



Ministry of Foreign Affairs



White Paper: Towards More Effective Human Security Approaches in the Context of the Emerging Threat of Violent Radicalisation in Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia



West Asia-North Africa Institute, November 2019



This project was commissioned and financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Netherlands through WOTRO Science for Global Development of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO-WOTRO). It was developed in collaboration with the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law (KPSRL) as part of the Ministry's agenda to invest in knowledge and to contribute to more evidence-based policymaking. Views expressed and information contained in this document are the responsibility of the author(s).

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE

The information in this publication may not be reproduced, in part or in whole and by any means, without charge or further permission from the WANA Institute. For permission to reproduce the information in this publication, please contact the WANA Institute Communications Department at info@wana.jo

Published by the WANA Institute, Royal Scientific Society in Amman, Jordan

Author: Dr Neven Bondokji, Barik Mhadeen

Design: Hadeel Qatamin

Printed in Amman, Jordan

© 2019 WANA Institute. All rights reserved.

Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Methodology	5
3. Reconceptualising Human Security	7
4. Marginalisation	10
5. Troubled Security	12
6. Policy Remarks	15

1. Introduction

Several programmes were implemented in the West Asia-North Africa (WANA) region since 2014 to prevent violent extremism. In most cases, these programmes were short-term and isolated in nature. There has been limited coordination between the different entities implementing these programmes in terms of donor strategies, national governments, and civil society actors. Due to this isolated and short-term nature, the impact of these efforts has been limited. Even in cases where programmes introduced a positive change locally, this impact remained limited either geographically or limited to each project's target group. Further, seldom did these programmes refer to the intensified regional securitisation and the impact this has had on Preventing Violent Extremism efforts.

Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) requires a long-term and comprehensive approach. This statement is supported by research that documents how drivers of violent extremism in the region are related to long-term structural challenges.¹ These structural factors pertain to either failures in governance and/or intensified state-centric securitisation at the expense of the larger human security umbrella. This has drawn attention to the state of human insecurity in the region, particularly in how the structural drivers of violent extremism are manifestations of weak human security programmes. This is not to dismiss the strong role that ideology and psychological factors play in the radicalisation process, but to highlight the crucial role of such structural factors in the region.

Human security (HS) is defined as the adequate protection from standard threats to an individual's economic, food, health, environmental, personal, communal, and political livelihoods.² The UNDP report of 1994 identified these seven pillars of human security.³ Despite the different definitions of the concept, academics and experts agree on its three main characteristics. First, HS is concerned with the well-being of the individual as the main unit of analysis. Second, the seven pillars are mutually reinforcing in nature. Improvement in one pillar will enhance other pillars, and vice versa. Third, it is a preventative concept; it encourages an approach that aims to build local resilience to the potential underlying causes of conflict.

Re-conceptualisation of HS to align with, contribute to, and balance policies aimed at countering violent extremism was the overarching goal of the research project “**Towards More Effective**

¹ Arab Human Development Report (2016), UNDP, accessed via: <http://www.arab-hdr.org/reports/2016/english/AHDR2016En.pdf>; and Nadine Saka, *The Political Economy of the Arab Uprisings*, published by the European Institute of the Mediterranean (2012), accessed via: https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/165555/10.%20PapersEuromesco10_Sika.pdf; and Anthony H. Cordesman, *Factors Shaping Continuing Violent Extremism and Conflicts in the MENA Region*, CSIS (2019), accessed via: https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/190506_After_Caliphate_Pt3.pdf

² Human Security Unit, *Human Security in Theory and Practice*, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Office – United Nations, accessed via: <https://www.unocha.org/sites/dms/HSU/Publications%20and%20Products/Human%20Security%20Tools/Human%20Security%20in%20Theory%20and%20Practice%20English.pdf>

³ United Nations Development Program, “Human Development Report 1994” (New York: UNDP, 2015), pp. 24-33, accessed via: http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr_1994_en_complete_nostats.pdf

Human Security Approaches in the Context of the Emerging Threat of Violent Extremism in Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia”. The project informs the findings discussed here.

In order to achieve this, the research project examined the triangular relation of:

- How improved HS programming can address the drivers of violent extremism;
- How state-centric security policies (SSPs) impact the drivers of violent extremism; and
- How SSPs encourage or hinder successful HS programming?

The findings establish that:

- Successful HS programming can prevent violent extremism and go beyond that to address drivers of broader instability in the region. This includes drivers of social conflict, economic strife, challenges hindering representative and inclusive governance, as well as questions related to the social contract in countries of the region.
- SSPs -procedural matters and legislative- can reinforce violent extremism. Excessive use of force, selective application of security measures, and constraints on freedoms of expression together reinforce the sense of marginalisation and alienation among citizens. In turn, this enhances the prospects of radicalisation.
- SSPs also hinder the implementation of HS programmes in various ways including procedural and administrative restrictions on civil society, as well as access to employment opportunities.

As field research activities progressed, it became evident that the focus on PVE is misplaced. The data revealed broader structural issues related to the state and its relationship with citizens, and on how this impacts resilience to conflict. The data compels analysis to examine the social contract, locally trusted actors, the emerging relation between the state (government and security sector) with citizens. Therefore, the re-conceptualisation of HS should be geared towards addressing drivers of conflict, with violent extremism as one threat among many others. Residents in the 18 areas examined in Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia argued that successful HS programming can effectively improve their material conditions (physical and financial means) and freedoms in a way that prevents conflicts and enhances local resilience to drivers of instability.

With this orientation, the research findings revealed important underlying dynamics. **Marginalisation stands out as one of the deeply seated root causes of conflict.** A well-documented root cause of violent extremism,⁴ marginalisation in the region results from human

⁴ UNDP Global Report (2019), *Frontlines, young people at the forefront of preventing and responding to violent extremism*, accessed via: <https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Democratic%20Governance/Youth/Frontlines-Web.pdf>; Marc Sommers, *Youth and the Field of Countering Violent Extremism*, Promundo-US (2019), accessed via: https://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Youth_Violent_Extremism.pdf; Dallin Van Leuven et al., *Youth and Contentious Politics in Lebanon: Drivers of Marginalization and Radicalization in Tripoli*, Search for Common Ground, 2019, accessed via: <https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Search-for-Common-Ground-Youth-and-Contentious-Politics-in-Lebanon.pdf>

insecurity and feeds into de-stabilising dynamics like mistrust in the state and alliances to non-state actors who offer socioeconomic services and/or a space for political expression.

Another important dynamic relates to the relation between HS and SSPs. Despite the various nuances of defining HS, local communities critiqued SSPs on grounds that differ based on the history, location, and sectarian and marginalisation attributes of each community. **Yet, most agree that SSPs are desirable for short-term conflict containment, but must be combined with long-term HS programming. Further, not a single community across the three countries dismissed the need for balanced SSPs.**

This white paper elaborates on these findings for the benefit of policy makers and interested actors. It reflects the findings from Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia. This paper is to be read in conjunction with the forthcoming Theory of Change developed based on this project's findings to clarify pathways for change. Detailed discussions on the research questions in each community were published earlier in 10 policy reports, and 3 background papers.⁵ This project was led by the West Asia North Africa (WANA) Institute, in consortium with Mercy Corps (MC) and the Arab Institute of Security Studies (AC SIS), and funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). Research partners in Lebanon and Tunisia were the Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies (LCPS) and The Jasmine Foundation (JF), respectively.

⁵ These are all published and accessible in English and Arabic on the website of the WANA Institute via <http://wanainstitute.org/en/all-publications?f1=196>

2. Methodology

This white paper presents the findings of a three-year regional project “**Towards More Effective Human Security Approaches in the Context of the Emerging Threat of Violent Extremism in Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia**”. It explores the relation between HS, SSPs, and PVE. **The policy discussion here builds on field research findings in 18 communities in Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia.** The researched areas include radicalisation hotbeds, refugee host-communities, and marginalised areas in each country. These are Ajloun, Mafraq, Russeifa, Karak, Tafileh, and East Amman in Jordan (Map 1); Baalbek, Tripoli, Zgharta, Saida, Hay El Seloum, Kfarnabrakh in Lebanon (Map 2); and Teboursouk, Carthage, Ben Guerdene, Douar Hicher, Menzel Bourguiba, and Djerba in Tunisia (Map 3).

Figure 3: Jordan's map

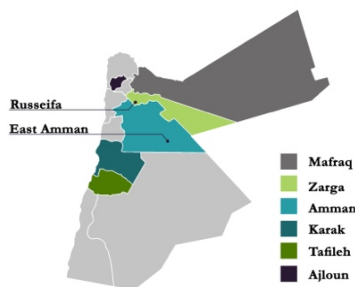


Figure 2: Lebanon's map

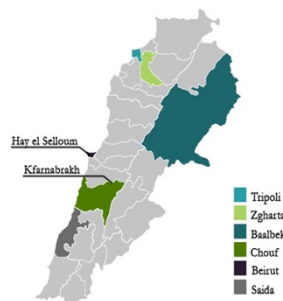
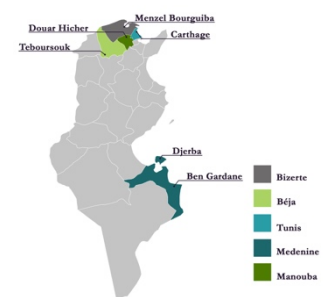


Figure 1: Tunisia's map



More on the selection criteria, for each one of the 18 selected communities, the choice was based on at least 1/3rd of the 18 communities to constitute radicalisation hotbeds, 1/3rd to constitute a refugees-hosting community, and a 1/3rd to be controlled communities. Further, the communities reflected a geographical variation of north, south and centre, in addition to a different sectarian/ethnic and social concentration of the selected communities. The urban-rural lens was applied here. Worth highlighting, the size of the population in said communities were not a major determining factor of their selection; for the focus has been placed on the quality and diversity of the different input that can be collected.

Field research activities gathered the views and perspectives of 1732 respondents, including 841 women (48.5%). The research participants were comprised of local government officials, security officers, local religious and tribal leaders, civil society activists, and vulnerable locals including those at risk of extremist recruitment. In total, field research activities included 163 interviewees, 254 participants in the FGDs, 912 participants in the three one-day workshops, and 137 policymakers, academics, and practitioners in the 3 policy labs. A total of 266 participants joined the verification FGDs (Table 1).

Research activity	Interviews		FGDs		Workshop		Policy Labs		Verification FGDs	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Jordan	29	25	46	45	155	161	23	17	39	61
Lebanon	35	19	40	43	124	171	19	20	41	38
Tunisia	47	8	33	47	168	133	35	23	57	30
Total	111	52	119	135	447	465	77	60	137	129
	163		254		912		137		266	
	1732									

The choice to examine the research questions in Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia is based on three factors. First, the three countries share an approximate number of populations, and are relatively comparable in size. Second, all three countries have been affected by regional instability and the waves of refugees from Syria and Libya. Third, each one of these countries represent a different form of fragility. Tunisia is an emerging democracy; Lebanon has for long suffered a fragile governance as a result of sectarian and political divisions; whereas Jordan, although a stable monarchy, has suffered the repercussions of regional wars with mounting economic, social, and security pressures. Further, all three countries have been facing security challenges in relation to VE, whether homegrown through the relatively significant numbers of nationals who joined VE movements abroad (and currently raising the question of returnees), or externally by having been a target of a number of VE attacks.

In total, 238 research activities were completed across Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia. (Table 2) below provides the breakdown of said activities:

	Workshops	FGDs	Interviews	Policy Labs
Tunisia	12	13	55	1
Lebanon	12	11	54	1
Jordan	12	12	54	1
Total	36	36	163	3
	238			

3. Reconceptualising Human Security

Drawing on evidence on the relationships between human security approaches, state-centric security policies, and countering violent extremism, this research project aimed at examining how human security approaches can be reconceptualised and implemented to align with, contribute to, and balance policies aimed at countering the transnational threat of violent extremism in the MENA region.

Four outcomes resulted from the discussion with research participants on redefining HS. First, **local communities understand HS in two forms: (a) services that meet their basic human needs, and (b) abstract ideas that meet basic human values.** The two were conceptualised interchangeably. For some respondents, HS equates to services in sectors like housing, education, infrastructure, and health. Other respondents articulated a different understanding of HS as the provision of freedoms and rights. These include representative governance, freedom from fear (although participants were unaware that this is a major component of defining HS),⁶ political rights, and the likes. Respondents defined HS by abstract gains that will eventually lead to a sense of security and protection. They referred to identity security and spiritual security, for example.

Second, **participants define HS by its absence.** Residents in all areas generally referred to manifestations of their human insecurity instead of defining what HS is. Inability to articulate what HS is reflects the lacking established presence of the concept, and therefore lacking forms of simplifying it to improve the public's deliberation about it.⁷ On another level, this trend in referring to human insecurity when asked to define HS, indicates the extent of which citizens are overwhelmed with their contextual grievances. The various unmet human needs (in Maslow's definition)⁸ directs respondents' focus to explaining their frustrations instead of articulating their best-case scenario. Similarly, this translates into an inability to articulate solid solutions or policy recommendations. It was clear that participants thought of themselves as helpless recipients of state inefficiency, positioned at the receiving end of policy-making mechanism, with little to no influence over the process.

Third, **governments' strategic thinking is yet to tap into HS as an operational policy tool.** In some instances, policy makers are aware of it but unable to operationalise it in a way that connects their policy design with improved HS indicators. To elaborate, in the policy labs that brought together 137 stakeholders, it became evident that policy makers are the least informed of

⁶ Human Security Unit, *Human Security in Theory and Practice*, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Office – United Nations, accessed via: <https://www.unocha.org/sites/dms/HSU/Publications%20and%20Products/Human%20Security%20Tools/Human%20Security%20in%20Theory%20and%20Practice%20English.pdf>

⁷ Maher Zoghlemi and research assistant Helmi Toumi, *Rethinking the Concept of Human Security and Its Approaches to Preventing and Combating Violent Extremism in Tunisia*, WANA Institute (2019), accessed via: [http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Final %20TCR English 25 July.pdf](http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Final%20TCR%20English%2025%20July.pdf)

⁸ Saul McLeod, *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*, Simply Psychology (2018), accessed via: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

HS as a concept.⁹ This applies to national government officials and to local government personnel interviewed locally. Civil society actors and academics seemed better informed and better equipped to draw links between policy design, HS programming, and conflict containment.

Fourth, respondents **prefer a focus on long-term HS programmes combined with short-term SSPs**. In most communities, locals expressed the need and desire for short-term SSPs that are efficient in containing immediate threats. But on the long term, most respondents agree that the emphasis should be placed on long term HS programmes with a balance of 80-70% for long-term HS programming combined with 20-30% SSPs measures. The only periods respondents voiced a clear preference for SSPs were at times of direct threats like in Tripoli and Karak.

Participants expressed some concerns that the current emphasis on SSPs is ineffective on the long-term. Some measures, they explained, like arrests, raids, and the various limitations on freedom of expression could lead to different forms of violent retaliation by locals who are simply disgruntled by the rough methods used by the security sector or the various limitations on peoples' freedom of assembly and/or expression. Worth noting here that a UNDP report on violent extremism in Africa referred to a similar conclusion.¹⁰

This suggested combination raises an important question: **should the new conceptualisation of human security include SSPs? If yes, how is this best articulated and what are the conditions for its inclusion?**

Respondents did not offer a response to this. On one hand, it was assumed in this project that SSPs are different conceptually and operationally from HS programmes. Therefore, the questions for all research activities did not seek to gauge support for including SSPs in HS definition. On the other hand, respondents exhibited various levels of caution when addressing SSPs. This relates to cultures of repression whereby citizens are not encouraged to discuss the security sector, its approaches, policies, and measures. Lebanon is one exception. But since public information about the security sector is also limited, the Lebanese respondents also did not elaborate on this. This fear of, or inability to, discuss security measures hinders any serious discussion of how SSPs should be oriented or whether there is a need to reconceptualise security policies in the first hand, before one is able to address their inclusion in the new definition of HS.

Another question pertains to the role of the state in the new definition of HS. The concept of HS as articulated in the literature refers to the individual as the basic unit of analysis. But since most participants in the three countries defined human insecurity through weak or inexistent basic services that the state is supposed to offer, this raises the question of whether the concept of HS should reflect the central role the state has in offering, mainstreaming, and ensuring the provision of HS programmes. In the discussions, it became obvious that locals hold the governments,

⁹ Jordan policy lab report, "Reconceptualising Human Security in Jordan," July 12th, 2018, available at: http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/files/NWO_PolicyLab_ReconceptualisingHumanSecurityInJordan.pdf, Lebanon policy lab report, "Reconceptualising Human Security in Lebanon," January 10th and February 26th, 2019, available at: <http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/files/Reconceptualising%20Human%20Security%20in%20Lebanon.pdf> and Tunisia policy lab report (in Arabic), "Towards More Effective HS Approaches," March 7th, 2019, available at: <http://bit.ly/2pja5Pg>

¹⁰ United Nations Development Program, *Journey to Extremism in Africa* (2017), accessed via: <http://journey-to-extremism.undp.org/content/downloads/UNDP-JourneyToExtremism-report-2017-english.pdf>

national and local, responsible for their insecurity. In many instances, the government was the entity considered to be the actor most capable, yet the least trusted to implement HS programmes.

This question of trusted actors provides crucial insights into HS programming in the region. **Local communities expressed divergent views on the entity they consider most trusted in providing HS programmes.** This included NGOs and CBOs (East Amman/Jordan), international INGOs (Ben Guerdane/Tunisia), local political parties, or clientelistic networks of powerful individuals. In few areas, the trusted actor is the national army. This reflects a trust based on actual experiences whereby these actors have delivered services that improved the HS of locals. This divergence in trusted actors clarifies the gap that the government have failed to bridge between itself as service provider and the citizens. Several other actors have emerged, they occupied its role, and acquired, as a result, local loyalties.

The third question that this discussion on HS raises is **whether the reconceptualisation of HS should rest upon trusted actors or existing ones.** For example, it was pointed above that the state should have a central role in the newly defined HS, even though it is not a trusted actor. But then a legitimate question is whether HS should be redefined based on existing actors, and not necessarily trusted ones. For example, in Tripoli locals argued that international NGOs are the most capable of delivering HS programming, but they are not necessarily trusted. The same applies to partisan actors in Lebanon. Therefore, the question becomes whether HS is a concept related to actors who improve HS for individuals or trusted actors to do so.

These questions could guide future research on HS in the region and elsewhere. But it is worth noting that this research project, conducted in 18 communities of various demographic, geographic, socio-economic attributes, can guide future research on HS in these directions.

Given the caveats and questions discussed above, and based on respondents' input, HS is defined as:

Human Security is a state of individual and communal peace achieved through an environment that meets the basic needs of individuals and through legislations that guarantee the rights and duties of all citizens. A state that promotes confidence in state institutions and cements citizenship and belonging.¹¹

¹¹ Jordan policy lab report, "Reconceptualising Human Security in Jordan," July 12th, 2018, available at: http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/files/NWO_PolicyLab_ReconceptualisingHumanSecurityInJordan.pdf, Lebanon policy lab report, "Reconceptualising Human Security in Lebanon," January 10th and February 26th, 2019, available at: <http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/files/Reconceptualising%20Human%20Security%20in%20Lebanon.pdf> and Tunisia policy lab report (in Arabic), "Towards More Effective HS Approaches," March 7th, 2019, available at: <http://bit.ly/2pja5Pq>

4. Marginalisation

An acute sense of marginalisation marks all 18 communities examined in Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia despite the divergence in their socio-economic indicators and demographic makeup. Although the level of marginalisation differs, the impact it has on the alienation of the locals and their mistrust in their governments is unescapable. This is alarming because marginalisation has proved to be a driver of violent extremism and other forms of social and political unrest.¹²

There are two ways of explaining this deep sense of marginalisation:

- **First, absence of the state is felt through weak human security programming, whereby the state as a service provider is non-existent for locals.** Grievances like inadequate public transportation in Tafleeh (Jordan), lacking lawful job opportunities in Baalbek (Lebanon), or poor management of drug abuse in Dowar Hicher (Tunisia) are a direct reflection of the governments' neglect of the basic needs of people. In residents' understanding, human security is a state whereby these basic needs are met in a dignifying way. It is in this context that a municipality officer argued that financial support to vulnerable women is more alienating than helpful due to the humiliating way in which this assistance is delivered by the relevant Ministry.¹³
- **Second, locals consider the selective and excessive security measures in local communities as a form of ill-placed/ill-manifested presence of the state.** In some areas of sectarian division like Tripoli, security operation in 2016 and in 2019 are thought of as selectively applied ones that specifically target Sunnis in Lebanon compared to the security measures applied when other sects are concerned.¹⁴ Similarly, use of excessive force in Ajloun is perceived by locals to harm the emerging tourism sector in the area, at a time when the state neglects the city in service provision. These methods lead to a conviction that **the state is present when it wants to discipline people, but is absent when it is a matter of serving people or delivering their rights.**

Marginalisation also reflects weak decentralised and local governance. In all areas examined, locals complained of their marginalisation through distance from capitals regardless of objective differences in marginalisation levels. In other words, geography-driven marginalisation. For example, residents in Ben Guerden and Dowar Hicher expressed their marginalisation despite difference in actual distance from the capital. Both Karak and Tafleeh complained of marginalisation although Karak is better served compared to Tafleeh. In Lebanon,

¹² Hannah Brock, *Marginalisation of the Majority World, Drivers of Insecurity and the Global South*, Oxford Research Group (February, 2011), available at: <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/138984/Marginalisation%20and%20Insecurity%20in%20the%20Global%20South,%202012.pdf> and European Policy Brief on Youth, March 2017, available at: http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/p2y_pb_3.pdf

¹³ Neven Bondokji and Lina AlHaj, *A Read of Human and Population Security: Russeifa as a Case Study*, (Amman: WANA Institute, 2019), accessed via: http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Publication_Russeifa_English.pdf

¹⁴ Barik Mhadeen, *Towards Comprehensive Human Security in Tripoli*, (Amman: WANA Institute 2019), based on field research and summary findings by LCPS's team. Accessed via: <http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Tripoli%20English%20Final%20Report.pdf>

the marginalisation and lack of adequate systematic programmes expressed in Tripoli echoed that of Baalbek. Therefore, regardless of objective indicators, if not in the capital, then locals consider themselves as marginalised. This raises concerns about failure in the recent experiments of decentralisation in these countries and of the ability of the state to ensure that development imperatives are equally distributed.

This highlights how inadequate knowledge on HS among policy makers and deficiency in strategically adopting HS approaches practically impacts citizens. The inability of policy makers to understand, operationalise, and appreciate the importance of HS as a long-term comprehensive tool to address conflict drivers, is reflected in poor HS programmes, inefficient governance, and/or the total irrelevance of the state for local population especially in peripheries away from the capital. Manifestations of this impact is best captured in the noticeable discontent emanating from the peripheries in all three countries of concern, for marginalisation directly translates into anger. The shifts in the terms of political contention and social mobilisation in these countries since the Arab uprisings of 2011 supports this trajectory.

Taken together, these concerns raise two important questions: **what is the impact of the state's absence on the rise of other trusted local actors?** In Lebanon, this is reflected in a variety of trusted actors that are different in each community. In Baalbek, it is para-state actors; in Saida it is a non-state actor, in Tripoli it is civil society organisations. **Residents are shifting their loyalty from the state, who is failing in offering human security programmes, to whoever is able to provide them. There is a clear socioeconomic and developmental void that is being filled by non-state actors.** This further distances states from their citizens.

This leads to another crucial question: **what is the required form of state's presence?** Ideally, the state should assume oversight and supervision, if not the implementation, of HS programmes. The weak national governments, however, are unable to achieve this, and the recent experiments in decentralised models are yet to produce efficient forms of governance.¹⁵

In some communities the security sector is replacing the government as a service provider. In Tafleeh in south Jordan, the army runs the only hospital and provides some key infrastructure projects. The civil state, as a result, is encapsulated in the army, blurring the line between the government's civilian role and the army's military role. It is worth noting that the complex dynamics of the civil-military relations in these countries are significantly under researched and require further investigation.¹⁶

¹⁵ See for example OECD's Open Government Review on Jordan (2017), accessed via: <https://www.oecd.org/mena/governance/Jordan-Highlights-2017.pdf>, Sarah Yerkes and Marwan Muasher, *Decentralization in Tunisia: Empowering Towns, Engaging People*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (2018), accessed via: <https://carnegieendowment.org/2018/05/17/decentralization-in-tunisia-empowering-towns-engaging-people-pub-76376>, and Democracy Reporting Brief (2019), *2019: the "The Year of Decentralisation" for Lebanon?*, accessed via: <https://democracy-reporting.org/2019-the-year-of-decentralisation-for-lebanon/>

¹⁶ The Carnegie Middle East Center is exploring this issue via their program on Civil-Military Relations in Arab States (CMRAS). More on this program is found via the following link: <https://carnegie-mec.org/specialprojects/ArabCivilMilitaryRelations/?lang=en>

5. Troubled Security

This project examined the role of State-centric Security Policies (SSPs). **These are policies with the traditional function of protecting the state and its borders in terms of the military and security aspects. These policies are divided into two parts: procedural and legislative.** The procedural part has to do with security measures such as raids, arrests, use of force, and arrangements inside prisons. On the other hand, the legislative part deals with laws and legislations that regulate the governing environment in order to implement procedural security policies¹⁷ such as the Anti-Terrorism laws or Cyber Security laws.

The project sought to assess the impact of SSPs on PVE efforts and on HS programming, with the underlying assumption that hard security measures have the potential of hindering successful and inclusive HS programmes, and can reinforce violent extremism when force is selective or excessive. The added value of this research and its findings lies in exploring the impact of hard security measures on PVE efforts, *in addition to* examining their impact on increasing human security gaps. Both influence pathways were confirmed. Crucially, in all research activities, participants drew a direct link between the drivers of violent extremism and the gaps in human security programming.

SSPs have limited the implementation of HS programmes on social cohesion and political participation, for example. Participants from Mafraq and Tafleh in Jordan offered evidence on both. Security policies in this regard include, but are not limited to: restrictions on locations; number of participants; topics of training courses or capacity building programmes; restraining the prospects of employment for family members of a suspect; or outrightly cancelling a service or a programme.

Marginalisation combined with repressive security policies lead to antagonism towards the security sector, which in turn can increase the risk of violent extremism. This antagonism takes many manifestations such as in football matches, funerals, or more lately in Tunisia in religious expressions calling security actors as tyrants.¹⁸ The use of selective and excessive force contributes to this risk. Evidence from Russeifeh in Jordan and Menzel Bourguiba in Tunisia confirms this, whereas a balanced use of SSPs to contain violent extremism is desired and welcomed by locals.

In fact, local communities prefer a security formula combining SSPs on the short-term to address immediate threats with long-term HS programming. Communities that face threats like Baalbek and Karak, or border ones like Mafraq and Ben Guerden, appreciate the immediate impact SSPs has in containing threats. Interestingly also, in Lebanon women prefer SSPs because

¹⁷ Neven Bondokji, Barik Mhadeen and Lina AlHaj, *Determinants of Human Security and Hard Security in Ajloun*, (Amman: WANA Institute, 2019), accessed via: <http://wanainstitute.org/en/publication/determinants-human-security-and-hardsecurity-ajloun>

¹⁸ Maher Zoghlemi and research assistant Helmi Toumi, *Rethinking the Concept of Human Security and Its Approaches to Preventing and Combating Violent Extremism in Tunisia*, WANA Institute (2019), accessed via: http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Final %20TCR_English_25_July.pdf

visibility of the security sector decreases harassment, thus improving their personal security.¹⁹ Here, a clear gender-dimension for the impact of such policies was touched upon but must be explored further in future research. All respondents argue that SSPs are preferred as a short-term measure only since it is limited in impact. Addressing root causes of conflict requires a holistic and long-term HS approach that is capable of addressing the various local drivers of conflict.

The security sector often fails to see this relation. It employs hard security measures and stops there. It is, thus, seen as both the mean and the end. Whereas local residents consider SSPs as just one immediate measure incapable of containing threats on its own. **Only in Lebanon, the security officers exhibited an understanding of this relation and the central role HS programmes should have to complement SSPs.** In Jordan and Tunisia, there was no evidence to this thorough understanding.

Some underlying nuances clarify the interconnectedness between HS and SSPs and how weakness in HS programming can also affect the effectiveness of SSPs:

- **The state is considered by respondents to include the government and the security sector.**
- **Where HS is weak and the government is blamed, part of this blame and resulting antagonism is directed at the security sector as well, complicating it further with the initial and broader lack of trust in the government.**
- **Likewise, the distrust in the government after a certain point extends to the security sector, which then limits the security sector's ability to implement security policies.**

In Jordan for example, the security sector currently wants to seize all small weapons among citizens. No clear estimate of the number of weapons circulating in the country has been officially given; the Minister of Interior, however, pointed to a circulation of around 10 million pieces of unlicensed weapons in Jordan, before another statement was attributed to him negating this number.²⁰ Still, the public is unwilling to cooperate due to their distrust in the government. Reasons for the distrust in this particular case include worries that this measure is a step towards implementing certain political measure, or that it is a step to contain the power of the various tribes in the country. Regardless of the exact reasons behind this weariness, **this is a clear example of how distrust in the government - as provider of HS programmes - has now led to distrust in the security sector. This hinders the implementation of crucial security policies that might be rightfully needed.**

The mistrust also relates to fears that security measures are politically driven. The example above is a case in point. Another is the conviction of locals in Saida and Ain Al-Hilweh that

¹⁹ Zeina El-Helou, Sami Zoughaib, May Tamim, Dr Neven Bondokji, *Sectarian Politics, Human Security, and the Quest to Prevent Violent Extremism in Lebanon*, WANA Institute (2019), accessed via:

http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Lebanon-%20English%20Report_%2030-6.pdf

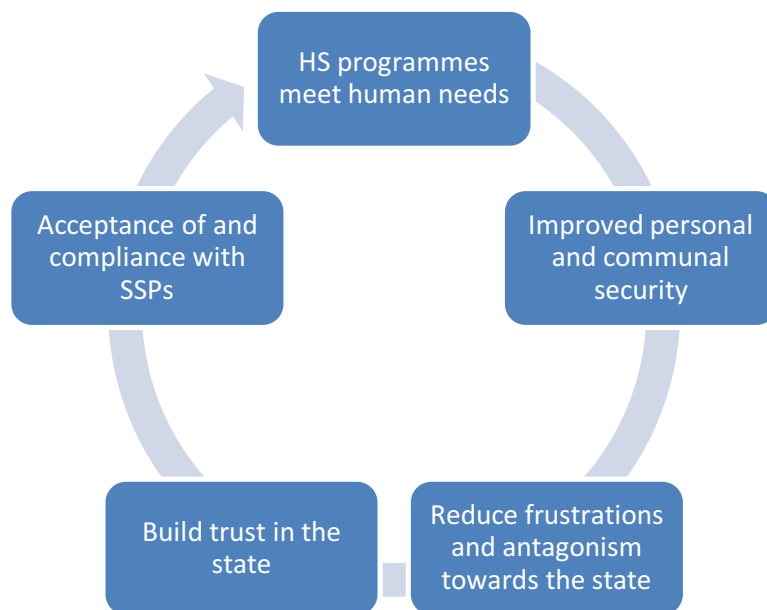
²⁰ Hadeel Al Rawabdeh, *10 Million Pieces of Weapon in Jordan... and a political-tribal quarrel regarding the government's move to collect them* (in Arabic), Al Jazeera (2019), accessed via: <http://bit.ly/2Qi0oM3>; and this article on Arabi21 (in Arabic), accessed via: <http://bit.ly/2q153Hg>

security measures are a political tool to target Sunnis. These concerns have a heavier toll in countries of sectarian divisions like Lebanon or Iraq for instance.

Therefore, **enhanced and improved HS programming will eventually improve response to SSPs**. Fears about political motivations behind security measures are reduced if mechanisms are in place for political participation, civil-military dialogue, and freedom of expression. More generally, the relation between HS and SSPs goes through a cycle of influence (Figure 1): HS programmes respond to people’s basic needs, improve their sense of personal security, reduce their frustrations, enhance their trust in the government, and thus in the state. This improves people’s responsiveness to SSPs.

It thus becomes evident that absence of the state as discussed above in the section on marginalisation has led to this complexity. Had the state been efficient, marginalisation would be reduced, and SSPs better received by the public. It is no surprise that in the given circumstances, locals are unable to distinguish between the government’s failure as service provider and the security sector. For them, **the state is not to be trusted. Full-stop.**

Figure 4: Improved HS leads to successful SSPs



6. Policy Remarks

The discussion above addressed the reconceptualisation of HS, the crucial role marginalisation has in influencing the relation between HS, PVE and SSPs, and the complex relation between HS and SSPs. Three observations about the research findings in Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia deserve attention here due to their policy implications.

First, **although security sectors are making efforts to build rapport with citizens, respondents generally perceive SSPs in a negative light.** Such efforts include activating the role of the Community Policing in Jordan with the mission of bridging the mistrust and communication gap between the police forces and the citizens,²¹ and launching the “Neighbourhood Police” initiative in Tunisia as part of their efforts at reforming the security sector.²² This directs attention to the question whether these efforts are not well delivered, or whether the negative impact of security daily procedures overtakes/diminishes the positive impression the security sector is trying to craft for itself locally. The respondents’ tendency to criticise security measures calls for a new way of thinking about implementing, communicating, and framing security policies.

Second, in all research activities, no expert, local actor, or practitioner referred to HS in other contexts or drew on comparisons to countries other than their own to explain a point or make an argument. **This reflects the level of non-engagement with HS as a concept, forms of operationalising the context, and/or its absence from media and development discourse locally.** A lot is yet to be done to market the concept of HS, drawing attention to its local implementation, and gathering lessons learnt from different regional contexts. This must also take place at the policy-makers level, particularly in Jordan and Tunisia where the policy labs have shown a clear unfamiliarity with the concept and its local applications.²³

Third, in all 238 research activities, participants were unable to present well-developed policy recommendations that are clearly-targeted to stakeholders, a time frame for implementing a recommendation, and/or offering specific action points. This may point to methodology shortfall in the selection of the research sample. On another level, and given the high number of participants (1732) and the variation in their experiences, **this also indicates a poor level of citizen’s engagement in policy making.** Had the three countries had a legacy of representative governance and powerful democratic culture, the ability of the respondents to articulate policy recommendations would have been higher. This, however, might be the research team’s assumption and merits some further examination.

²¹ See for example: <http://eupolcops.eu/ar/node/5454>, and more on the activity of the Communal Police in Jordan is found on their official Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/JordanianCommunityPolicing/>

²² Basma Barakat, “Neighbourhood Police” a Tunisian Initiative to Improve The Relationship with Citizens (in Arabic), accessed via: <http://bit.ly/2NLm1mx>

²³ Jordan policy lab report, “Reconceptualising Human Security in Jordan,” July 12th, 2018, available at: http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/files/NWO_PolicyLab_ReconceptualisingHumanSecurityInJordan.pdf, Lebanon policy lab report, “Reconceptualising Human Security in Lebanon,” January 10th and February 26th, 2019, available at: <http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/files/Reconceptualising%20Human%20Security%20in%20Lebanon.pdf>



West Asia-North Africa Institute
Royal Scientific Society
70 Ahmad Al-Tarawneh St
Amman, Jordan

info@wana.jo
www.wanainstitute.org