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**U.S. Department of State
Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)
Office of Africa and Middle East Programs (AME)**

**Countering Violent Extremism Strategy for Africa
and the Middle East**



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- i -

Executive Summary

Across Africa and the Middle East, evolving global security challenges, from Boko Haram to ISIL, have made it increasingly clear that military, and law enforcement interventions alone are not sufficient to stop the spread of radical, violent non-state terrorist groups. A comprehensive strategy that addresses the roots of violent extremism, as well as the promotion and protection of human rights, is necessary to achieve security objectives of the United States in Africa and the Middle East.

This strategy defines INL's Office of Africa and Middle East Programs' (INL/AME's) role in countering violent extremism (CVE), to include (1) designing, managing, and implementing programs; (2) serving as program and policy experts; and (3) engaging stakeholders.

First, the strategy provides a framework for any INL program officer engaged in designing, managing, and implementing CVE programs in Africa and the Middle East, in particular those funded with FY 2015 INCLE-OCO State Africa Regional CVE funds or other funds which are attributed to CVE objectives. As discussed within the strategy, the key elements of CVE programs are as follows:

- **Specific Intention (Required):** Programming must be tailored to address a particular set of issues and driver(s) of violent extremism, have clear objectives and articulate a sequence of activities and outcomes expected from the selected interventions, and have metrics/indicators to measure the impact on those drivers.
- **Geographic and Demographic Targets (Required):** Programming must have geographic, and/or primary, secondary, and tertiary targets that have a clear connection to the problem of violent extremism.
- **Collaborative (Recommended):** Programming should be coordinated with relevant stakeholders, as well as complement other assistance programs to the extent possible.
- **Sustainable (Recommended):** U.S. foreign assistance is finite and programming decisions should take into account sustainability, host nation ownership, and future resource implications.

Many INL/AME programs meet both "recommended" elements of a CVE program and some also could have an impact on a driver of extremism. However, programs without the specific CVE intention and targeted approach are considered to be "CVE-relevant" programs. When possible, direct CVE programs should be complementary and coordinated with CVE-relevant programs, due to the potential impact on a driver.

Second, working in close coordination with other INL offices, INL/AME has a valuable role to advise policy makers on the role of criminal justice programs and policy in CVE. Effective, equitable, and transparent criminal justice sectors can have a great impact on drivers of violent extremism such as corruption, human rights abuses by security forces, and weak government institutions.

Finally, engaging stakeholders, including but not limited to U.S. government agencies, regional and international organizations, host central and local governments, and civil society, is critical

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

- ii -

to ensuring policy and programmatic success. A flexible communication strategy is useful to adapt to specific contexts, different audiences, and varying sensitivities related to CVE.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

- iii -

Table of Contents	Page Number
I. Introduction and Context	<u>1</u>
II. Key Definitions	<u>2</u>
III. What We Know about Violent Extremism	<u>2</u>
a. Drivers of Violent Extremism Related to Political Grievances	<u>4</u>
b. Risk Factors of Violent Extremism	<u>4</u>
c. Sites of Radicalization	<u>5</u>
d. Border Security	<u>5</u>
IV. INL/AME's Role	<u>6</u>
a. Designing, Managing, and Implementing Programs	<u>6</u>
i. Targeted	<u>7</u>
ii. Intentional	<u>7</u>
iii. Collaborative	<u>7</u>
iv. Sustainable	<u>7</u>
b. Serving as Policy and Program Experts	<u>8</u>
c. Engaging Stakeholders	<u>9</u>
V. Monitoring and Evaluation	<u>9</u>
Annex: The Criminal Justice System and CVE	<u>10</u>
End Notes	<u>12</u>

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

- 1 -

I. I. Introduction and Context

The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)'s approach to violent extremism is drawn from key national security strategic documents. The White House's 2015 National Security Strategy notes that the threat of violent extremism across the globe continues to increase in areas that are prone to conflict, have weak or defunct governance, or both. The strategy charges all U.S. government agencies to "focus on building the capacity of others to prevent the causes and consequences of conflict to include countering extreme and dangerous ideologies."

In February 2015, the White House convened a three-day summit on countering violent extremism (CVE), which discussed "concrete steps the United States and its partners can take to develop community-oriented approaches to counter hateful extremist ideologies that radicalize, recruit, or incite to violence." At the summit, President Obama called on the international community to maintain the commitment to fight against terrorist organizations; confront the warped ideologies terrorists espouse, especially their attempt to use Islam to justify violence; and address grievances exploited by terrorists, including economic and political grievances. Preventing and countering violent extremism is a pillar of the Administration's strategic approach to counterterrorism, which aims to prevent the spread of terrorism by reducing sympathy and support for violent extremism.

Furthermore, the 2015 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) establishing the Department of State's strategic priorities highlighted the goal of "*Preventing and Mitigating Conflict and Violent Extremism*." Focusing on partnering with host governments, supporting vulnerable communities, and challenging extremist messaging, the 2015 QDDR states that "the State Department and USAID will work with other agencies and multilateral partners to strengthen U.S. counterterrorism and CVE efforts by focusing more on prevention and tackling the drivers of violent extremism."

Although INL traditionally defers to the Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) as the State Department lead for efforts to combat violent extremist threats, INL does play a critical role in addressing this issue through our engagement with the criminal justice system. Many capacity-building programs implemented by INL's Office of Africa and Middle East programs (INL/AME) combat the threat of violent extremism, though are often not strictly defined as CVE programming. One question we face is how to distinguish which programs are "CVE programs" and which are traditional programs that seek to build capacity more generally, but that may have an indirect benefit on CVE priorities.

This document provides a framework to define INL/AME's role in CVE programming and provide guidance for program officers engaged in designing and implementing CVE programs, in addition to the more traditional INL programming. The strategy also will guide the use of FY 2015 INCLE-OCO State Africa Regional funds allocated for CVE programming or other program funds that are attributed to CVE in the Africa and Middle East regions.

The strategy's intended result is that INL, as part of an interagency team, designs and implements effective, evidence-based criminal justice sector initiatives to target the drivers of violent extremism.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

- 2 -

All efforts should also align with the goals and objectives of the FY 2014-2017 Department of State and USAID Strategic Plan and the CY 2015-2018 INL Functional Bureau Strategy. While these documents do not directly mention CVE, they provide the framework for all INL programs.

Finally, all CVE efforts must also align with any specific country or regional strategies that are applicable to the area of operations, which can include regional strategies, such as the State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) CVE Strategy (*when finalized*), Trans Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership Strategy, Counterterrorism and CVE Strategy for East Africa, and integrated country strategies (ICS).

II. Key Definitions

One of the challenges in working in the CVE arena is a lack of consistent definitions, and in fact, the Department is in the process of defining CVE. The draft State/USAID CVE Strategy is redefining the Office of Foreign Assistance's (F) "independent key issue" definition of CVE; the INL/AME strategy aligns with the current draft definition. The INL/AME strategy will rely upon the following existing definitions to help program officers differentiate between CVE and counterterrorism activities within the criminal justice system, though these could be adjusted based on the outcome of pending conversations.

- a. **Violent Extremism (VE):** Advocating, engaging in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically-motivated or -justified violence to further social, economic, or political objectives.¹
- b. **Countering Violent Extremism (CVE):** Undermining the attraction of and recruitment by violent extremist movements and ideologies that seek to promote violence against the United States, and its interests and partners.²
- c. **Counterterrorism (CT) Operations:** Law enforcement or military actions taken to neutralize terrorists and their organizations and networks in order to render them incapable of using violence to instill fear and coerce governments or societies to achieve their goals.³
- d. **CVE Programs:** The non-coercive, intentional, and targeted use of diplomatic and development approaches to address the drivers of violent extremism. CVE programs attempt to address not only the immediate threats, but also to build community resilience against the broader spread of violent extremism in order to prevent future threats.⁴
- e. **CVE-Relevant Programs:** Diplomatic and development approaches to address host country needs or reforms that may *indirectly* address the drivers of violent extremism, but that are not specifically designed with CVE goals as a primary focus.⁵
- f. **Criminal Justice System:** The system of law that is directly involved in preventing, detecting, and investigating crimes, and apprehending, prosecuting, defending, sentencing, and incarcerating those who are suspected or convicted of criminal offenses.⁶

III. What We Know about Violent Extremism

The current U.S. government approach to violent extremism is based on USAID's Guide to the Drivers of Violent Extremism, which identifies the common theme of "push and pull factors."⁷ Push factors are defined as "the negative social, cultural, and political features of a societal

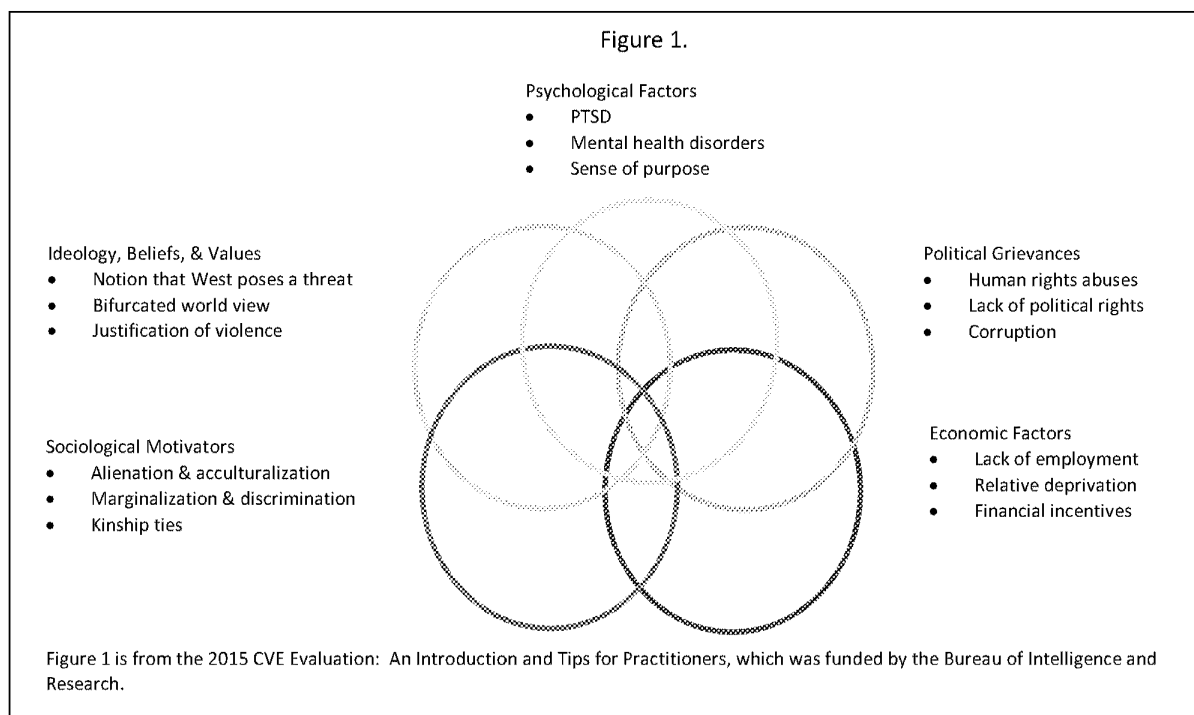
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

- 3 -

environment that aid in ‘pushing’ vulnerable individuals onto the path of violent extremism.”⁸ Some examples of these push factors are: poverty, unemployment, illiteracy or lack of education, discrimination and perceptions of neglect, political and economic marginalization, fear of victimization, revenge, coercion, and societal pressure.⁹ Pull factors are defined as “the positive characteristics and benefits of an extremist organization that ‘pull’ vulnerable individuals to join.”¹⁰ For example, a group’s ideology, strong bonds of brotherhood and sense of belonging, reputation building, and the prospect of fame or glory can all motivate individuals to participate in violent extremism.¹¹ Understanding push and pull factors is an important step to understanding the drivers of violent extremism.

When examining why violent extremism is taking place, context is key. The drivers and motivators of radicalization vary from country to country, community to community, and even from person to person. The study of drivers of violent extremism is a relatively new field and requires more extensive research to understand an individual’s or group’s motivation to join or support a violent extremist organization. Current literature groups drivers into categories as shown by Figure 1, including psychological factors; ideology, beliefs, and values; sociological motivators; economic factors; and political grievances.



Given the nature of INL funding authority and expertise, INL/AME programming likely will primarily impact **political grievances**. The following is a discussion of (1) the drivers of violent extremism related to political grievances, (2) personal risk factors that may lead people to become radicalized, and (3) sites of radicalization that are relevant to INL. When identifying the drivers that INL/AME can realistically address, we must consider the local context and available resources, including, but not limited to funding.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

- 4 -

Drivers of Violent Extremism related to Political Grievances

A 2015 Mercy Corps study¹ notes the principal drivers of politically-motivated violence are rooted in corruption, human rights abuses, and discrimination.¹²

Corruption

Corruption is the abuse of power for private gain and current literature identifies it as an important driver of violent extremism. Corruption can manifest itself in many ways, including ineffective governance; an inability to provide fair, accountable, and humane justice and security; removal or limitation of constitutional liberties; and impunity for elites and those connected to corrupt governments. Corruption can take place in all sectors and levels of government, but personal experiences with corruption have the greatest significance in fueling radicalization.¹³ However, an individual's personal experience with corruption generally cannot occur without the acute and structured corruption of higher-levels of the government and/or society¹⁴. It may look different from state to state, but in most instances, corruption perpetuates existing problems within that country and region as a whole. Violence and radicalization are often seen as the only effective course of action to a community seeking to protect themselves from the government and/or fight for change.¹⁵

In recognition of its pervasive nature, corruption is treated by this strategy as a complementary root factor that provokes other drivers to occur.

Human Rights Abuses

Another driver of violent extremism spurred by political grievances are human rights abuses on the part of police and military forces, including arbitrary detention, disappearances, harassment, physical and sexual assault, torture and death. Abusive behavior towards the civilian population, coupled with a lack of accountability and a culture of impunity, can lead the population to feel a sense of abandonment and mistrust towards the forces put in place to protect them, and the feeling that they need to take extreme measures in order to find justice.¹⁶ A 2015 analysis by the State Department's Bureau of Conflict Stabilization Operations' (CSO) indicates that countries with above average levels of state-sanctioned killings, torture, disappearances, and political imprisonment double their risk of a violent extremist group emerging, and that states with the highest levels of state terror quadruple their risk of a violent extremist group emerging.¹⁷

Lack of Political Rights

Poor governance and weak institutions that are ineffective or deny citizens their civil and political rights can fuel violent extremism if it is seen as the only option to have rights heard and redressed. In some cases, laws meant to fight terrorism are being broadly and indiscriminately applied to lawful individuals and organizations, such as bloggers and journalists who did not take part in any violent extremist activity. The inability to formulate and enforce effective laws to counter extremism, while simultaneously protecting civil and political rights, increases the risk of political grievances and the possibility of radical ideology taking root.

¹ This study was produced through programs funded by USAID, the European Commission, and the U.K.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

- 5 -

Risk Factors of Violent Extremism

The path to violent extremism by an individual or group is varied, comprising a mix of factors and experiences. While the existing literature of specific risk factors for violent extremism is limited, it is possible to realize lessons from studying risk factors that drive individuals to gangs or other violent activities, as discussed by the National Institute of Justice. Specifically, prior criminal activity and mental health and substance abuse disorders increase the probability of radicalization.

Prior Criminal Activity

A study done on more than two hundred terrorists and their networks found that nearly 25% had a prior criminal conviction.¹⁸ This risk factor is discussed in further detail below in ‘Sites of Radicalization’.

Mental Health Disorders, Including Substance Use Disorders

The presence of mental health disorders, including substance use disorders, can render that population more vulnerable to radicalization or recruitment by radical groups. For example, a recent study identified drug addiction as an important factor to explain why youth were joining criminal gangs.¹⁹ In other cases, violent extremist organizations recruit fighters via intoxication or addiction.²⁰ Drugs such as methamphetamines can be provided to increase aggressiveness, pain tolerance, stamina, and desensitizes them to conduct atrocities.

Sites of Radicalization

Sites of radicalization, also known as “opportunity factors,” give individuals a space to be exposed to radical ideology and sentiments as well as a space to vocalize beliefs and gain the support of others.²¹ These physical spaces are important when considering the spread of violent extremism because they give individuals a platform to take action.

While sites of radicalization are varied, prisons are the most relevant for INL programming. Prisons offer an ideal location for radicalization to occur, due to the existence of both “push” and “pull” factors. Inmates may feel resentment towards the system that imprisoned them and excluded them from society. Becoming a part of a group within a prison enhances one’s personal security as well as gives an individual a sense of belonging.ⁱⁱ On the other hand, INL assesses that prison environments that are humane and offer opportunities for education, prison industries, and skill development appear to lower the risk of radicalization.

Border Security

Secure borders are an important part of the CVE discussion. Weak and porous borders facilitate the recruitment, movement, and enactment of violent extremism activity. For instance, the borders of the African Sahara and Sahel have facilitated the growth of multinational extremist groups.²² Porous borders tend to attract extremist groups as they allow for freedom of movement between jurisdictions and can create safe havens.²³

ⁱⁱ One example of this is a prison that is estimated to have held at least nine members of the Islamic State’s senior leadership before ISIL was formed.ⁱⁱ

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

- 6 -

IV. INL/AME's Role

INL/AME's role in CVE efforts is defined by three distinct activities:

- Designing, managing, and implementing programs that are targeted, intentional, collaborative, and sustainable;
- Serving as program and policy experts; and
- Engaging stakeholders.

In implementing these activities, INL/AME must coordinate, as appropriate, its activities with other State Department bureaus and offices, USAID, the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, and others to ensure an integrated response to CVE. INL/AME program officers should ensure that best practices in CVE are routinely shared and coordinated with other stakeholders through joint assessment trips, co-funding initiatives, collaboration, and clearance on CVE projects.

With the increasing number of conducting direct or CVE-relevant efforts, it is imperative for INL to continue to learn from and collaborate with U.S. government and international partners. The most important partners in any CVE initiative are the host governments, its institutions, and its civil society (including media), which are critical for the success and sustainability of any program aiming to counter violent extremism.

While many INL/AME programs are CVE relevant programs and have an impact on the drivers of extremism, they are not strictly CVE programs as defined by this strategy. Every effort must be made to ensure CVE programs and CVE relevant programs are coordinated and, when possible, complementary.

Program officers managing CVE programs should follow all appropriate laws, regulations, and policies including but not limited to: all federal regulations, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, OMB circular guidelines, the Department of State's (DOS) Foreign Affairs Manual and Handbooks (FAM/FAH), Procurement Information Bulletins (PIBs), Grants Policy Directives (GPDs), and INL Standard Operating Procedures and Policies (SOPPs). INL/AME officers should also develop or modify an existing country plan (CP), which includes a results framework that depicts what a program intends to achieve through a logical sequence of activities and outcomes, and a program monitoring plan to help ensure the program meets its goals and objectives, in accordance with the INL program guides.

A. Designing, Managing, and Implementing Programs

INL/AME's primary role in CVE is designing, managing, and implementing impactful criminal justice programs. Similar to USAID's policy, The Development Response to Violent Extremism, INL/AME program officers should ensure that their CVE programs address the following project design elements: targeted, intentional, collaborative, and sustainable.

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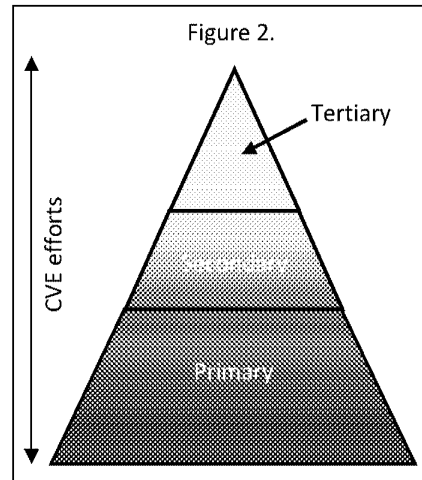
- 7 -

Targeted (Required)

Programs must have specific geographic and demographic targets that have a clear connection to violent extremism.

The *geographic approach* identifies specific locations that possess a violent extremist threat and is based on data, when possible. This analysis should be coordinated with other stakeholders in the State Department such as the regional bureaus, CT Bureau, and the Bureau for CSO.

The *demographic approach*, borrowed from INL's Office of Western Hemisphere Programs (WHP), is defined by Figure 2. The demographic approach seeks to divide efforts into three main groupings, primary, secondary, and tertiary.



The *primary prevention* addresses factors that influence an individual's likelihood of becoming a violent extremist offender. An effective primary prevention strategy should minimize the drivers and risk factors and strengthen the protective factors for the general population, through a holistic package of evidence-based interventions. The *secondary prevention* refers to efforts targeting those deemed at the highest risk of engaging in violent extremist activities. These efforts should also be comprehensive, based on the local context, and focus on reducing some of the drivers identified in Section III for affected populations. The *tertiary prevention* refers to *ex post facto* measures after a person has become radicalized or a violent extremist event has occurred. Tertiary prevention measures include varying degrees of support or assistance and are closely tied to intervention and rehabilitation activities. Rehabilitation and reintegration should be comprehensive and based on the needs and condition of the individual (e.g. psychological counseling and drug treatment when applicable).

Intentional (Required)

During program design, INL/AME programs should intentionally build considerations about target groups, contexts, and needs into a tailored program for that particulate set of issues. Programs should clearly identify which driver(s) of violent extremism they intend to address, set clear objectives and articulate the sequence of activities and outcomes s expected from their selected set of interventions. Section III can be used as a resource.

Collaborative (Recommended)

Collaboration, with all appropriate stakeholders, must be exercised during all phases of a CVE initiative using foreign assistance funds. All INL/AME CVE programs should provide complementary assistance to targeted audience(s) or beneficiaries with other stakeholders' programs.

Sustainable (Recommended)

Sustainability is a key element to all of INL/AME's programs with particular attention to promoting host country or regional participation – and eventual ownership. INL/AME

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

- 8 -

recognizes that CVE funding is finite and any program concepts should not rely upon future U.S. government funding. We must find ways to motivate, support, and encourage others, including finding local champions, to undertake the reforms necessary to continue to help address the drivers of violent extremism after assistance programs end, as needed.

Host country or regional ownership can include the government institutions, civil society, customary local authorities, communities, local populations, or a combination thereof. The easiest way to ensure ownership is to involve local authorities from the onset of program design and give them a stake in the future of the initiative, though given local budget constraints, there will also be occasions where a successful program is necessarily short-lived with limited objectives.

B. Serving as Policy and Program Experts

INL/AME has a valuable role in advising policy makers on the role of criminal justice sector programs and policy that address violent extremism in Africa and the Middle East regions. INL/AME also provides policy and programmatic guidance to interagency partners on what specific interventions should be developed to address political drivers of conflict in the Africa and Middle East regions.

Due to the need to report on and request budgets for CVE activities in various forms, INL/AME program officers should also differentiate between INL's standard criminal justice assistance, such as transnational crime and general capacity building programs, and specific criminal justice interventions that have the objective of countering violent extremism. INL/AME should work closely with other INL offices, and the Department when advising policy makers on the role of criminal justice programs and policy in addressing violent extremism.

More specifically, INL/AME program officers should work closely with sectoral experts in police, justice and corrections from Office of Criminal Justice Assistance and Partnership (CAP) and functional experts from the Office of Anticrime Programs (C) when designing, implementing, and assessing CVE criminal justice programs.

- INL/CAP provides technical support to INL offices from program inception, through implementation, and ultimately to the evaluation stage. CAP police, justice, and corrections subject matter experts advise INL offices on all technical aspects of criminal justice reform programs, including program assessment and evaluation, program development and implementer identification, and program design. CAP assists program officers with CVE program design and implementation through the addition of a CVE technical expert on the CAP team.
- INL/CAP is expanding the International Police Peacekeeping Operations Support (IPPOS) program to include curriculum designed to address challenges related to CVE, including training tailored to enhance survivability and police engagement at the community level. IPPOS training is delivered to countries that are deploying to peace and stabilization missions, a growing number of which face serious and emerging violent

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

- 9 -

extremism, as do the countries that are contributing police to these operations. Lessons learned, curricula and the relationships developed can be a resource for AME.

- INL/C provides technical support in eight programmatic areas, including anti-money laundering, border security and alien smuggling, anticorruption, transnational organized crime, intellectual property rights and cybercrime, environmental crime and wildlife trafficking, International Law Enforcement Academies, and drug demand reduction. Many of these cross-cutting issues address CVE objectives and INL/C programming supports CVE efforts.

When designing and implementing CVE focused criminal justice projects, the program officer should provide policy and program advice to policymakers on the host-nation capacity, local conditions, and how CVE interventions relate to traditional INL programs in a given country. INL/CAP sectoral experts can advise program officers on what criminal justice interventions are most useful in addressing CVE, and can also help program officers develop criminal justice program requirements and activities based on their relevant sectoral experience. This combination of thorough technical and country-specific planning in the program design phase ensures that programs address both local needs and the appropriate criminal justice approach to CVE (see Annex: The Criminal Justice System and CVE).

C. Engaging Stakeholders

“Words matter,” as noted by the Department of Homeland Security, in coordination with American Muslims, in their set of recommendations to help “accurately identify the nature of challenges that face our generation” that remains crucial to the CVE context today.²⁴ Officers conducting CVE initiatives must recognize that their endeavors, actions, and rhetoric may increase local sensitivities. Engaging stakeholders, including but not limited to U.S. government agencies, international organizations, regional organizations, host central and local governments, and civil society, is crucial to policy and programmatic success.

For all CVE initiatives, it is necessary to develop a communication strategy for all stakeholders involved. The strategies may be different for stakeholders that are internal to U.S. government and those that are external, depending on the specific needs and sensitivities. In some cases, identifying the effort as a CVE initiative may cause selection biases, increased or decreased support, and increased threats. For this reason, it is important to have a flexible communications strategy when engaging with stakeholders.

V. Monitoring and Evaluation

Like all INL/AME programs, our CVE programs must incorporate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) best practices, be in accordance with INL SOPPs, and take into account the realities of the operating environment. In most cases, data and information in this context is extremely limited, and where they are accessible they are often not reliable or valid. Host government statistics, while important and must be tracked, should be treated with caution and not be the only indicator used by the initiative. These efforts must remain flexible and be able to adjust to the dynamic and challenging (political, security, logistical) environments. Furthermore, CVE

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

- 10 -

initiatives must document lessons learned, challenges, and course corrections to ensure that they can be institutionalized for future efforts.

Nevertheless, M&E for CVE initiatives will be extremely difficult to conduct and will only be effective when all the actors freely share and combine their information, and possibly resources. As shown in Figure 1, there are many drivers and factors of violent extremism, and INL/AME can only address a limited number. As such, INL/AME M&E activities for CVE initiatives will only be asked to measure the effectiveness of and evaluate the capacity or capacities that the initiative intends to improve, and, in accordance with the draft State/USAID CVE Strategy, will measure how that capacity or capacities addresses a specific driver(s) or factor of violent extremism. INL/AME programs will not be asked to monitor, measure, or evaluate the overall violent extremism threat environment. Programs should monitor more than program outputs and explore measurements for higher-level outcomes of the program.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

- 11 -

Annex***The Criminal Justice System and CVE***

Criminal justice sector actors, namely police, justice (prosecutors, defense attorneys and judges), and correctional officials play a role in CVE programs due to their access to communities and groups vulnerable to radicalization. Police, in particular, can help to convene a variety of stakeholder and identify individuals at risk of indoctrination by violent extremist organizations and direct them to services that may divert them from recruitment. Corrections officers also have a role in observing incarcerated terrorists and their potential efforts to recruit while in prison. Below is a sector specific synopsis of the criminal justice sector, in relation to the CVE context.

Law Enforcement Reform in the CVE context

Police have unique access to the communities they serve and are able to help identify drivers of extremism through their community-oriented activities. Community oriented approaches and philosophies to policing, such as *community policing*, can be a useful tool for police to identify push and pull factors in their communities and link vulnerable populations to civil society services aimed at preventing radicalization. However, community policing, by definition, is a part of broader law enforcement efforts and is not a specific solution to CVE or a certain crime.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) defines community policing “as a philosophy or organizational strategy that promotes a partnership-based, collaborative effort between the police and the community to more effectively and efficiently identify, prevent and solve problems of crime, the fear of crime, issues of physical safety and security, social disorder and neighborhood decay in order to improve the quality of life for everyone.”²⁵ Program officers seeking assistance in determining whether aspects of community policing can address CVE activities should contact the INL/CAP Police Team.

There are also regional, country-specific, and law enforcement capacity issues and challenges that INL/AME program officers should take into account when considering community policing philosophies for CVE. For community policing models to work, there needs to be fundamental policing skills in place; representative and integrated security services; discretionary authority or responsibility to deal with local issues; proper incentives to serve the public; and oversight and accountability when there is a real or perceived abuse of power and corruption. Community engagement aspects of community policing, such as the role local police can play in identifying vulnerable community members and providing introductions to civil society programs that work with such populations, play a part in CVE.

Justice Sector Reform in the CVE context

The “justice sector” encompasses the core institutions and actors involved in the prosecution, defense, and adjudication of criminal matters, e.g., the judiciary and court system, prosecutorial services, criminal defense counsel, legal assistance providers (including civil society), government entities such as the Ministry of Justice, and a country’s legal framework. The justice sector can help counter violent extremism by establishing legislative frameworks that protect civil and political rights and by ensuring that individuals who are arrested, charged, tried, and

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

- 12 -

incarcerated are treated in a fair, accountable, transparent, and humane manner. However, the justice sectors in many countries have themselves become victims of political, economic, and security instability, due to factors including a lack of judicial independence, corruption, inadequate court facilities and resources, little access to legal aid and assistance, and limited or poorly trained staff. These issues all contribute to a lack of due process and a perception that people have been denied access to justice.

Citizens may turn towards violent extremism because they feel that the system has failed them – that their rights are not being protected and their voices are not being heard. This makes them vulnerable to individuals and groups who propose violent extremism as recourse. A justice sector that addresses those rights, which also provides access to redressing those rights, and that is held accountable for the protection and implementation of those rights, citizens are less likely to be recruited into violent organizations and ideologies.

Civil society is another key factor in justice sector reform. In many countries, citizens engage the justice system either informally or through civil society organizations. In addition, civil society often plays a large role in holding institutions accountable, exposing corruption, and demanding an end to impunity for crimes. It gives people a chance to be heard and ‘names and shames’ those in power, forcing reform and change. Where civil society and media are controlled or suppressed, citizens seek alternative means for expression – often falling prey to those who manipulate those feelings of dissatisfaction and disempowerment to their own ends, turning citizens towards radicalization and offering violent extremism as the seemingly only viable option to achieving justice.

Corrections Sector Reform in the CVE context

Correctional systems – including detention, imprisonment, probation, parole, and community supervision – are essential components of an effective criminal justice system. Correctional systems support law enforcement and the judiciary, and promote public safety by safely, securely, and humanely managing individuals in conflict with the law.

With violent extremism on the rise, there has been an increased focus on the intersection between countering violent extremism and prisons for several reasons. Absent the necessary safeguards, prisons may provide a safe haven for terrorists to network, compare and exchange tactics, recruit and radicalize new members, and direct deadly operations outside the prison walls. More importantly, most imprisoned extremists will eventually be released. How prisoners are treated when they are incarcerated charts a course for how they behave when they are released. It is also true that safe, secure, humanely operated prisons that couple incarceration with opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration can present opportunities for positive change and counter violent extremism. Improving general prison conditions, avoiding over-crowding, training staff, and providing meaningful programming emerged as one widely accepted good practice for countering violent extremism.

The international community also recognized this fact and developed an array of instruments focusing on sound prison management and the protection of human rights to address CVE in prisons. In May 2015, the United Nations revised the UN’s 1955 Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. The “Mandela Rules,” as they are now called, outline 122 principles that affirm the fundamental dignity of prisoners everywhere and provide a comprehensive

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

- 13 -

foundation to bring decency and humanity to their treatment. The June 2012 Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders identifies 25 good practices to help countries develop programs designed to rehabilitate and disengage incarcerated violent extremists and address general issues relating to prison radicalization. The Sydney Memorandum complements this with an analysis of the challenges authorities face in the management and reintegration of terrorism offenders. And the Council of Europe is developing a handbook that seeks not only to prevent terrorist acts from occurring in prisons, but to prevent individuals from becoming violent extremists in the first place.

While much of the current focus remains on managing what happens inside the prison walls, there is a growing recognition that prisons themselves are under attack from external threats. Over the past eight years, the frequency and sophistication of large-scale prison attacks and military-style attacks on prisoner transports increased. That is why the INL/CAP office has developed the Security Operations Training Initiative (SOTI). SOTI provides corrections officials with the tools they need to plan and respond to external attacks by violent extremists or criminal organizations on a particular prison and/or prisoner transport. The program consists of a vulnerability assessment, training, and mentoring. SOTI leverages expertise from several sources to participate in assessments, develop curricula, and deliver training: INL domestic corrections partners; Department of Defense; Federal Bureau of Prisons (BoP); United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO); and the U.S. Institute of Peace. SOTI will be launched in March 2016.

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- 14 -

End Notes

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