



BORDER SECURITY TRAINING PROGRAM (BSTP)

USIP's Border Security Training Program (BSTP) trains police officers from Kenya's Border Police Unit (BPU) and General Service Unit (GSU) who serve along the Kenya-Somalia border. The program, which began in 2017, is implemented in partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Counterterrorism and fills a training gap in Kenyan policing institutions, which frequently exclude training on non-tactical approaches to effective community-engagement.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The program aims to increase the capacity of Kenyan police to manage conflicts nonviolently and to effectively partner with communities along the Kenya-Somalia border, where deep distrust exists between police and communities, in order to more effectively interdict terrorist suspects and reduce justice-related drivers of violent extremism in Northeast Kenya.

"The training is informative and eye opening...I believe the training should stretch out and reach all officers. It is life changing, once you open your mind to it."

– BPU officer, May 2023.

TRAININGS

USIP's trainings incorporate a relationship-based approach — all skills are developed for the purpose of building or healing relationships among the parties in conflict with one another, while managing the conflict itself — and are designed to meet the specific needs of BPU and GSU so that the policing institutions can sustain and deliver them beyond USIP engagement.

There are currently three trainings that USIP implements with BPU and GSU:

1. **Community Engagement:** This training increases the capacity of the BPU and GSU to manage conflicts nonviolently and to effectively partner with communities along the Kenya-Somalia border and includes content on prejudice awareness and reduction, communication and conflict management skills.
2. **Gender-Informed Community Engagement:** This training increases the capacity of the BPU and GSU to identify, understand and respond to the security needs of everyone in a community, no matter their gender identity. The training focuses on supporting officers in understanding and assessing how gender impacts security risks for individuals and applying gender-responsive approaches to appropriately address the security risks.
3. **Trauma-Informed Policing:** This training increases the capacity of BPU officers to recognize and manage personal traumatic stress and engage in communities more productively through awareness of trauma's effects on behaviours and attitudes. The training focuses on supporting BPU officers with the knowledge, skills and tools necessary to recognize and manage personal traumatic stress and to recognize and address signs of trauma in communities to more effectively carry out their duties.

IMPACT

- ▶ Over 1000 officers have been engaged to date.
- ▶ USIP has trained a cadre of 25 dialogue facilitators, including 12 officers representing the BPU and 13 community-based organizations, who implemented more than 20 dialogues in four communities along the Kenya-Somalia border to identify and problem-solve security-related issues.
- ▶ USIP is developing a cadre of 76 BPU and GSU trainers who will continue to deliver the training curriculum within their institutions beyond USIP engagement.
- ▶ BPU and GSU have committed to integrating USIP training content into their core curricula.

"After these sessions, I will be doing my work differently. And when my colleagues see me and ask, I can share what I have learned here."

– BPU officer, November 2023