



Received: 01-05-2026  
Accepted: 10-06-2026

ISSN: 2583-049X

## **The Impact of Community Policing Initiatives and Local Partnerships in Addressing the Problem of Illicit Brews in the Nyeri County**

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62225/2583049X.2026.6.3.6488>

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### **Abstract**

Globally, illicit brew consumption is among the leading causes of mortality besides other effects like social disintegration affecting families and the society at large. As a country, Kenya has made various efforts to tackle the illicit brew problem, including enacting and enforcing laws to control alcohol abuse. However, enforcement agencies often face varied challenges thereby limiting their effectiveness. Despite the legislative and policy interventions, the problem of illicit brews has continued to be a menace in the Kenyan society. Consequently, there is need to interrogate other strategies outside law and policy that may be embraced to reduce illicit brew related harm in the society. This research aimed to evaluating the impact of community policing initiatives and local partnerships in addressing the problem of illicit brews in the Nyeri county. The study was guided by Community partnership theory and

Communication Theory. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design with mixed-methods research approach targeting a subset of population from the study area. A simple random and purposive sampling techniques was utilized to select the respondents. Data was collected from the respondents and the key stakeholders using questionnaires and key informant interview guides respectively. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically. While quantitative data was examined using summary statistics such as proportions, averages and the means. Study found that, community policing has strengthened trust and cooperation to combat illicit brewing effectively. The study recommends that, to integrate regular community forums to sustain behavior change, to strengthen anonymity, simplify reporting and to provide feedback to build trust and encourage community participation.

**Keywords:** Community Policing Initiatives, Local Partnerships, Illicit Brews, Management of Illicit Brews, Law Enforcement

### **1. Introduction**

The consumption of illicit brews has been a pervasive global crisis, characterized by an ever-increasing prevalence and a devastatingly high socioeconomic burden due to the associated health effects and the vulnerabilities (Onaolapo, 2022) <sup>[25]</sup>. The sheer scale of the challenge is underscored by the recent global data, which has revealed that, general alcohol use among the individuals aged 15 to 64 rose by 23 percent between 2011 and 2021, reaching an estimated 296 million users globally (UNODC, 2023) <sup>[31]</sup>. The existing studies show a substantial knowledge gap which this research study intends to fill. Although Onaolapo (2022) <sup>[25]</sup> successfully demonstrated most people experience severe effects from the crisis which requires high financial resources to resolve, his research failed to study how specific cultural elements and regional policy shortcomings created the problem. The UNODC (2023) <sup>[31]</sup> report presents important information about the high levels of alcohol consumption, but it does not contain the needed details to study the dangerous challenges which unregulated toxic illicit brews create in this particular study area. This project required additional research beyond the basic economic and statistical information which these sources provided. It sought to curb this literature gap by providing a micro-level, context-specific analysis of how local dynamics, regulatory deficits and community responses shape the illicit brew crisis, ultimately offering targeted, evidence-based solutions that were missing from the current macro-level discourse.

The United States of America (USA) faces serious challenges from unlawful moonshine production, which creates alcoholic beverages without legal permits, thus violating both federal and state laws. The unregulated production creates major problems because it skips essential quality control processes, which leads to dangerous contamination of products through toxic methanol. The consumption of these toxic illicit brews has led to devastating public health outcomes, which include severe

poisoning and irreversible blindness and death because of the absence of proper distillation and testing (Manning & Kowalska, 2021) <sup>[11]</sup>. Unauthorized brewing activities have created two major problems for public safety because they establish connections to organized crime while they create financial losses through unauthorized federal and state excise tax violations. The underground activity has historical roots which extend back to Prohibition (1920-1933) when the government prohibited both alcohol manufacturing and alcohol sales. The cultural views on drinking alcohol and the changing alcohol control laws create conditions that keep illegal brewing active after prohibition has ended. The economic benefits that people obtain by drinking alcohol and the social acceptance that alcohol enjoys together with the complicated nature of legal requirements make modern illicit brewing possible. Unlicensed breweries function without required permits according to the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB), which results in tax evasion and safety regulation violations that endanger public health (Birgel *et al.*, 2023) <sup>[1]</sup>. This suggests that the persistence of illicit brewing is not only a regulatory challenge but also a socio-economic issue that requires comprehensive interventions addressing both enforcement and community-level demand factors.

People produce homebrewed alcohol because their personal greed for profit drives them to create unlicensed production systems which turn into commercial operations that operate outside of legal boundaries (Birgel *et al.*, 2023) <sup>[1]</sup>. The socio-economic impacts of illicit brewing extend beyond individual profits. The production of unsanctioned alcohol creates multiple problems for communities because it requires additional law enforcement resources and creates public health dangers. Unlicensed brewing operations in California and Texas which support the craft brewing industry create risks for legitimate businesses that comply with health regulations and fulfill their tax obligations (Manning & Kowalska, 2021) <sup>[11]</sup>. The unregulated production of these illicit brews leads to safety dangers because people get exposed to dangerous substances that manufacturers use without following proper control measures (Manning & Kowalska, 2021) <sup>[11]</sup>. Authorities combat illicit brewing through two main strategies which involve strict regulation enforcement and public education about the dangers of unlicensed alcohol consumption. The United States continues to experience active brewing problems which create dangers for public health and economic stability and community security. The public needs ongoing education about unlicensed alcohol production hazards while regulators need to enforce existing regulations. And as the society evolves, the stakeholders must also navigate these.

Illicit brewing in Nigeria, poses a significant socio-economic and health challenges to its consumers. It is often referred to as 'local gin' or 'ogogoro,' and these unregulated illicit brews are typically produced under unsafe conditions and contribute to widespread health problems. The consumption of illicit brews is prevalent among the various demographic groups, particularly in economically disadvantaged communities. Data from the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) indicated that, illicit alcohol consumption was notably high among the young adults aged 18-35, with approximately 40% of this age group engaging in the consumption of locally brewed illicit

brew (NDLEA, 2022) <sup>[20]</sup>. The adult male population in specific communities shows high rates of brew consumption which results in significant alcohol use increase throughout rural areas (WHO, 2021) <sup>[35]</sup>. The combination of poverty and unemployment together with insufficient educational opportunities caused people to turn towards alcohol products which they could obtain without spending much money (Ijje *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[7]</sup>. People who drink illicit brews face serious health hazards which extend to multiple medical conditions. Alcohol Research UK (2020) reports that the unregulated consumption of these brews leads to excessive toxic substance contamination which includes methanol. The chemical exists in dangerous quantities which exceed safe levels and this condition results in people suffering from acute poisoning and permanent disability or death. The 2020 outbreak in Nigeria resulted in more than 50 deaths from methanol poisoning which occurred after people consumed a batch of illicit gin (Ijje *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[7]</sup>. Illicit alcohol consumption brings about health dangers which develop into long-lasting health conditions such as liver disease and psychological disorders together with social unrest.

The research findings demonstrate that alcohol prohibition leads to severe social consequences. The many problems which arise from illegal alcohol consumption create higher rates of crime and domestic abuse and multiple accidents that affect already resource-poor communities (Turyasiima, *et al.*, 2025) <sup>[30]</sup>. The public health campaigns have become more successful through their improved alcohol enforcement policies and increased public health education efforts which actually help to resolve these particular challenges. The interventions face major obstacles because their execution depends on insufficient resources and the ongoing effects of poverty and missing enforcement systems which leave multiple communities exposed to the health risks of illegal alcohol consumption.

The illegal brewing activities in Tanzania have developed into major public health problems which start from illegal production and consumption of traditional alcoholic drinks. The local materials which brewers use to create their products under the name 'ujanja' or 'gongo' include maize and sugarcane and sorghum because these substances create multiple threats to public health and safety. The entire population of Tanzania uses the illegal brews but certain demographic groups show more consumption than others. These researchers conducted a study which discovered that people from low-income rural areas have higher rates of illegal alcohol consumption (Madundo, *et al.*, 2024) <sup>[10]</sup>. The population needs to access illicit brews because these products cost less than legally produced alcohol which leads to increased usage among users. The Tanzania Alcohol Policy Alliance (TAPA) reported that, approximately 30% of Tanzanian adults engage in the consumption of alcoholic beverages, with a significant percentage relying on the illegally produced options (Kureh *et al.*, 2022) <sup>[9]</sup>. The demographic of illicit brew consumers often includes young adults and women who face marketplace barriers because they lack both economic resources and social acceptance (Madundo, *et al.*, 2024) <sup>[10]</sup>. The health effects which result from drinking illegal alcoholic beverages lead to severe consequences. These beverages are often produced without oversight, leading to consequentially dangerous levels of methanol and other harmful substances (Kureh *et al.*, 2022) <sup>[9]</sup>. Methanol poisoning, which can lead to severe health consequences or death, has been documented in numerous

cases across Tanzania. For example, a report by the World Health Organization (WHO) indicated that, methanol poisoning accounted for hundreds of deaths and numerous hospitalizations in regions where illicit brewing is rampant (WHO, 2022) [34].

Illicit brew has remained a significant problem in Kenya, contributing to health risks, social challenges and undermining public safety, particularly among vulnerable populations such as the youth. In response to the rising cases of alcohol and illicit brew consumption, particularly among the youth, the Kenyan government established the National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) in 2001 to coordinate public education, prevention and control efforts targeting substance abuse across the country. The primary goal of NACADA was to educate the public about the risks associated with substance use (NACADA, 2021) [18]. In the subsequent survey done by NACADA, in 2022, the prevalence of at least one drug or substance of abuse stood at 18 percent, as for analysis of individual drugs, the most commonly used substances were alcohol (11.8%) and tobacco (8.5%). The study also highlighted a growing demand for more affordable and easily accessible alcoholic products, particularly a locally known brew of chang'aa (3.4%) and traditional brews (3.1%). With reference to other studies, the increasing trend in use of drugs and substances, points to increased associated impacts (Takahashi *et al.*, 2017) [28]. The substantial consumption of illicit brews is often driven by high prices, taxes and the legal requirements associated with regulated alcoholic beverages, as well as cultural norms, that often deem them right (WHO, 2021) [35]. They are frequently consumed during social and cultural activities, where less stringent regulations can sometimes lead to excessive intake. This unrecorded alcohol poses increased health risks due to the unknown and potentially harmful impurities and contaminants (Ferreira-Borges *et al.*, 2016) [6].

Recent statistics reveal alarming rates of alcohol dependency and abuse. About 5.8% of adult Kenyan males who fall within the age range of 15 to 64 years face difficulties with alcohol dependency while 2.4% of this population suffers from alcohol use disorder according to NACADA (2021) [18]. The consumption of illegal alcoholic beverages leads to alcohol-related problems because these drinks become accessible through their low price and wide distribution and their social acceptance (Ferreira-Borges *et al.*, 2016) [6]. The main types of illegal alcoholic beverages include chang'aa and busaa. Chang'aa functions as a high-strength alcoholic drink because it contains alcohol at levels between 15.3% and 34%. The process involves fermenting a combination of corn sorghum millet and sugar for one week before distillation starts (Musungu *et al* 2015) [13]. The procedure produces a transparent alcoholic beverage which delivers intense effects that become hazardous when consumed in large quantities.

Busaa is a malt liquor which contains alcohol at levels between 3.9% and 5.4% alcohol content. The production process of the product uses corn flour and sorghum or millet as its main ingredients which undergo fermentation during a two-day period. The widespread availability and cultural acceptance of busaa make it a major factor in alcohol-related issues despite its lower alcohol content when compared to chang'aa.

Nyeri County, is among the identified counties within Kenya grappling with the illicit brew production and

consumption/abuse to a level calling for national intervention to control within the productive age strata of the population (Wachirah & Gacheru, 2024) [32]. According to a study conducted by the Nyeri County Government, drug and illicit brew is a major problem in the county mainly affecting people between the of age 20-35 years, with alcohol, cannabis and tobacco being the most commonly abused substances (Nyeri County Government, 2020) [23].

According to the 2022 National Household Survey on Substance Abuse (NHSISA) conducted by NACADA, Nyeri County has consistently maintained one of the highest rates of illicit brews in Kenya. The survey revealed that, 16% of the young people aged 15-24 in Nyeri County are currently using drugs, a figure significantly exceeding the national average of 6%. The prevalent illicit brews abused in Nyeri County include alcohol, tobacco, bhang (cannabis) and heroin. These substances continue to pose significant challenges to individual health and safety, including issues such as crime, violence and the spread of HIV/AIDS within the community. According to the statistics from the National Police Service (NPS), the incidents of drug-related crimes such as robbery and assault had surged by 30% within the Nyeri county over that past year (National Police Service, 2022) [21]. Of particular concern was the disproportionate impact of the illicit use on the young men in Nyeri County. Hence this study sought to interrogate the community policing initiatives and local partnerships in addressing the problem of illicit brews in the Nyeri county.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

The two suitable theories that guided this study on the impact of community policing initiatives and local partnerships in addressing the problem of illicit brews in the Nyeri county, were: Community Partnership Theory (Robert Trojanowicz & Bonnie Bucqueroux – 1990) [29] and Communication Theory (Claude Shannon & Warren Weaver – 1949) [3].

### 2.1 Community Partnership Theory (Robert Trojanowicz & Bonnie Bucqueroux – 1990) [29]

According to Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1990) [29], community policing is both a philosophy and an organizational strategy that promotes collaboration between the law enforcement agencies and the public to identify, prioritize and solve community problems. The theory emphasizes proactive problem-solving, decentralization of authority and some partnership-building between the citizens and the state agents to address the root causes of crime, disorder and fear. Its central components summarized as the “Nine P’s” (Philosophy, Personalised, Policing, Patrols, Permanent, Place, Proactive, Partnership and Problem-solving) have highlighted a shared responsibility, trust-building and a continuous engagement between the police and the community (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990) [29]. Rather than relying on reactive or punitive enforcement, the theory advocated for more preventive and community-driven approaches that can foster lasting safety and social order.

The study used this theory to explain how communities and government partners work together to combat illicit brewing in Nyeri County, Kenya. The study showed that successful management needs active participation from community members and local leaders and civic organizations and law enforcement officers to address the root problems of poverty and unemployment and community acceptance of illegal

alcohol. The theory's active and specific local principles required Nyeri County to base its response strategies on community understanding and youth participation and alternative employment initiatives and ongoing partnerships between law enforcement bodies and local residents.

The theory focuses on three main elements which are decentralization and trust plus information-sharing. The theory needed these specific elements to create effective local solutions which would stop illegal brewing activities. The authorities and communities need to establish trust between them because this will help residents to report criminal activities and join in various security measures. The assignment of officers or community representatives to permanent locations will create better relationships between the two groups because this practice will enhance their shared responsibility for their positions while making police information exchange easier and better law enforcement results. The Community Policing Theory established a solid theoretical framework which researchers used to assess the effectiveness of community-based and partnership-based approaches in decreasing illegal alcohol production and use throughout Nyeri County.

The Community Partnership Theory studied collaborative efforts which required shared responsibility but failed to show how effective communication impacted trust and coordination and behavior modifications. The research used Communication Theory to solve its shortcomings through its demonstration of essential community messages which developed community awareness to create successful information distribution systems that helped Nyeri County residents combat illegal alcohol production.

## 2.2 Communication Theory (Claude Shannon & Warren Weaver – 1949) [3]

The Communication Theory plays a vital role in enhancing the Community Readiness Model (CRM) by emphasizing how effective information exchange can shape a community's attitudes and drive collective action. The theory showed that communication achieves its highest impact through a continuous two-way exchange process which enables senders to deliver messages through proper channels while receivers can understand these messages precisely (Claude & Warren, 1949) [3]. And timely and relevant feedback from the community members to communicators fosters trust and mutual understanding, which were essential for sustained engagement.

The Nyeri County authorities needed to develop an effective communication system which used appropriate cultural methods to establish consistent communication with community members for their illicit brew prevention work. The project required both the distribution of information about the dangers of illegal alcohol consumption and the process of gathering community input which would shape project execution. The community members would develop ownership of the project through open communication which would lead to their active participation in prevention activities.

The Communication Theory showed that successful community interventions need speakers to create messages which match the cultural values and beliefs and current knowledge levels of their target audience. The prevention programs will achieve better acceptance through successful communication because CRM identifies the community's current readiness stage. The integrated approach will create

a supportive environment which enables knowledge and attitude development and behavioral change to occur together, which leads to better sustainable management of the illicit brew problems in Nyeri County.

## 3. Materials and methods

The study utilized a descriptive survey research design using mixed-methods approach to achieve the study objectives. The design and approach encompassed integration of both qualitative and quantitative research methods within a single study (Creswell, 2009) [4]. This approach allowed the researcher to gain a more holistic understanding of a research problem by leveraging the strengths of both qualitative (from the focused group discussions and the key informant interviews) and quantitative data (surveys and document reviews) collected (Wasti *et al.*, 2022) [33]. The design allowed for a comprehensive data collection and results as the study captured a broad range of information, providing a comprehensive view of the illicit brew production, its usage and strategies to curb its use and production with reference to past experiences.

The study was conducted within the geographical boundaries of Nyeri Central Sub-County, which is locally recognized as Nyeri Town and serves as the primary urban center of Nyeri County. The researcher chose Nyeri Town Sub-County as their research site because the area displays critical illegal alcohol production and consumption patterns that create dangerous public safety problems for local residents. NACADA's 2021 National Survey on the Status of Drugs and Substance Use in Kenya reported Nyeri County with 12.8% chang'aa prevalence which was nearly double the national average of 6.8% with the local police records from 2023 documented 1,247 chang'aa-related arrests, ranking Nyeri 2nd nationally among the counties for illicit brew seizures (NACADA, 2021) [18]. The urban area of Nyeri Town provides a complete view of the county's social and economic and population characteristics but research studies use its major reason for selecting the area because it has documented the highest number of illegal alcohol production cases. Nyeri ranks as one of the leading counties for chang'aa-related arrests and seizures in Kenya according to local records while peri-urban areas function as centers for illegal alcohol production and drug-related violent conflicts.

The study included two main groups for research in Nyeri Town Sub-County which included the local residents and the crucial institutional partners. The general participant group included the residents who were 18 years old and older and who had either experienced direct harm from illicit brew abuse or had observed instances of community violence. The target population's inclusion criterion of the residents aged 18 years and above aligns with the Kenya's legal framework for adulthood and accountability in matters of substance abuse and community security. The Constitution of Kenya (2010) grants individuals the right to legal maturity at 18 which allows them to make their own decisions about research participation and report crimes and join community activities without needing permission from their guardians. The second and the more specialized group comprised the Key Stakeholders who were directly involved in the community response strategies and the management of the illicit brews. These experts and the field personnel included the Law Enforcement Agency officials, Community Policing members, the Local Administrators

(including Chiefs) and the officers from the National Authority for the Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NACADA). To gain comprehensive and the ground-level insights, this group also included the family members affected by the illicit brew and the brewers themselves. Furthermore, the institutional representation was purposively drawn from the County Health Department, the County Security Department and the administrative personnel from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) operating at the County, National and the Local levels who were directly or indirectly concerned with the illicit brew control and management.

In alignment with the descriptive survey research design, the study employed the stratified random sampling to categorize the target population, followed by the simple random sampling within the defined strata to select the final respondents in the county. Additionally, purposive sampling techniques was used to select the key stakeholders in the community for the response strategies and the management of illicit brew. They included, the health department, security department and the administration at the county, national and local level. The rationale for this sampling techniques resonated with the fact that the target population were not known with every member of the population

reviewed having a likelihood of being chosen (Robinson, 2014)<sup>[26]</sup>.

The following sample size calculation formula by Yamane (1967)<sup>[36]</sup> was used in the determination of the sample.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \quad 1, \text{ Where}$$

n= sample size

N= Population Size

e= acceptable sampling error at 95% confidence level

According to the Kenya Population and Housing census (2019)<sup>[8]</sup>, Nyeri town Sub County had 48036 households who were 18 years and above.

$$n = \frac{48036}{1+48036(0.05)^2}$$

=396

=396+10% attrition (0.1\*398=436)

The 10% attrition population was to be included into the research after the sample respondents had not been reached. But because the sample population was reached, they were not included. The sample size population was therefore 420 as shown in the Table 1 below.

**Table 1:** Distribution of Sample Size Population

Division	Population (in H/Hs)	%	Sampled Residents	Health Department	Security Sector	Administration station
Kingajo	4711	9.81	39	2	2	2
Mukaro	13945	29.04	115	2	2	2
Ruringu	13771	28.67	114	2	2	2
Kamakwa	15609	32.49	129	2	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>48036</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>

The research employed a semi-structured questionnaire (see Appendix i) to systematically gather quantitative data that focused on all the study’s variables from the target respondents concerning community response strategies and management of the illicit brew in Nyeri County. The questionnaire was designed to capture comprehensive insights into the various aspects, of illicit brew abuse region and the associated effects on the community responses strategies. The questionnaire comprised of items that aimed to quantify the attitudes, beliefs and the firsthand experiences of the participants. By incorporating a semi-structured format, the questionnaire struck a balance between structured closed-ended questions, allowing for quantifiable responses and the semi-structured open-ended questions, permitting the respondents to give their perspectives in more detail.

The study conducted Key Informant Interviews (see Appendix ii) with purposively selected key stakeholders in illicit brew as well as experts in the security departments including, policymakers, government officials and the representatives from the non-governmental organizations, at county level who were directly or indirectly concerned with educating, controlling, managing and preventing illicit brew usage and associated impacts at the different jurisdiction. As attached in Appendix II, is the semi-structured format to where the target respondents expressed their perspectives on the community response strategies and the impacts and association with the management of illicit brews.

The study collected data through both quantitative and qualitative methods which researchers applied strict processing methods to achieve precise results. The

researchers conducted complete dataset cleaning through Microsoft Excel software which included removing outlier data to improve research trustworthiness. The research created a cleaned quantitative dataset which researchers used for statistical analysis in SPSS version 29 while they studied the variables through proper numerical methods that discovered study-oriented patterns and relationships and relevant trends. The research team applied thematic analysis to the qualitative data which included textual responses and open-ended information based on established themes that matched the research objectives. The study used bar graphs and pie charts and tables to present quantitative results, which helped readers understand the findings, while the research presented qualitative results through textual descriptions that organized insights into thematic narratives, which demonstrated research depth and context. This dual approach ensured that, both the quantitative and the qualitative data were analyzed using the methods best suited to their nature, providing a comprehensive understanding of the research questions.

**4. Results and discussion**

The study investigated how community policing programs together with the law enforcement partnerships with local residents help to detect and dismantle illegal brewing operations throughout Nyeri County. Community policing has emerged as a crucial method which helps to improve public safety through building trust and fostering cooperation between police officers and the communities they serve. The initiatives in Nyeri County which face challenges from illegal brewing operations work to develop

better monitoring systems and establish effective reporting methods while they work together to disrupt illegal supply chains. The study examined the operations of these partnerships while measuring their success at decreasing illegal brewing activities and their contribution to developing permanent community protection solutions.

#### 4.1 Perceived Effectiveness of Community Policing Initiatives on Identifying and Eliminating Illicit Brewing Operations

The respondents were asked on how effective they believed community policing initiatives were in addressing issues related to illicit brewing in their community. The below Fig 1 has the results.

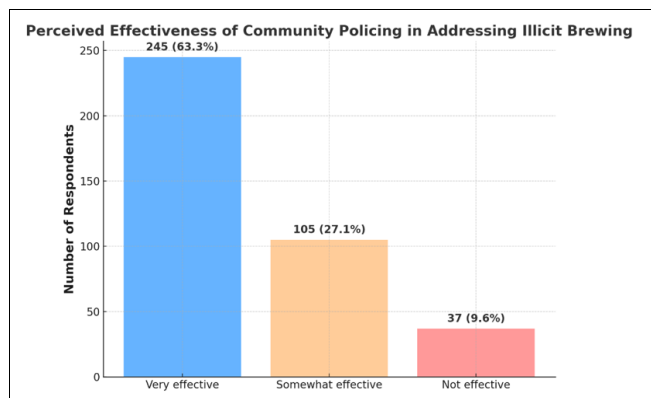


Fig 1: Perceived Effectiveness of Community Policing in Addressing Illicit Brewing

Most respondents believed that community policing programs successfully reduced illegal brewing operations in their assessment of program effectiveness. The initiatives received high marks because 245 respondents (63.3%) rated them as very effective while 105 respondents (27.1%) viewed them as somewhat effective. The 37 respondents (9.6%) who believed insufficient effectiveness existed were the only group who expressed that opinion.

The community believes that community policing activities successfully reduce illegal brewing activities according to the study results. The large proportion of respondents who believe the initiatives work demonstrates that people increasingly trust police and community members to work together for security purposes. The state security agencies need to establish citizen involvement as their primary focus according to Nzai and Makokha (2024) [24] who call this approach necessary for achieving nationwide security. The community policing program creates positive community perception through its active work to implement its core values of proactive community engagement and transparent practices and mutual responsibility.

The low percentage of respondents who considered the initiatives to be ineffective shows the need to find locations where the implementation process fails to meet standards and where particular community groups experience exclusion from the implementation process. The feedback will help develop better inclusive and responsive community policing methods which Nyeri County currently uses. As a key informant informed...

*"Community policing has been quite effective in our area. The local residents are more vigilant and willing to report any suspicious activities, which has led to an increase in the number of raids and shutdowns of the*

*illicit breweries. The trust built between the police and the community has made it easier to gather intelligence and act swiftly. However, the problem still persists in some of the remote areas where the police presence is limited."* (Key Informant I, 2025).

The informant reported that community policing activities have enhanced their ability to discover and shut down illegal brewing operations in their neighborhood. The system achieves its effectiveness because community members trust the system and work together with police to report illegal activities. Local residents actively participate in surveillance and intelligence sharing which helps law enforcement agencies to target their operations and shut down illegal brewing supply networks. The research supports existing literature which shows that community engagement through community policing programs helps enhance public safety results (Nubani, Fierke-Gmazel, Madill & De Biasi, 2023) [22].

The informant confirmed ongoing difficulties which especially affect remote locations that have limited police resources and presence. The research findings demonstrate that community policing functions as an effective method yet its effectiveness differs between various county locations. The presence of illegal brewing operations in these areas requires additional enforcement resources which should include mobile policing units and technological surveillance systems.

#### 4.2 Awareness of the Community Policing Initiatives in Their Area

The assessment under objective two will examine how community policing programs together with police-community relationships impact their ability to detect and dismantle illegal brewing operations throughout Nyeri county. The respondents were asked if they were aware of any community policing initiatives in their area. The results are shown below (Fig 2).

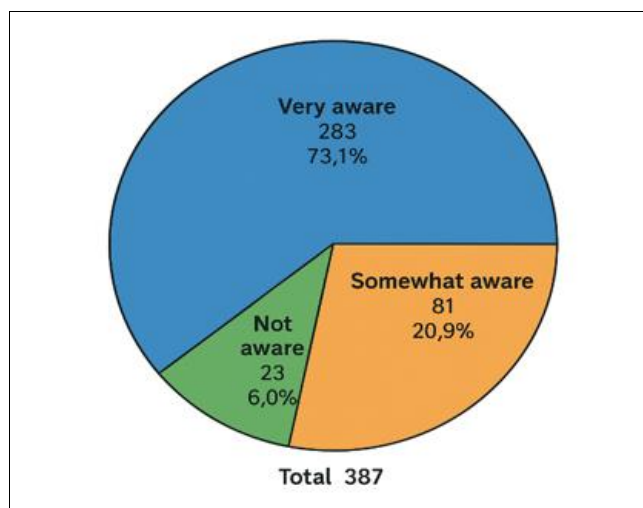


Fig 2: Awareness of community policing initiatives

The findings revealed that, community awareness of the policing initiatives in Nyeri County is notably high. Out of the 387 respondents, 283 individuals (73.1%) reported being very aware of community policing efforts in their area. An additional 81 respondents (20.9%) indicated that, they were somewhat aware, while only 23 respondents (6.0%) stated that, they were not aware of such initiatives. These

acceptances within the local population, which is essential for fostering effective collaboration between the law enforcement and the residents in addressing illicit brewing activities.

The high level of awareness may be attributed to the continued efforts by the local law enforcement and administration to integrate the residents into crime prevention strategies, particularly in addressing illicit brewing operations. The high awareness is a positive sign that, the structures supporting the police-citizen collaboration are functioning and accessible. This awareness is essential, as community policing thrives on trust, shared responsibility and a proactive engagement between the police and the community (Modise, 2023) [12].

Moreover, awareness is often a precursor to active participation. Therefore, these findings would lay a foundation for further investigation into how such awareness translates into real community action such as reporting, information-sharing and the joint patrols meant to dismantle illicit brewing networks. The small percentage of those unaware would suggest a potential gap in the outreach that may need to be addressed through targeted engagement in those more remote and marginalized areas.

The law enforcement agencies together with local residents need to establish strong partnerships for them to effectively enforce laws against illegal brewing operations in Nyeri County. The creation of shared responsibility needs collaborative efforts between police and community members to establish better information sharing methods which will lead to successful law enforcement operations. An insight from a key informant was that...

*"The partnerships have been crucial. Residents provide timely information about brewing activities and in return, the police have become more responsive and transparent. This collaboration has fostered a sense of ownership among community members, making enforcement a shared responsibility rather than just a police mandate. Together, we have been able to identify hotspots and prevent brewing before it escalates."* (Key Informant II, 2025).

The informant's response demonstrated that law enforcement must work together with local residents to improve their operations against illegal alcohol production. The two parties will exchange information through their partnership because residents will act as local observers and police officers will create trust among the community. The policing system will change because both citizens and law enforcement agencies will work together to make sustainable behavioral changes. According to Mutonyi and Sirera (2018) [15], community participation enhances collective responsibility for security by fostering cooperation between residents and law enforcement agencies in addressing local crime and social problems. The residents' developed sense of ownership will serve as the main element that enables them to monitor and actively participate in activities which help detect and stop illegal brewing operations.

The partnership model will allow law enforcement to better distribute their resources because they can direct their efforts toward locations which have been proven to be most dangerous. The approach will create stronger social bonds in the community which will build trust between residents and

law enforcement officers who work to fight illegal activities. The research findings support the Community Readiness Model which shows that successful interventions require precise matching of their strategies to the current readiness level of the community. The model helps communities to work together by recognizing their social patterns and abilities which helps them to develop trust and solve problems while achieving lasting results.

### 4.3 Community Members Sharing Information on Illicit Brews

The respondents were also asked whether the community members are encouraged to share information about illicit brews with local authorities. The Fig 3 below.

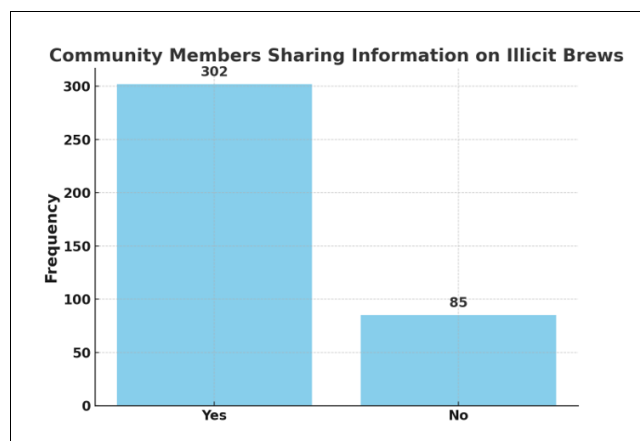


Fig 3: Community Members Sharing Information on Illicit Brews

Out of 387 respondents, 302 (78.0%) affirmed that, the community members are encouraged to share information with the local authorities, while 85 (22.0%) indicated otherwise. The evidence demonstrates that both the community and the institutional system actively promote whistleblowing activities which assist in combating illicit brewing operations. The security agencies with local administration support their efforts to engage citizens for protection and enforcement work. The small group of people who experience discouragement believe that perceived dangers and fear of retaliation and previous reporting experiences without results drive their current state.

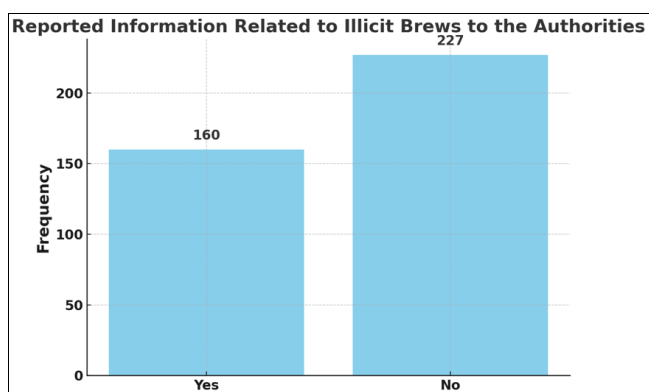
The extensive support for information sharing demonstrates that trust-building activities between the community and local authorities have achieved successful results. The citizens who report illegal activities create two benefits because they improve detection times and they build community protection. The chance of discovery creates an environment that prevents offenders from committing crimes in this collaborative setting. The ongoing public awareness campaigns combined with community policing efforts and visible police activities that respond to community reports have led most people to work with law enforcement. Braga, Weisburd and Turchan (2019) [2] referred to focused deterrence strategies as "pulling levers" policing programs which have been increasingly implemented in the USA and other countries to reduce serious violent crime. The factors demonstrate that reporting leads to both valued results and effective outcomes for organizations.

The 22% of participants who chose not to disclose details about their experiences showed these specific matters that needed more investigation. The participants hesitated to

share information because they worried about maintaining their privacy while fearing that their colleagues would exclude them and because they doubted whether authorities would take their reports seriously. Police departments face operational challenges because community members maintain their fears which prevent them from contacting police officers and sharing information about criminal activities. Local authorities must solve these problems through windows which protect informant identities and show progress on case updates while proving their dedication to follow-up actions. These improvements will enhance two areas because they will boost reporting numbers while establishing more trust between the community and security system which will lead to decreased illegal brewing operations.

**4.4 Reported Information Related to Illicit Brews to the Authorities**

The respondents were also asked whether they have ever reported information related to illicit brews to the authorities. The Fig 4 below shows the results.



**Fig 4:** Reported Information Related to Illicit Brews to the Authorities

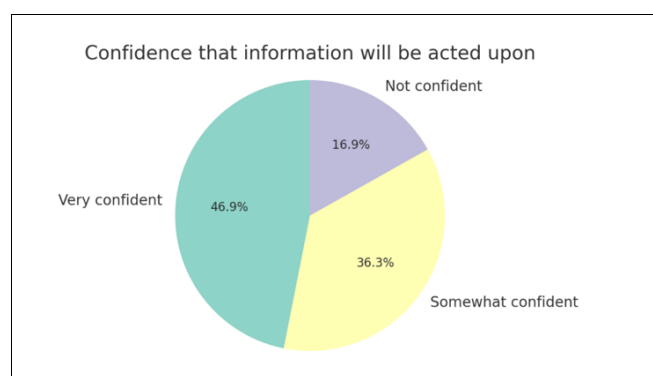
Only 160 respondents (41.3%) mentioned reporting information to the authorities, compared to the 227 (58.7%) who have not yet. The difference shows that people reported their actual behavior when they received incentive to report yet only three people did. The citizens of this country will not report their concerns because they lack trust in government security agencies and they fear their safety will be compromised. The gap will close when people establish confidence through two methods which involve protecting their identity and organizations that respond quickly to intelligence information.

People who want to report crimes to authorities face barriers which arise from their cultural and social background. In some of the communities, people preferred to solve conflicts through internal methods because they wanted to avoid being treated as "whistleblowers." People who know about illegal activities stay silent because they face two main obstacles which include peer pressure and the risk of backlash from their own community. Mutonyi (2021) [14] observed that, fear of victimization, social stigma and strained community relationships often discourage individuals from reporting unlawful activities, even when they recognize the harm such activities cause to society. The solution to these social obstacles requires specific educational programs and community involvement activities which show how reporting benefits both the community and the people who decide to report.

The gap will be closed through the creation of accessible reporting methods which also improve user experience. The process of reporting becomes inaccessible to many people who either do not know how to report or find the reporting process too difficult to understand. The authorities can solve this problem through their establishment of straightforward reporting systems which include dedicated hotlines and online forms and mobile applications while they provide users with details about required information and post-reporting procedures. The system establishes trust with report submitters through its method of delivering feedback which includes acknowledgment of received reports and explanation of future actions.

**4.5 Confident They Were That the Information Will Be Acted Upon**

The respondents were also asked, how confident they were that the information they gave, would be acted upon. The Fig 5 below.



**Fig 5:** Confident They Were That the Information Will Be Acted Upon

The study found that 75 (46.9%) people who reported information showed high confidence while 58 (36.3%) people displayed moderate confidence and 27 (16.9%) people lacked any confidence. The figure showed that most people thought action would occur but more than half of the respondents showed only limited belief in potential outcomes. The evidence showed that past experiences and observed outcomes had formed their current perceptions. The local authorities can improve public confidence through two methods which involve providing feedback and showing visible enforcement that comes from community reports.

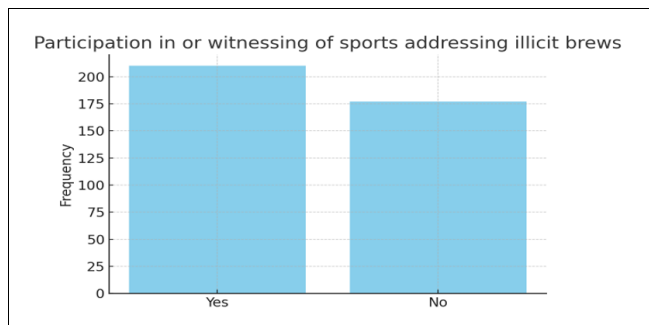
The process of establishing trust demands that authorities maintain open and regular communication with the public. When people observe that their reports result in actual outcomes which include investigations and public information updates they perceive the reporting system as effective and worthwhile. The authorities should consider establishing several regular channels for updating the community about actions taken in response to reports while maintaining more confidentiality. The organization needs to establish two functions which will enable them to validate their investigative work and show the community that their input matters.

The authorities can boost community trust through their community reporting activities which they need to perform with local residents. For example, by forming advisory committees or holding some open forums that can provide opportunities for the public to share feedback, ask questions and participate in decision-making. The inclusive

approaches create a sense of partnership with the community which will result in more people reporting their problems. The authorities and the community must work together with active community involvement to establish permanent trust which will help their reporting systems to function effectively.

**4.6 Participation In or Witnessing of Sports Addressing the Illicit Brew**

The respondents were also asked, whether they have ever participated in or witnessed sports address Illicit Brew. The Fig 6 below.



**Fig 6:** Participation in or Witnessing of Sports Addressing the Illicit Brew

The majority of 210 respondents showed that 54.3% participated in or observed sports events which aimed to combat illegal brewing while 177 respondents showed that they did not participate in these events. This showed that these initiatives have achieved a satisfactory level of acceptance among local residents. Sports provide an opportunity for youth to connect with one another which makes sports an ideal starting point for anti-illicit brew campaigns. The existing events require expansion because current attendance numbers show potential for greater community outreach.

Sports events create a casual setting which enables people to learn and raise awareness about various issues. The event would bring together multiple groups who typically avoid formal conversations about illegal brewing. Mutonyi, Masiga and Kilongosi (2020) [17] noted that, community-based initiatives that leverage social interaction platforms and local participation are more effective in promoting behavioral change because they encourage collective ownership of community challenges and solutions. Community Partnership Theory suggests that communities should solve their problems through collaborative solution development while sharing their community resources. The program will use local sports ambassadors to show positive life choices through their social standing and celebrity status. The new approach will create security systems through local community participation which will lead to better security evaluation results because most youth will select safer options. Community organizers who use popular local events to spread anti-illicit brew messages can change public opinion and public conduct through their trusted collective platform which serves to build community partnerships for sustainable transformation.

To maximize the effectiveness of these sports-based initiatives, it is important to ensure they are inclusive and accessible to all segments of the community. The event should take place at accessible times and locations which require sufficient resources to support active involvement

from all underrepresented groups who face higher risks from illegal brewing activities. The connection between sports events and community programs which include counseling and vocational training and health services will establish a comprehensive approach to prevention that tackles the fundamental social and economic issues which create this problem.

**4.7 Perceived Impact of Sports and Games on Community Awareness of Illicit Brews**

The respondents were also asked, how they perceive the impact of sports and games on community awareness of illicit brews. The outcome is in Table 2 below.

**Table 2:** Perceived Impact of Sports and Games on Community Awareness

Response Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Very Positive	175	45.2%
Positive	125	32.4%
Neutral	65	16.7%
Negative	22	5.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>100%</b>

The sports initiatives received participation from respondents who reported their experiences with positive impacts at a rate of 95 through 32.4% who reported their experience as positive and 35 through 16.7% who stayed neutral and 12 through 5.7% who showed negative feedback. The positive assessment from 77% of the people who participated in the research shows that sports and games function as effective methods to create social bonds and increase public understanding. The few neutral or negative responses may reflect cases where such events lacked focus or failed to reach their intended goals. The events will achieve greater success in changing people The events will achieve greater success in changing people The events will achieve greater success in changing people through better organization and improved follow-up communication.

The positive view that people hold about sports programs demonstrates their ability to create sustainable community outreach methods which maintain local cultural ties. Sports training develops teamwork skills and teaches discipline and mutual respect, which athletes can use to build community ties while protecting against social threats like illegal alcohol production. Ronkainen, Aggerholm, Ryba and Allen-Collinson (2020) [27] proved that sports serve as informal learning tools which require further research. The organized educational events create lasting impacts when they maintain consistent links to educational materials because these effects lead people to practice safe behaviors while supporting community health initiatives.

The organization needs to solve the problems which stakeholders raised about their assessment of organizational impact as either neutral or negative. The organization needs to conduct needs assessments which will help them create activities that better match community interests while all messaging should be designed to be understandable and relevant and actionable. The organizers can develop better strategies through participant feedback and continuous evaluation processes which will make sports and games more enjoyable while becoming a strong force for creating positive social transformations. One of the most consistent suggestions was to incorporate anti-illicit brew messaging directly into the sporting events. The participants proposed

that, sports competitions and especially football, athletics and volleyball should include banners, branded kits and the announcements promoting the awareness. For instance, one respondent stated...

*"Let us use football matches to pass messages. Each team should carry banners saying 'Say No to the Illicit Brews'"* (Key Informant III, 2025)

This method establishes sports as an exciting pastime which also serves as an effective tool for creating public awareness. The organization plans to use major events for anti-brew message delivery because multiple showings during the event will increase message visibility which will help establish negative brewing attitudes among people of all ages. The Communication Theory states that message effectiveness depends on delivery method and used channels and message exposure frequency. The organizers use sports events as communication platforms to reach maximum audience while they deliver anti-illicit brew messages throughout the community.

The events provide more than their physical appearance because they create spaces for people to engage in interactive dialogues. The event can use halftime breaks and award ceremonies to present short speeches and skits which demonstrate the dangers of illicit brewing. The youth groups and community-based organizations can perform these performances. The events will become both entertaining and educational through their interactive activities. The event organizers should establish anti-brew messaging as an official element of the event to make community celebrations adopt awareness as their basic practice. The regularity and consistency of these events needs to be demonstrated because they are being organized on a regular basis. The respondents believed that community sports events should exist as continuous programs instead of being treated as single events. As one respondent explained...

*"Once the people see this happening regularly, they will start taking the message seriously."* (Key Informant IV, 2025).

The implementation of sports as an ongoing anti-illicit brew program will create a social environment that connects public activities with educational programs and preventive efforts. The established schedule will allow researchers to track its effects while building sustainable behavioral changes which will continue throughout time. The participants in the study expressed that actual life experiences would create stronger emotional effects than statistical data and standard health alerts. One participant proposed...

*"If possible, invite the people who have recovered from alcoholism to talk during the games. Their stories will touch many."* (Key Informant V, 2025).

Another had this to add on...

*"Let those who have recovered from alcoholism to be part of the organizing committees. It will show that everyone can change and give back."* (Key Informant VI, 2025).

The research demonstrated that actual experiences enable drinkers and their community members to comprehend reality through trustworthy proof from actual human experiences. The use of community sports events as storytelling platforms will help to eliminate the negative stereotypes associated with recovery. The former alcoholics should receive recognition as successful role models because they completed their recovery process. Their public appearance together with their testimonies will create discussions that lead people to understand addiction as a public health concern instead of viewing it as a character deficiency. The events create secure environments which allow participants to share their experiences and request assistance. The process of humanizing the issue will create an opening which allows people to discuss the problem because they typically stay silent about illegal brew consumption in both rural and urban areas.

The presence of these people would give them recognition. Mutonyi and Pesa (2024) <sup>[16]</sup> argued that, the community-based security interventions are more sustainable when they promote inclusivity, participation and social reintegration, thereby strengthening community ownership of local security initiatives. The community will develop a culture which supports forgiveness and healing when members who were formerly seen as troublemakers are allowed to join community transformation efforts. The inclusive approach will help former users while it also improves the entire intervention strategy through enhanced legitimacy and operational effectiveness. The community policing program in Nyeri County shows potential to fight illegal brewing operations yet multiple challenges exist which affect its ability to achieve sustainable results and operational success. The enforcement efforts face challenges because of two main factors which include unpredictable community involvement and people who stop working after they experience threats and because the organization lacks essential resources. The next section includes key informant perspectives which explain how illegal brew operations create practical difficulties that law enforcement agencies need to address through innovative methods for continuous operational tracking.

*"One major obstacle is the inconsistent of the community participation, especially when the people fear retaliation from the brewers. Sometimes, limited resources and the manpower constrain the police's ability to follow up on reports. To address these, we have been conducting regular awareness campaigns to build trust and to protect the informants. And we are also working with the local leaders to encourage sustained involvement. Additionally, we are seeking support to improve our logistical capacity."* (Key Informant VII, 2025).

The main obstacle to sustaining community policing efforts against illegal alcohol production activities. The community members fear retaliation which prevents them from joining essential activities required for continuous surveillance and reporting work. The problem shows how community safety and trust issues make people afraid to participate because of potential dangers. The police inability to act quickly on community reports occurs because their resource and

personnel situation is insufficient which decreases their enforcement efficiency. The informant suggested solution to these problems through their proposal of active solutions which included educational programs designed to create trust while protecting informants. The research work of Lansing and his colleagues demonstrated that trust-building elements work as essential components to achieve optimal community engagement which helps identify best practices for the ongoing work.

The local leaders need to be engaged because their presence can strengthen existing social support systems which drive people to participate. The law enforcement agencies need to improve their operational capacity through better resource management and solutions to their existing operational challenges. The strategies would provide a complete solution to the problems through their combination of community empowerment and institutional strengthening which supports the enduring success of community policing programs.

### 5. Conclusion

Based the findings of the study, it can be concluded that, that Nyeri County community policing programs together with local partnerships between law enforcement and residents have succeeded in detecting and dismantling illegal brewing operations. High community awareness together with active community participation has created trust relationships among the community, which later led to better information flow and increased operational effectiveness and community social ties. Organizations still need to find solutions which will make their programs more accessible while they work to eliminate staffing deficits which result from people avoiding reporting because they fear punishment. The study demonstrates that public confidence maintenance together with community policing success in reducing illegal brewing operations depends on organizations which need to develop better anonymous reporting systems and process their complaints while handling all communications in an open manner.

### 6. Recommendation

Based the conclusions of the study, the study recommended that, to enhance anonymity protections, simplify reporting procedures and to provide consistent feedback to build the public trust. This would help to ensure inclusivity and to address fears of retaliation to encourage greater community participation in combating illicit brewing.

### 7. Acknowledgement

I appreciate my mentor Dr. George Oyombra, of the Department of Security, Diplomacy and Peace Studies, at Kenyatta University for his mentorship. I also acknowledge the whole fraternity of the school of law, arts and social sciences at Kenyatta University for their effort in modelling security studies.

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