



COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Goal: The development of an empirically-driven and region-specific evidence base on the drivers of violent radicalisation, and a theory of change within which to develop more effective human security and counter-extremism approaches.

Duration: February 2016 – August 2019.

Situation Analysis: Despite the current military success against Daesh in Syria and Iraq, the threat of new radical armed groups emerging after the decline of Daesh, the impact of returnees in countries of origin, and best approaches to their reintegration mark the main policy concerns among stakeholders in the region. Historically, moderate Jordan has one of the largest contingents of foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq,¹

and its citizens form part of a growing constituency for radical ideologues.² Understanding the growth of, and the drivers behind, such radical groups is imperative for policy-makers, programming agencies and donor governments. This emerging challenge requires a new conceptualisation of Countering and Preventing Violent Extremism (CPVE) — specifically expanded in scope to address the social, psychological, and cultural drivers of extremism in local communities.

¹ Suha Ma'ayeh, "Jordan's Fight Against ISIL a High Risk Balancing Act," *The National*, July 9, 2015, <http://www.thenational.ae/world/middle-east/20150217/jordans-fight-against-isil-a-high-risk-balancing-act>

² Hassan Abu Haniyeh, "Pathways to Countering Extremism through Human Security Initiatives," (presentation presented at workshop on Human Security in Fragile and Conflict Affected Settings, The WANA Institute, Amman, Jordan, September 8, 2016).

Project Activities	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interdisciplinary desk review identifying radicalisation drivers drawing from English and Arabic sources; • Interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with radicalisation experts, tribal leaders, civil society activists, youth, refugees and female preachers; • Interdisciplinary desk review examining Social Identity Theory and its links to radicalisation processes; • Report on the psychological underpinnings of radicalisation and programmatic responses; • ‘Journey Mapping’ of Jordanian foreign fighters; • Media analysis on radicalisation narratives and counter-narratives; • Education curriculum review; • Qualitative and quantitative field research on the relation between state security policies, human security programming, and CVE in 18 communities in the region; • Conflict tracking system recording local level disputes in 18 target communities over a period of 12 months; • 4 capacity building Policy Labs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable data on drivers of violent extremism and radicalisation pathways improve local responses to radicalisation on the community level; • Field research findings inform evidence-based policy-making, planning and programming; • Regional data sets construct a theory of change on the nexus between CVE and human security programming; • Policy recommendations influence national policy making and international, regional and local programming.

Project Outline

The WANA Institute’s CPVE work aims to bridge this knowledge gap by analysing individual motivations and contextual drivers of the increase in violent radicalism, and identifying the ‘pull factors’ facilitating violent radicalisation. The project has a specific focus on gender variations in radicalisation processes, and differences within vulnerable group sets, including refugees and youth. This knowledge base will be consolidated through a curriculum review, media analysis, and workshops with youth, religious leaders and civil society. Alongside this, an audit and analysis of human security programming spanning Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia and Egypt will be conducted, specifically examining how the emerging threat of extremism has impacted the scope for and effectiveness of community-based security programming. The broader aim is to develop an evidence base to inform policy tools specific to the WANA region, and human security approaches that can better align with and contribute to counter-extremism interventions.

Defining Violent Extremism

For the purposes of this project, radicalisation will be defined as “a process of personal transformation that an individual goes through in response to contextual grievances. This transformation is marked by a personal crisis in search for role and meaning that eventually leads an individual to support the use of violence against state actors and civilians to bring about an ideologically-defined social and political order.”³

³ Neven Bondokji, Kim Wilkinson, and Leen Aghabi, *Understanding Radicalisation: A Literature Review of Models and Drivers* (Amman: The WANA Institute, 2016), 5, <http://wanainstitute.org/en/publication/understanding-radicalisation-literature-review-models-and-drivers>