15 to 24-year-old population. Alcohol and other drug abuse in the adolescent population carries a high risk for school underachievement, delinquency, teenage pregnancy and depression (Belcher & Shinitzky, 1998).

2.2 Knowledge and awareness on effects of drug abuse among the youth

Evident lack of awareness, fanned by unavailability of accurate information on the adverse consequences of indulgence habits left the problem of drug abuse to permeate communities throughout Kenya. This lack of awareness amongst the youth regarding the harmful effects of drug abuse is cited as the main reasons for the youth getting involved in drug abuse. Enhancing knowledge and awareness is therefore one of the protective factors against drug abuse for young people. It is essential to create awareness through mainstreaming capacity building on drug abuse related issues including the effects of drug abuse and addiction in learning institutions. Formal curriculum interventions alone are not adequate as they are hampered by failure to achieve full implementation of the curriculum, use of inappropriate methodology and improper design of school instructional materials. A study conducted in Bamburi Location, Mombasa County revealed that the main sources of awareness and knowledge on the effects of drug
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abuse for the youth is mainly the friends and media. This implies that the media and peers provides a key avenue for socializing young people against drug abuse. Therefore, peer educators' initiatives should aim at empowering young people with the requisite knowledge and skills to support fellow young people against drug abuse.

2.3 Socio-cultural factors contributing to drug abuse
Socio-cultural factors also play a major role in determining one's behavior. For instance, some cultures recommend use of stimulants, depressants and hallucinogens such as beer, liquor, wine, tobacco and marijuana during cultural functions. Some liquor or drugs are culturally accepted and during these cultural ceremonies, people are grouped in age sets and provided with the drugs. The social environment also plays a great role in influencing drug abuse ranging from the family environment to the peer group influence and the need to fit in a certain group. Thus, in societies where such factors exist, drug abuse may be at its peak.

In a study on promoting science-based prevention in communities, addictive behaviour and socio-economic status did not seem to correlate with increased risk of drug abuse among adolescents (Hawkins, Catalano & Arthur, 2002). However, extreme poverty in conjunction with childhood behavioural problems were factored for increased risk for drug abuse.

2.4 Economic factors contributing to drug abuse
Economic factors have a great influence and are of great significant on drug abuse. For example, one's income level determine one's indulgence in drug abuse. This is confirmed by a survey conducted in secondary schools in Kenya by NACADA in 2012 where students strongly believed that economic factors facing the society today contributes to drug abuse among the youth in and out of school. Further, a study conducted among young people in 2012 in Bamburi, Mombasa County revealed that unemployment was the main reason influencing indulgence of the youth in drug abuse. This was followed closely by high poverty level and low cost of obtaining the drug by the young people.

Social class is another important variable influencing drug abuse among young people. This is because different social classes are linked with different standards of living and different social problems. While consumption of drugs such as local cheap liquor and other local drugs is prevalent amongst poor families that are characterized by low income, the affluent also engage in drug taking due to the ability to buy.

2.5 Effects of drug abuse
Drug abuse can lead to psychological and physical effects. The Acadiana Addiction Centre (2017) notes that drug abuse occurs when an individual continues using the substance despite the negative cognitive, behavioral, physical, social and frequently mood-related symptoms. Likewise, the Gateway Foundation (2016) notes that the drugs enter the human body in several ways including injection, inhalation, and ingestion. The way in which the drug enters the body have an influence on how the drug affects the person. For example, injection takes the drug directly into the blood stream, providing more immediate effects, while
ingestion requires the drug to pass through the digestive system, with delayed effects.

2.5.1 Psychological effects
The psychological effects of drug abuse come from the reason that the user is addicted to drugs, as well as the changes that take place in the brain once they become a drug addict. These effects include:

- wild mood swings, depression, anxiety, paranoia, violence
- decrease in pleasure in everyday life
- complication of mental illness
- hallucinations
- confusion
- psychological tolerance to the drug’s effects creating a desire to do ever-increasing doses of the drug
- desire to engage in risky behavior
- addiction which leads to cravings

2.5.2 Physical Effects
Physical effects of drug abuse vary by drug but are typically seen in all systems of the body and some of the primary physical effects of drug abuse take place in the brain. These physical effects include:

- contraction of HIV, hepatitis and other illnesses because of sharing needles
- lifelong adverse cognitive effects on children born to drug-using mothers
- increase mortality
- heart rate irregularities, heart attack
- respiratory problems such as lung cancer, emphysema and breathing problems
- abdominal pain, vomiting, constipation, diarrhea

- kidney and liver damage
- higher risk of unintentional injuries, accidents, domestic violence
- seizures, stroke, brain damage and
- changes in appetite, body temperature and sleeping patterns.

2.6 Strategies of curbing drug abuse
Most drug abuse among the youth starts in school and therefore the school population is the best place for early detection, prevention and management of drug abuse (Cheloti & Gathumbi, 2016). A survey on drug abuse among the youth aged between 10 and 24 years in Kenya found that, majority of them started abusing drugs in secondary schools and universities (Cheloti et al, 2016). Therefore, the heads of education institutions are better placed to effectively lead in curbing drug abuse among the youth.

The school community can be involved in curbing drug abuse. School community refers to all persons who directly or indirectly interact with the school and who can influence the behaviour or climate of the school. Therefore, the school community includes; school support staff, School Board of Management (BOM), Parent’s Teachers Association (PTA) and school committees, and the community living, working or operating businesses around the school. Cheloti et al (2016) notes that the most common source of alcohol for students in schools was the community around the school supplying about 42-55 percent of the total alcohol consumed by students.

The use of preventive programs is one strategy of boosting protective factors and reduction of risk factors for drug use. The programs are designed
for various ages and can be designed for individual or group settings, such as the school and home. The National Institute for Drug Abuse (2014), identify three types of preventive programs:

a. universal programs to address risk and protective factors common to all children in each setting, such as a school or community;

b. selective programs which can target groups of children and teenagers who have factors that put them at increased risk of drug abuse; and

c. indicated programs which are designed for youth who have already begun using drugs.

In efforts towards prevention and control of drug abuse in Kenya, NACADA (2012) recommends among other strategies; involvement of community based organizations in promoting responsible behaviour change messages, empowering women and youth groups to provide support to those already using drugs, and using school children as agents of change against drug abuse.
Drug and Substance Abuse Among the Youth in Lamu County
CHAPTER THREE

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY
3.1 Study design

This study investigated the factors that contribute to drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County, Kenya. Therefore, information was gathered from a cross-section of specific target populations in Lamu County to establish factors associated with drug abuse. Consequently, the study adopted a cross-sectional survey design which involves the collection of data at one point in time from a random sample representing a given population (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000; Wiersma & Jurs, 2005). The cross-sectional survey design was appropriate for this study because it gave a wide and varied range of stakeholders' ample opportunities to share their views, ideas and suggestions on the factors that contribute to drug abuse in Lamu County, Kenya.

A survey gather data from a relatively large number of cases at a point in time and is not concerned with the characteristics of individuals but with the statistics that result when data are aggregated from several individual cases (Best & Khan, 2003). Kerlinger (1973) describes surveys as studies of large populations by selecting and studying samples chosen from the population to reveal the relative incidence, distribution and interrelations of variables of interest. It focuses on people, the vital facts of people, and their beliefs, opinions, attitudes, motivations and behaviour. The main interest in a survey is the accurate measurement of the characteristics of whole populations of people and the data gathered enables the description of the prevailing conditions at that point in time. Surveys elicit information about attitudes that are otherwise difficult to measure using observational techniques. Therefore, adopting the cross-sectional survey design was appropriate and the study gathered sufficient information for generalization about the problem of drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County.

3.2 Study methods and approach

Mixed method approach was adopted in this study because it allowed the researchers to combine elements of qualitative and quantitative approaches for breadth and depth of understanding the problem (Creswell, 2006). Mixed method approach is expansive, inclusive, pluralistic, complementary and creative form of research that make use of multiple approaches in answering research questions, rather than restricting or constraining researchers' choices. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process. It focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone. Therefore, mixed method approach provides more comprehensive evidence for studying a research problem than either quantitative or qualitative research alone.

The problem of drug abuse is complex as it is not only illegal but is intertwined with health hazards and anti-social dispositions such violence, money laundering, corruption and terrorism among others. In-depth understanding of the problem of
drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County, required gathering of both qualitative and quantitative data through questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions from a cross section of the target population. Therefore, mixed methods approach was adopted in selecting samples, instrumentation, gathering information and data analysis.

3.3 Study location
This study was conducted in Lamu County (Figure 2), located in the northern part of the coast region of Kenya. It is one of the six counties in this region, the others being Mombasa, Kwale, Kilifi, Tana River and Taita Taveta.

Figure 2 : Map of Lamu County
(Source: https://www.google.com)
Lamu borders Garissa County to the North & North East, Tana River County to the West & South West, the Indian Ocean to the South East, and a small stretch of border with Somalia to the East. The County covers a land surface area 6,167 square kilometers, consisting of a mainland coastal strip and the Lamu Archipelago. With the administrative headquarters in Lamu town, the County has a population of 101,539 people, based on the Kenya national population census of 2009. Lamu County has two parliamentary constituencies; Lamu West with seven electoral wards (Shella, Mkomani, Hindi, Mkunumbi, Hongwe, Witu and Bahari) and Lamu East with three electoral wards (Faza, Kiunga and Basuba).

Lamu County was selected for this study following reports from media and local authorities about the grave situation of drug abuse among the youth. For example, in the Daily Nation Newspaper of 30th August 2015, the Lamu County Commissioner, Mr. Ndambuki reported that drug abuse among the youth was on the rise particularly in Lamu town and Lamu East Sub-County and among the drugs abused were bhang and cocaine.

3.4 Target population
Creswell (2005) defines the target population as a group of available individuals from the population that have some common characteristics that the researcher can identify and study. The target population is the entire group a researcher is interested in and from which the researcher wishes to draw conclusions. This study focused on youth in between the age 15 and 35 years in selected public institutions in Lamu East and West Sub-Counties as a representative of all youths in the County in school and out of school youth. The key informants were the principals of secondary schools, teachers responsible for guidance and counselling at secondary school level, representative of the secondary schools Board of Management (BOM), managers of Technical Training Institutes (TTIs), religious leaders, local administrators (Chiefs), police officers, clinical officer, education officials and the Governor of Lamu County. This target population was considered appropriate in providing sufficient information on factors that contribute to drugs abuse among the youth in Lamu County.

3.5 Sample size and sampling procedures
A sample is a sub-group of the target population that the researcher studies and generalize about the target population (Creswell, 2005). Cochran (1977) notes that, one method of determining the sample size is to specify the margins of error for the items that are regarded as most vital to the study. The goal is to include sufficient numbers of subjects so that significant results can be detected. Sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what is at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources (Patton, 1990). Both random and non-random sampling procedures were adopted for selection of samples from the target groups. Since the focus of the study was drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County, secondary schools were used as the sampling units in this study and used as the basis for the selection of other respondents. Therefore, stratified random sampling was used to select public secondary schools, students, teachers, principals and members of the BOM.
3.5.1 Selection of secondary schools
There are 19 public secondary schools in Lamu County out of which 10 schools (53%) were sampled using stratified random sampling (Appendix I). The sampling frame considered the administrative location of the school to ensure an even distribution, single sex and co-education schools, and day and boarding schools.

3.5.2 Selection of target groups within a school
In each of the sample schools, eight students of form 1 and 2 and eight students of form 3 and 4 were sampled randomly by the researchers. In co-education schools, sampling included both boys and girls to ensure the perspectives of both gender were taken into consideration. Meanwhile, in each sample school, the principal, teacher in-charge of the guidance and counselling programme and one member of the school board of management were selected.

3.5.3 Selection of target groups outside the school
Purposive sampling was adopted in this study to obtain samples of the different target groups outside the school that were considered sufficient to provide information about the issue of drug abuse in Lamu County. Specifically, the study adopted the expert sampling type of purposive sampling which is used when the aim of the research is to obtain information from individuals that have better understanding or particular expertise of the issue being studied (Panneerselvam, 2004; Coolican, 2009; Emmel, 2013). Expert sampling is also useful where there is a lack of empirical evidence in an area of study. Currently, there is no study that has been done on the factors that contribute to drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County. The selection of the samples in this study was made by the researcher based on his knowledge of those individuals in the study location who were most representative and with appropriate understanding of the issue of drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County. Therefore, the researchers in this study judged that the local community leaders, religious leaders, local administrators (Chiefs), clinical officers, education officials, police officers and County Governor of Lamu had sufficient understanding of the issue of drug abuse among the youth in Lamu. A summary of the final study sample is presented in Table 1, while the detailed sample is presented in Appendix II.

The key informants were the principals of secondary schools, teachers responsible for guidance and counselling at secondary school level, representative of the secondary schools Board of Management (BOM), managers of Technical Training Institutes (TTIs), religious leaders, local administrators (Chiefs), police officers, clinical officer, education officials and the Governor of Lamu County. This target population was considered appropriate in providing sufficient information on factors that contribute to drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County.
Table 1: Sample Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary School Student</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Vocational Training Center</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of School Youth</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of Guidance and Counselling</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal of Secondary School</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member School Board of Management</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager Vocational Training Center</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Officer</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Officer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Leader</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Leader</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-County Director of Education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Director of Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6 Research instruments

The following instruments were used to collect information from the sampled target groups:

a. questionnaire for principal of secondary school, manager of TTI and clinical officer
b. focused group discussion guide for secondary school students, students of vocational training centres and out of school youth
c. interview guide for teachers of guidance and counseling, members of the school board of management, education officials, rehabilitation officer, police officers, religious leaders, community leaders, area chiefs and County Governor of Lamu.

The research tools for the different target groups focused on the same thematic areas regarding drug abuse among students and youth in the community. The areas of focus were: i) knowledge of cases of drug abuse among students and youth in the community; ii) age and gender of those involved in drug abuse; iii) types and sources of drugs that are commonly abused; iv) reasons for drug abuse among the students and youth in the community; v) effects of drug abuse among the students in schools and youth in the community; vi) challenges faced in curbing drug abuse among the students and youth in the community; and vii) intervention measuring for curbing drug abuse among students and youth in the community.

The commonality of thematic areas in items across the research tools for different target groups allowed for triangulation of the information during data analysis.

3.6.1 Pilot study

A pilot study is a small study designed to test logistics and gather information prior to a larger study, to improve the latter's quality and efficiency. A pilot study can reveal deficiencies in the design or procedure
of a proposed study and these can then be addressed before time and resources are expended on a large-scale study (Lancaster, Dodd & Williamson, 2004). It is normally a small study in comparison with the main study and therefore can provide only limited information on the sources and magnitude of variation of response measures (Ruxton & Colegrave, 2006).

In this study, piloting was undertaken at Pumwani Boys Secondary School in Nairobi which was not part the study sample. The pilot sample was made up of one principal, one guidance and counseling teacher and sixteen students. The main purpose of the pilot study was to test reliability and validity of the research instruments. It was also meant to ascertain the relevance of the responses and other administrative logistics such as timing. The research instruments were improved based on the feedback obtained from piloting.

3.6.2 Reliability
Reliability is the degree to which a data collection instrument produces stable and consistent results. Cronbach (1951) in Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) proposed the Cronbach's alpha as one of the indices of reliability which is used to determine the internal consistency or average correlation of items in an instrument. It is an index of reliability associated with the variation accounted for by the true score of the underlying construct and generates a coefficient of internal consistency ranging from 0 to 1.0. A score of 0 indicates no reliability while a score of 1 indicates high reliability. An alpha coefficient of 0.7 and above is considered suitable to make accurate group inferences.

Internal consistency refers to the general agreement between multiple items, often Likert scale items that make-up a composite score of a survey measurement of a given construct. An internal consistent test can be interpreted as a test with all items measuring the same underlying construct in the same way. In other words, test items are all parallel in an internally consistent test. However, in this study, the tools that were used for data collection were interview and focus group discussion guides which generated qualitative responses that do not render themselves for analysis of reliability using the internal consistency method. Furthermore, while the data collected through questionnaires from principals of secondary schools, managers of vocational training centers and clinical officers could have been used to compute the reliability index, the sample size was below the threshold of 20 that is required for computation of reliability indices (Warner, 2008). However, during data analysis, the responses from different target groups were triangulated to establish consistency of the findings. Triangulation of the responses was made possible because the different target groups were subjected to questions based on the same thematic issues regarding drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County.

3.6.3 Validity
Validity refers to how well an instrument measures what it is purported to measure. In this study, content validity was used for validation of the instruments. Content validity involves an assessment of the extent to which an instrument adequately covers the objectives of the study. An
instrument that contains a representative sample of items for the objectives and subject matter of interest is considered to have good content validity. To evaluate the content validity of an instrument, one must first agree on what dimensions and elements constitute adequate coverage. Content validity is a function of how well the dimensions and elements of a concept have been delineated (Sekaran, 2003, p.206).

In determining the content validity of the instruments in this study, a panel of experts was constituted and their opinions were sought. The experts who included researchers in the field of social sciences and education were individually given the study proposal and instruments for review and later held a one day workshop for discussion and recommendations for improvement of the tools. During the workshop, the panel of experts critically evaluated each item in each of the instruments and rated how well it was corresponding with the objectives of the study. The inputs gathered from this panel were used to improve the instruments. Content validity was further enhanced during the pilot study at Pumwani Secondary School as the respondents gave their comments on the wording of each of the items in the instruments during a follow up discussion with the researchers.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

3.7.1 Research authorization

The researcher sought for authority from the relevant authorities to visit and collect data from the schools and institutions in Lamu County. The researcher visited the sampled institutions and administered the questionnaires to principals and managers of technical institutions and conduct a focused group discussion with the students in the sampled schools and out of school, following prior arrangements with the principals and the County Director of Education. Also, the guidance and counseling teachers were interviewed. The identified police officers, chief, clinical officers, county director of education and board of management members were also interviewed.

3.7.2 Ethical considerations

Research ethics revolves around the planning, conduct, and reporting of research. Research ethics should include protection of human and animal subjects (Resources for Research Ethics Education, 1999-2010, Research-ethics.net/about/contributors). Ethical issues can be separated into four main sections: whether there is harm to the participants, whether there is informed consent, whether the participants’ privacy has been invaded and whether the researcher has had to deceive those involved (Diener, Emmons, Larson, Griffin, 1985).

There are several reasons why it is important to adhere to ethical norms in research. First, norms promote the aims of research, such as knowledge, truth, and avoidance of error. Prohibitions against fabricating, falsifying, or misrepresenting research data promote the truth and avoid error. Second, since research often involves a great deal of cooperation and coordination among many different people in different disciplines and institutions. Therefore, ethical standards promote the values that are essential to collaborative work, such as trust, accountability, mutual respect, and fairness. There are many ethical norms in research, such as guidelines for authorship, copyright and
patenting policies, data sharing policies, and confidentiality rules in peer review. All these are designed to protect intellectual property interests while encouraging collaboration. Most researchers want to receive credit for their contributions and do not want to have their ideas stolen or disclosed prematurely. Many of the ethical norms help to ensure that researchers can be held accountable to the public. For instance, federal policies on research misconduct, conflicts of interest, the human subject’s protections, and animal care and use are necessary to make sure that researchers who are funded by public money can be held accountable to the public.

Fourth, ethical norms in research also help to build public support for research. People are more likely to fund research projects if they can trust the quality and integrity of research. Finally, many of the norms of research promote a variety of other important moral and social values, such as social responsibility, human rights, and animal welfare, compliance with the law, and health and safety. Ethical lapses in research can significantly harm human and animal subjects, students and the public (Resnik, Patrone & Peddadah, 2010).

To ensure all ethical considerations are adhered to the researcher sought authority from the relevant authorities to visit and collect data from Lamu county Institutions. The participants were briefed on what the study is about and the procedures to be used in each of the sampled institutions. It was clarified to them that participation in the research should not be out of coercion. Also, no benefits were due to those who participated in the study. The participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality regarding all information provided, given that this study sought information on the sensitive issue of drug abuse. Consequently, anonymity has been applied in reporting findings in this study to protect the identity of the respondents. For example, the names of specific areas, institutions and respondents have been disguised.

3.7.3 Selection and training of research team
A total of 27 persons were involved in this study, comprising two groups; 16 members of field data collection and 11 data transcription and analysis team. The field team of 16 members was organized into three teams, each with 5 members, comprising of team leader responsible for managing the team operations and quality control, three researchers responsible for conducting the interviews and focus group discussions and a research assistant responsible for data entry and compiling of team reports. The data analysis and report writing team comprised of 10 transcribers and 1 data analyst cum report writer. The field data collection team was trained by the lead researchers on the content of the tools and data collection procedures. This ensured consistency in application of the tools for reliability and validity. The overall study was coordinated by the lead researcher.

3.7.4 Data collection procedures within the schools
The research teams visited one school per day and arrived in the school in the morning. They paid a courtesy call on the principal and briefed them on the purpose of the study. They administered the principal questionnaire, conducted interview with the teacher in-charge of guidance and counselling and focus group discussions with students. For the
focus group discussions, the researchers sampled students from respective classes and proceeded to conduct the focus group discussions in a room or area that had been designated by the principal and assisting teachers. The researchers also conducted interview with the representative of the school board of management. All the interviews and focus group discussions were recorded and permission was sought from the respondent for the recording. At the end of the exercise, they briefed the principal and proceeded to interview other target groups within the vicinity of the school (community leader, chief, religious leader, police officers).

3.7.5 Data collection procedures outside the school
After conducting the school level data collection, the research team conducted interviews with the target groups outside the school. It is convenient to interview such respondent in their natural working environment to minimize disruptions of their normal work schedule.

3.8 Data analysis
Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected in this study. Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative data analysis procedures were applied to generate results in this study. The data collected from principals of secondary schools, managers of vocational training centers and clinical officers was input into MS Excel template prepared for this purpose and imported into SPSS version 22 and subjected to further analysis that generated descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data in the form of voice recordings that was collected through interviews and focus group discussions was transcribed by a team of 10 transcribers who were engaged and trained on this process by the data analyst. The transcripts were imported into MAXQDA 12, a qualitative data analysis software, and coded thematically in alignment with the objectives of this study. The coded data was then analyzed to generate descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies and percentages and presented in graphs and tables. In addition, representative samples of verbatim responses were isolated during the coding stage to reinforce the quantitative findings.

Given that of most the data in this study was qualitative, coupled with the limited sample size, it was not possible to conduct inferential statistical analysis for predictions and sub-group comparisons. Furthermore, this study was exploratory in nature and was meant to establish the status of the problem of drug abuse among the young in Lamu rather than comparison of sub-groups. However, verbatim excerpts that were considered relevant from the different target groups were isolated and used to reinforce the descriptive statistics. Consequently, this study generated a rich mix of both quantitative and qualitative findings that was complementary, and presented a deep and clear understanding of the status of the problem of drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County.
4.1 Introduction

This was an exploratory study that investigated factors that contribute to drug and substance abuse among the youth in Lamu County. Specifically, the study focused on: awareness about drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County; types and sources of drugs that are abused; how the drug abuse has affected the youth and schooling in Lamu County; community and school level strategies for curbing drugs abuse; and challenges encountered in attempts to curb this menace at community and school levels. The findings across respondents were synthesized, triangulated and presented to reflect these thematic areas of concern. Most of the data was qualitative, collected through interviews and focus group discussions. Therefore, it was coded though content analysis using MAXQDA 12; a qualitative data analysis software, into thematic areas to generate descriptive statistics that are presented as percentages to highlight the intensity of specific issues. Furthermore, samples of the original verbatim excerpts from respondents were isolated and presented to reinforce the quantitative findings. The findings are presented in tables, graphs and verbatim excerpts.

4.2 Demographic factors and drug abuse

The first objective in this study was to establish demographic factors associated with drugs abuse among the youth in Lamu County. Information was gathered on two demographic factors; gender and age, to establish whether they are associated with drug abuse. Therefore, respondents were required to indicate which gender in the specific locality was more likely to abuse drugs and the age range for the drug abusers. The findings are presented in sub-section 4.2.1 and 4.2.2.

4.2.1 Gender of drug abusers

All respondents were unanimous that males predominantly abuse drugs as opposed to females. However, a few females also do abuse drugs while others serve as peddlers and couriers of illegal drugs as confirmed in the following verbatim excerpts:

“Like here in Lamu girls are not many you will find maybe 5 or 4 girls. But about boys they are many and it’s because of being jobless which makes us lose direction”.

FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu

“Boys are the ones who predominantly abuse the drugs while the women are mostly used to transport drugs under their buibuis”.

Police Officer, Area C

“It is mainly the men who abuse drugs. The girls are indirectly affected especially those married by men who abuse drugs. Some girls are used to transport the illegal drugs”.

Community Member, Area B

“The male gender is the most affected, very few females are affected by drugs and substances abuse”.

Chief, Area C

“Not many girls are affected although we have had some few cases where they have been given drugs. For example, we had a real case on Sunday. On Sunday, a girl student was given drugs and was defiled on Sunday night. She
resumed consciousness on Monday. We are currently handling the case with the police and the doctors but that happened because she was drugged. She was given food that was contaminated with a substance. After taking the food, she ended up in her room unconsciousness until morning”.

Member of BOM, School A

“In schools, girls are not using, only boys but out here, we only have one case of a woman who has disturbed us a lot and she can't walk without the drugs. She is married with children. We took the husband for rehabilitation and things are good for him. The family has tried a lot to help the lady even taking her for rehabilitation but things are difficult with her. She was taken by her sisters as she has relatives in Mombasa, so they took her to for rehabilitation. She stayed for two weeks but gave the nurses a hard time, so they said they can't stay with her there because she is disturbing”.

Chief, Area A

The World Drug Report 2014 notes that men are two to three times more likely than women to use drugs such as opium and marijuana (UNODC, 2014). Likewise, the report of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2014) of the US equally notes that males aged 12 to 17 years are more likely than females to abuse marijuana by 20 percentage points. However, this difference closes in with age. On the other hand, females in the same age group are more likely than males to abuse prescription pain relievers and this difference persist with age. This gender dimension in drug abuse is further confirmed in a study of 14-20 years old secondary school students in Nigeria, where the male students were significantly rated higher on taking alcohol than their female counterparts by 6 percentage points (Agu, Nwankwo, Obi, Sydney-Agbor & Mgbenekedi, 2013). In Kenya, a study of youths aged 10-24 years found that males were five times more likely to use alcohol and almost twenty times more likely to use marijuana than their female counterparts (World Bank, 2004). In conclusion, literature review and findings in this study indicates that males are more inclined to abuse drugs than their female counterparts. Furthermore, gender and age are determinants of the types of drugs that are abused.

4.2.2 Age of drugs abusers

The findings in this study show that 82% of those who abuse drugs and substances are between the age of 11 to 25 years (Figure 3). By age group, those between 16-20 years are more likely (41%) to abuse drugs closely followed by those between 11-15 age bracket. Ordinarily, most children in these age groups are either in primary and secondary schools, or institutions of higher education, which could imply that the menace of drug abuse is widespread in the education institutions in Lamu County. The World Drug Report (UNODC, 2014) notes that globally, in 2012, up to 7% of world population aged 15-64 had used an illicit drug mainly marijuana and cocaine in the previous year. Chesang (2013) note that those between 16-30 years of age are the most affected by drug abuse in Kenya. Furthermore, in an analysis of drug abuse in the coastal region of Kenya, over 60% of drug abusers are below the age of 30 years (Korir, 2013).
Drug and Substance Abuse Among the Youth in Lamu County

The oldest case of drug and substance abuse mentioned in this study was 60 years old. On the lower end, children as young as 7 years were also mentioned as abusing drugs:

“7 years and above. When young children are sent by parents or parents leave drugs on a table, the children start tasting and get used to them from a tender age”.

_Students FGD, School J_

“From my own experience over the years that I have been around here, there is no specific age that one is likely to abuse drugs; it all depends on the background and the environment of a child. If the child is exposed to an environment where drugs are available may be the parents are involved in drug abuse, he may start using drugs at infancy. So, the age factor is just too wide”.

_Community Elder, Area E_

“It starts at the age of 14. In fact, it’s immediately some of them drop out from primary school or those who have finished class 8. It goes maybe to 24 or even 30 years. I had a friend when I was in the armed forces; we were in the armed forces with him. After he left the forces; he is now almost 45 or 50; he started using drugs and I had to call him and tell him that he has big boys who are looking up to him and what he was doing was not good and he had to stop”.

_Chief, Area D_

Drug abuse affects people during their most productive years, when youth become trapped in a cycle of drug use and drug trade as opposed to being engaged in legitimate employment and educational opportunities (UNODC, 2016a). In conclusion, there is a wide range in the age of people involved in drug abuse in Lamu County. However, it appears that from both literature and findings in this study, that younger persons between 11-30 years are more likely to be involved in drug abuse than older persons.

![Figure 3: Age of drugs and substance abusers in Lamu County](image-url)
4.3 Awareness of drugs abuse in Lamu County

The second objective in this study was to establish awareness about drugs abuse and their effects on the youth in Lamu County. In addressing this objective, information was gathered on: i) types of drugs that are abused by the youth in Lamu County; ii) sources of the drugs; and iii) how the drugs are abused by the youth in Lamu County. The findings are presented in sub-sections 4.3.1 through 4.3.4.

4.3.1 Drugs abuse by the youth in Lamu County

Six out of the nine (67%) of the secondary school principals and one of the two managers of technical training institutes that were surveyed confirmed awareness of drug and substance abuse in their institutions (Table 2). Furthermore, two of the four medical officers surveyed also confirmed awareness of drug and substance abuse among the youth in the area.

### Table 2: Awareness of drug and substance abuse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal secondary school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager vocational training center</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical officer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Meanwhile, all other respondents who were interviewed confirmed that there is a widespread problem of drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County. A significant number of youth have been addicted to drugs, especially in settlements such as Kashmun in Lamu Island (Lamu County Integrated Development Plan, 2013, pp:16). The following sample verbatim excerpts from the interviews and focus group discussions with respondents consistently demonstrates that there is high level of awareness as well as the types and sources of drugs that are abused by the youth in Lamu County;

**Promising young man wasted by drugs**

"I can remember last year I met a certain family that had a son I knew for so long. This is my twentieth year in this town. I am a businesswoman. In previous years, this young man was focused. He was a hard worker. I later met him and he seemed to be mentally ill. He used to trade in building stones and timber. So, I met him with a church drum roaming around town. I realized something was amiss. I looked for the family to know what was happening. I talked to a relative who said that he engaged in drugs; he stopped working and those were the repercussions of taking drugs for long”.

*Community Leader, Area E*

**Agony of parents’ whose children are addicted to drugs**

"This issue of drug abuse is a big issue for us. It has affected parents whose children have started abusing drugs."
Many parents are complaining about this issue of drug abuse because their children are involved. There are many children who are affected. Many children are now sick and some parents have lost their children because of drug abuse. It has led to poverty because they are addicted to abusing drugs especially Unga, more so than marijuana. The ones using Unga are more affected because Unga has really affected our children”.

Member of BOM, School B

Rampant drug and substance abuse in the community

“Drugs and substance abuse is rampant here in our community and society at large whereby many people are affected not only men, but even women are affected by drug and substance abuse. And we normally witness and observe the kind of challenges that we have in Lamu County and there are a lot of abuses”.

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School D

Two out of every three households affected

“Majority of households are affected, say two out of three households have someone who abuses drugs”.

Students FGD, School B

Violent encounter with a drug addict

“That thing, it is a big problem. Like now, it was just yesterday I came from school here headed to town, I met someone who is an addict of that, and he had closed the road placing a tree here and there then he stands there and says he want money, you give him fifty shillings so that he can open for you to pass, he pretends like he is a policeman, at that moment he has a machete and a knife. So, when I stopped I told him to remove that. He insisted and refused to remove and he took the machete, because I had refused to give the fifty shillings that he demanded so he threw the machete at me and it missed me, so I took the tree because now I could see he is dangerous and he withdrew a knife. I decided there was no need of engaging him and I ran to the police. I took the OCS, came and followed him and caught him, right now he is in police custody and mostly he is someone who uses those drugs a lot. So, there is that, in plenty. It is only a few years ago it came, this thing was never here five years back but now we see that it has affected children and most youths”.

Religious Leader, Area A

A local University girl drugged by a friend

“Last week, I remember I had a case when a mother came to me. Her daughter is at the University. So, she came to me complaining of the behaviour of her daughter. I had to call the daughter and we discussed with the daughter as my daughter not as a chief. You know sometimes you must lower yourself so that you can get the information. So, I talked to her as my daughter and I told her the disadvantages of her using hard drugs and other things. She told me there is a girl who they happen to be together in the university and it happened that they were just talking then she told her you can test this. She didn’t know what she was testing / sniffing. So, she sniffed and became unconscious and she was taken to her mother’s as she was vomiting. Then the mother became worried and that is when she called me.
Information on the type of drugs and substances that are abused in Lamu County was gathered from respondents using questionnaires, interview and focus group discussions. The data that was gathered was subjected to descriptive analysis to generate percentages and the findings are presented in Figure 4.

Figure 4 shows that eight types of drugs were mentioned as being abused by the youth in Lamu County. Marijuana or Bhang, scientifically known as Cannabis sativa was the most frequently mentioned drug by almost a quarter of the respondents.

This was closely followed by Khat, locally known as Miraa, and tobacco products including cigarettes. Hard drugs including heroin, cocaine, mandrax and Rohyphol tablets (locally known as bugizi) were also mentioned. The main drugs that are abused in Kenya include alcohol, cannabis, heroin, Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD), mandrax and...
prescription drugs such as codeine, phenobarbitone, valium and piriton among others. A study of drug abuse among secondary school students in Central Kenya found that students took marijuana mistakenly to enhance their studies, while Khat (Miraa) was taken during the examination period to remain awake as they revised for exams (Kyalo, 2010). The UNODC have listed 244 drugs and substances that are under international control although those that are reported in drug seizures are smaller in number (UNODC, 2016a). Similarly, in Kenya, over 220 substances are listed as prohibited and controlled substances (Republic of Kenya, 1994).

The respondents further indicated that the drugs and substances are abused at any time of the day. However, mornings and evenings were frequently mentioned as peak times with higher incidences of drug abuse. Equally, the likelihood of drug abuse was reportedly higher during the weekends, sports events, and festivals such as weddings and funerals. Chesang (2013) further notes that in Kenya, illegal drugs are available everywhere including the next neighbour, kiosk, street corner and bar and they are abused anytime including during social gatherings. In conclusion, these findings indicate that drugs and substance abuse have become deeply entrenched into the communal fabric and lifestyle of the youth in Lamu County.

**Examples of drugs that are abused**

"The drugs that are abused include Unga, brown sugar, a green tablet that is put in the mouth under the tongue where it dissolves. Such drugs are available in Bajuli, Kashmir, Hidabo, Kadthahari and Kijitoni villages."

*Community Leader, Area K*

"In the school and the community, the most abused drugs are Bhang, alcohol, cocaine, Miraa, and a blue and white drug that is sold in the chemist which is used to treat mentally sick people. Other drugs that are abused are alcohol and tobacco."

*Out of School Youth, Area H*

4.3.3 **Sources of drugs that are abused**

Information was sought on the sources of drugs and substance that are abused and the results are illustrated in Figure 5. Respondents indicated that most of the illegal drugs that are abused are got from within the country (79%) and consistently mentioned were Lamu, Malindi and Mombasa Counties as the origin of the illegal drugs. Some respondents further identified the type of drugs that originate from specific regions, for example, Miraa was associated with Meru, while Bhang was locally grown in the Boni forest, or sourced from Kisumu, Migori and Uganda. Sources of the illegal drugs outside Kenya that were identified by respondents constituted 21% of the source and these included; Tanzania, Somalia, Pakistan, Uganda, South Africa, India and America.
Figure 5: Sources of illegal drugs abused by youth in Lamu County

The following are verbatim excerpts from the interview and focus group discussions that further confirms the high level of awareness of the sources of drugs that are abused by youth in Lamu County:

**Drugs from up-country, Pakistan, Mombasa, Nairobi**

“They come from up country and Pakistan then it comes through Mombasa. When it arrives in Kenya it goes to Nairobi first, then it gets here in Lamu. There is someone from the mainland and he is the one who brings for us. He comes with boat and he sells to us and then he disappears. He has people here in Lamu whom he leaves the drugs with for them to sell then they take him the money.”

*FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu*

**Bhang from the community and upcountry**

“Bhang is grown around in the community, and it is also brought from upcountry, also supplied by rich politicians, brought by road, air through helicopters, water by boats at night using fishermen in the deep sea”

*Out of School Youth, Area E*

**Bhang, cocaine, Miraa from Kisumu, Mombasa and Meru respectively**

“Bhang is brought from Kisumu while cocaine, brown sugar and heroin are brought from Mombasa. Miraa is got from Meru while illicit brews are sourced from the local community”

*Chief, Area A*

**Bhang, heroin, tobacco from Malindi, Pakistan and Pate Island respectively**

“Bhang is brought from Malindi while heroin is sourced Pakistan, Tobacco from Pate Island, and Miraa from Meru. These drugs are transported by road and sea; some are sent as courier parcels”

*Chief, Area B*
**Drugs from Uganda, Tanzania**

“The drugs are brought in from Uganda, Tanzania, a little Bhang is grown in Hongwe, from upcountry brought by road and sea then distributed by boda boda”

*Out of School Youth, Area A*

**Cocaine from Mombasa, Bhang from Uganda**

“These drugs come from far and they come by means not know. Brown sugar and cocaine probably come from places like Mombasa but Bhang come from as far as Uganda and its then transported to here because it not planted here it’s planted there because the environment here does not allow”

*Chief, Area E*

While these responses confirm the sources of illegal drugs, they also indicate that the Sea is a major route through which the illegal drugs and substances find their way into Lamu County. This is a pointer to an external source of the drugs outside Kenya. Chesang (2013) also noted the external sources of the illegal drugs as South Africa, Brazil and Columbia and local sources as the Coastal Towns of Kenya and Tanzania. The extensive Kenyan coastline coupled with an international airport in Mombasa and feeder airstrips in Lamu, Malindi and Kwale and the porous border with Somalia make the Coast region an ideal transit route for international drug traffickers (Halimu, 2006). The spillover effects of these illicit drugs have resulted in the increasing local consumption. Furthermore, although respondents mentioned Mombasa, Malindi and Lamu as some of the sources of the illegal drugs and substances, they were also clear that the drugs and substances arrived at these destinations through the sea, as the following verbatim excerpt indicates:

**A lot of drugs come by ship**

“I am not sure but one thing I know for sure is that a lot of drugs come by ship. They come by ship. We have Jetties in Mpeketoni which are not used by many people. We have small Jetties here like Meyja, Kiongwe, Mjini. These are Jetties that the Swahili cities used in the past because these cities have been here for a long time. Lamu drug dealers use boats to supply their merchandise in this area. They have their agents and in my view, I think they use boats. The reasons why I say that is because the cars that come here pass through security check points and it would be very easy to detect the drugs. However, these checks points are in place, but the drugs are still available. It means that the routes without checks are used to deliver drugs”

*Member of BOM, School A*

This is a further indication to the fact that most of the drugs have an external source outside the country. Meanwhile, it is worrying that the source of the Rohypnol tablets (bugizi) were pharmacy shops within Lamu County, which further compounds the issue of drug abuse in the County when illegal drugs become accessible through legally established business enterprises. The drugs are transported in a variety of ways from their source and within Lamu county including air, sea and road, disguised as courier parcels or hidden in clothing, and food items, for example potato sacks and bread. They are also transported in plastic containers, briefcases and match boxes. The following verbatim excerpts demonstrates the ways in which the illegal drugs find their way into Lamu County:
Bhang transported in potato sack and plastic containers

“Yes there was a time we caught a lot of Bhang that had been packed in sacks of potatoes so you could not know anything was packed in there. But when the loaders were offloading one sack fell out and then it was noticed so we reported to the police and after the investigation we found like 10 sacks packed that way. Another way is these plastic containers when you pack in them one can’t notice and Bhang is not something that is heavy so it’s packed in that you can’t smell it. Once packed that way they are transported by means of vehicles”.

Chief, Area E

Transport of drugs through Sea, Air and Road

“They come from outside because even when you look at Bhang, there are no farms growing Bhang here. So, they come from outside. It comes all the way from Mombasa because Mombasa has a port and it has airports, their roots come from outside because I don’t think things like Unga are available in Kenya. I hear it comes from outside. So, there are certain routes used to bring those drugs in. Surprisingly, how it gets here, only the ones who buy it must know the areas where they can go to get the drugs. Maybe they travel to Mombasa and when they come with it, they communicate on phone. It’s not easy to arrest the people who are using different ways that there is only one way that drugs can get here. The only means of transport is road and sea. So, it’s transported by road to Lamu and then when in Lamu, it is brought here by sea. So, there must be a way that it is transported to this place”.

Member of BOM, School B

Within Lamu itself, there are specific areas known as sources of the drugs. For example, Mbwajumwali was cited for heroin, while Chundwa was cited for Bhang among other areas.

4.3.4 Ways in which the drugs are abused

The research sought to find out the ways in which the drugs are abused. The results were presented in Figure 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th><strong>Percentage</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chewing</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snifing</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injection</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swallowing</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6: Ways in which the drugs and substances are abused
Although the respondents did not directly link the ways in which each specific drug was abused, they identified in general, the ways in which the drugs are abused as chewing, smoking, sniffing, injecting, drinking and swallowing. These ways of drug abuse are consistent with the types of drugs that were mentioned and are further confirmation of the wide range of drugs that are accessible by the youth in Lamu County. Since the drugs are costly, the addicts pool together the little money they have, to raise the minimum for a unit dose of the drug. This imply that there is a lot of sharing of drugs between the addicts. Considering that some of the drugs are injectable, it is a pointer to the health risks that victims are exposed to when they share hypodermic needles.

**Smoking**

“One jointed cigarette costs three hundred shillings (300). We mix a cigarette, heroin and a little bhang. We buy heroin, cocaine and bhang separately and then buy cigarette from the shops and mix to make the jointed cigarette. The mixture is called popper”.

*FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu*

**Injections**

“For heroin, we mix with water and then you inject yourself so that one is just direct. We buy the needles for injections from the chemist for those who use through that method of injections. But I can say here in Lamu there are not many who inject themselves. They are only a few, you will find two or three”.

*FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu*

### 4.4 Effects of drugs abuse on youth in Lamu County

The second objective focused on the effects of drugs abuse on the youth in Lamu County. Respondents were required to indicate the physiological and behavioral effects of drugs abuse on the youth in Lamu County in general and specifically on students in secondary schools. The findings are presented in sub-sections 4.4.1 and 4.4.2.

#### 4.4.1 Physiological and behavioral effects of drug abuse

Information was gathered on the physical (health) and psychological (behavioral) changes on youth in Lamu because of drugs abuse and the data was presented in Figure 7 and Box 1. Figure 6 shows that almost two thirds (61%) of the effects are health related and mainly acute health effects (39%) including: death, hallucinations, headaches, infection with HIV and AIDS, liver cirrhosis, lack of appetite, lack of sleep, lose sense of taste, loss of weight, loss of memory, mental disorders, slurred speech and body weakness (Box 1). Meanwhile about a quarter (24%) of the effects are aggressive behavioural changes including conflicts in the family, stealing, rape and violence.
Drug and Substance Abuse Among the Youth in Lamu County

Box 1: Physiological and behavioural effects of drug abuse

**Physiological effects**

Acute mild death, hallucinations, headaches, HIV and AIDS, liver cirrhosis, lack of appetite, lack of sleep, lose sense of taste, lose weight, loss of memory, mental disorders, red shot eyes, shaking and staggering, sleepy, slurred speech and body weakness brown teeth, dirty, dry skin, gain weight, high appetite for food, stained fingers, wounds and burns on the lips, behavioural effects aggressive, non-aggressive, Violence, conflicts in the family, stealing, rape, extreme physical exertion, mood swings, careless and unruly, Idleness, lazy and absconds work, neglected children, poor academic performance, poor hygiene and self-neglect, poor relationship with others, sluggish behaviours, uncontrolled talking, unfriendly, begging for food.

The list of the negative effects of drugs and substance abuse is endless. While some drugs are associated certain specific negative effects, there are commonalities in physiological and behavioural negative effects across most drugs. The physiological effects include; brain damage, upper digestive tract cancers, heart attack, high blood pressure, liver and lung damage, headaches, weight gain and loss, increased and reduced appetite for food, bronchitis, emphysema, hallucinations, lowered perception of pain, euphoria, coma and death, impotence, blindness, insomnia, and greater risk of hepatitis, tetanus & HIV/AIDS (Kyalo, 2010; Agu et al, 2013; Chesang, 2013; Korir, 2013; UNODC, 2014). The behavioral negative effects include; reduced concentration span, hampered memory and learning ability, boredom, reduce short-term memory & comprehension, loss of interest in school work & co-curricular activities, absenteeism in school, feeling of satisfaction & excitement, fantasies, suicide & murder among young people, poor performance in school, impaired decision making & creative thinking, risk behaviours, sexuality vulnerability & victimizations, paranoia, loss of identity, stunted development of life & social skills and lack of core living values such as honesty, tolerance, peace and responsibility.

The following verbatim excerpts from interviews and focus group discussions further highlights the physiological and behavioural negative effects of drug abuse among the youth:

**Drug addicts are isolated by family and community members**

“It's an issue which is not very good and it is affecting us negatively economically, health wise and it is making us to be isolated by people. We even thank you for being with us here. We are isolated completely from the family and the community because they see us as lost people. When we go somewhere, let's say where people are giving offertory, they refuse us to give as they say we are people who cannot be advised because we use drugs and whenever we enter a place, every person stares at us.”

FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu

**Health and household poverty**

“When you work and get five hundred shillings (500), you only take tea and use the rest of the money to buy drugs. So, you end up being hungry and at the same time your wife and kids at home depends on you. So, you find
when you get money you go buy drugs so health wise we are affected because we don't think of eating. You finish even a month and you have not been eating well so will not have good health. The more you get more money the more we tend to take the drugs in plenty. You find that maybe if you get one thousand and five hundred shillings (1,500) in a day, you will take home only three hundred shillings (300)

FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu

Violence in the society

“First, the drugs have contributed to violence in the society. You can no longer instruct a youth and he listen and obey. They break the law ever so often and therefore get arrested so frequently. There have also been student unrests that I think is mainly led by this group of drugs and substance abusers”.

Community Elder, Area E

Stealing, raping

“Parents are more affected because of their children to an extent that their houses must be guarded as their own children have become thieves; they steal, they steal valuables, they steal money, they steal dishes, they steal their parents’ clothes. These are children whose parents were relying on. They were hoping that they would help them in future by supporting them financially. The parents now have the responsibility of caring for them. They have also to feed them, dress them, and they are also in bad state. They are dirty, they don’t shower, and they look older than they are because of the effect of the drugs. The community is also affected because the children commit immorality in other people’s homes, they steal, they loot and they also rape girls. So, the community is also affected. Nowadays, it’s hard to leave your clothes outside, you have also to fence well, you have to put a padlock”.

Member of BOM, School B

“There is someone I know with elderly parents, the father cannot even see and the mother is obese, so if you dare leave your house carelessly he comes in and steals anything he can get his hand on. So instead of him working hard to support with expenses at home he steals from even their home to buy drugs adding onto their poverty. He steals and sells household items such as cups, the cooking pan or anything”.

Religious Leader, Area E

“Yes, the youth steal a lot, like the day before yesterday one of them was burned alive and he is still in the mortuary. He was burned because he was used to stealing things like goat and disturbing people and when he goes there when asked for cash by the police he comes to steal and take to them so he was burned the day before yesterday”.

Chief, Area A

“It has affected the entire family at large. Poverty level and theft have increased. They steal in their homes after their homes, they go to the community. When you hang clothes, they are stolen and sold. They take them to Pate Island or Chundwa then those stolen from Pate are sold maybe here”.

Chief, Area B
Lazy and threat to family

“They have been affected negatively. People who are under the influence of drugs are lazy. Because they are lazy and life must continue, they end up involving themselves in stealing. Thirdly, many are helpless health wise. They have ended up being very helpless, sick, without strength. Many who are affected have become a threat to families. This is because here is someone who at any time can behave inhuman because he has no values”.

Member of BOM, School A

“Their health is bad because most of them don’t find time to eat well, the only time they have is to buy drugs so instead of saying let me buy lunch they rush to the places where the drugs are sold then they continue to use the drugs”.

Chief, Area E

Threat to the family institution

“You also find that the youth are not getting married. They get to an old age without getting married and without the youths who can help tomorrow. Like for me, I have brothers but I expect at my old age my son will help me. Like my son is an addict, am hurting but for him its nothing. So, in years to come, poverty rate will rise because when I retire and my son is stealing everything including what I have”.

Chief, Area B

A costly habit

I sometimes use one thousand and five hundred shillings (1,500) on drugs per day. I do small business and when I get like three hundred shillings (300) I go to buy the drugs and smoke. I again go and maybe get another two hundred shillings (200) and I go buy more drug until I have nothing in the evening. You know for me, it is a must use more than three times a day. Like maybe yesterday, I smoked 4 times, today I will do it 4 times and if I get a fifth time I will still do it. I take depending on the amount I make per day”.

FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu

Begging for money to fuel their drug habit

“If drugs were very expensive, how are they able to buy the drugs? You know one day I was somewhere and one of the addicts of drugs came and asked me that he has not taken breakfast if I could give him some coins and another one came and another one. So, I was told that what they do is to beg one person after another and at the end of the day they have enough money to purchase drugs for the day. And they don’t even ask for much may be ten or twenty shillings because they know there is another person they can go to and if he does that to five people he has raised one hundred shillings. That is how they get themselves hooked up with these drugs”.

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School C
Drug addiction

"In the morning when I wake up my mind is not working. You feel like the body is broken and feel like you are sick so you must go and use the drugs to feel better."

FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu

4.4.2 How drugs have affected students

Specific to secondary school students in Lamu County, drug have adversely affected them in several ways (Figure 8 and Box 2).

- Poor relationship: 30%
- Violence: 20%
- Poor academic performance: 15%
- School drop out: 13%
- Crime: 10%
- Health: 7%
- Low school attendance: 5%

Figure 8: Effects of Drugs and Substance on Students in Lamu County

In general, drugs abuse has adverse effects on both the health and behavior of the students. The most frequently mentioned adverse effect is poor relationship (30%) between the students and other students, teachers, parents and the community. Violence was the second frequently mentioned adverse effect in terms of bullying other students, fighting within the school and community and general unruly behaviour. It worth noting that students who abuse drugs and substances are also likely to be involved in crime.
manifested in stealing probably for cash to buy drugs, engage in rape and entice other students into the habit. Overall, drug and substance abuse among students have affected schooling as manifested in poor academic performance, absenteeism and high school dropout rates.

The following are verbatim excerpts from interviews that further highlights the effects of drug and substance abuse among the students:

**Poor relationship with other students, teachers and parents**

“You find that they don’t respect the teachers and the parents. They don’t have friends and at home they fear everyone even if it’s the parents”

*Chief, Area B*

**Expulsion from school**

“It’s challenging to be honest. Last year, we had to come to school to handle students who had created a mess, they had destroyed school property. Parents misunderstood us because we had to expel some of the students here. This was because if they remained here they would have destroyed the entire school. So, in such instances, when we see students are not behaving properly despite repeated warnings, then the last option is to expel the students. Even last year, there are some students who did their examinations outside the school despite being boarders due to such issues”.

*Member of BOM, School G*

**Suspension from school**

“We suspended them indefinitely and asked them to go find other schools, since at our school, we cannot accommodate any peddler. The students performing well are drug abusers. Many abuse Marijuana, Bhang. So many of them use these drugs and you cannot give them any counselling because some of them they are coming from a single parent and that is a very big issue to our community. Majority of them, they are coming from the single parents. Others using drugs but come from both parent families are poor….. they’re coming from poor families”

*Member of BOM, School J*

**Poor academic performance**

“The year before last year, there was this boy that would drink a lot, would sneak and go drinking in the village and would sneak back, but I think the School was able to live with him till he cleared and left. There is also another case here and am suspecting that one of those boys is addicted; he is ever late in class, and his performance is very poor and his speech is quite affected. Today he missed the class and said he was in the hospital, he claims to be ever sick”.

*Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School E*

“It affects us because you see like this student he is sent home stays home for two weeks and when he comes back we have covered the syllabus for two weeks in his absence. So, it means school’s mean grade will go down”.

*Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School A*

**Infection with HIV and AIDS**

“Weakness and death, for example as a result of HIV infection because of sharing needles. Another bad effect is loss of sexual drive in men and stealing”.

*Students FGD, School B*
School drop out

We have a case of a student who was taking a lot of drugs dropped out. I think he is even known by some students here because he was to complete in 2015. He just left school and disappeared, as simple as that. He is in the village but really hooked into it. So, his life in school was like a barrier. We talk to the students we really do but it is like some of them have just made up their minds no matter what.

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School C

Violence

“Because out Bhang’s influence he does crazy things like fighting. For example, last year we had one who even though did not want to open up to us but we were sure he had smoked something because he picked a log, hit a fellow student who passed out as a result. When the teacher tried to call him, he said, you too teacher come I show you. So, we knew he was under influence of something but he denied however even his eyes could tell”.

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School A

4.5 Factors contributing to drug abuse in Lamu County

The third objective in this study sought to establish the factors that contribute to drugs abuse in Lamu County. Across the respondents, a total of 16 specific issues were mentioned as contributing to drugs abuse among the youth in Lamu County. These factors were clustered into socio-cultural and economic factors.

Figure 9 show that socio-cultural factors are the main contributing factors (75%) towards drugs abuse among the youth in Lamu county. Meanwhile economic factors contribute 25% of the case of drug abuse.

4.5.1 Socio-cultural factor

The most cited socio-cultural factor was peer pressure (21%) among the youth closely followed by influence from family members and community (17%). An analysis of the specific socio-cultural factors shows that they are closely related and reinforcing. For example, while poor parental guidance expose the youth to bad role models, this is likely to reinforce peer pressure, further driving the youth into seeking recognition from their peers by whatever means available.

Although there is not a single cause that drives the youth into drug and substance abuse, peer influence is a major cause of drug abuse among the youth in Kenya (Chesang, 2013). The youth are pulled into drugs by those they associate with, which makes drug abuse a learned behaviour as expounded in the social learning theory (Bandura, 1971). At the same time, rapid

The students not performing well are drug abusers. Many abuse marijuana, bhang. So many of them use these drugs and you cannot give them any counselling because some of them they are coming from a single parent and that is a very big issue to our community. Majority of them, they are coming from the single parents. Others using drugs but come from both parent families are poor...... they’re coming from poor families.
urbanization and globalization have exposed the youth to more horizons, which have weakened the traditional social controls (Jonawitz, 1975). Consequently, parents are no longer able to apply firm control and guidance on their children, which expose them to undesirable behaviours. The following are some verbatim excerpts that highlights the specific issues contributing to drugs abuse among the youth in Lamu County:

Peer pressure, seeking recognition from peers

“Secondly, it's thinking that the drugs will give them power. When under influence, one has remarkable strength. You can do things that you may otherwise not be able to do. A few days ago, we had a case where a madam was kissed by a student in class. When she turned to look at who had kissed her, she screamed out loud and it was escalated to the school board of management. That student must have been under the influence of some drugs to be able to do something like that. So, it gives them ability and strength. In addition, they think it will give them consciousness. They believe that if you are under the influence and you are farming, you will dig more, if its studies, you will be brighter because they think it unlocks something”.

Member of BOM, School A

Influence of family and community members

“Our children associate a lot with people from the neighborhood and they stay in places where people abuse drugs. So, it's very easy for children to be involved in drug abuse because they may sometimes be asked, "Taste this." Why don't you have a look at this?" So, they associate with the drug abusers and the environment that we have, which is a very bad environment. Wherever you go, you find there are people abusing drugs. So, our children associate with
“But I heard a boy who was in a primary school, he used to take drugs, the father was a drugs addict and the mother was a peddler. You understand by peddler?”

Chief, Area D

“I think that some of the families, the relatives of the students or parents take drugs and these children end up taking the drugs also out of curiosity. If my father is using drugs, I will be more curious to also taste the drugs. So, I think there are people who sell drugs but the parents contribute a lot also”.

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School C

“We realize that most of their parents have abused drugs terribly. And they just abuse them when their kids see them. So, they copy the parents. You realize that when students come to school you cannot stop the student because the parent is doing it. Another one is just from the environment where they come from, whereby the parents are just involved in drugs and therefore the students also got to be automatically involved in the same”.

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School A

Idleness

“If there was work throughout they will not find time to abuse drugs. Unlike Nairobi and other countries, there are no facilities for sports and games to occupy the youth. You find that the politicians only introduce sports and games for a while when they want votes, then they disappear. But it should be a continuous program in that there should be a playing

grounds available for the youths to keep themselves busy. In our case, they are not there, we don’t have such things. Its either farming or idleness, and the poverty levels are very high”.

Chief, Area A

“Being idle. When your friends are stressed, you tell them to smoke it for relief. But instead of stress relief, it also ends up affecting us”.

FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu

Teachers are involved in drug peddling

“It's the school that is mostly affected by the use of Bhang and drug abuse. The first student had a mean score of C- while most of the form fours got a mean score of E. And they are also selling within the school. And I also hear that there is another problem in that, the teachers are involved in selling the drugs and so then they can’t concentrate on the students so what will they do since it’s the business of the day in the school. And for the school things are bad because the principal is also involved. The CID arrested them but were compromised. There is need for more investigation because people are complaining about that head teacher”.

Chief, Area A

Habit of drug abuse deeply entrenched in the social fabric

“During Moi era, we didn’t have these problems and even if you wanted to smoke Bhang, you could go and hide yourself at a distance. If someone, identified you as a Bhang smoker, your name would be spoiled. It is like you have killed someone. But nowadays, smoking Bhang is the in-thing among the youth…. if a boy has not smoked Bhang he is not mature”.

Chief, Area D
Lack of parental guidance

“We found one of our girls was cohabiting with a man for three days. Then we called the mother to find out whether she knew where her daughter has been and she didn't know. She is like since she has paid the school fees the child should be in school. She has rented her a house around here. So, the child left her place to the man's place. You see, she wants to keep the daughter away from home because she wants to engage in her own affairs and does not want the daughter to see. They are known as “quarry women”. The girl asked the mother right here as we were handling the case, ‘I never question you when you bring those your men home and I am wondering the reason why you have brought me here’. The principal had to ask the girl to leave us alone to speak with the mother. Now we had to tell the mother that she was to blame for the behaviour of the daughter”.

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School A

4.5.2 Economic factors

There is a close interplay between socio-cultural and economic factors that contribute to drug abuse. For example, the high unemployment among the young result in idleness, creating a void and a sense of social exclusion, which leads to frustration and stress, culminating in seeking for solace in drugs as a temporary relief from their current state.

Unemployment

“Lack of jobs is also contributing in that after high school, if maybe they don't pass well in their exams, they have no future”.

Member of BOM, School A

“We are in area where you have to move around looking for something to support yourself and other times you are stressed and one is forced to use the drugs for relief. I personally as an older man have used drugs for 25 years”.

FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu

High poverty levels

“As a result of drug abuse poverty has increased, theft and no peace in the family. You also find that if your child is arrested, you would rather sell your house or properties to ensure they are released”.

Chief, Area B

4.6 Challenges in curbing drug abuse in Lamu County

The fourth objective in this study was to investigate the challenges that are encountered in efforts to curb drugs abuse in Lamu County. Figure 10 presents nine specific challenges that were identified and almost three quarters of these were related to policy and institutional framework (73%) while socio-cultural factors accounted for about of third (27%) of the challenges.

4.6.1 Policy and institutional framework factors

Two challenges under policy and institutional framework that were identified are related to legal enforcement to curb the drug menace and accounted for over a half (56%) of the overall challenges. These were: weak legal enforcement of the law (35%) and fear of retaliatory attacks from drug peddlers and drug abusers (21%). Despite legislations to control drugs abuse in Kenya including the Kenya Narcotic Drugs and
Psychotropic Substances Control Act Number 4 of 1994, revised in 2012, the legal enforcement under this legislation remains the main challenge in curbing the menace of drug abuse. The narcotic business is a complex syndicate that abounds with corruption, woven by powerful people who have enlisted the services of security, immigration, customs and the anti-narcotics personnel (Chesang, 2013). Evidently, the drug cartels have not only employed complex and convoluted operations in their illegal trade, but also have enlisted some law enforcement agents for protection. The wealth and power of drug trafficking organizations provide them with resources to buy protection from law enforcement agents, from politicians and the business sector (UNODC, 2016, pp: xix).

Figure 10: Challenges in curbing access to illegal drugs in Lamu County

**Weak legal enforcement to curb the drugs menace**

One issue that constantly emerged is the level of corruption with the agencies charged with fighting narcotics in Lamu County including the police and court system. Those with the mandate to conduct security surveillance for narcotics are the ones who abet the law and allow illegal drugs to pass through security check points. The following excerpts from the interviews exemplifies the weak legal enforcement of laws to control the narcotics trade and curb availability of drugs for the youths in Lamu County.

“What I say is, if these drugs come with containers and they come even in the villages here, how do they come in? For containers to come in, there is procedure that they are checked by security personnel but you find nothing happens. Those given the mandate to check are given something, maybe a million shillings to leave it. The truth is,
I hear they pass through the port from Pakistan. Heroin is the easiest to penetrate because you find even ladies are paid like ten thousand shillings to transport it. They hide it in their brassier and they mostly use people from their families and close neighbours”.

Chief, Area B

“Among Government officials both senior and junior, sometimes we are informed in the news of drugs confiscated but somehow it is never known what happens to these drugs. Locally, sometimes someone is arrested but after just a short while he is set free. The parents too sometime hide their criminal children or children of their friends”

Community Elder, Area E

The level of police complicity is unfathomable. At times the police work in cohort with the drug peddlers and substitute Bhang meant for court exhibit with grass.

“The big challenge is on the side of the police. They are not faithful to their work. They just take money and do away with the cases. So instead of stopping, it is like they are promoting. Like this is Bhang (showing a photograph), we tried to burn it last week and the police were involved. Like you may find you have arrested a case of drug but you find grass. Like this bhang we were burning the day before yesterday. We thought we were burning Bhang but we were burning grass”.

Chief, Area E

Although the police were frequently mentioned as the main hindrance in the legal enforcement towards curbing drugs abuse in Lamu County, it appears the challenge run deeper into the prosecution and court system as the following verbatim excerpt attest;

“We have tried to deal with them and sensitize the community but there are loop holes. The truth is that you will find that while we are fighting drugs, on the side of court, they say the citizens have their rights so on the second day they are released and they just pay small amount of money or maybe with papers like logbook something worth like only one hundred shillings, so what I can say is there is a lot of corruption. They are released with just small fee. That is not enough so the police have almost given up because someone has been given say, fifty thousand shillings. When they take them to court, they are freed on a bond of maybe twenty, ten or five thousand shillings. So, when the police go to these places they just tell them to give something, then they are let them to go”.

Chief, Area C

Law enforcement agencies protect peddlers

“But to catch them it is very hard unless you have some people you can network with so that they tell you where to find them. But making direct arrests is very hard. To add on that, there is something that is failing us which we have talked about several times and it is something that is hurting us because the police are close to those drug dealers. For example, we got some intelligence that some drugs are somewhere and when we reported, the same police called the dealers and told them to remove them as there will be an operation. Then the same dealer will …… the next day come and face you and tell
Drug and Substance Abuse Among the Youth in Lamu County

Chief, Area C

“No, Bhang is not grown here at all. When it penetrates here, it’s through corruption in that they don’t go through the scanning process, they are just given certain amount that is the security guards. Someone is given a consignment and asked to deliver it at a certain location. Those who are supposed to guard these things are the ones involved. Security forces are very much involved and that am very sure it is there. Unless people change, we change our culture and the greed. Here in our area it’s really bad, here in ‘police station A’, it’s bad because any case that you bring doesn’t go far. First they look at cash. If you give cash the case is over just like that. But I have heard the OCS will be transferred.”

Chief, Area H

“In addition to the main law enforcement agencies including the Kenya Police, Administration Police, Chiefs and the courts, an additional establishment is the Kenya Police Reserve (KPR). This is a voluntary civilian force established to support the National Police Service at the community level in Kenya. Unfortunately, members of the KPR are not paid for the services that they offer and it is no wonder that they have joined the other law enforcement agencies in the gravy train of corruption;

“The Kenya Police Reserve (KPR) guard the community but because they are not paid, there are challenges, as they also take money, bribes, from the peddlers, so you can’t get them and they also alert the peddlers when there is an operation”.

Chief, Area A

“I think it is just an issue of authorities not willing to really fight drug abuse. With authorities, I mean the administrative, security-wise and the village elders. I think I can use one word… integrity. It is as simple as that. Once you hold an office you should be responsible. That is one of the issues; they share the proceeds of the drugs trade and turn a blind eye”.

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School C

Fear of retaliatory attacks from drug peddlers

Apparently, the law enforcement agencies know the main drug peddlers, but even when they forward their names to the police for action, nothing is done mainly because the drug business is controlled by powerful criminal cartels that are equally ruthless to those who dare interfere in their illegal activities.

“One of the challenge is threat when you try to raise the issue or arrest them. Like on security meetings when you try to mention someone, it’s very easy even to be killed. Like there is one of our sub-chief from Area B who was murdered during the day time. He was cut into pieces completely just because of mentioning someone. So, one must just remain secretive. So, there are alot of life threats. Like one day, I went to storm somewhere, where they were drinking illegal brew. When they saw us, they ran away. We then poured out everything and destroyed the Jerrycans. After we left the place, I got a message that: ‘you think you know, I will show you’. Then I knew it was him. When I went to the police, I wrote a statement but was told the solution is to do the operation repeatedly.
We did the operation consecutively until he feared. Though I still fear him because maybe he has a grudge against me so I have to be alert all the time”.

Chief, Area A

“I can tell you that it is something that is hurting us a lot because the drug dealers are not dealt with. So now our life’s as chiefs are in danger. When I go to see my friend there, let’s say Mr. Man and there is a woman selling illegal stuff, then Mr. Man my friend goes to tell the woman to avoid the chief as he is after you. So, someone like that can easily plan to kill you and you may not even realize it. So, there is that problem and even the community is not ready to help because of that, it's a secretive issue, it's something if you tell your friend something is happening somewhere and they are at this place this time they will rush there and be given maybe five hundred shillings and tell them to be careful, or leave here and go somewhere else, so there is that problem. We get little help or no help. You find that those who are dealt with are the sellers but the dealers just continue with their work and nothing is done. The death of the chief was due to the issue of drugs. Because of giving information to the police so I think they planned and killed him. Like now after 8 pm or 9 pm we don’t get out of our houses”.

Chief, Area C

“We have involved some parents in some cases, indiscipline cases which are of course perpetuated by drugs, but the parents are not cooperative. The moment you call a parent, they side with the students and may be say something like that is not a happening. Therefore, as teachers there is a challenge in imposing the discipline to a child because we stay in the village and the moment you try and press a student to the wall you realize that this very student you are going to meet him in the village and when you meet you can even be physically assaulted. This is a challenge because you cannot handle the case with the parents, they do not inquire of their children. When the parents hear of the case and sides with the kid, the kid will take the advantage and claim that the teacher hates him/her and because of that grudge you can be attacked by the villagers or the punished student. Last year there was a colleague teacher who was hit by a stone while making a phone call outside his house. We live in the village and that is why it is a challenge because we interact and meet often with the students in the village. When we did some investigation, we realised that a day before that incident, he had handled some indiscipline case of a group of boys and they threatened to see him later in the village so after that he was hit by a stone. So, we just concluded that it was the threat that was being carried out”.

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School A

What emerges from the fore-going is that the fight against narcotics is a risky undertaking engrained with fear of retaliatory attacks from the drug peddlers. Apparently, it is not only the community members who fear retaliatory attacks but also the security agents charged with the responsibility of enforcing the law against narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Ultimately, this create a sense of desperation among members of the community and personnel within the law enforcement agencies.
Ad hoc response to the drug menace

“There isn’t any program for the youths. I would just suggest if there are educated people in the area to be given that work to talk to the youths and give them advice on the effects of these drugs. Though there is a program that has come up recently because of politics. Politicians use these kinds of programs to get votes and then abandon them”. Chief, Area A

Difficulties in detecting some drugs

“The people from the boat can identify and report that so and so has brought the unwanted, it becomes so easier for it to be identified. But when it comes to hard drugs let’s say cocaine, brown sugar, Bhang it becomes too difficult for it to be identified because the way they hide it maybe in bags and so many ways. Maybe a lady will carry it within the chest, in their body so becomes difficult to know what they are carrying. Chief, Area D

Inadequate resources for the interventions

“There are challenges like in this area, there is one problem of getting the vehicle to arrest the people. Even with a motor vehicle, there are no armed escorts even if you arrest them”. Chief, Area H

Some of the drug addicts are willing to undergo rehabilitation, but they cannot meet the cost of treatment.

High cost of rehabilitation

“Like for me if I said I will not take drugs from now I will start slowly and after a month I can’t do without. To be helped, if the county government cannot do anything for us even for us we cannot do anything to help ourselves. I am one of those affected and I had five thousand shillings (5,000) and went to seek help but was told I can’t get help unless I added some more money. For to get help we need to have money and our source of income is very low because we just hustle and maybe we get five hundred shillings (500) and I have five kids and that is not enough for the family. Unless you have someone willing to help you. Like here we are 10% while 90% are out there. If you ask us here who is affected by this issue and who is ready to go for treatment, am sure we will be willing. The only problem is we are not able”. FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu

“In this situation, if there will be enough financial support to take us to rehabilitation centres, they are the only hope that we have. I took myself to the rehabilitation by my money wasn’t enough so I had to come back. I had contributed until it came to one thousand (1,000) shillings as I have committed myself so that I go back to my normal way of life. There are treatment centres in Mombasa and Malindi. If I get help even now, I am ready to go for treatment”. FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu

4.6.2 Social-cultural factors

One of the major challenge related to socio-cultural factors in curbing drug abuse in Lamu County was lack of cooperation from family and community members.

Lack of cooperation from parents and community members

“There are some parents who fight us and even
don’t talk to us. We went to the field some other time with the police, from door to door pinpointing those selling drugs. They were arrested and jailed; some one year, another four years. We tried to incorporate the community members because these drugs are getting into the community, but they don’t avail information as they see it as just an issue of the chief and they don’t want to help”.

Chief, Area C

“The other problem is that our community is not ready to give information on what is happening and so by the time you realise it’s too late. So, if the community can take measures it could help. Because when the drug peddlers come to the village they will not have space since they will see it is the common citizens who are setting them up. Since the community is just around, they could be taking measures to inform the chief.”

Chief, Area E.

“When a child is arrested, the parent goes to ask that the child is pardoned, that he should not be harmed or arrested. The parent uses whatever means for the child to be released. If the parents allowed them to be sentenced it would be good. But the parents love their children. The minute the child is arrested, they go to release them. The ones affected do not change because they know when arrested, tomorrow they will be released. There are such issues. Sometimes the child is arrested, they are to be sentenced but the case is prolonged until the child is released as not guilty. I don’t know what usually take place between them and the child. There is something else that the parents fear, that is reporting that so and so is involved. Maybe they say, "If I say I will be viewed as a bad person or maybe something may happen to me." Because these are people who protect themselves, they have money, so they can do anything. You cannot go saying so and so is involved in this issue.”

Member of BOM, School B.

4.7 Strategies of curbing drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County

The fifth objective in this study focused on the strategies for curbing drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County. As will be seen in the findings, community level and school level strategies were mentioned, which reflects the nature of the setting of the study, with some youth in school while others are out of school. Some of the strategies that were mentioned were in already in place while most were suggestions from respondents on how best to deal with the drug menace in Lamu County.

4.7.1 Community level strategies for curbing drug abuse among the youth

The respondent mentioned 13 specific community level strategies for curbing drug abuse among the youth in Lamu county (Figure 11). These strategies were clustered into socio-cultural, policy & institutional, and economic strategies. The policy and institutional strategies accounted for over a half (54%) of the suggestions. This could imply that most efforts towards curbing drug and substance abuse should be directed towards policy and institutional strategies including implementation of existing legislations, intensification of existing interventions and structural reforms. Therefore, any intervention that fail to focus on the policy and
institutional context in addressing issues of drugs and substance abuse is less likely to succeed.

4.7.1.1 Socio-cultural related strategies
Among the socio-cultural strategies that were mentioned include; sensitization of the community on drugs abuse which accounted for a fifth (20%) of all the strategies that were mentioned, provision of guidance and counselling services (12%) and empowerment of parents with parenting skills (3%). Generally, the socio-cultural related strategies were preventive in nature.

Rehabilitation services and employment opportunities
“Talking on my behalf, if the rest have something to say they can say. The government should stop the entry of these drugs here. It is not only here in Lamu where drugs are being sold, but it is all over in the coastal region. Also, the government should take us for rehabilitation. The rehabilitation centre is being built here in Lamu, but it will take time and what will we do until it is completed and opened. So, we request the government because we are affected, to take us to rehabilitation centres within a short period so that at least we can be able to help our families at home”.

FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu

A desperate call by drug addicts to be understood
“The government should understand us and that the use of drugs is not a crime but it is a disease. They take it as a crime. You know the government and the community thinks we are bad and that is why they isolate us. To be able to work with the government, the government should understand us, we are not bad people we are sick. We have mothers’ day, we have world drugs, but here in Lamu, the world drug day

Guidance and counselling at community level
“The father was a drug user and a peddler, the mother was a peddler but not a drug user, the boy was in class 7 and he happened to be a user, he was almost 16 or 17 years. I called him, the boy and when I was discussing with him he told me, I have a lot of difficulties at home my mom is a peddler, my dad is a user, where should I go and if I do anything am I doing it wrongly. He told me he sells them in school. So, I talked to the boy, I asked him, do you want to be like your father or do you want to be like your mom. He said no but I have no other alternative because they are part of me and I told him you are the only one who can change them if you have an interest and if you don't have interest you will keep on spoiling the family. He told me to assist him to go and talk to his dad. I went and the father went for rehabilitation and he became okay. I could have called him to be here today, he would have given his experience. So, the father stopped its almost 7 or 8 months and he is very decent and well behaved. He is not peddling anymore. The son is now in secondary school. And the mother is not peddling”.

Chief, Area D

Sensitisation of the community on drug and substance abuse
“We can have conferences where individuals from the villages can go and be trained on the effects of drugs, so that they can come back and impact on the community, sensitizing them and training them on the effects of drugs. So, having ambassadors in each and every village”

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School B.
have never been seen. In 2015 in Poland, I saw the largest number celebrating world drug day and they were giving t-shirts for those affected. So, those affected came out and the community, even the president of Poland said that we cannot isolate the community because of drugs and we must work hand in hand with them. It’s for us to look for means and ways to help them so that tomorrow we don’t spread the disease. In our community, we can’t even go to mosque because they think we are bad people. What can be done to be close to our families and the community my idea is they must accept us. The leaders should help finish poverty. Should open forums and involve every Kenyan and people will have a good life. They should stand and explain to the community what to be done and when they do that things will be well. If we get treatment this could also end”

FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu.

4.7.1.2 Policy and institutional strategies
The policy and institutional strategies accounted for 54% of all the strategies that were mentioned and topmost was the arrest and prosecution of drug peddlers accounting for slightly over a fifth of all the strategies (21%). This imply that respondents are aware of the legal measures already in place that could be applied to curb the drug menace by putting drug peddlers and abusers to account. The provision of rehabilitation services for drug addicts was the second most suggested strategy (12%). Generally, the policy and institutional strategies that were mentioned were corrective in nature. The following are verbatim excerpts of the interviews and focus group discussions that highlights some of the community level strategies for curbing drugs and substance abuse in the community:

Law enforcement by arresting and prosecution of drug peddlers

“On this issue of drugs we need the Government to do more. As we saw the President sink the ship the other day we would like him to keep up the efforts. The court cases involving drugs also need to be expedited and not to take too long. The evidence is there, so there is no need to take too long in court because every time it takes too long, they
take the advantage and destroy the evidence, and the judge will get bribed with huge bribes. So, what we would implore the Government to do is that when they confiscate these drugs they need to destroy it however huge it is. Then they need to take firm action against the known dealers. The Government needs to come up with a law that can freeze their wealth acquired from drug dealings. If possible, they should not just be jailed; they should be hanged as they do it in Philippines. The President of Philippines has really done a good job; whenever I read newspapers I congratulate him. That Duterte, he is very good”.

Community Leader, Area A

“In short, getting the main drug dealers of Lamu town. There is one dealer dealing in drugs just like a regular shop, just in Lamu town and everyone knows him. If such can be arrested. He is trafficking drugs in coffins and youths are waiting for it yet the Government does nothing about it”.

Religious Leader, Area F

“Things will be okay. Imagine there was another magistrate, I think he left. He contributed a lot. He did a clean job. He could fine and jail the peddlers for several years which helped to reduce the incidences. He was later transferred”.

Chief, Area C

Rehabilitation services

“We just formed a union here with some stakeholders and made contributions. We were then joined by the Member of Parliament (MP) and businessmen and then we succeeded. Even now there is another plan we were just issuing a cheque for bursary the other day from the government affirmative fund. There is this plan by women representative to secure, I think it must be one million shillings I think it’s for catering for the rehabilitation centre in Lamu County and to take those affected”.

Chief, Area C

“So, I would suggest that UNICEF to help in putting up rehabilitation centres for those affected and for the current police officers to go and new management to come in and those selling we fight with them so that this issue is no longer a problem here”.

Chief, Area B

There was some level of consensus on the strategies that need to be put in place to curb the problem of drug abuse. On the other hand, there is consensus that the that corrupt practices among the law enforcement agencies derail the fight against narcotics and should be dealt with from the very top;

Vetting of the law enforcement agents

“It is very hard to control Bhang because it’s not known exactly where it comes from and the person behind. So, those people on higher level are the ones who should be dealt with first. It is just like corruption it should be dealt with from the top management and not on the lower level for it to end”.

Chief, Area A.

It was suggested that re-shuffling of the police officers could be a strategy to break the cycle of corrupt practices in the enforcement of the anti-narcotic law;

Re-shuffling of the police

“We have tried even to ensure the police
officers are transferred and new ones brought here, but as per the government procedures, they cannot be transferred all of them at the same time. So even if new ones come they are trained by their work mates. If it were possible all should be transferred and new ones brought in, it's better that way”.

Chief, Area B.

**Provision of firearms to Chiefs**

“Even there was a time I was suggesting that since the Chief are threatened its better they be given guns to protect themselves, even if it is the small one like the pistol. Since we are in good conduct one can’t use them when not necessary. So, they are just for use in case a problem occurs”.

Chief, Area A.

**Use of sniffer dogs**

“I would also suggest that sniffer dogs should be used and not to be brought during the day at least they come at a time when people are not aware. They could be brought secretly from door to door”.

Chief, Area A.

“But recently about two weeks ago, we happened to have the sniffer dogs around so I think they were here through the national police service and they managed to go to certain houses which were well known to be working on this issue of hard drugs and they managed to arrest and had the hard drugs which were in those houses”.

Chief, Area D.

“Like three weeks ago there was an operation with sniffer dogs and they found some of the drugs but not the persons. So, for now they are afraid because they don't know when they will come again. This is one way the government can help to do away with the issue”.

Chief, Area E.

**Use of technology to enhance communication about drug peddlers**

“Within the locality here if any person is seen in the streets or any other place trying to sell the hard drugs you will be informed by the community. I have shared my mobile telephone numbers to the Nyumba Kumi Initiative. Even on the notice board my number is there, I don’t hide it. Something funny I am also on Facebook and WhatsApp, so somebody will inbox me. Like watch this guy (showing a message on Facebook page using the mobile phone)”.

Chief, Area D.

**Protection of whistle blowers**

“I could have shown you one of the guy who came to me through Facebook and he sent me a photo of some guy and wrote, please take care of this guy, he has done this, and I reported the matter to the police. It doesn’t become difficult if you keep the source of information secret”.

Chief, Area D.

4.7.1.3 **Economic related strategies**

Incidentally, strategies related to economic factors accounted for only 12% of the suggestions and frequently mentioned were strategies for engaging the youth either through vocational training, employment and involvement in arts and sporting activities. Overall, the economic focused strategies were preventive in nature.
Vocational skills training for the youth

“What I have tried to do is to talk to teachers in this school so that they talk to them so that after school they can go to a polytechnic because after failing in form four here they can join polytechnic. When they get the skills, they can now go to look for jobs somewhere else. That would be a way to reduce these drugs”.

Chief, Area C

“First, there are youths who have completed basic schooling and maybe they don’t get very good grades, they should not be looked down upon and made to feel that they are of no value in the community. The parents should not discourage them because of failing in the exams. They need to be taken to a college to learn some technical skills, and if addicted they should be taken for rehabilitation. They need to be taught some skills and make use of the skills. For example, I am not educated. My education was interrupted in form three because of lack of school fees. But now, am able to do comedy, music and arts, why because of the system we had, we had art and craft and music in schools. If these subjects could be reinstated, then if the student did not continue with schooling he would still be able to support himself with some skills. May be other skills too can be added”.

Community Elder, Area E

Creation of employment opportunities for the youth

“Also, the government should give us jobs. If the government can assure us, not necessarily being given jobs but if they can register us as a youth group, we can do cleaning in Lamu. We are hard workers here in Lamu. We just need something to keep us busy so that we don’t go back to that again because everyone here will have a good opportunity. If they can try and find out our problem and try to give us help, so that we can form groups for concerts.

The government should come up with projects to keep us engaged in them. The government should form for us some groups to support us financially. Everybody here have their own experiences, like this guy he is the youngest here and he can build very good timber house”.

FGD with Drug Addicts, Lamu

Involve the youth in arts and sports

“What we have used now is that of rehabilitation. The other way is time. Maybe if they are engaged in playing football from 4pm to 6pm, their mind will concentrate for a while on the football and shift from drugs. For example, one man, who was an addict, is married, I think he has three kids and he went to the rehabilitation and now he is now a very good player. For now, he is very good and back to normal. He is a referee”.

Chief, Area C

“We could organize some events and the best way to involve them is to play football because it’s one of the community events. We have about three fields here”.

Chief, Area D

4.7.2 School level strategies to curb drug abuse among the students

Respondents were required to indicate school level strategies for curbing drug abuse. Figure 12 presents 12 strategies that were mentioned as being effective in curbing drug abuse at school
level. Like the community level strategies, the specific strategies were grouped into policy and institutional, and socio-cultural strategies. The policy and institutional strategies accounted for over three quarters (78%) while the socio-cultural accounted for 22% of the suggested strategies. This finding confirms the importance of policy and institutional framework in designing interventions for curbing drug abuse at school and community level.

4.7.2.1 Policy and institutional strategies

The frequently mentioned institutional strategy was strengthening of guidance and counselling programme at school level which accounted for about a third (32%) of the specific strategies that were mentioned;

**Guidance and counselling programme**

“In school, we have guidance and counselling which is very, very important because through this the students are constantly advised not to be involved in drugs. So, guidance and counselling is very important. Another thing is trying to investigate the students. They should find out their history and when they find a student who is involved in drugs, he should be investigated and if it is found that he is involved, he should be warned or expelled. Such things can help. Something else, a school doing well like this school and it has a compound, it has a fence, it will be hard for outsiders to come inside. It should be noted when students go out because students might leave to take drugs. They might go outside, take drugs and then come back here. They should also be contained inside the school for the whole day and only leave in the evening to go home. But if they keep going back home, then coming back to school, that movement is not good because it may contribute to the students taking drugs”.

*Member of BOM, School B*

“There is that close monitoring of the movements of the students. We engage them in co-curricular activities. We also have life-skills education which is a once a week session by class teacher to just talk to the students on life skills. So, we involve a lot, not entirely about drugs but relationships, career guidance and so forth. Then we invite religious groups and leaders
or even parents to come and talk to the students. So, there is just that close monitoring. Talking to them, highlighting the effects of drugs and why they should stop the habit”.

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School C

Other strategies that were mentioned included fencing of the school compound, restriction of visitors to schools and provision of boarding facilities for students among others;

Fencing the school compound

“You know Madam you will to go to school X, where we are putting on a wall around the school compound which is almost complete now. The school management should also be tasked to know who surrounds their school. There is a rule that a bar or public canteen should be at least 30 metres from the school fence. Let us have a conducive environment in the schools”.

Chief, Area D

“Initially we never had a school fence but now we have. Yes, putting up of the fence has enabled us to retain students within the school because initially they would pass through the other side without our knowledge to the village and get drugs”.

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School B

More resources for guidance and counselling

“Another thing is may be to urge the administration to pump in more resources for counselling. We don’t have resources. Like books and some materials like magazines, posters and videos that can just show the effects of abusing cigarettes, marijuana, and bhang and the effects of that cocaine. The diagrams and the books should be made available to the students so that they will just be free to access them so that they be encouraged to read to know the effects. Another thing would be to use lessons like learning skills to teach them the effects of abusing drugs”.

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School B

4.7.2 Social-cultural strategies

Among the socio-cultural strategies that were mentioned were; collaboration between the school and community; and empowering parents with parenting skills.

Empower parents with parenting skills

“Also we told school that if we could invite the parents too and we have a talk with them and the students so that when they go back home they can also talk to them”.

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School A

4.7.3 Strategies for making guidance and counselling at school more effective

Specific to the school level strategy of guidance and counselling, the respondents were required to indicated this could be strengthened at school level. While guidance and counselling programme was mentioned to be effective is some schools, there was overwhelming indication that these programme need to be strengthened, and made
more effective as a strategy for curbing drug abuse by the youth in school. Figure 13 show that the topmost suggestions were: training of teachers in guidance and counselling (37%), involvement of anti-narcotics experts in school guidance and counselling programmes (17%) and provision of more resources including time for guidance and counselling.

Training teachers in guidance and counselling

This is one area that all teachers should share the skills in guiding and counselling the students. Some of us have not yet been fully trained but through college and university there is a unit that one needs to study guidance and counselling. That training is important because any teacher involved in guidance and counselling is directly involved with a student so creating that rapport between a teacher and student is very important. Any teacher can do guidance and counselling. But maybe when it comes to the technical part of it, it is advisable that people get trained.

But any teacher can really play a role because we all do it daily directly or indirectly. It is part and parcel of us as teachers”.

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School C

More time for guidance and counselling

“Well, apart from creating enough time we can also form some membership. Have it like a club, we set a day that is just known in the whole school as a day of counselling because we have a challenge with time since after four, the games time is just spent in the village because some of the students go for madrassa and so forth. But we only have two days that is Thursday and Friday that is when we can hold them after four within the school. But that time is very short because just something like 35 minutes each day and you realize that is just one hour and 10 minutes for the two days-Thursday and Friday. That time is just too short to handle the cases of guidance and counselling”

Guidance and Counselling Teacher, School B

| Training of teachers on G & C | 37% |
| Involvement of anti-narcotics experts in G&C | 17% |
| Provision of more resources for G & C | 16% |
| Allocate and use time for G & C in time table | 11% |
| Involvement of all teachers in G & C | 7% |
| Incorporate co-curricular activities in G & C | 4% |
| Policy guidelines on G & C | 3% |
| Teacher need better understanding of students | 1% |
| Maintain records on guidance and counselling | 1% |
| Provision of G & C services to parents | 1% |

Figure 13: Strategies for making guidance and counseling at school more effective
Drug and Substance Abuse Among the Youth in Lamu County
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5.1 Conclusion

5.1. Conclusion

This was an exploratory study that investigated factors that contribute to drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County. It focused on: awareness about drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County; types and sources of drugs that are abused; how the drug abuse has affected the youth and schooling in Lamu County; community and school level strategies for curbing drug abuse; and challenges encountered in attempts to curb this menace at community and school levels. The following are the conclusions based on findings on these thematic areas.

5.1.1 Demographic factors and drug abuse

Two demographic factors were explored in this study; gender and age. This study revealed that males are more inclined to abuse drugs than their female counterparts. However, some female indulge in the habit, though most of them serve as drug peddlers and couriers. This finding is consistent with the global trend which show that men are two to three times more likely than women to abuse drugs such as opium and marijuana (UNODC, 2014). Similarly, some studies in Kenya have reported that male youths aged 10-24 years were five times more likely to use alcohol and almost twenty times more likely to use marijuana than their female counterparts (World Bank, 2004). This study further revealed that 82% of those who abuse drugs in Lamu County are between the age of 11 to 25 years. This age group is mainly in primary and secondary schools and other education institutions. Similar studies in Kenya and globally indicates that most of those who are abuse drugs are below 30 years of age (Korir, 2013).

5.1.2 Awareness of drugs and substance abuse in Lamu County

There is high awareness about the widespread problem of drug and substance abuse among the youth in Lamu County including the areas that are most affected, types of drugs that are abused and their sources. The specific youth who are addicted to the drugs are known and many examples were cited while some confessed drug addicts were interviewed in this study. Meanwhile, there is a sense of helplessly in the communities as they witness their children wasting away their lives in drugs. The main types of drugs that are abused are marijuana or Bhang and Khat or Miraa. Though Miraa is not classified as a narcotic in Kenya, it is known to induce adverse health and social effects and it is prohibited in some countries. In addition, hard drugs including heroin, cocaine, mandrax and Rohyphol tablets are increasingly being abused by the youth in Lamu County. The mornings, evenings, weekends, and social gathering such as sport events and festivals are prime times when the likelihood of drug abuse is higher. The sources of the drugs that are abused are within and outside the country. Frequently mentioned within the country were Lamu, Malindi, Mombasa, Meru, Kisumu, Migori while sources outside the country include Tanzania, Somalia, Pakistan, Uganda, South Africa, India and America. The sea was cited as the main route used for transportation of drugs, although the drugs are transported in a variety of ways including air, sea
Drug and Substance Abuse Among the Youth in Lamu County

and road, disguised as courier parcels or hidden in clothing and food items. Of concern is that some of the drugs that are abused by the youth in Lamu County are peddled through legally established pharmaceutical outlets in Lamu County.

5.1.3 Effects of drugs abuse on youth in Lamu County

Both physiological and behavioural effects of drug abuse were mentioned. The physiological effects that were mentioned include: death, hallucinations, headaches, infection with HIV and AIDS, liver cirrhosis, lack of appetite, lack of sleep, lose sense of taste, loss of weight, loss of memory, mental disorders, slurred speech and body weakness while the psychological effects include; conflicts in the family, stealing, rape and violence. Regarding secondary school students, the adverse effects cited were poor relationship between the students and other students, teachers, parents and the community, violence in terms of bullying other students, fighting within the school and community and general unruly behaviour. The students who abuse drugs are also more likely to be involved in crime manifested in stealing probably for cash to buy drugs and entice other students into the habit. Overall, drug abuse among students have affected schooling as manifested in poor academic performance, absenteeism and high school dropout rates.

5.1.4 Factors contributing to drug abuse in Lamu County

Socio-cultural factors are the main contributing factors to drugs abuse among the youth in Lamu county and the most cited was peer pressure among the youth and influence from family and community members. An analysis of the specific socio-cultural factors shows that they are closely related and reinforcing. For example, while poor parental guidance expose the youth to bad role models, this is likely to reinforce peer pressure, further driving the youth into seeking recognition from their peers by whatever means available. Generally, lack of parental guidance as parents are no longer able to apply firm control and guidance on their children expose the children to external influences and undesirable behaviours. The economic factors that were cited include high unemployment and poverty levels. There is a close interplay between socio-cultural and economic factors that contribute to drug abuse. For example, the high unemployment among the young result in idleness, creating a void and a sense of social exclusion, which leads to frustration and stress, culminating in seeking for solace in drugs as a temporary relief from their current state.

5.1.5 Challenges in curbing drug abuse in Lamu County

Three quarters of the challenges that were identified were related to policy and institutional framework while socio-cultural factors accounted for about a third of the challenges. Two challenges under policy and institutional framework were weak legal enforcement of the law and fear of retaliatory attacks from drug peddlers and drug abusers. Despite legislations to control drugs abuse in Kenya including the Kenya Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Control Act Number 4 of 1994, revised in 2012 and the National Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse Act Chapter 121B, the legal enforcement under these legislations remains a challenge. Evidently, the drug cartels have not only
employed complex and convoluted operations in their illegal trade, but also have enlisted some law enforcement agents for protection. The wealth of drug trafficking provides them with resources to buy protection from law enforcement agents and politicians.

Apparently, the main drug peddlers are known, but even when their names are forwarded to the police for action, nothing is done mainly because the drug business is controlled by powerful criminal cartels that are equally ruthless to those who dare interfere in their illegal activities. Aside from members of the community, law enforcement agents charged with the responsibility of enforcing the law against narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances are also aware and fear retaliatory attacks from the drug peddlers. Ultimately, this create a sense of desperation among members of the community and personnel within the law enforcement agencies. Finally, the lack of cooperation from family and community members is a major challenge in fighting drug abuse.

5.1.6 Strategies of curbing drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County

Community level and school level strategies were suggested, which reflects the nature of the setting of the study, with some youth in school while others are out of school. Some of the strategies that were mentioned were in already in place while most were suggestions on how best to deal with the drug menace in Lamu County.

The community specific strategies for curbing drug abuse among the youth in Lamu county were clustered into socio-cultural, policy & institutional, and economic strategies. The policy and institutional strategies accounted for over a half of the suggestions which could imply that most efforts towards curbing drug abuse should be directed towards policy and institutional strategies including implementation of existing legislations, intensification of existing interventions, structural reforms, arrest and prosecution of drug peddlers, and provision of rehabilitation services for drug addicts. Other suggestions were provision of firearms to Chiefs for self-protection, use of sniffer dogs to detect narcotics, use of technology to enhance communication about drug peddlers and protection of whistle blowers. Among the socio-cultural strategies mentioned were; sensitization of the community on drug abuse, provision of guidance and counselling services and empowerment of parents with parenting skills. The economic related strategies included engaging the youth through vocational training, employment and involvement in arts and sporting activities.

The school level strategies, were grouped into policy and institutional and socio-cultural strategies. The policy and institutional strategies accounted for over three quarters while the socio-cultural accounted for about a fifth of the suggested strategies. The frequently mentioned policy and institutional strategy was strengthening of guidance and counselling programme at school level. Other strategies included fencing the school compound, restriction of visiting to schools and empowering parents with parenting skills.

To make the guidance and counselling programme more effective at school level, the following suggestions were made; training of
teachers in guidance and counselling, involvement of anti-narcotics experts in school guidance and counselling programmes and provision of more resources including time for guidance and counselling.

5.2 Recommendations
Drawing from the findings in this study and review of related literature, several recommendations emerged on how to address the rising problem of drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County. Drawing from the findings and conclusions in this study as well as review of related literature, several recommendations emerge on how to address the rising problem of drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County. These recommendations are broadly categorized into community and school level recommendations. In each of these two broad categories, the recommendations are further clustered into policy & institutional framework, socio-cultural and economic. This classification was found appropriate as it is aligned with the findings in this study. At the outset, it is important to highlight that most of the factors that contribute to drug abuse among the youth in Lamu County are not unique to Lamu County. What is unique for Lamu County is its location along the Kenyan coastline which expose the region to the sea routes of international drug traffickers. Therefore, the recommendations that are presented put a greater emphasize on policy and institutional strategies because the problem of drug abuse is systemic and occasioned largely by institutional failure.

5.2.1.1 Policy and institutional framework

Arrest and prosecution of drug peddlers
There is sufficient legislation including the Kenya Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Control Act Number 4 of 1994, revised in 2012 that specifies how to deal with persons who trade in narcotics or abuse the same. Although there have been some convictions including destruction of vessels transporting narcotics in Kenya, there is need to intensify actions by applying the law more firmly to detect and make the trade in narcotics unsustainable. Court cases involving drugs need to be prioritized and expedited as fast as possible as delays creates room for compromise of the law enforcement agencies, as well as threats and intimidation of witnesses. The establishment of special courts for dealing with narcotics should be considered. The laws should be applied firmly by jailing culprits for long jail terms, destruction and freezing of their assets. Given that Lamu is in the process of developing an international port under the Lamu Port and Lamu-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport Corridor (LAPSSET) project, the anti-narcotic police unit should expand their operations in Lamu to contain the situation before it gets out of hand.

Provision of rehabilitation services
For the drug addicts, their arrests, prosecution and jailing is a counterproductive strategy, given that prisons are also known to be havens of drug abuse. Therefore, the best course of action is rehabilitation and re-integration into the society so that they can be productive members of the society. There are 10 public rehabilitation centers are in Lamu. While more of these centers are required, it will equally be important that they are
equipped with adequate resources including specialist staff trained on weaning addicts out of various types of drugs. As a first step towards this effort, the National Government and County Government of Lamu should urgently allocate more funds for rehabilitation services under the health budget for equipping the rehabilitation centers with sufficient facilities and resources including specialized staff. Meanwhile well-wishers including philanthropists, development partners and Civil Society Organizations should be invited for financial, logistical and technical support.

**Vetting of the law enforcement agents**

There is little confidence in Lamu County about the capacity of the current law enforcement system including the Police Officers, Prosecutors, Courts and Kenya Police Reservists to carry out their mandate with integrity reportedly out of compromise by the drug barons and drug peddlers. Therefore, the law enforcement agents who deal with narcotics should be constantly vetted and reshuffled as a strategy to break the cycle of corrupt practices and compromise by the drug barons in the enforcement of the anti-narcotic law. The vetting mandate should be given to independent authorities such as Independent Police Oversight Authority (IPOA) and the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) among others.

**Surveillance of illegal drugs**

At the local level, the law enforcement agents lacked adequate resources for surveillance of illegal drugs. Therefore, there is no clear mechanism of tracking the illegal drug trade in Lamu County. Currently, surveillance of illegal drugs is ad hoc and occasionally, anti-narcotic agents conduct door to door searches using sniffer dogs. This strategy should be sustained, intensified and scaled up to ensure wide coverage in searches. Some of the local administrators in Lamu County have adopted low cost technology including SMS, WhatsApp and Facebook for receiving and sharing information on drug peddlers. The use of mobile technology should be considered as a viable option for tracking drug peddlers given the intricate nature of the illicit drugs trade and the need for anonymity.

**More resources to wage the war against narcotics**

Managing the drug abuse problem at the local levels requires adequate resourcing of the local administrators. Therefore, there is need to provide them with adequate means of transportation for surveillance. At the same time, there is need to provide them with firearms for protection against retaliatory attacks from the peddlers and drug barons.

**Protection of whistle blowers**

Members of the community are not willing to share information on the drug peddlers and barons largely because of fear of retaliatory attacks. Strategies should be devised to ensure that community members who share information with law enforcement agents are not exposed to the drug cartels for their personal safety.

5.2.1.2 Socio-cultural strategies

Among the socio-cultural strategies that are proposed are: sensitization of the community on drugs abuse and provision of guidance and counselling services at community level.
Generally, the socio-cultural related strategies were preventive in nature.

**Sensitization of the community on drug abuse**

Individuals and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) should conduct campaigns against drug abuse through meetings and community level workshops to sensitize and train community members and the youth on the hazards of drug abuse. The County Government of Lamu, development partners and the private sector should establish partnerships and collaborate in these efforts for sustainability. Those who have successfully been rehabilitated and re-integrated into the community should be recognized as used as champions for rallying their peers to come out of the habit.

**Guidance and counselling at community level**

Some of the local administrators have taken it upon themselves to guide and counsel affected members of the community and these efforts should be applauded, streamlined and scaled up for better results. Therefore, the CBOs in Lamu County should partner with community members and experts and mount programmes for detection and rehabilitation of drug addicts. The experts should provide counselling services to those affected and identification of the those who require referrals for specialized rehabilitation.

**5.2.1.3 Economic strategies**

The economic strategies that are proposed include vocational training, employment and involvement of the youths in arts and sporting activities. Overall, these strategies are preventive in nature.

**Vocational skills training for the youth**

Most of the youth who leave school at primary and secondary schools in Lamu County do not proceed to higher levels of education nor do they have adequate skills for gainful employment. Given that the provision of technical and vocational training has been assigned to the County Governments, the County Government of Lamu should conduct a needs assessment to determine the potential number of youths who require vocational training skills and at the same time map out the skills required for available employment opportunities, train the youth on vocational skills and entrepreneurship. The vocational skills training for the youth should be coupled with a mentorship and placement programme so that the trained youth can transition into either formal employment or self-employment ventures.

**Involve the youth in Arts and Sports**

The County Government of Lamu in partnership with development partners should establish Sports and Talent Centres in Lamu to tap and nurture the youth potential in sports and arts. Given that Lamu is one of the world renown tourist destinations, the potential market for sports and creative arts in the tourism industry is huge, and could generate revenues not only for the youth but for the County Government as well.

**5.2.2 Recommendations for school level intervention strategies**

**5.2.2.1 Policy and institutional framework**

**Guidance and counselling programme**

The guidance and counselling programme in schools should be revamped, intensified and
adequately resourced to cater for the needs of all students including those affected by drug abuse. While some would root for expulsion and suspension of students who are addicted to drugs, those actions only serve to aggravate the problem as the victims are further excluded and exposed to more opportunities for the habit. Therefore, Ministry of Education, (MOE) should deploy adequate trained teachers of guidance and counselling in each secondary school. However, given the current staffing levels in schools, the MOE could consider deploying education officials at Sub-county level, charged with guidance and counselling for a manageable cluster of schools. Within the school, mechanism should be put in place so that all teachers monitor students behaviours for early detection and remedial action.

Given that most student get inducted into drugs abuse by their peers, it is imperative that the guidance and counseling programme in schools embrace peer educators as a strategy for peer to peer counselling. Meanwhile, the school programme should involve all students without exception in co-curricular activities, and clubs and societies for holistic development in all dimensions of education. Other strategies for strengthening the guidance and counselling programme at school level include; training of teachers in guidance and counselling; involvement of anti-narcotics experts in school guidance and counselling programmes; provision of more resources including time for guidance and counselling, books, magazines and videos.

Fencing the school compound
Fencing the school compound as a physical barrier is important not only to prevent the drug peddlers from accessing the students in school but also prevention of constant movement of students in and out of the school. The MOEST have issued a directive on fencing of school compounds and this should be enforced as one of the strategies in curbing access to drugs in schools. In addition to fencing the compound, the school management should ensure that the gates are manned to restrict movements in and out of schools.

5.2.2.2 Socio-cultural strategies
Among the socio-cultural strategies that were mentioned were collaboration between the school and community, and empowering parents with parenting skills.

Collaboration between school and community
The school management should explore opportunities for collaboration with the community leaders, local administrators, local Community Based Organisations and all other stakeholders in addressing the problem of drug abuse among the students. This could take the form of laying strategies on how to mitigate against the problem of drug abuse including; structured programmes at school where the community members are invited for discussions with students, sharing information on cases of drug abuse, reaching out to parents whose children are victims of drug abuse among others.

Empowerment of parents with parenting skills
During open days and other forums at school, the school management should liaise and invite experts in parenting to sensitize the parents on their roles in bringing up children and preventing them from falling into the trap of drug and substance abuse.
REFERENCES


Drug and Substance Abuse Among the Youth in Lamu County
## Appendix I: Sample Schools in Lamu County

<table>
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<tr>
<th>No</th>
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### Appendix II: Study Sample

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Appendix IV: Special Narcotics Unit to Fight Drug Menace in Lamu County

Just days after President Uhuru Kenyatta issued a crackdown on drugs, dealers and dens at the Coast region, Lamu Governor Issa Timamy and Acting County Commissioner Fredrick Ndambuki have vowed to make Lamu a drug free zone. Speaking at Mpeketoni town during an Education Day on Saturday, Mr. Timamy said many youth in Lamu are heavily hooked on narcotics, something that has made them unproductive and easily prone to crime. The issue of drug use has even contributed to insecurity in the region and Mr. Timamy said he will adopt a forceful measure to wipe out drugs and even stop drug dealers from accessing the region to distribute drugs to the Lamu Youth. He said the county government was already in the process of forming a county special unit that will be mandated to move in the entire Lamu County to identify drug dealers and users. He thanked the national government for the recent efforts made in eliminating illicit brews and promised to ensure the fight is also projected on drug use among youth in the county. He said every person had a duty to play towards the complete eradication of illicit brews and drugs in the region. Mr. Timamy said the County special unit will be on the lookout and report any persons who shall continue to propagate such business in the county. He said the drugs menace was getting serious and underscored the need for concerted efforts by religious leaders, the police and all stakeholders to save youths from falling prey to drug addiction. “The drugs menace and addiction has ruined our youth. I can confirm that currently drug use amongst youth is still rife particularly in Lamu town and the Lamu East region. I advise the locals to cooperate with the security agencies operating in Lamu in the fight against drugs. Our generation should be one that is sober enough to aid in nation building,” said Mr. Timamy. Commenting on the same, Lamu acting county commissioner Fredrick Ndambuki urged people to cooperate in the fight against drugs and promised to ensure the crackdown is conducted in every corner of every village in the county. Addressing over 200 youth who were selected this year to join institutions of learning under the Presidential Scholarship program on Lamu Port (LAPSSET) project in Lamu town on Friday, Mr. Ndambuki advised youth to stay away from drugs and avoid joining criminal groups. He said the nation aims at having a straightforward generation that will aid in nation building. He said the issue of drug use among youth in the region has greatly contributed to poor performance even in national exams each year and asked parents to encourage their children get education instead of focusing on drugs. “Drug use among youth is still a challenge in this region since many youths particularly those from Lamu town and Lamu East Sub County are still using bhang and cocaine. We will fight the menace at whatever cost,” said Mr. Ndambuki.
### Appendix V: Profile of Lamu Sub Counties

#### Lamu West Constituency

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Source: Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC)
Drug and Substance Abuse Among the Youth in Lamu County

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<td>Ndau, Kwatini, Kwatongani, Tchundwa, Myabogi, Siyu, Pate, Shanga and Kiwayuu Sub–Locations of Lamu County</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>Kiunga</td>
<td>4,265</td>
<td>520.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rubu/Mwabore, Mkokoni and Kizingitini Sub–Locations of Lamu County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>Basuba</td>
<td>1,052</td>
<td>1,708.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mararani, Mangai and Milimani Sub–Locations of Lamu County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC)