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**PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE BASIC INTELLIGENCE TRAINING IN
ALL BASIC COURSES OF THE KENYA DEFENCE FORCES**

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PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE BASIC INTELLIGENCE TRAINING IN ALL BASIC COURSES OF THE KENYA DEFENCE FORCES

AIM

1. The threats dynamics currently facing Kenya are dynamic, contemporary and are all manifested in an asymmetric nature¹. In the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) structure, each establishment has Intelligence trained personnel whose duty is to provide timely and actionable intelligence to the commanders at all levels for effective decision making. This works perfectly in a conventional set-up, however, in asymmetric situations, where the threat cuts across all spheres of society, there is need for all personnel to be equipped intelligence lenses so as to actualize the principle of “every soldier is a sensor/ collector” to enable better situational awareness, reporting and in turn better analysis for effective operations. In view of the aforesaid, this paper recommends an ‘Introduction to Intelligence operations’ training block in all basic courses in the KDF to build an early capacity across the force.

INTRODUCTION

2. Kenya’s operations in Somalia since 2011 have highlighted the need for effective intelligence-led operation. Somalia being a clear asymmetric theater, the need for intelligence personnel is at its highest point as operations are conducted by sub-units and each requires accurate and enduring intelligence support in order to operate effectively². This initially saw the establishment of the Military Intelligence Battalion and later the Military Intelligence Corps with 3 Battalions to cater for the ever-increasing need for intelligence³. A point to note is that all this has gone a long way in increasing the capacity of the KDF Intelligence department to be more effective, however, it is still note sufficient due to the information requirements at all levels. Intelligence is a specialized trade, however, it has to be actioned by operational units and there is an under-utilized potential in having the consumers if combat intelligence be part of the process. This will enable the full utilization of the ‘boots on the ground’ to add value to intelligence processes through understanding the basic mechanics and being part of them. If this is achieved, there will be a tremendous transformation of force capability as the value added will have an immediate impact on effective execution of operations.

¹ Anderson, David M., and Jacob McKnight. "Kenya at war: Al-Shabaab and its enemies in Eastern Africa." *African Affairs* 114, no. 454 (2015): 1-27.

² Maruf, Harun, and Dan Joseph. "Secret History of Al-Qaeda’s Most Powerful Ally, Bloomington: Indiana University Press. (2018): 136.

³ Kenya, KDF (2022). Kenya Defence Forces Doctrine. KDF Press.

DISCUSSION

Overview

3. In conventional operations, intelligence preparation is based on the adversary's military capabilities, intentions, terrain and weather⁴. A good analysis of these factors would lead to a near accurate predictions of the adversary's available options and this would enable own forces to plan effectively. This has been the basis of intelligence configuration in conventional military forces prior to the evolving of the threats that increased the scope of military operations as is now the case.

4. Asymmetric operations brought into play a whole new set of necessary considerations that would shape the operations and if not well understood and managed can cost catastrophic losses. This necessitated a greater role for intelligence. The Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI) adapted quickly and this is reflected in the additional and reviewed content of the Basic Intelligence Course that was enhanced from 4 to 6 months. The Intelligence personnel therefore are keeping pace with the dynamics but to fully succeed, a critical mass is needed; all personnel need to have a basic understanding.

Current KDF Intelligence Configuration

5. The current configuration provides for an Intelligence officer per Battalion and with 2 or 3 NCOs⁵. The same small structure is replicated across all formations and establishments. This is because, It was envisioned that the Int officer and their team will be able to be a principal staff officer for a commander at any level and perform intelligence staff functions. However, the threats have been transforming and the need for accurate intelligence has been rising. With Mission Command, operational commanders are increasingly being delegated authority to conduct operations all the way to platoon level.

6. To put this into perspective, an infantry Battalion has at least 4 companies, that translates to 12 companies. If a battalion deploys 3 companies in independent sub-sectors and each platoon has its own set of tasks, the 3-personnel Intelligence team at the Battalion is clearly insufficient to be the sole synthesizer of intelligence for everyone.

7. Intelligence trained personnel understand how to translate information requirements into tasks and thereafter debrief the teams to get feedback and form a basis for the next tasks⁶. If such a capability is spread to company and platoon level, it will

⁴ Gill, P., & Phythian, M. (2018). What Is Intelligence? In *Intelligence in an Insecure World* (3rd ed., p. Chapter 1). Cambridge: Polity Press.

⁵ Kenya, KDF (2022). Kenya Defence Forces Doctrine. KDF Press.

⁶ Godson, R., & Wirtz, J. (2000). Strategic Denial and Deception. *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, 13, 424-437.

have a tremendous boost for the small teams in terms of effective planning and better products for respective higher commanders.

9. Tactical troops are the ones who come into contact with the adversary. In an asymmetric environment, the threat blends with the population and there is a very blurred line between combatants and non-combatants. In the asymmetric theater, the adversary has direct action teams who are armed, however, the real force multiplier lies in the population which hosts financiers, active facilitators, sympathizers, passive sympathizers and supporters. A soldier who only understands effectiveness through combat, will not be able to adapt to the dynamics that shape an eventual firefight. Intelligence training can bridge gap by developing necessary soft skills like elicitation, interview, interrogation and in a conflict situation build capacity for tactical questioning and Sensitive Site Exploitation (SSE) which is key in processing areas where the adversary has had activities.

10. Intelligence-trained personnel are always located at command headquarters at all levels, and creating a base of personnel who can be do the ground work will significantly grease the intelligence cycle for rapid and accurate results. The current structure does not provide the numbers need to have the personnel across every level as would be desired. There is therefore value in having all the personnel equipped with a foundational understanding of intelligence operations to enable the Intelligence officers refine it at the Command Headquarters level.

An illustration using Op AMANI BONI in Lamu County

11. Using Operation AMANI BONI as an example, the Chief J2 is co-located with the Commander in Manda and he has small Field Intelligence Teams (FIT) co-located with the Combat Teams across the AOR. There is an analysis in Manda and Collection managers. In total, the total number of troops in the operation is about 2500 with the Intelligence personnel totaling about 35. The Intelligence component of the operation is expected to conduct and coordinate all-source intelligence collection, collation, integration, analysis and dissemination accurately and in a timely manner.

12. The troops deployed conduct the following operations:

- a. Key Leaders Engagement (KLE) with local leaders, religious leaders and Government administration officers.
- b. Patrols into the pastoralist villages to dominate the area and deny the terror organization Al Shabaab freedom of movement and action.
- c. Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) activities to alleviate specific needs of the population; including medical camps, veterinary services, drilling boreholes and medical evacuation.

13. These are significant interactions that can yield a lot of information particularly from such an area where the threat thrives on a narrative that is coined around local

population grievances⁷. It is easy here to visualize the value that can be achieved if the 2500 personnel in this theater had Intelligence lenses. The collection function, which is the key to providing fodder for analysis, will receive a major boost together with other tasks that require unique approaches in asymmetric operations.

14. The main proposal is to systematically capacitate the troops with basic intelligence soft skills necessary for collection, elicitation, interview, interrogation, counter intelligence and sensitive site exploitation.

Comparison with neighbouring countries

15. It is worth noting that in all the East African Region militaries; our neighbours, Intelligence is the basis of their foundational military doctrine. It is fused with aspects of patriotism and there is a clear indoctrination of personnel to keep them on the straight and narrow. As much as this seems to be well in line with any sound military established, it is interesting to note the emphasis that is laid on elicitation, reporting and basic counter intelligence⁸. This makes every interaction that they have, a small intelligence operation regardless of the nature of deployment or activity.

16. How is such a policy of value, one might ask. This relieves the main intelligence outfit the burden of deploying its mainstream intelligence personnel everywhere due to the fact that any deployment of personnel; sports, exchange activities, operations, liaison, is a deployment of collectors, they only need a chain of reporting and the information will come. This increases the base of overt collectors and reduces the signature of declared intelligence personnel hence enhancing situational awareness at all levels.

17. Though it can be argued that most of our neighbours are configure like that due to their history of internal unrest, it is worth noting that they are current well placed and it is important to have a comparative advantage if Kenya is to remain the model anchor State in the East Africa region.

Intelligence Personnel Training Module

18. The Basic Intelligence course is the foundational training for Intelligence officers and it runs for 6 months for both officers and service members. It prepares Intelligence staff to be able to fully perform Intelligence functions at all levels and is later complimented with short specialized courses but in principle, one can rise in the intelligence levels with this foundational knowledge⁹. Its scope covers the following areas:

⁷ Ekanem, Ekanem Asukwo. "Al Shabaab and its Violent Extremism in Kenya." *Saudi J. Humanities Soc Sci* 7, no. 5 (2022): 188-204.

⁸ Wettering, F. L. (2000). Counterintelligence: The Broken Triad. *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, 13(3), 265-300.

⁹ Kenya, KDF (2022). Kenya Defence Forces Doctrine. KDF Press.

- a. Introduction to Intelligence;
- b. Intelligence Preparation of the Operating Environment;
- c. Intelligence Collection Management;
- d. Introduction to Intelligence Analysis and structured analytical techniques;
- e. Reporting and Report Writing;
- f. Elicitation, Interviews and Interrogation;
- g. Introduction to Counter Intelligence;
- h. International Affairs; and
- i. Introduction to the Military Decision Making Process.

19. This 6 months package, whose content is not taught in any other course in the Kenya Defence Forces, goes to the necessary depth to prepare personnel for intelligence operations and staff work. However, it is possible to condense the key concepts across the scope into a 1 or 2 weeks package as an introductory block that can be delivered to all KDF personnel. The recommended scope is as follows:

- a. Introduction to the Intelligence Cycle (with main focus on information collection and reporting);
- b. Introduction to Human Intelligence (HUMINT) Operations (with a focus on Elicitation, Interviews and Interrogation);
- c. Introduction to Counter Intelligence (with a focus on Double Agents, Hostile Intelligence activities and counter measures); and
- d. Sensitive Site Exploitation (SSE) to enable them understand how to process suspicious sites and gather evidence safe after operations to enable further exploitation.

20. These four areas can be effectively condensed to give a foundation for critical situational analysis and a basis for tactical intelligence tasking at tactical and operational level.

CONCLUSION

21. It is accurate to note that, Intelligence appreciation should not be a preserve of a few dedicated Intelligence personnel, but the basics should filter down to all in rank and file while the Intelligence personnel do the more specialized intelligence-related duties. The contemporary operating environment calls for intelligence-led operations and the process of attaining accurate and actionable intelligence relies of broad collection and analysis that can be done in various degrees at all levels hence, can be done by all.

22. KDF future operations are almost certainly going to involve pushing more power to the edge and sub units will operate semi-autonomously under the mission command philosophy. Units and sub units they are currently being enabled to be able to deliver combat effects decisively, building their intelligence capacity should equally be a priority as it is the component that shapes operations and is key for force protection. An introductory block of intelligence training for all KDF personnel will build the necessary capacity and give the necessary tools to increase effectiveness in the troops. It is worth

noting that, based on the recruitment requirements of the KDF, all personnel have the required aptitude to grasp the concepts that are recommended by this paper. This will create a broad collection base and personnel capable of executing basic tasks effectively.

RECOMMENDATION

23. Based on the evidence and arguments highlighted herein, there is a clear need to address the issue of enhancing intelligence appreciation in the KDF. It is hereby recommended that the Introduction to Intelligence training module focusing on Introduction to the Intelligence Cycle, HUMINT Operations, Tactical Interrogation, Counter Intelligence, Reporting and Sensitive Site Exploitation as recommended above, be delivered as follows:

- a. Junior soldiers and NCOs Courses – 1 week;
- b. Senior NCOs Courses – 1 week to include a practical exercise;
- c. Recruits training – 2 days;
- d. Officer Cadets – 1 week;
- e. Young Officers Basic courses – 2 weeks to include exercises; and
- f. Junior Commanders and Command and Staff Courses – 1 week.

23. Further, it is recommended that the Defence Intelligence Academy (DIA) retains the Quality control of the entire syllabus. This will ensure that operational lessons learnt in the field are factored into the package by the school's Curriculum Development Department from time to time.

24. For delivery, DIA to offer the training for the Junior Commanders Course, Command and Staff Course and any other senior courses as may be directed. For the Captains Courses and below, it is recommended that this be delegated to the Service Intelligence components to deal with their respective formations, units and sub-units. This will enable the Services (Army, Air Force and Navy) structure the delivery as per their training and operational cycles as they have full control of their formations and units. By extension this will gradually build the capacity of the services to develop modules that are specific to their requirements and only require quality control and assurance from the Defence Intelligence Academy and the Directorate of Military Intelligence.

25. It is assessed that, despite an additional cost implication, the training will enhance personnel effectiveness and augment operational readiness from a situational awareness perspective because, time spent on training is never time wasted.

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