A Framework for Prevention and Intervention Strategies

INCORPORATING VIOLENT EXTREMISM INTO VIOLENCE PREVENTION EFFORTS

Developed by a collaborative of non-governmental and governmental stakeholders from the Greater Boston region

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A Message from United States Attorney Carmen M. Ortiz

As U.S. Attorney, I was honored that the Greater Boston region was chosen by the White House to be one of only three pilot locations in the country to develop an approach to enhance our efforts at preventing violent extremism. Our resilience and longstanding history of successful collaborative efforts to combatting violence served as the genesis for this framework and the foundation on which we will build an effective strategy to combat violent extremism locally and enable communities across the country to do the same.

One of my highest priorities has always been reducing violence by promoting safe and healthy alternatives through prevention and intervention strategies. Throughout my tenure, I have worked with nontraditional partners, like schools, service providers and academia, to find ways to reduce gun and gang violence through non-law enforcement methods. I believe that these innovative strategies are not only effective, but necessary in order to develop a framework to counter violent extremism in the Greater Boston region. These innovative approaches are intended to complement, not replace, the traditional tools of law enforcement in protecting the public safety.

From the very day we were chosen as a pilot region, we have actively engaged community representatives, faith-based leaders, educators, mental health experts and local government officials, just to name a few. Known as the "Collaborative" I am most proud of these "local champions" for their commitment to this pilot initiative and their resolve to engage in meaningful dialogue which has resulted in a comprehensive and multidisciplinary solution-based framework.

Through the hard work of so many, and the tenacity of the community, I firmly believe that we are poised to launch a series of compelling and practical solutions to countering violent extremism in the Greater Boston region. I want to thank and commend all involved for their continued commitment to our efforts.

Carmen M. Ortiz

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United States Attorney
District of Massachusetts

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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

In March 2014, the White House National Security Council (NSC) requested assistance from three regions with piloting the development of a comprehensive framework that promotes multi-disciplinary solutions to countering violent extremism. The Greater Boston region was selected because of its existing collaborative efforts and nationally recognized success with developing robust comprehensive violence prevention and intervention strategies. With the support of the Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Homeland Security and National Counterterrorism Center, a range of stakeholders in the Greater Boston region began to develop a locally-driven framework. The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts has had a coordinating role in this process.

A COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

The locally-driven framework has been developed by a collaborative of non-governmental, governmental and academic stakeholders from the Greater Boston region.[1] (See Appendix A) Contributions were made through in-person meetings, phone conversations, emails and other written correspondence. Working Group meetings were held on a regular basis to work through issues and craft an approach that can be customized based on the local needs.

WHO ARE VIOLENT EXTREMISTS

Violent extremists are individuals who support or commit ideologically-motivated violence to further personal, political or social objectives, sometimes without direction from or influence by a foreign actor.[2] There are a number of violent extremist ideologies that are based in politics, religion or economics. The framework developed by the Collaborative in the Greater Boston region does not focus on any one form of violent extremism.

WHAT IS COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Countering Violent Extremism, also known as "CVE", at the very basic level, focuses on using prevention and intervention approaches[3] as a way to minimize the risk of individuals being inspired by violent extremist ideologies or recruited by violent extremist groups. In the Greater Boston region, Countering Violent Extremism efforts do not contain a law enforcement suppression component, which is aimed at protecting national security and developed and implemented by law enforcement agencies.[4] Law enforcement suppression strategies fall under counterterrorism efforts and are focused on activities once an individual has begun to prepare for or engage in ideologically-motivated violence to advance their cause. (This distinction is important to understand.)

Through the initiative, the Collaborative has been working to clarify the meaning of Countering Violent Extremism and to identify language and initiatives that promote resilience, respect and partnership. Both governmental and non-governmental collaborators have demonstrated a commitment to work through an inclusive process that will not polarize communities.

FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

The framework is intended to serve as a foundation to assist various communities (locally, nationally and internationally) build resilience and capacity to prevent individuals, including young people, from being inspired and recruited by violent extremists.

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[1] The Collaborative has included numerous City of Boston personnel who have provided guidance and expertise on best practices. The City of Boston has implemented many of the solutions contained in the framework, some through Boston's National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention and Boston's Defending Childhood Initiative.

[2] Reference: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Countering Violent Extremism Office, Washington, D.C.

[3] These approaches involve both universal prevention and individualized interventions. Prevention involves increasing support, building skills and protective factors, and reducing risk factors or stressors. Providing individualized interventions at the earliest sign of concern is key.

[4] One exception to this may be when programming is included as part of an offender's probation or supervised release plan which could involve a law enforcement aspect, particularly in instances of non-compliance.

Having a foundation from which to start is an important step to developing any strategy, particularly one that involves a complex issue like countering violent extremism which, so far, has been poorly defined and understood. Through the pilot initiative, the Collaborative has explored existing prevention and early intervention strategies that can be enhanced as well as new strategies that require resources for implementation. Although the Collaborative was created out of an initiative to counter violent extremism, the solutions are not entirely unique from other prevention related strategies that are currently being implemented (or can be implemented) through broader efforts by public health, mental health, non-profit organizations, private partnerships, government and others. Rather than create a program specifically labeled *Countering Violent Extremism,* a more effective approach might be to expand the capacity and resources of agencies and organizations to ensure that they are able to enhance the work that they are already doing as well as leverage existing successful programs to help address violent extremism.

HOW TO USE THE FRAMEWORK

The framework is designed to allow local communities the flexibility to define their problem areas, create achievable goals and objectives, and develop realistic implementation plans. The suggested solutions provide ample options so that organizations and agencies have a better understanding of the types of issues that can be considered. Some may look to the framework as a starting point to help enhance existing comprehensive programs. Some may read the framework and better understand how their existing efforts can help to prevent individuals from being inspired and recruited by exploitive influences like violent extremists. Communities should not view the framework as a specific endorsement to create and/or brand separate programs labeled CVE which may have a certain stigma. Rather, those decisions are best made by organizations and agencies at the local level given the needs and dynamics within their respective communities.

DELIVERY OF SERVICES/WHO IS VULNERABLE OR AT RISK

Researchers across the globe have made it clear that the path to violent extremism is not linear and there are no valid or reliable indicators to "predict" who is more likely to engage in violent extremism. Defining who is at risk or who is vulnerable to being inspired and recruited by violent extremist groups is challenging without local data to support where resources should be surged. Surging resources to specific communities, who have not directly asked for assistance, may actually stigmatize those communities. This is counterproductive and it may create further isolation, alienation and disenfranchised individuals. Without data and absent a direct request from communities to address issues of recruitment, a more effective approach might be to expand resources of relevant agencies and organizations[5] to ensure that they are able to provide services to individuals vulnerable to isolation, alienation and becoming disenfranchised; and to empower those who may assist in shepherding individuals, about whom they are concerned, to appropriate service providers.

WHO PLAYS A ROLE

A number of stakeholders play a role in implementing and "receiving" the solutions in the framework. Some solutions are best implemented by non-government, while some may be better implemented by government or through joint partnerships. The solutions have been phrased in a way that provides a snapshot of who implements and who "receives" the solutions.

WHAT ARE THE FOCUS AREAS

The overall project goal identified by the Collaborative is to increase the capacity of community and government as a way to protect vulnerable individuals from engagement in and the nation from violent extremism. The Collaborative thoughtfully explored a variety of areas that have presented particular challenges with accomplishing the goal. The following areas were identified as problem areas:

[5] Agencies and organizations can be non-governmental or governmental agencies that are offering programs and providing support and services to individuals.

PROBLEM ONE: Some young people may be at greater risk of feeling isolated and alienated, making them more vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists.
PROBLEM TWO: Providing services to individuals before mobilization[6] toward violent extremism is challenging when there is a lack of understanding regarding violent extremism and limited intervention programs.
PROBLEM THREE: Social media and other media platforms are being used to recruit individuals to join extremist groups and to encourage individuals to engage in violence.
PROBLEM FOUR: U.S. policy and events around the globe can frustrate, anger and, at times, influence some to think that there is no effective alternative other than to express grievances or solidarity through the use of violence.
PROBLEM FIVE: Distrust between government and non-government hinders collaboration and effective decision making and problem solving.
PROBLEM SIX: Lack of knowledge in mainstream society regarding religions, cultures and thought systems which are unfamiliar or are maligned in the media contributes to poor perceptions that fuel and mutually reinforce fear and estrangement.
PROBLEM SEVEN: Individuals convicted of hate crimes and terrorism offenses require specialized support and services before and after release from prison.

WHAT ARE THE SOLUTIONS

In order to ensure that efforts are cohesive, the Collaborative recommends that a multi-disciplinary working group be considered when tailoring the approach to a particular jurisdiction. For each of the areas above, sample goals and solutions have been identified – some of which are broad-based prevention while some are more focused on direct interventions. The goals and solutions should be tailored by the implementing organization/agency so they more appropriately represent the mission of those organizations/agencies. For instance, if a non-profit organization wishes to assist with addressing Problem One, it may be more focused on solutions that will increase support, services and programs to young people which may make them more resilient and *prevent* them from being more vulnerable to recruitment. Similarly, if a government agency wishes to address this same problem, it may be more apt to implement solutions that will *improve access* to services in communities and organizations. Although this too may increase resiliency within the community, it may also improve the delivery of direct services to those already vulnerable.

Implementing agencies should not feel constrained by the structure of the framework. The sample goals and solutions are intended to help implementing agencies more ably and comprehensively address each of the problem areas, but the infrastructure and resources of the implementing organization or agency must be taken into consideration when tailoring a particular response.

[6]Mobilization is a process by which radicalized individuals take action to prepare for or engage in violence or material support for violence to advance their cause. *"Radicalization dynamics: A primer" National Counterterrorism Center, September 2010.*

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FRAMEWORK

OVERALL PROJECT GOAL

Increase the capacity of community and government as a way to protect vulnerable individuals from engagement in and the nation from violent extremism.

PROBLEM ONE

Some young people[7] may be at greater risk of feeling isolated and alienated, making them more vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists.

GOAL AREAS

- Reduce isolation by strengthening families and providing positive community connections.
- Provide appropriate support, services and programs to those young people who perceive themselves as being targeted by others or those who have wanted to be a part of a prosocial group, but have been turned away ("failed joiners").
- Improve access to behavioral health services in communities and organizations.
- Improve systems and training that promote inclusiveness.
- Work collaboratively with current school and community service providers and organizations to increase communication and improve delivery of English Language Learning (ELL) services.
- Provide young people and parents with access to culturally sensitive, appropriate mental health, and substance use services.

SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER

Skills Development Programs

- Utilize schools, community and faith-based programs and private providers to assist young people with fostering effective interpersonal and self-advocacy skills.[8]
- Utilize schools, community and faith-based programs and private providers to assist young people with developing critical thinking and conflict resolution skills.[9]
- Utilize schools, community and faith-based programs and private providers to offer opportunities to students who are interested in understanding and developing mediation, conflict resolution, bullying prevention and intervention skills and becoming peer leaders and advocates.
- Utilize a range of service providers to provide English Language Learning (ELL) opportunities to families.
- Utilize academics and other experts to develop interactive programs of civic engagement that encourage adolescents[10] and young adults[11] to freely debate and constructively work on public issues that matter to them, thus helping them to gain skills, motivation, democratic values and a sense of belonging.

[7] The World Health Organization defines a young person as someone between the ages of 10 and 24.
[8] The structure of the programs may vary depending on the age group.
[9] The structure of the programs may vary depending on the age group.
[10] The World Health Organization defines an adolescent as those between the ages of 10 and 19.
[11] For purposes of this document, a young adult is between the age of 20 and 24.

- Utilize subject matter experts, which could include government personnel, to assist populations across the ages with developing and achieving competency with digital literacy skills.
- With the assistance of private businesses, vocational training schools and others, provide job development courses and apprenticeship programs to vulnerable adolescents and young adults.
- Provide young people with skills on how to cope with unwanted and aggressive behavior (e.g. bullying, harassment, intimidation) through programs offered by schools, community and faith-based organizations and private providers.

Awareness/Education /Training

- With the assistance of government, identify existing local mental health/social services, support networks and programs for young people, and educate communities about ways to access those resources, perhaps using resource guides in multiple languages.
- Provide focused workshops and professional development opportunities to parents and caregivers, school personnel, community and faith-based organizations, youth workers, mentors and law enforcement on how to assess and work with young people experiencing conflict, isolation and alienation.
- Ensure that organizations, faith-based groups, communities and schools are equipped to handle (or know how to access information) to become proficient in stress management and self-care skills in both children and families
- With the assistance of existing mental health networks, identify culturally diverse mental health and substance use service providers, and educate the community on how to access those services.
- With the assistance of public health networks, identify and utilize experts to provide technical assistance to communities and organizations on how to design and implement culturally sensitive programs that help young people develop specific social skills.
- With the assistance of public health networks, identify and utilize experts to provide technical assistance to communities and organizations on how to design and implement self-advocacy programs for young people.
- Identify and utilize experts to provide technical assistance to communities and non-governmental organizations on how to design and implement youth development programs that support one's culture.
- Utilize local experts to provide schools with training on best practices for working with immigrant children and children exposed to trauma, which include placement/testing, school climate and student acceptance.
- With the assistance of public health and mental health networks, provide trauma-informed care training to non-governmental organizations and families with a focus on resiliency factors which can lead to positive outcomes.
- Identify and utilize expert trainers to provide interactive cultural sensitivity and awareness training to a range of organizations and individuals, including those in government.
- Provide skills building and bridge building across agencies, educators and community interest groups.
- With the assistance of public health, provide "Building Youth Self-esteem" workshops for NGOs, caregivers, mentors (including peer mentors and immediate peer groups) and advocates (including peer advocates).
- Provide students, families and all school staff with on-going bullying prevention and intervention training as well as resources that are available both in and out of school.
- With the assistance of subject matter experts, including public safety staff, educate families, educators, service providers and organizations about targeted violence, including violent extremism, so they better understand vulnerabilities and how to protect young people from engaging or being recruited to engage in violence.

Engagement/Support

- As initiated by school staff, periodically review lists of students to determine which students appear not to be connected and offer those students and families support.
- Examine existing school systems that connect families and caregivers with forums like Parent Universities, Welcome Centers, community centers and schools, and increase access and utilization of those opportunities.
- Provide advocates (or mentors) through schools and community/faith-based organizations to individuals in need of positive peer development, care and support.
- Identify those who can provide vulnerable individuals with job skills and opportunities for employment, and connect those providers to individuals for follow up.
- Through partnerships, create cross-cultural engagement activities and heavily market those activities within and across communities as a way to enhance understanding.
- With the use of mentors or youth workers, teachers and others, conduct check-ins and engage in dialogues with adolescents and young adults who are disconnected or experiencing conflict to determine interests, hobbies, etc. for further engagement.
- Through collaboration between mental health, community and faith-based organizations, engage in dialogues to identify mental health and social services most needed and develop methods of reducing the stigma of seeking services.
- With government and private support, increase staffing for those organizations and agencies that can provide programming and mental health services to individuals in need of care and support.[12]
- Encourage engagement between the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Attorney General's Office and schools to enhance understanding of federal and state civil rights protections.
- With government support, provide schools with no cost conflict resolution and violence prevention resources.

PROBLEM TWO

Providing services to individuals *before* mobilization[13] toward violent extremism is challenging when there is a lack of understanding regarding violent extremism and limited intervention programs.

GOAL AREAS

- Improve the understanding regarding violent extremism through education and outreach by trained individuals.
- Improve understanding of concerning behavior across disciplines so that individuals know the threshold of when and how to refer/provide services and support and when behavior becomes a public safety concern.
- Increase public awareness regarding existing resources, services and service providers that can assist individuals with addressing concerns.
- Increase general awareness within the public of who to contact for advice, referrals for care and public safety concerns.
- Increase coordination among existing service providers, organizations and agencies.
- Increase knowledge and skills regarding crisis intervention, trauma-informed care and psychological first aid.

[12] Some organizations may prefer to be funded by private funders or foundations.

[13] Mobilization is a process by which radicalized individuals take action to prepare for or engage in violence or material support for violence to advance their cause. *"Radicalization dynamics: A primer" National Counterterrorism Center, September 2010.*

- Surge resources to fund service providers to provide case management, individualized service plans, educational assistance and transitional job opportunities to vulnerable individuals.

SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER

Awareness/Education/Training

- Through collaborative partnerships between law enforcement and others, organize dialogues or trainings to a wide range of individuals[14] on violent extremism, the difference between radicalization and mobilization to violent extremism, when/how to provide services and, when appropriate, when/how to report concerns to law enforcement.[15]
- Conduct a needs assessment of community non-profit and faith-based organizations who are interested in providing care and support to individuals before he or she "mobilizes" to violent extremism to determine infrastructure and support needed.[16]
- With the assistance of public health and subject-matter experts, provide or enhance training opportunities on crisis intervention and trauma-informed care to community and faith-based organizations that provide programming and services to vulnerable young people and families.
- With the assistance of public health and mental health providers, provide or enhance training to community and faith-based leaders on psychological first aid so they may provide support to communities in instances when individuals have engaged in violent extremism, domestically or abroad.
- Using subject-matter experts, develop a curriculum and/or protocol for service providers who are working with individuals who may be radicalizing toward violent extremism.
- In coordination with subject-matter experts and at the request of service providers, provide technical assistance and specialized training to existing service providers and emergency mental health providers that are already providing comprehensive wrap-around services[17] to vulnerable individuals, both male and female, so they may enhance existing program models.
- As initiated by schools, enhance awareness within K-12 and higher education regarding behavior assessment and care protocols and how peers can connect individuals to assessment and care teams.
- Provide thorough training among key mental health providers and public safety officials on protocols for sharing information.
- Increase understanding within the community about threat assessment, who does it and how assessment information is maintained and stored.[18]

Engagement/Support

- Develop a statewide multidisciplinary team or committee[19] that meets regularly to enhance communication.
- With the assistance of government, create a resource guide with information on who is trained to provide mental health and other specialized services, and how to refer someone for care before he or she "mobilizes" to violent extremism, and market that guide widely to the public.
- Create or enhance "service provider to service provider" dialogues to ensure they are communicating regarding service issues and resources.

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[14] A wide range of individuals includes organizations/service providers, government/non-government stakeholders, parents, peers, community leaders, faith-based leaders, educators, private clinicians, emergency mental health providers, multi-disciplinary assessment and care teams, youth/street workers, mentors, hotline operators, etc. It can include prison, probation, parole and community corrections staff.

[15] These dialogues and trainings may cover a range of topics like violent extremism, gang violence, workplace violence, school violence, etc.

[16] A needs assessment can be done independent from government *or* with the assistance of government.

[17] Comprehensive wrap-around services include screening and assessment, case management, individualized service plans, educational assistance/referral/placement and transitional job opportunities.

[18] Understanding on threat assessment can be increased through dialogue, outreach materials, and other methods.

[19] This team should consider a range of issues as opposed to focusing solely on violent extremism. Federal, state and local government should be included on the team along with non-government representatives.

- Create or enhance a network system among community, non-government organizations, service providers, schools and law enforcement for referrals for services or, when necessary, reporting of public safety concerns.
- Establish (or enhance) local multidisciplinary behavior assessment teams that include schools, Department of Childrens and Families, crisis intervention staff, law enforcement, public health and others so that behavior may be more effectively assessed for follow-up care.[20]
- With the assistance of subject-matter experts and with the cooperation of government, enhance dialogues with prison, parole, probation and community corrections staff to discuss ways to increase resiliency factors within prison or community corrections environments.
- Establish (or enhance) formal and informal lines of communications among law enforcement, mental health and social service agencies to improve relationship, communication and understanding.
- Utilize (or create or enhance) existing hotlines for concerned parents, caregivers, family members, peers and others to share concerns and receive assistance and feedback.

PROBLEM THREE

Social media and other media platforms are being used to recruit individuals to join extremist groups and to encourage individuals to engage in violence.

GOAL AREAS

- Educate communities about ways to protect their children from being recruited.
- Develop broad and diverse counter narratives and promote those narratives for wide reach.
- Provide platforms for young people to have answers to questions from reliable sources.

SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER

Awareness/Education/Training

- Utilize subject matter experts, which could include government personnel, to assist populations across the ages with understanding Internet safety and achieving competency with digital literacy skills.
- With law enforcement assistance, educate community representatives in a controlled setting about existing messages, propaganda and recruitment efforts and the harm this can do their children.
- Through efforts initiated by non-governmental stakeholders, increase awareness regarding the impact of hate speech and network with those working to counter hate speech.
- As developed and initiated by non-government, utilize scholars, community leaders and clergy to assist in public debates over ideological and socio-psychological underpinnings of contemporary violent extremism.
- As developed and initiated by non-government, conduct presentations by prominent academics to frame the issues and objectively explain the history of various movements and the drivers of their evolution.
- Utilize academics to advise on the serious danger presented by certain kinds of materials (e.g. different kinds of materials, sizes of collection).
- With the assistance of subject-matter experts, increase awareness of existing approaches to online dialogue and online organizing.

[20] Many K-12 schools and universities have Multidisciplinary Behavior Assessment Teams which are also known as Threat Assessment Teams or Student Threat Assessment Teams (STAT). These Teams discuss all forms of concerning behavior.

Engagement/Support

- Develop relationships between non-government and communications experts who can provide education on the basics of media marketing strategies and contextual advertising; assist in creating, producing, editing and delivering a specific public message; and assist with the technical aspect of creating online traffic (i.e. domain names, tagging, search engine optimization/search engine marketing, etc.).
- Through efforts initiated by non-governmental stakeholders, provide safe spaces within the community for young people to express and process frustrations, fears and concerns.
- Increase non-governmental efforts to promote non-violent religious perspectives, which can be geared specifically toward reaching adolescents and young adults.

PROBLEM FOUR

U.S. policy and events around the globe can frustrate, anger and, at times, influence some to think that there is no effective alternative other than to express grievances or solidarity through the use of violence.

GOAL AREAS

- Provide skills to individuals, with a primary focus on young people, to support conflict resolution and constructive advocacy.[21]
- Provide education about effective approaches to activism and political/social impact.
- Provide support for youth engagement/empowerment/activism programs.
- Enhance communication and coordination between community and government.

SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER

Skills Development Programs

- Utilize schools, universities, community and faith-based programs and private providers to assist young people with developing critical thinking and conflict resolution skills.
- Utilize schools, community and faith-based programs and private providers to assist young people with developing self-management/youth self-advocacy skills to young people.
- Utilize schools, community and faith-based programs and private providers to assist young people with developing anger management skills.
- Increase opportunities, with the assistance of schools, community and faith-based organizations, for young people to create their own narrative for peace and develop marketing strategies and skills to implement that narrative.

Awareness/Education/Training

- Provide workshops in the community and at schools on non-violent activism/civic engagement with the assistance of subject-matter experts.
- With the assistance of subject-matter experts, provide education to populations across the ages on how to be an advocate.
- With the assistance of public health and mental health providers, provide workshops for parents, NGOs, faith-based organizations, and teachers on helping young people handle anger and frustration.
- Utilize subject matter experts to teach people and communities how to advocate on and to make change in policy (e.g. local, U.S. and foreign policy) through non-violence.

[21] The structure of the programs may vary depending on the age group.

- Provide training, with the assistance of subject-matter experts, to government/law enforcement on effective ways to interact with individuals who wish to engage in nonviolent activism.
- Increase awareness within communities about the mission and responsibilities of local, state and federal government agencies which will also better educate communities about the limitations of those local agencies.

Engagement/Support

- Through non-governmental organizations, provide safe spaces for young people to express and process frustrations, fears and concerns.
- Engage in regular dialogues and relationship building activities between government and non-government stakeholders.
- Identify successful youth empowerment and activism programs/activities, and widely promote and support them in schools and non-government organizations.
- Create internship programs across all government agencies for young people to understand how government works.
- Create opportunities for government and young people to engage in dialogues through recreational activities, youth advisory councils, presentations at schools and college classes, town halls, afterschool programs, youth academies and other formal or informal channels.
- Develop strategies to foster communication between government and non-government whereby the community can seek aid and assistance when concerns arise within the community or across the globe.

PROBLEM FIVE

Distrust between government and non-government hinders collaboration and effective decision making and problem solving.

GOAL AREAS

- Develop relationships between community and policy-makers to influence policy.
- Identify lessons learned and best practices of successful government/non-government relationships and increase awareness regarding those lessons and practices.
- Increase dialogue between government and non-government through informal and formal dialogues.
- Increase knowledge of laws, systems, policies and procedures and enhance systems when possible.
- Increase diversity of the government workforce to more significantly reflect the community that it serves.

SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER

Awareness/Education/Training

- Create or enhance engagement among non-government, government and experts on federal and state privacy, civil rights and civil liberties protections through meetings, workshops and other activities.
- Through government-initiated engagement, educate the community about the differences among the various law enforcement agencies and clarify information on law enforcement policies that are poorly and/or inaccurately understood. (e.g. community policing, informant policy, undercover operations)
- Through government-initiated engagement, increase understanding within the community about threat assessment, the range of those using it and how assessment information is maintained and stored.
- Utilize subject matter experts (which includes those in the community) to develop and provide interactive cultural sensitivity and awareness training to government.

- Through government-initiated efforts and with the assistance of non-government, provide training to law enforcement on the do's and don'ts and importance of community outreach.
- Through government-initiated efforts, increase law enforcement understanding using a victim-centered approach/people focused approach vs. an incident focused approach.
- Through government-initiated efforts and with assistance of subject-matter experts, provide or enhance conflict resolution training for government employees.

Engagement/Support

- Create or enhance private sector engagement with law enforcement to discuss ways to protect against becoming victims of violent extremism and how to respond if victimized.
- Through law enforcement-initiated efforts, enhance relationships with communities through community policing.[22]
- Create opportunities for non-government to inform government on decisions and policy (e.g. community advisory groups).
- Through partnerships between non-government and government, create opportunities for youth/government engagement through internships, recreation, advisory groups, etc.
- When possible, share unclassified emerging threat information from law enforcement to community representatives.
- Enhance outreach by government and other social services to immigrant and refugee communities as a way to enhance dialogues.
- Encourage law enforcement and community attendance and participation at public housing and neighborhood watch meetings.
- Build connections and enhance communication between community leaders and local politicians/public officials.
- Create joint government and non-government strategies on how to deal with the media to prevent stakeholders from being used against one another.
- Hire culturally diverse individuals for government positions which may require a review of recruiting practices and may involve expanding agency outreach to younger generations.
- Show support to communities by ensuring that the prosecution office promptly engages with those communities who may suffer backlash from certain prosecutions.

PROBLEM SIX

Lack of knowledge in mainstream society regarding religions, cultures and thought systems which are unfamiliar or are maligned in the media, contributes to poor perceptions that fuel and mutually reinforce fear and estrangement.

GOAL AREAS

- Increase knowledge and understanding regarding cultures, religions and thought systems.
- Create a culture of respect, tolerance and inclusiveness.

[22] Effective community policing that addresses *all* of the security concerns of various populations creates community resilience, authentic relationships between citizens and their police department, and forges/strengthens the bonds of trust between police and the community it serves. Police departments like the Boston Police Department have been engaged in community policing for many years. The purpose of community policing is not to gather intelligence from the community.

SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER

Engagement/Support

- Encourage partners to disseminate public statements/press releases to partner media lists.
- Invite media to public debates that are initiated by the community.
- Create ongoing non-government-initiated counter narratives with assistance from experts and students at universities.
- Engage in dialogue between community and government speech writers and leaders to enhance perspective regarding language used to communicate with the public.
- Through partnerships, create cross-cultural engagement activities and heavily market those activities to the public as a way to enhance understanding.
- Engage in dialogues and relationship building activities between government and non-government stakeholders.
- Through partnerships between universities and subject matter experts, encourage free expression on campuses, but counter hate and bigotry.
- Create internship programs across all government agencies for young people to understand how government works.
- Hire culturally diverse individuals for government positions which may require a review of recruiting practices and may involve expanding agency outreach to younger generations.

Awareness/Education/Training

- Provide training, with the assistance of subject-matter experts, to non-governmental/faith-based organizations on strategies for working with the media.
- Utilize subject matter experts (which includes those in the community) to develop and provide interactive cultural sensitivity and awareness training to government.
- As developed and initiated by non-government, issue public statements, op-eds and other messaging that may clarify and enhance perspective within the public.
- As developed and initiated by non-government, utilize scholars, community leaders and clergy to assist in public debates over ideological and socio-psychological underpinnings of contemporary violent extremism.
- As developed and initiated by non-government, conduct presentations by prominent academics to frame the issues and objectively explain the history of various movements and the drivers of their evolution.[23]
- Provide training that is initiated by schools and employers and with the assistance of subject matter experts on how to develop school and workplace cultures that promote tolerance and difference (e.g. anti-bullying, anti-hate, anti-bias programs, conflict resolution, cross-cultural conflict resolution).
- With the assistance of subject-matter experts, teach people in schools and within the community about how to counter hate speech in a non-violent way, both on and offline.

[23] This presentation would benefit from multi-party vetting.

PROBLEM SEVEN

Individuals convicted of hate crimes and terrorism offenses require specialized support and services before and after release from prison.

GOAL AREAS

- Increase understanding regarding disengagement from violent extremism within the corrections setting
- Coordinate services between corrections and post-release service providers in an effort to reduce risk of return to violence through sustainable reintegration into the community.

SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER

Awareness/Education/Training

- Utilize subject matter experts to educate corrections and community corrections personnel[24] regarding violent extremism and disengagement from violent extremism.
- Utilize subject matter experts to provide specialized training on disengagement from violent extremism to existing service providers who are providing intensive case management and diversion/reentry-related services.
- In cooperation and coordination with correctional institutions, expose those convicted of hate crimes and terrorist-related charges to former violent extremists ("formers") or, if not feasible, to the stories of "formers" who can provide support and encouragement.

[24] Personnel may include correctional program staff, psychologists, investigators, probation and parole personnel and others.

NEXT STEPS IN MASSACHUSETTS

Considerable energy has been devoted to developing a consensus framework that can be customized and implemented broadly. The next immediate steps in the process will be to identify resources for implementation, establish a well-coordinated implementation plan and develop performance measurement tools. Over the coming months, the Collaborative will spend the next year focusing on, among other things, the following:

- **Identification of Public Resources**
  In coordination with local, state and federal government, existing public resources (including those dedicated toward violence prevention) will be more fully assessed to determine where resources can be leveraged.
- **City/Town/Regional Implementation**
  Efforts will be made to select at least two specific jurisdictions (i.e. cities/towns/regions) in Massachusetts to customize and implement the framework.
- **Technical Assistance/Enhanced Assessment and Screening Protocols**
  Subject-matter experts on violent extremism will be secured to provide technical assistance to existing service providers (across the state) who are providing comprehensive wrap-around services to high-risk and court-involved youth. These providers already have programs that include assessment tools, case management, individualized service plans, educational assistance/referral/placement and transitional job opportunities. However, they have not traditionally worked with individuals vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists or those radicalizing to violent extremism. Technical assistance will be provided so they may enhance existing program models.
- **Improved Awareness of Violent Extremism**
  There is a great need to properly educate a number of stakeholders about violent extremism. Trainers will be identified and properly trained by subject-matter experts. Non-government will also be included as trainers. Presentations will be customized depending on the format of the presentation (e.g. conference-style, roundtable dialogue) and audience (e.g. schools, community, peers, law enforcement). Priority will be given to training existing school and university assessment and care teams, crisis intervention and response teams and others (including non-government) who directly request the training. The training may not be limited to violent extremism, rather, it may be a presentation merged into a larger conference or event.
- **Controlled Exposure to Violent Extremist Propaganda/Development of Community-initiated Counter Narratives**
  Interested community representatives will be educated in a controlled setting about existing messages, propaganda and recruitment efforts and the harm they can do their children. They will be connected with experts who can provide greater understanding on the breadth, scope, and complexities of developing counter narratives. They will be exposed to local university representatives and communication experts who are interested in assisting communities with developing broad and diverse counter narratives
- **Expansion of Youth Dialogue and Civic Engagement Programs**
  Some organizations, schools and universities have expressed an interest in developing activities that will engage young people in the discussion about how to prevent individuals from joining violent extremist groups. Subject-matter experts will be included in dialogues so they may assist adolescents and young adults with developing platforms for prevention. Additionally, civic engagement programs for young people will be expanded and offered to others.
- **Trauma-Informed Care and Crisis Intervention Training**
  With the assistance of public health and mental health providers, training on trauma-

informed care and crisis intervention will be provided to non-government. Included in this training will be a networking opportunity with existing providers/organizations so they may determine the best process for referring individuals for specialized services using existing networks.

- **Development of Performance Measures**
  In order to develop and maintain legitimacy as well as be competitive for grant funding, agencies and organizations must develop ways to measure the success of their efforts. Experts will be consulted to assist with the development of performance metrics for the sample solutions so that success can be measured.
- **Digital Literacy Presentations**
  Existing digital literacy presentations will be enhanced and provided as requested, in partnership with government and non-government.
- **Specialized Training and Dialogues on Disengagement**
  Dialogues with corrections, probation and parole will be coordinated to expand understanding of violent extremism and disengagement from violent extremism.
- **Technical Assistance on Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Planning**
  Some cities with diverse populations struggle to work through the complexities of developing a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan that meets the needs of its community members. Subject-matter experts will be identified to train local and state government on how to conduct an LEP assessment so they may develop an effective plan.
- **Enhanced Communication among Law Enforcement /Mental Health/Social Service Agencies**
  In coordination with others, existing methods of communications among law enforcement (local, state and federal), mental health and social service agencies will be assessed so that methods can be enhanced.
- **Cultural Awareness Training to Federal Government**
  In cooperation with federal agencies, existing cultural awareness training to federal employees will be assessed to determine the trainers that have been used, the format of training, the frequency of training and improvements needed. Assessment information will be shared with local and state government so they may enhance their practices.
- **Development of a Resource Guide**
  Individuals cannot access resources if they are unaware of them. After an assessment has been conducted of the programs and services provided by organizations and agencies, the information will be compiled into a user-friendly resource guide and made available to communities.
- **Public Awareness Regarding Roles of Government Agencies**
  The public lacks awareness regarding the mission and responsibilities of the various government agencies, which can cause frustration when assistance is needed. In coordination with representatives from local, state and federal government, methods of enhancing awareness will be explored.
- **Increased Awareness Regarding Threat Assessment**
  During the development of the framework, it was learned that non-government is unfamiliar with "threat assessment", its purpose, who is doing it, how it is done and how information is maintained and stored. In coordination with other law enforcement, a plan will be established to increase understanding of this practice.
- **Enhanced Training on Community Outreach**
  In collaboration with law enforcement and community leaders, a presentation will be developed for delivery to law enforcement on the "do's and don'ts" and importance of community outreach. Once developed, the presentation will be marketed to law enforcement agencies.

APPENDIX A

Greater Boston Regional Collaborative

The locally-driven framework has been developed by a collaborative of non-governmental, governmental and academic stakeholders from the Greater Boston region. Also included in the collaborative were a few representatives from Washington, D.C. The Collaborative was made up of the following individuals:

Non-Government

- Saida M. Abdi, LICSW, Director of Community Relations, Refugee Trauma and Resilience Center at Boston's Children's Hospital
- Imam Basheer Bilaal, Islamic Society of Greater Lowell
- Reverend Jeffrey Brown, Twelfth Baptist Church, Roxbury
- Melissa Garlick, Regional Counsel, Anti-Defamation League
- Andrea Hall, LICSW, Clinical Director, Boston Emergency Services Team, Cambridge Somerville ESP, Department of Psychiatry, Boston Medical Center
- Deeqo M. Jibril, Founder/Executive Director, Somali Community and Cultural Association
- Shahid Ahmed Khan, Pakistani Association
- Dr. Nabeel Khudairi, Islamic Council of New England
- Sulieman Muhammad, Islamic Council of New England
- Robert Trestan, New England Regional Director, Anti-Defamation League
- Abdirahman A. Yusuf, Executive Director, Somali Development Center

Government

- Dr. Lina Alathari, Supervisory Research Psychologist, Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Secret Service, National Threat Assessment Center, Washington, D.C.
- Deputy Superintendent Paul Ames, Cambridge Police Department
- Jennifer Ball, Chief of Staff, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)
- Aloke Chakravarty, Assistant U.S. Attorney, U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts
- Brandy Donini-Melanson, Law Enforcement Coordinator, U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts
- Susan Durkin, Outreach Specialist, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Field Division
- Jodie Elgee, Director, Counseling and Intervention Center, Boston Public Schools
- Superintendent Paul Fitzgerald, Boston Regional Intelligence Center, Boston Police Department
- David Fredette, Assistant District Attorney, Suffolk County District Attorney's Office
- Usra Ghazi, Public Policy Fellow, New Bostonians, City of Boston
- Anne Gilligan, MPH, Safe and Healthy Schools Coordinator, Massachusetts Department of Education
- Michelle Goldman, Policy Advisor, Homeland Security, Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS)
- Police Commissioner Robert Haas, Cambridge Police Department
- Scott Hatch, Deputy Chief, Radicalization and Extremist Messages Group, National Counterterrorism Center
- Captain Haseeb Hosein, Boston Police Department
- Eleanor Joseph, Advisor, City of Boston
- Lydia Khalil, Analyst, Boston Police Department
- Diane McLeod, Director, Massachusetts Association of Human Rights and Relations Commission

- Chief Steven Mazzie, Everett Police Department and Former President, Massachusetts Major Cities Chiefs of Police Association
- Tracy Miller, Supervisory Intelligence Analyst, Federal Bureau of Investigation, CVE Office, Washington, D.C.
- Daniel Mulhern, Director of Public Safety, City of Boston
- Sergeant James O'Connor, Boston Police Department
- Superintendent Bernard O'Rourke, Chief, Bureau of Field Services, Boston Police Department
- Dr. Debra Pinals, Assistant Commissioner for Forensic Services, Massachusetts Department of Mental Health
- Kieran L. Ramsey, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Field Division
- Captain Scott Range, Massachusetts State Police, Commonwealth Fusion Center
- Denis Riordan, District Director, Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Boston Field Office
- Alejandra St. Guillen, Director, New Bostonians, City of Boston
- Kurt Schwartz, Undersecretary of Homeland Security, Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS), and Director of Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)
- Lt. Scott Sencabaugh, Wilmington Police Department/NEMLEC STARS Response Team Coordinator
- Sean Smith, Public Affairs/Border Community Liaison, Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection, Boston Field Office
- David Solet, General Counsel, Middlesex County District Attorney's Office
- Darwin Suelen, Supervisory Special Agent, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Field Division
- Ehsan Zaffar, Senior Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, Washington, D.C.

Academic Advisors

- Dr. Heidi Ellis, Director, Refugee Trauma and Resilience Center at Boston's Children's Hospital
- Dr. Robert Fein, Forensic and National Security Psychologist
- Dr. John Horgan, Director, Center for Terrorism and Security Studies, UMass Lowell
- Dr. Peter Levine, Associate Dean for Research and Lincoln Filene, Professor of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service, Tufts University
- Dr. Eben Weitzman, Director, Graduate Programs in Conflict Resolution, Human Security and Global Governance, UMass Boston, John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies
- Dr. Michael Williams, Postdoc, Center for Terrorism and Security Studies, UMass Lowell

APPENDIX B

Acknowledgements

A number of individuals have provided support, insight and guidance as the Greater Boston Regional Collaborative worked to develop the framework. The U.S. Attorney's Office would like to thank the following individuals for their assistance throughout the process:

- Brette Steele, Senior Counsel, Department of Justice, Deputy Attorney General's Office
- John Picarelli, Program Manager for Transnational Issues, Department of Justice, National Institute for Justice
- James Farmer, Assistant U.S. Attorney, U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts
- Jennifer Maconochie, Director, Strategic Initiatives & Policies, Boston Police Department
- Kelly Nee, Deputy Superintendent, Boston Regional Intelligence Center, Boston Police Department
- Boston's National Forum for Youth Violence Prevention
- Yusfui Vali, Executive Director, Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center (ISBCC) Muslim American Society – Boston Chapter
- Nichole Mossalam, Executive Director, Islamic Society of Boston –Cambridge
- BRIDGES partners
- Mary Ann Gapinski, Director of School Health, Massachusetts Department of Public Health
- Farah Pandith, Adjunct Senior Fellow, Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Council on Foreign Relations, Counter Extremism Project
- Brad Davis, Special Agent, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Field Division
- Bradford S. Stewart, Domestic Representative, National Counterterrorism Center
- Stephen Marks, Assistant Special Agent Charge, Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Secret Service, Boston Field Office
- Brian Deck, Assistant Special Agent Charge, Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Secret Service, Boston Field Office
- Captain Chris Wright, Massachusetts Department of Corrections
- Matthew McCann, Deputy Federal Preparedness Coordinator, Department of Homeland Security, FEMA Region 1
- Sean Gallagher, Field Office Director, Boston Field Division, Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Enforcement and Removal
- Dan Cooler, Northeast Regional Director, Office of Intelligence and Analysis, Department of Homeland Security

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APPENDIX C

Dissenting View – Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center (ISBCC)

I want to begin by thanking U.S. Attorney Carmen Ortiz for her office's sincere efforts in working with the community on this initiative and incorporating many of the community's ideas that could lead to healthier and safe communities. Ultimately, however, I cannot sign on to this document due to the premise of "Countering Violent Extremism" mandated by the National Security Council and other federal actors, which guides this framework.

Many of the services suggested in this report are initiatives that ought to be implemented in any and all communities, particularly those that have been marginalized. Civic engagement is a vitally important tool towards empowering communities. There are Bostonians of all backgrounds, including the Boston Muslim community, that have serious resource needs and face emotional trauma. We have seen the power of responding to gang violence and bullying in schools with interventions and outreach driven by a common faith.

However, at their core, CVE programs are founded on the premise that your faith determines your propensity towards violence. It clearly appears that the CVE initiative is exclusively targeting the American-Muslim community, in spite of the best efforts of the local U.S. Attorney to re-define it expansively.

The data shows that violent extremism is an extremely rare phenomena. Furthermore, the working group concludes that religious and ethnic profiling, including the attendance of a mosque, cannot predict violent threats or extremist individuals. The everyday reality of nearly all American-Muslims is like that of any other American: we simply do not meet or experience individuals interested in violent ideologies. My experience as a leader of an Islamic center is emblematic. In my nearly two and a half years as Executive Director at the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center, my team and I have never personally come across any individual in our congregation seriously considering any fanatical ideology.

As a result, for the government to offer us services based on concerns of violent extremism in our community – as implied by this framework – seems to reinforce the same stereotype that society holds of American-Muslims: that they or Islam are inherently violent. This is unacceptable to our Boston-Muslim community.

A far more appropriate premise to the framework acceptable to the Boston-Muslim community would have been "countering violence". This term does not single out the American-Muslim community and could apply to a number of low-resourced and powerless communities, from immigration populations in the south to those living in poverty in Appalachia.

We at the ISBCC are aware that extremist groups and terrorist organizations seek to recruit susceptible members of our communities through a distorted and false vision of Islam. As we fortify our youth against repugnant ideologies that are not part of our faith, and as we amplify our voices to denounce extremism in all its forms, we believe a two-step methodology will help us achieve these goals.

First, improving outcomes for all marginalized communities, including segments of the Boston Muslim community, will make our congregants even more resilient in the face of repugnant ideologies. Serving marginalized segments of our community and addressing their needs is a core ethos of our religious institution and will continue to be a priority.

Second, we at the ISBCC teach and live a faith that is rooted in Islamic tradition, committed to American ideals, and empowered to serve the common good. This authentic Islam is rooted in the values of compassion, justice, community, and a commitment to America. Delivering on this vision of Islam in more robust, creative, and relevant ways to our young people - and thereby winning in the marketplace of ideas - allows us to be successful in (a) proactively improving the resilience of Boston as a whole and (b) fortifying our community against all harms and dangers, including radicalization. What we need is the support of our neighbors and community members so that we can achieve our mission.

Yusufi Vali, Executive Director
Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center (ISBCC), Muslim American Society – Boston Chapter

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