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RELEASE IN PART B5,B7(F),B6

**Countering Violent Extremism (CVE)**  
**Discussion Paper for 10th Annual TSCTP Conference**

**Overview**

(U) As the U.S. government continues to address security sector capacity in the Sahel and Maghreb regions, it is equally critical to promote stronger community-security partnerships and community resilience against violent extremism. With increased White House focus on CVE, and anticipated increased funding in FY 2015, there is an opportunity to expand our ongoing activities, and push a more integrated, strategic CVE agenda in the region. Coordination with other security sector assistance programs, funded outside of TSCTP allocations, is critical to ensure the maximum impact and the most efficient use of finite resources.

(U) The CVE component of security assistance falls under goal six of the TSCTP Strategy, which focuses on “reducing sympathy and support for violent extremism.” This goal is mainly accomplished through three strategic assistance approaches:

- (1) building community resilience and providing positive alternatives to communities vulnerable to recruitment and radicalization to violence;
- (2) strengthening partner government and civil society will and capacity to counter violent extremism; and
- (3) countering terrorist messaging and narratives.

(U) The *U.S. Strategy for Countering Boko Haram* also captures the need for a robust regional CVE approach under Objective 4, which aims to: “enhance state and local efforts to engage with civilians affected by Boko Haram, counter violent extremism, and address underlying causes of insecurity.”

(SBU) The P-led Sahel-Maghreb review process in 2013 determined that more emphasis should be placed on governance, democracy, and conflict mitigation alongside our core counterterrorism efforts. In addition to its existing development efforts in Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin, in January, USAID presented to the Working Group its concept of the Sahel Development Initiative (SDI), highlighting specific lines of effort to address issues and vulnerabilities that could contribute to the spread of violent extremism in the Sahel, including weakening legitimacy of violent extremist organizations and ideology; developing effective governance; and securing and enhancing resilient communities. SDI provides a strategic framework for describing how CVE programs and outcomes relate to other development

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priorities in the region. It is under consideration as a priority for the Africa region in the FY 2017 budget formulation.

(SBU) While governments in the Sahel and Maghreb have made progress in confronting terrorist groups, significant concerns remain about new and enduring sources of radicalization and recruitment to violent extremism. Although Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has been marginalized in northern Mali, the peace process is fragile, and certain communities across the Sahel remain vulnerable to violent extremist influence and recruitment. In the Lake Chad Basin region, Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, and Chad have pushed Boko Haram out of almost all towns and major villages, although major attacks, especially in N-E Nigeria still proliferate. The unaddressed challenge is to reach into less populated areas where the terrorist group's influence remains considerable, and where Boko Haram retains the capacity to coerce/conscript people into its ranks by offers of wives or financial rewards, or by threats of death for the recruit or members of his/her family.

(SBU) In addition, Nigeria now needs to address the key challenge of filling in behind military successes with police and civil administration to maintain security, restore stability, establish rule of law and good governance, and promote economic development and job creation to address root causes of the conflict and break the cycle of violence. The region also needs to address the hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon, as well as bolster the governance and economic development of the border communities of the Lake Chad Basin, to buffer the economic and security drivers of Boko Haram in the region. Without this comprehensive governance and security approach, Boko Haram will continue to forcibly conscript people in North-eastern Nigeria, and in the broader area, to recruit among displaced and aggrieved populations often through the promise of gainful employment and protection for families. Without effective security, governance, rule of law, and basic health, education and other services, internally displaced persons (over 1.2 million) and refugees (over 250,000) will be reluctant to return home and rebuild their lives, thus remaining vulnerable to radicalization and recruitment to violent extremism.

**Ongoing Activities**

(U) Various programmatic tools and approaches address the factors that make individuals and communities susceptible to violent extremist recruitment and radicalization. These factors include lack of economic opportunity for youth, political and social alienation, abuse by security forces, lack of access to justice, and historical grievances.

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(SBU) From FY 2011 through FY 2014, the Bureau of African Affairs (AF) obligated almost \$16 million in ESF to implement CVE projects in the West Africa/Sahel region of TSCTP. Based on the initial 653(a) allocations, we expect to receive \$7 million in FY 2015 ESF to support TSCTP programming. **Please see Tab 1 for an overview of ongoing CVE projects that mitigate these drivers.**

**White House CVE Summit**

(U) The White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism that was held February 18-20, 2015 drew government, civil society, and private sector participants from around the world to develop a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder action agenda against violent extremism. Government and civil society delegations from 14 African countries were in attendance, along with representatives from the African Union.

(U) Participants were asked to announce concrete CVE deliverables, including offers to host follow-on regional events; to initiate new, and expand ongoing, CVE initiatives; and draft national CVE strategies and action plans. The United States will reconvene all White House CVE Summit participants for a September Leaders' Summit on Countering ISIL and Violent Extremism, and various side-meetings on the margins of the UN General Assembly, to take stock of the progress on CVE made since the White House CVE Summit. Of the TSCTP partners, Algeria and Mauritania hosted follow-on CVE conferences in July and August 2015 respectively.

(U) In addition, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Government of Djibouti are expected to announce the establishment of a CVE Center of Excellence and Counter Messaging Hub in Djibouti as a dedicated venue for training, dialogue, and research related to CVE.

Gaps:

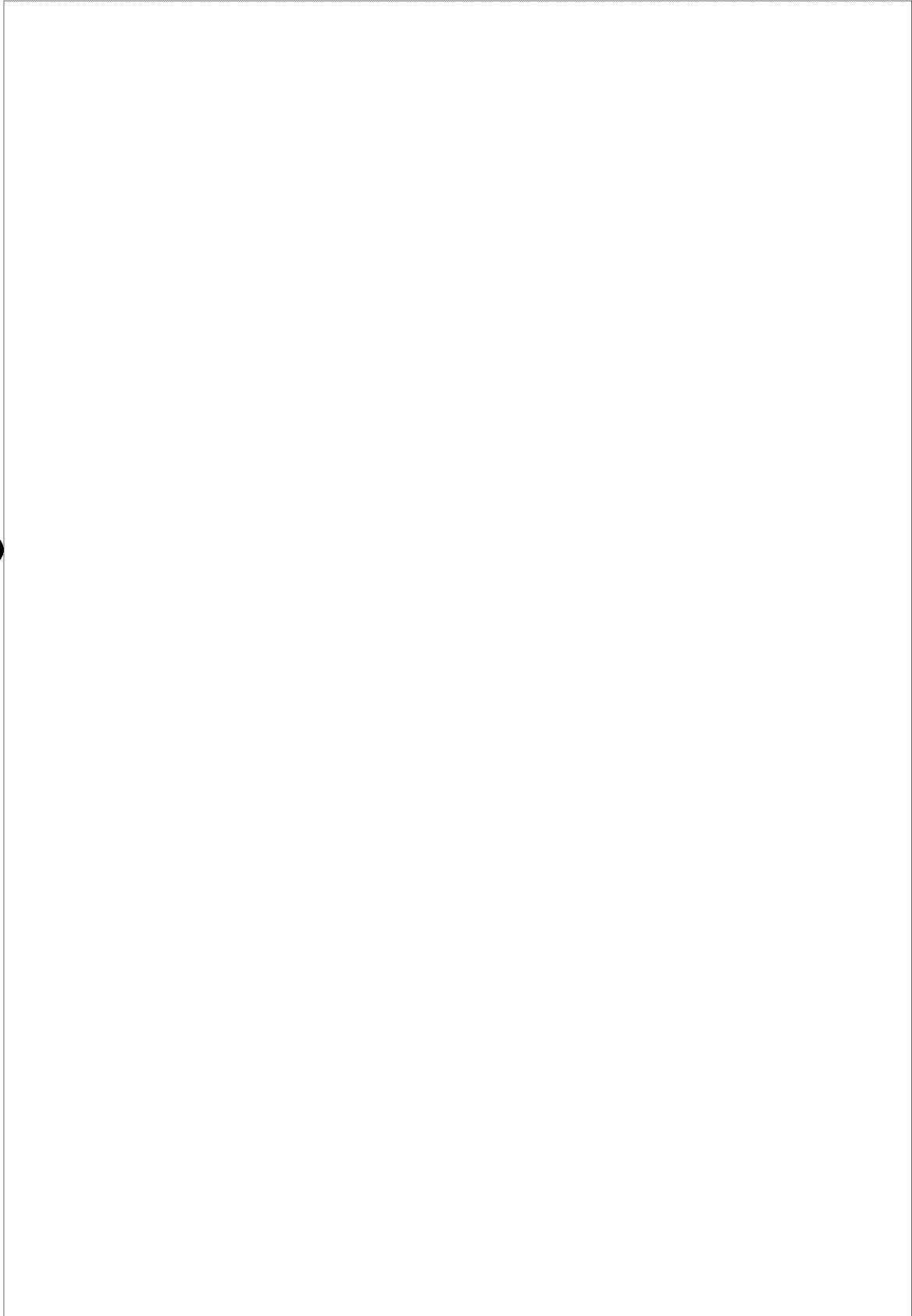
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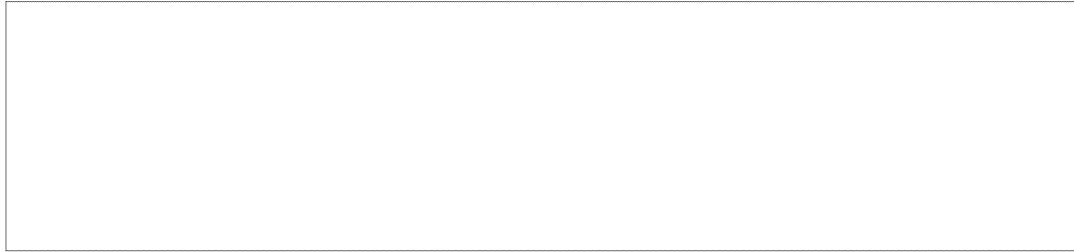


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**Tab 1**

**Sample Ongoing CVE Activities in the TSCTP Region**

(SBU) Our CVE goals are mainly accomplished through three approaches, and below are examples of ongoing U.S. government CVE projects that attempt to mitigate drivers of recruitment and radicalization in northern Nigeria and in neighboring countries to counter Boko Haram:

**(1) Building community resilience to recruitment and radicalization to violence:**

- Provide positive civic engagement, economic, skills building, leadership and social-inclusion opportunities to at-risk communities, especially youth in northern Nigeria and northern Cameroon;
- Strengthen critical thinking skills and nonviolent attitudes among youth through educational initiatives and curriculum reform, including in Quranic schools in Chad;
- Support efforts by local NGOs in northern Nigeria, including Kano and Bauchi states, to build community and youth resilience against violent extremism;
- USAID's "Sahel-Maghreb Capacity Building Project" will conduct research, analysis, trainings and workshops in order to build the capacity of local civil society to address drivers of violent extremism. The first workshop which seeks to provide skills for local civil society organizations is planned for late summer or early fall 2015.
- Promote development. USAID's mission in Abuja is channeling \$103 million in programming for northeastern Nigeria, including building accountable and effective local institutions (\$5 million); supporting HIV/AIDS services, vaccinations and routine immunization programs, and delivery of primary health care (\$66 million); and improving educational opportunities for IDPs and host communities (\$32 million).
- USAID's risk assessments in the Sahelian countries and the current regional CVE risk assessment in the Lake Chad Basin.

**(2) Strengthening partner government will and capacity to counter violent extremism:**

- Strengthen regional capacities of governments, in collaboration with civil society, to identify and respond to early warning signs of violent extremism;

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- Improve stability. USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) is targeting \$6 million to improving stability in areas most affected by the Boko Haram insurgency.
- The Nigeria Regional Transition Initiative (NRTI) is designed to counter violent extremism. Focus areas include: 1) increasing positive engagement with government and communities 2) increasing access to credible messaging; and 3) reducing youth vulnerability in the Lake Chad Basin area.
- Mitigate conflict and promote governance. USAID/OTI is conducting conflict mitigation and democratic governance work in the Gao region of Mali, as well as numerous efforts by local NGOs in Nigeria to build community and youth resilience against violent extremism.

**(3) Countering terrorist messaging and narratives:**

- Arewa24 is a multi-media platform, centered around a 24/7 Hausa language satellite television channel in northern Nigeria, which creates, produces, and distributes a variety of culturally-relevant general entertainment programming to the more than 100 million Hausa speakers in Nigeria and around the world, specifically targeting youth and mothers of young children. The programming draws more than 13 million viewers daily and more than 18 million viewers weekly in the six northern Nigerian focus states (Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Sokoto, and Zamfara). There is evidence it has also enjoyed considerable international audiences across Saudi Arabia, Libya, Sudan, and Niger.
- USAID/OTI is improving radio transmission capability with news and security updates relevant to northeastern Nigeria (starting with Borno state) in Hausa and Kanuri languages, increasing access of isolated communities to credible security information in areas where Boko Haram violence and the risk of radicalization is most acute.
- CSCC and PAO Niamey are implementing an Internet Café at Abdou Moumouni University to serve as a platform for engaging target community of Muslim youth to furnish them with access to credible information.
- CSCC and PAO Niamey are implementing a CVE Awareness Campaign/ Credible Voices Network that targets regions bordering northern Nigeria and Mali, which are among the most exposed to the negative influence of religious intolerance.
- CSCC and MIST Abuja are implementing FARE Radio Jingles, short-jingles in English, Yoruba, and Hausa that use religious passages to counter violent extremist views on jihad or martyrdom, and direct audiences to messages that encourage peace and tolerance. Target audience of 10,000,000.

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- CSCC is implementing 3<sup>rd</sup> Party produced Mobile Optimized Counter Boko Haram Videos, a series of short, mobile-optimized video clips in Arabic, French, Hausa and Kanuri which are intended to counter Boko Haram messaging.
- CSCC and PAS Abuja are implementing “Our Voice”: Mobile Social Media Platform for Countering Violent Extremism in Northern Nigeria. The platform provides U.S. government and local partners with a mobile social media platform to communicate at scale with disenfranchised/hard-to-reach Nigerian audiences. The mobile platform allows for the delivery of community feedback surveys, large-scale interactive SMS content, and audio content.
- CSCC and MIST Abuja are implementing “FARE for Peace”, a multimedia project that involves three media and audience outreach methods: radio broadcast; television content; and opinion leader fora to reach audiences in Northern Nigeria.

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