Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism Guidebook

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Foreword

Despite Daesh's loss of territory in Iraq and Syria, violent extremism in general is finding fertile ground around the globe. Violent extremist groups continue to morph and adapt their tactical and propaganda strategies to draw recruits and incite violence. As violent extremism continues to localize, context-specific and evidence-based interventions are ever more necessary.

Counterterrorism policies in the West have narrowly focused on Muslim communities while neglecting the actual threat of far-right (often white supremacist) violent extremism. Repressive security measures have fueled Islamophobia and emboldened far-right extremist groups. Far-right extremists and Daesh are two sides of the same coin; they both want a world divided by existential fault lines, and they both find expression in fear-based politics that breed hate. A long-term solution for violent extremism hinges on a multipronged approach that addresses both of these forms.

As part of the community of practitioners concerned with the rise of violent extremism, we work toward understanding and preventing violent extremism of all kinds. We must reflect on how we build transformative and sustainable peace in our communities. The question of how our contributions support a human rights-based approach in preventing violent extremism is one that calls for continual reflection, as well as open, honest exchange. Military and security approaches must be a last resort, as violence begets violence. At the forefront of any inquiry on the subject must be the need to address the core sociopolitical and economic grievances, including the exclusion and marginalization of particular segments of the population, that gave rise to such groups in the first place. As such, interventions for preventing violent extremism should move beyond counter-messaging to providing counteroffers or alternatives to address root causes and promote social inclusion. In doing so, the voices of women and youth must be empowered.

The Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) Guidebook will outline the Carter Center's PVE project by detailing the Center's methodology for building community-led, grassroots inter ventions for peacebuilding. This guidebook examines the Center's work on discrediting Daesh propaganda and the rise of Islamophobia through an alternative, grassroots model, which focuses on empowering and strengthening capacity among local leaders. It is divided into five modules and covers the following topics: (a) political context of the emergence of PVE; (b) the Center's methodology and core principles of project design; (c) project implementation; (d) monitoring and evaluation; and (e) policy recommendations for

Section 1
Political Context and the Emergence of Countering or Preventing Violent Extremism

The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, and the launch of the Global War on Terror (GWOT) created a new geopolitical security environment. Security policy post-9/11 has grown imbalanced between the short-term imperatives of reducing security threats and the long-term benefits of achieving justice and building sustainable peace. The costs have been significant; according to

prevention, such as Hedayah, the CVE "center of excellence" in the United Arab Emirates, were formed, and CVE policies and action plans were incorporated into multiple existing international structures.

Faith-Based Leaders' Responses

In his address to the United Nations General Assembly on violent extremism, President Obama stated

recruitment. Too often these condemnations are constructed in classic Arabic and rely on orthodox juris-prudence. These appeals often fail to reach the communities most at risk of recruitment to violence.

Violent Extremism Today: The Rise of Islamophobia and White Supremacy

Despite ill-formed and poorly executed CVE policy in the United States and beyond, the recent growth of violent extremism is a serious issue that calls for a serious, well-formed, human rights-based response. For

Center's project started with a focus on countering Daesh recruitment propaganda through the mobilization of religious and community leaders. In parallel, the Center's approach also aimed to prevent and respond to the dangerous tide of Islamophobia.

The remainder of this report will detail the methodology of the Center's PVE work, convey its successes, and enumerate its challenges. Section 2 will detail the Center's PVE methodology in research and work-shop design, illustrating how effective PVE must be grassroots, collaborative, inclusive, and designed to fill the gaps left by security-based approaches that emphasize Muslim violent extremism while ignoring other forms. Section 3 will detail the implementation of the Carter Center's methodology over three years of research and training faith-based and community leaders from five countries. Section 4 will define the Center's monitoring and evaluation scheme, while the final section, Section 5, will lay out a series of recommendations for effective PVE programming for governments, international nongovernmental institutions, local civil society actors, and women-led and faith-based organizations. It is our hope that the framework and methodology presented here will encourage policymakers to take a more inclusive approach to preventing violent extremism and inspire community actors and faith-based leaders to engage with their communities in the fight for peace and human dignity.

Section 2
Methodology and Core Principles

Given the criticisms and pitfalls of C/PVE as it emerged in the post-9/11 landscape, the Center's PVE project strived to develop a methodology for prevention that was community based, inclusive, collaborative, and attentive to the flaws of security-based C/PVE approaches.

Dr. Houda Abadi, an associate director in the Center's Conflict Resolution Program, developed a mixed-method approach that combined rigorous primary source research on terrorist recruitment propaganda with a training model for faith-based leaders and socio-religious actors to address the rise of Islamophobia and Daesh and provide a grassroots approach to preventing violent extremism.

The following sections will detail the methodology employed by the Center's Inclusive Approaches to PVE project and emphasize its transferability to other institutions or actors looking to develop research-informed and rights-based approaches to PVE.

The first section will describe the project's research methods, the collection of terrorist recruitment propaganda, field work, and expert symposia. The second section will describe the methodology for the recruitment and training of faith-based leaders. This section will include a justification for the Center's broad understanding of "faith-based leaders," selection criteria, the project's gendered approach for working with leaders, and key principles in the project's design.

Research Methodology

selected for coding if they were confirmed as official Daesh propaganda.[24] In total, 778 videos were ultimately selected for analysis and included in the data set.

The research team also coded and analyzed Daesh's English e-magazines, Dabiq and Rumiyah, and analyzed Daesh's online Arabic newsletter, al-Naba'. All issues of Dabiq and Rumiyah were coded for text and image. This included the use of Quran and Hadith materials, use of gender, images of children, references to enemies and allies, narratives, and continuity of topics and style, among other variables. The PVE team also analyzed issues of Daesh's French-language e-zine, Dar al-Islam, and social media posts.

Fifty-one interviews were conducted in the northern regions of Morocco: Rabat, Salé, Tangier, Ceuta,

Daesh's recruitment strategies and use of social media technologies to appeal to alienated youth. The symposium aimed to develop a nuanced understanding of counternarratives that would engage religious resources, leaders, and institutions in peacebuilding in their local contexts.

Discussions centered on the supply of fighters, paths to extremism, and the successes and failures of governmental responses to extremism, including security-based and community engagement models. Experts reviewed multiple case studies to illustrate the elasticity of Daesh's appeal and the lack of a single recruit or radicalization profile. Experts agreed that counter-recruitment measures must engage trusted religious and community leaders and that Daesh's use of social media and exploitation of religious texts must be met with counter-messages and counteroffers, using the very same communication media.

Islamophobia Symposium Findings (September 2017)

Developing effective responses to the rise of Islamophobia has been at the core of the Center's approach to violent extremism since its inception. In September 2017, the Center convened a three-day symposium called Countering the Islamophobia Industry, bringing together 30 international practitioners and scholars on Islamophobia, media, and political violence. Discussions centered on three major themes: (1) manifestations of Islamophobia and its impact on the ground; (2) the symbiotic relationship between Islamophobia and radicalization; and (3) strategic and sustainable responses to Islamophobia.

Symposium experts concluded that Islamophobia is not a Muslim issue, it is a human rights issue; that existing civil and human rights law should be used to combat Islamophobia; that the establishment of coalitions among groups that fight religious-based discrimination, racism, misogyny, and other forms of discrimination and marginalization is likely to be an effective strategy in reversing the tide of systemic Islamophobia and systemic racism; and that it is discriminatory and counterproductive to use national security as an excuse for singling out and isolating Muslim communities.

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Why Faith-Based and Community Leaders?

Debates around C/PVE have attempted to tackle the intersection between religion and violent extremism. There is a common belief that religion is a driver of violent extremism that disregards any potential positive role that religious and faith-based leaders can play. At the same time, a significant proportion of stakeholders view religion as an intrinsic part of the solution. When we think of faith-based leaders, we often think of official representatives of faith who have traditionally sanctioned training in theology and

of local dialects (French, Flemish, colloquial Arabic), shorter and more interactive sermons, creating safe spaces for women and girls, and developing local youth initiatives.

Selection and Recruitment

Official Muslim religious leaders, especially in Muslim-majority countries, are often state-appointed and

3. Encouraging local ownership: The iterative capacity-building workshops were designed to ensure sustainable, locally owned projects that increased communities' resilience to violent extremism. To this end, the workshops were designed to provide leaders with the skills, tools, and networks necessary to initiate their own locally adapted PVE initiatives. Workshop participants were selected for the ability to conceptualize, develop, and manage their own projects, and who were engaged in their communities and passionate about activism. This ensured that not only would the local projects materialize, but also that these projects would remain closely identified with the local leaders and not The Carter Center. This allowed the Center to work alongside faith leaders, in an inclusive manner, to channel their social capital and legitimacy toward preventing violent extremism of all kinds.

4. Developing local solutions to global problems: The Center's two PVE cohorts included faith-based and community leaders from five countries on three continents. This geographical spread ensured reli-

how masculinity is defined within both Daesh and white supremacist movements, and how extremist propaganda often relies on explicit ideas of manhood. As such, challenging violent extremism must begin with engaging young men as men. Instead of consistently depicting manhood in binary and stereotypical ways, scriptures can sometimes assist in transforming unhealthy hypermasculinity into healthy and, as one workshop participant called it, "prophetic" masculinity.

The Seven Core PVE Principles

The Carter Center's capacity-building workshops were based on the premise that effective programs must be community led and designed through a participatory process that responds to the strengths and weaknesses of local contexts. Hence, the workshops followed seven core principles in their design and implementation.

1. Distance from a security-based approach to PVE: The Center firmly distanced the project from the securitization of many C/PVE frameworks. It is worth re-emphasizing that mutual respect, confidence and trust are indispensable for effective PVE work. To preserve these principles, the Center remained discerning about its sources of funding: It did not seek or accept grants or donations from governments that have adopted C/PVE practices that have no empirical justifications and have caused more harm than good.

2. Reiterative model: A fundamental part of the Center's pedagogy was the promotion of intra- and inter-group encounters through reiterative workshops. A genuine, positive difference can be made when barriers among and between groups are removed and individual relationships of mutual trust, collaboration, and affection are established. Many organizations have trained large groups of youth and community leaders in a short period of time, claiming that short trainings to large cohorts ensure a larger impact. The Center's reiterative, capacity-building training-of-trainers model was designed on the opposite assumption—that training a small and intimate group of faith leaders from different communities but with significant social capital, and trust-based relationships built over time will generate a larger and more sustainable impact. The Center's framework for trust-building breaks the concept of trust into four dimensions that were implemented in each workshop: (1) listening and building a safe space; (2) moving from vision to action; (3) collaborating across geographical, political and ideological divides; and (4) ensuring local ownership and sustainability.

3. Transnational coalitions:Connecting faith-based and community leaders from North Africa, Europe, and the United States allowed for a better understanding of each community's concerns regarding violent extremism. It also created a space where the context-specific challenges could be discussed while advocating effectively for networked and strategic Muslim leadership in the global sphere. Workshop design provided participants with tools to build effective transnational coalitions, creating networks between Muslim majority countries in North Africa and Muslim minority communities in Europe and the U.S. For many participants, the workshops were their first real opportunity to operate in a safe, nonjudgmental atmosphere that was conducive to the exchange of differing ideas. The frank discussions between the participants who reside in the West as Muslim minorities and those who live in North Africa within Muslim majorities highlighted fresh perspectives on, for instance, the impact of C/PVE policies on their respective communities, or the types of violent extremism—Daesh, Islamophobic, ethno-nationalist—that each community feels it needs to respond to.

4. Experiential learning:The project design was committed to experiential learning where participants were given the opportunity to experience, reflect, conceptualize, and apply acquired knowledge, operating at four levels: (1) offering safe space to share and explore new ideas; (2) balancing theory and

These principles were designed with a commitment to empower our workshop participants and to encourage local ownership, allowing these initiatives to remain sustainable after the Carter Center's direct involvement ends. Shortly after the series of reiterative workshops concluded, the Center created an alumni process, enabling participants from the first cohort to mentor the second. This was an important step in taking the initial workshop trainings to scale, resulting in multiple, autonomous, locally adapted PVE initiatives within a network of faith-based and community leaders. This cohort model framed the Center's "exit strategy": building a multiyear network of PVE actors and organizations allowed the Center to disengage from direct capacity-building.

Section 3
Implementation

This section will detail the implementation of the Center's PVE reiterative capacity-building workshops from 2016 through 2019. Workshop trainings were designed to enable participants to expand and leverage their influence in ways beneficial to their grassroots work. The first part will focus on the front-line faith-based and community leaders' profiles, their diversity, and the impact of their individual and collaborative projects. Next is a focus on the content of the trainings and the roster of workshop experts. Adjustments were made throughout the life of the project to adapt and respond to the changing threat of violent extremism, so topics and experts evolved in response to participant priorities. The final part reflects on the two cohorts of leaders' local PVE interventions.

Description of the Two Cohorts

Recruitment for the first cohort was done after a detailed mapping of local sociopolitical contexts through field visits, local media analysis and personal interviews, in order to understand the local drivers of violent extremism and engage more effectively with stakeholders who have the legitimacy and credibility to influence others.

The first cohort consisted of 23 leaders from France, Morocco, Belgium, and Tunisia

Muslim-American activists. Several participants were former political detainees; some had lost friends or family members to violent extremism as recruits or as victims of violence.

For the Carter Center's project to be successful, it needed buy-in from prominent leaders who held senior positions in the target communities. The first cohort was therefore older on average and included more faith-based leaders holding senior positions in organizations or institutions with an interest in the prevention of violent extremism. The second cohort incorporated a greater range of community leaders and seasoned grassroots activists adept in new communication technologies. The age mix paid dividends to the overall project; the younger second cohort immediately built a private online social media group, several traveled to visit their colleagues' communities, and more senior colleagues opened doors and made connections for their younger peers.

The second cohort tended to be more media savvy and technologically adept, especially regarding social media use. For example, the first cohort received a total of 16 individual sessions on media over five workshops. This included basic media literacy, as well as trainings on the technical knowledge required to understand digital media and to produce content. Members of the second cohort came to the table with much of this knowledge already acquired. Media training for the second cohort included instead more advanced content on project branding via social media and effective storytelling. While not surprising given their average age range, such diversity necessitated more flexibility in terms of workshop design and topic selection.

Workshop Topics and Expertise

To have a transformative impact, the workshops served as a safe space to develop strategic and inclusive responses to violent extremism of all forms; empower faith-based and community leaders in the digital age; develop political and social strategies to respond to local challenges; foster intra- and inter-Muslim coalitions in the fight against all forms of violent extremism; and develop the skill set to design, monitor, and evaluate their own local projects.

Topics and Content of Iterative Workshops

While the topics were not addressed separately, four broad categories emerged: (1) the various forms of violent extremism, (2) civic engagement, (3) media literacy, and (4) gender. Seven sessions focused on design, monitoring, and evaluation practices. Toward the end of the project cycle, workshop participants were expected to develop and pitch their own projects using a logic model framework.

The breakdown of session topics based on these four categories is reflected in Figure 1.

Evolution of Topics and Themes

Throughout the project, the Center remained attentive to the changing priorities of workshop participants vis-à-vis trainings. When the project was first developed, Daesh was a preeminent global threat, and the flow of foreign fighters to Syria and Iraq was at its peak. Three years later, white supremacist violence and Islamophobic rhetoric were on the rise. While always a threat to Muslim minority communities in Europe and the United States and a core pillar of the PVE project since its inception, combating Islamophobic extremism grew as a concern to the workshop participants and the global community at large with the rise of far-right parties in Europe. The North African participants added important nuance to the discussion by highlighting that Islamophobia is not just a Western phenomenon. Fear and marginalization of conservative forms of Islam, like Salafism, are prevalent in Muslim societies as well. Responding to these challenges required agility and flexibility in programming design and in the scope of topics addressed and expertise employed.
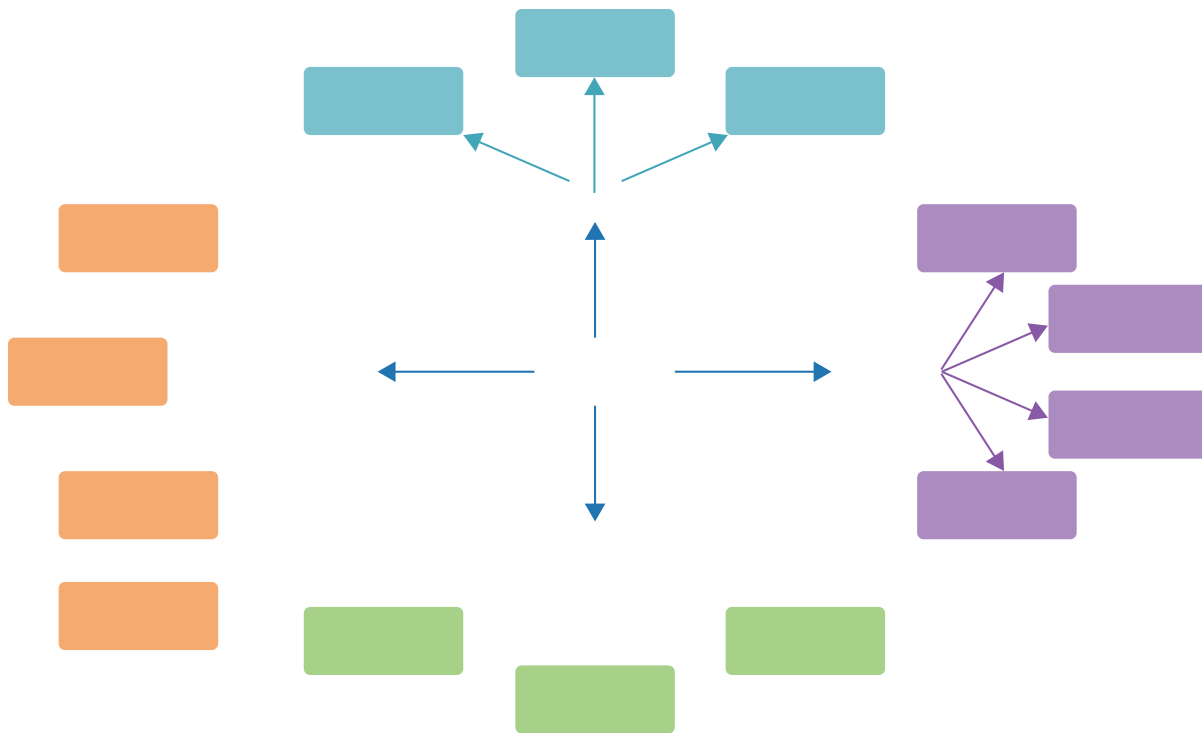
The Center's trainings on Islamophobia and white supremacy examined the current political context and the toolbox needed for a better and stronger response to hate and bigotry. It included presentations from a former neo-Nazi on the ideology and recruitment methods of white supremacist groups. These sessions also addressed the role toxic masculinity plays in the recruitment practices of both Daesh and white supremacists, factors that make men vulnerable to recruitment, and the role of community leaders in redefining healthy masculinity.

Similarly, participant priorities evolved over the two cohorts in terms of the method selected for preventing violent extremism. The first cohort was more focused on responding to and defeating violent extremist ideology directly, while the second was more geared toward finding avenues to reclaim their narratives, increase Muslim participation in public life, normalize Islam in the public imagination, and advocate for coexistence. The second cohort also seemed to place more emphasis on leadership and leader ship training models and on intra-faith engagement.

Expertise

The Center sought to represent diverse backgrounds and expertise in selecting experts. Experts included academics, practitioners, lawyers, and psychologists, as well as specialists in participatory media, gender, conflict transformation, and nonprofit marketing, among others. The issue of violent extremism is complex, and having an interdisciplinary framework was key to providing a nuanced and holistic approach to the trainings.

From its inception, the project was designed with a deep commitment to the inclusion of marginalized voices and to amplifying the voices of Muslims and women in the fight against extremism. Of the 23 experts, 13 were women. As the majority of both cohorts were either from North Africa or members of 6 mo3m -41018061.

the North African diaspora in Francophone Europe, efforts were made to select experts who were not only

Phase Two

The workshop cycle for the second cohort of faith-based and community leaders ended in early 2019. While the process of "standing up" projects is still ongoing as of the writing of this report, each country group articulated a goal and description for its project. Tunisian participants are developing an organization to build resilience to extremism among youth in targeted areas of Tunis by leveraging the access and expertise of 30 local imams and mothers into a community-action network of civic engagement and grassroots conflict management. The Moroccan participants are implementing a program to train 20 youth activists in three pilot areas in conflict mediation and assisting them in creating youth-led coexistence projects in local neighborhoods. European participants are developing an online consultation platform with local communities, aiming to create synergies among different grassroots leaders, and to encourage French and Belgian Muslims, especially youths, to live their faith openly and without compromise. Workshop participants from the United States are developing a nonprofit that will select and train a small cohort of young Muslim leaders in strategies for advancing civil rights, grassroots activism, and intra-faith coalition-building to establish a diverse network of Muslim leaders across multiple spheres of American public life.

Members of the first cohort now serve as mentors and colleagues for the second. Their collaboration has built an expanding network of practice that will allow their work to cross-pollinate and ensure the sustainability of their initiatives in the absence of direct Carter Center involvement.

Section 4
Monitoring and Evaluation

The Center's PVE project was premised on a results framework designed to achieve an increased capacity of Muslim religious and community leaders to discredit violent extremism, close communication and gender gaps between mainstream and conservative Muslim religious and community leaders, and identify appropriate policy recommendations for governments and NGOs based on our research and interactions with local communities. In design and in implementation, The Carter Center incorporated into the evaluation scheme outputs and indicators that were concrete, measurable, and related directly to the project's proposed outcomes and aligned with the theory of change. The project was designed with an M&E system in place, and activities were evaluated through both quantitative and qualitative means. In addition, monitoring and evaluation schemes were included in the knowledge transfer, so that participants would be prepared to monitor their own projects after the training cycle was complete. This section will examine the four parts to the monitoring and evaluation of the PVE project: (1) assessing participants' influence and impact; (2) capacity-building and research; (3) context monitoring, risk mitigation, and implications for programming; and (4) a 360-degree participatory project evaluation approach.

Assessing Participants' Influence and Impact

Monitoring systems were employed throughout the life of the project to provide consistency in making

including donors, policymakers, and academic researchers. Engagement with the Center's research was monitored quantitatively via website analytics; the Center's PVE page was visited and reports accessed from over 50 countries, and individual reports were downloaded hundreds of times. The monitoring and evaluation scheme for the Center's research was also participatory and involved review and feedback from participating faith-based and community leaders. The research formed the basis of multiple workshop sessions; more important, however, was that all research products were translated into both French and Arabic to make them accessible to workshop participants, as well as interested civil society groups and government officials in Europe and North Africa. The Center's research was used by multiple participants in their own local projects and in their training of other faith-based leaders and community activists in their own contexts. One participant, an imam from Tunis, inspired by the Center's research and trainings, published a book on Islamophobia, overcoming extremism, and peaceful coexistence between the East and West.

Context Monitoring and Implications: Programming for Change

Careful attention was paid to risk analysis and management, including ongoing interrogation of the project's assumptions about violent extremism, participant context, and potential negative impact. Monitoring tools were employed on a continuous basis throughout the project to monitor risk to the project's goals and to track changes in the wider environment and potential impacts on the program, participants, and their work on the ground. This included formalized tracking in the form of weekly internal context reporting that covered analysis of the evolving landscape of violent extremism as well as changes in the political context in target countries and communities. Tracking the evolution of Daesh's recruitment narratives or the emergence of more virulent forms of Islamophobic violence, for example, allowed the Center's team to analyze the changing landscape of violent extremism and respond appropriately in terms of research and workshop design. Periodic field visits and consultations with program participants on the status and context of violent extremism, government security measures, and the challenges of PVE work in their countries and regions also informed programming decisions that sought to mitigate risks to the project's goals and the participants' livelihoods.

Flexibility and responsiveness to local conditions and the needs of project beneficiaries were of central concern in mitigating potential risks. For example, workshop participants expressed early that workshop locations must be chosen with care. Many governments take excessive security measures on issues related to violent extremism and its prevention, others monitor Muslim minorities closely, and some have little tolerance for discussions of religion or policy that are not dominated by government agencies. The political space in which grassroots activists operate and seek to combat violent extremism is narrow and closing. In addition, many of our workshop participants were specifically targeted by violent extremist groups. Participant security was therefore a real concern. The decision was made to hold workshops in a neutral location with the full cooperation of the authorities and the provision of security. The Center also did not seek to self-publicize, which allowed work to be carried out with a low profile and in genuine partnerships with our two cohorts of faith-based and community leaders, thus minimizing the chances of poor implementation choices leading to harm.

The Center's PVE project worked to build long-term relationships with partners based on mutual respect and honest communication. Workshop discussions were sometimes contentious, and potential risks included the violation of the Chatham House Rule, under which all workshops were held, or a lack of group cohesion as cohorts evolved. Early in the first cohort's workshop cycle, the Chatham House Rule was violated, necessitating the removal of several participants from the cohort. In these cases, making decisions and exercising authority transparently and with the participation of all impacted faith-based and

community leaders mitigated risk to the workshop community by re-establishing trust. Ongoing resource monitoring and strategic decision-making based on need/resource assessments were also used to mitigate the risk of overextending program resources. The second cohort originally included Libyan peace practitioners. However, the ongoing conflict in Libya made it impossible for Center staff to make field visits to Libya and assess the Libyan context. The access and resources required to perform effective monitoring and evaluation of participants' ongoing project development, as well as the cost and difficulty of participant travel, argued against extending the Center's PVE project to Libya.

Participants were from five countries, and there was a risk of cultural misunderstanding and for participants to work in regional silos and fail to cohere into a global network of PVE practitioners. Violent extremism and C/PVE are perceived very differently in different contexts; C/PVE programs in the U.S. and Europe have historically been discriminatory and narrowly focused on Muslim communities, while Muslim communities in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), the primary victims of violent extremism, feel acutely the need for C/PVE programming. Workshop discussions were therefore designed to mitigate this risk by building cross-cultural understanding on violent extremism and the need for C/PVE while simultaneously advocating effectively for strategic Muslim leadership in the global sphere.

Conclusion

Programming designed for the prevention of violent extremism is difficult to monitor and evaluate. The contexts in which violent extremism thrives are complex, there is no single driver of violent extremism, and direct causal relationship between community action and violence or its prevention is opaque and often impossible to draw. The Carter Center is committed to the assumption that, if religious and community members across political divides engage with one another and offer alternatives for civic engagement, then local communities can become positive agents of change and reduce the incidence of violent extremism. Our project's monitoring and evaluation scheme incorporated both quantitative and qualitative measures of assessment continuously throughout the project cycle. The results show that the project's work was relevant, effective, and sustainable as the participating organizations and leaders continued their projects after the conclusion of the Center's direct involvement. Outcomes harvested in partnership with the program's beneficiaries confirm this assessment. Overall, the evaluation of the Center's PVE projects shows that a contextual, rights-based, and inclusive approach to programming has the potential to positively impact societies beyond the narrow dangers of political violence or terrorism by empowering local influential community leaders to counter the violence narrative.

Section 5
Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

Aggressive, security-based approaches to violent extremism may make sense in the short term and may win successes on the battlefield, but they are the wrong approach for building and maintaining long-term resilience to violent extremism. This final part will examine some of the lessons learned during the Carter Center's engagement with community leaders to prevent violent extremism. The next section will review some of the challenges and successes of this work, both our own and those of the faith-based and community leaders with whom we partnered. The final section will lay out some recommendations for policymakers based on our work that we hope will encourage more inclusive approaches to preventing violent extremism.

Successes

The implementation of the workshop series spawned many successes, including the deployment of multiple sustained projects or one-time PVE initiatives or events to date. Two imams from conflicting religious orientations in Tunis began working together after attending the workshops; they had never met before. A young imam traveled to visit several members of his cohort in multiple European cities, exploring their projects and communities and sharing notes on future sites of collaboration. Members of Morocco's two largest and opposing socio-religious organizations are now working together to train youth. At the conclusion of the last joint workshop, the two groups created a private online discussion platform for information sharing, networking, and ongoing collaboration.

   The success of the Carter Center's PVE capacity-building workshops is due in large part to the participants themselves—their hard work, dedication, and commitment to peace. Several key elements of the workshops' implementation and long-term strategies empowered two cohorts of leaders to effectively participate in PVE and build alliances across the ideological spectrum, based on principles of respect and inclusivity, for a common vision and goal. Some of the workshop successes follow.

- Development and implementation of context-specific projects and interventions: The workshop participants developed preventative grassroots programs to empower and immunize their local communities.

- Bridging the gap between policymakers and community leaders: The workshop participants from the two cohorts pitched their context-specific projects and interventions to policymakers and donors from the region. This not only encouraged local ownership but also created the opportunity to share lessons learned and advocate for local and national PVE policies around peace and security.

- Application of skills and lessons learned: The workshop participants used their new skills in their daily work and adopted a more holistic approach to countering violent extremism. For instance, after a Daesh propaganda deconstruction and media literacy workshop, a conservative Tunisian imam produced several videos of anti-Daesh sermons with advanced video techniques and posted them for online dissemination. Another Tunisian imam published several articles in major newspapers based on the Center's research,

gave lectures at mosques and participated in panel discussions criticizing Daesh on television and radio, including a radio conversation with a conservative Salafi imam and fellow workshop participant.

- Promotion of stakeholder engagement on national and international levels: Reflecting on their work with The Carter Center, members of the first cohort noted that the trainings they received internationalized their approach to extremism and that the tools they gained allowed for greater impact. Participants from Belgium have been involved with various domestic and international human rights groups to combat extremism in the form of Daesh as well as rising far-right ultra-nationalism. They have partnered with organizations like Alliance for Freedom and Dignity (AFD) and the European Organization for Co-existence and Human Rights to discuss deep-rooted causes of violent extremism and ways to overcome them.

- Addressing violent extremism through a comprehensive approach that includes transformative interventions and community ownership: These diverse interventions anchored local collaboration with an emphasis on preventative grassroots programs to empower youth. Workshop participants described how they not only learned new ways of outreach and collaboration, but also experienced individual change as they "went from feeling like victims to becoming active agents."

- Building a community of practice: The workshops were designed to be practical, providing participants with concrete tools through interactive exercises and collaborative learning. The cohort model and reiterative method fostered trust among participants and created a shared sense of purpose. Relationships were formed and coalitions cemented in a network of practice connecting communities across North Africa, Europe, and the United States. This was best illustrated when a young imam from North Africa traveled to Belgium and France to meet independently with other members of the cohort, tour their projects, and learn what they were doing.

- Promoting dialogue and coalition building: Bringing participants from multiple countries and regions allowed faith-based and community leaders to become better equipped to understand one another's concerns regarding violent extremism and become more strategic advocates for effective transnational coalitions and Muslim leadership. In parallel, the workshops functioned as a channel for communication between groups across ideological divides who otherwise would not interact.

While all participants had their own expertise and had previously worked independently in their own countries, the workshop series motivated them to collaborate on several domestic as well as international projects. A new shared understanding between mainstream and conservative faith leaders paved the way for cooperation and joint initiatives within local communities.

Despite the real and persistent difficulties mentioned above, the reiterative workshops provided the tools and the cohort model fostered a network capable of overcoming these challenges.

Challenges

Despite the hard work of the faith-based and community leaders engaged with The Carter Center, participants have encountered challenges in deploying their projects and have no easy solutions. The first and perhaps most pervasive challenge has been finding and allocating the resources required to start up nuanced projects that attempt to tackle a complex problem.

Chief among these resource restrictions is time. The faith-based and community leaders engaged by the Center over the past three years are not full-time PVE practitioners. All have careers, family obligations, and prior demands on their time. They are imams, scholars, journalists, lawyers, mothers, fathers, husbands, and wives. Finding and deploying resources, scheduling, and coordinating interventions all take time. This sometimes limits the scale of what the participants can do.

Geography also often was a challenge—participants from the same country who met in the workshops attempted to work together on shared projects, but the geographic distance sometimes made coordination difficult.

Participants have also repeatedly cited funding as a challenge; new organizations taking a grassroots approach to PVE and in opposition to security-based approaches face an uphill battle when it comes to tapping traditional government-based funding. In addition, while funds from governmental and INGO budgets devoted to C/PVE are available, and the rhetoric from organizations like the U.N. and European Union seeking to support community-led organizations is promising, the application and reporting requirements are too often perceived as arbitrary, opaque, and onerous. This is particularly true for small, community-led organizations that lack dedicated staff, much less staff purely devoted to development and technical expertise. That the Center's participants have done so much good with such limited resources is a testament to their passion and resolve.

Also, it remains true that the topic of extremism and C/PVE work remains controversial and overly politicized. In the Western context, this might mean that public discourse around violent extremism and the stigmatizing of Muslim communities make it incredibly difficult for Muslim religious and community leaders to work on these issues openly. In much of North Africa, governments hold a monopoly on any and all topics relating to religion, including C/PVE. Participants from the region faced the closing of political space around the issue of violent extremism, forcing them to be flexible and creative in their project design. Some were forced to pivot from projects focused on extremism and instead develop civic engagement and media literacy programming for youth. While their creativity made these initiatives succeed, the lack of political space for working on these issues had the potential to limit or derail their projects entirely.

Policy Recommendations

This guidebook outlines the Carter Center's methodology for developing and implementing a grassroots-centered initiative to prevent violent extremism. In addition to sharing lessons learned and core principles, we conclude with these eight main policy recommendations for PVE stakeholders:

- Aggressive security measures alone cannot defeat violent extremism. It must be prevented through a comprehensive and rights-based approach that addresses root causes and draws on rigorous local research. Strengthening social cohesion, promoting social justice, and forging resilient social contracts must be a core part of preventative efforts.

- While far-right violent extremism is on the rise, policymakers and law enforcement agencies have focused primarily on Al Qaeda and Daesh. This has led to challenges in adequately understanding and assessing the dangers posed by far-right violent extremism. Effective PVE policies should avoid double standards between the various forms of violent extremism, increase funding for research on far-right extremism, and allocate resources to prevent and counter this form of violent extremism.

- Stakeholders should adopt a participatory approach to preventing violent extremism. Preventative approaches to violent extremism work best when led by local communities and grassroots leaders and supported by partnerships among stakeholders at the national and international levels. Targeted engagement and inclusive solutions, such as enhancing the participation of women and youth, are fundamental to sustaining peace.

- For sustainability, PVE programming needs to be designed for maximum local ownership. In parallel, resources need to be allocated for building and strengthening a PVE community of practice to provide capacity building, promote engagement, and share lessons learned beyond the cyclical life of projects.

Policymakers and donors should allow for flexibility in funding timelines to account for core funding in addition to project-based funding for the sustainability and scaling up of projects.

- The role of civil society in peacebuilding and fostering resilience to violent extremism is of critical importance. It is paramount that civil society be given the political space and the financial resources to contribute and engage in the PVE space.

- PVE programming needs to incorporate online and offline media strategies for the targeted audience. These strategies need to use cultural references, connect to local issues, and include rational and emotional appeals.

- Stakeholders must build stronger regional and international partnerships to foster collaboration and capacity development. Efforts should include sharing resources and lessons learned, strengthening research, providing technical expertise, and sharing information.

- Daesh's vast territorial losses have created an untenable moral and legal dilemma. The lack of a comprehensive legal international approach to the foreign fighter phenomenon has resulted in a variety of measures, some more repressive than others. Children born in Daesh-controlled territory are in a precarious legal status. Parentage is often unknown or unprovable, and most are stateless. The fate of these children raises moral, legal, political, and diplomatic dilemmas. There's a dire need for a rights-based approach to rehabilitation and reintegration.

Preventing Violent Extremism programming has matured considerably in the years since CVE was first offered as a broader and more multidisciplinary approach to terrorism and political violence. Unfortunately, however, the trajectory and tactics of violent extremists have matured as well, necessitating ever more innovative and evidence-based approaches to prevention. The Carter Center's approach to preventing violent extremism, documented in this guidebook, represents an approach to prevention that is grassroots, inclusive, rights-based, and sustainable. The hope is that the materials presented here can serve as a benchmark and guide for others

Annex A

Case Study on Civic Engagement: Preparing for the 2016 United States Election

TASK

Devise an outcomes-based strategic campaign

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The 2016 election campaign has started with the primaries, and it is clear that Muslims are central to this campaign, alongside other minorities. Yet, Muslims are a significant minority of about 7 million, and are concentrated in areas where they can make micro impacts on the election, and if coordinated, even a macro impact in a tight election. The challenge is whether this can be coordinated and leveraged to achieve certain goals for this community.

QUESTION

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Annex B

Case Study on Islamophobia in the United States: Finding a Sustainable, Consistent, and Strategic Response

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Islam has a 400-year African American presence and a recent immigrant presence in the United States. Islamophobia has been present, whether initially part of broader slavery and segregation, or more recently as a security challenge, especially after September 11. The latter was committed by people who called themselves Muslim, justified terror in the name of Islam, and were connected to global groups who do the same. In the last weeks, Islamophobia has intensified following the Paris and San Bernardino terror attacks, but its virulence has exceeded previous episodes because they coincided with an election campaign where candidates have turned their fury on domestic Muslims and made ridiculous and chilling pronouncements. This has placed Muslim persons, institutions, and the religion itself in the crosshairs.

QUESTION

How would we put together a campaign to resist Islamophobia, finding a position that balances the fears and concerns of ordinary Americans with the fact that most Muslims themselves abhor what was done in their name?

TOOLBOX

1. Maqasid al Shariah (MaS): How would we rank the MaS?

2. Objectives and Outcomes: Which ones are primary, secondary, and tertiary?

3. Leadership: What qualities of leadership do we need?

4. Audience: Who are we speaking to?

5. Coalitions and Alliances: How do we build these for this purpose?

6. Communication: What are the messages? Means? Reach?

Reference: World for All Foundation, Maqasid Al Sharia Civic Engagement Course

Annex C

Case Study on Building Strong and Credible Brand for Social Change and Action