

Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism Guidebook

THE
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The Carter Center was founded in 1982 by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, in partnership with Emory University, to advance peace and health worldwide. A not-for-profit, nongovernmental organization, the Center has helped to improve life for people in 80 countries by resolving conflicts; advancing democracy, human rights, and economic opportunity; preventing diseases; and improving mental health care. Please visit www.cartercenter.org to learn more about The Carter Center.

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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 interventions 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 those seeking to engage effectively with communities on preventing violent extremism.

One cannot overemphasize that there is no "one size fits all" solution; only by understanding the issues at the very local level can sustainable solutions be found. However, The Carter Center hopes that this guidebook will provide policymakers and community leaders with the necessary skills and tools to better inform and implement evidence-based and grassroots PVE programming.

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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 a report by the Watson Institute of International Affairs at Brown University, the total cost of the GWOT to the U.S. federal budget from post-9/11 to 2019 is \$5.9 trillion.¹ A later study by the same Costs of War Project found that around half a million people have been killed in the post-9/11 wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.² Yet, despite the massive monetary and human cost, the violent extremism that the GWOT was intended to prevent had metastasized instead. Violent extremist organizations in Mali, Somalia, the Philippines, and elsewhere exploit local grievances to exacerbate conflicts in already fragile states.

In parallel, white supremacy groups as well have been on the rise in the West, with ethno-nationalist groups and parties continuing to gain ground in contentious elections. These groups' advocacy of racial purity, exclusivism and authoritarianism overlap with the propaganda of other violent extremist groups. This sort of violent extremism has been taking lives seemingly on a daily basis from Christchurch, New Zealand, to El Paso, Texas.

The Carter Center's (the Center) Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism emerged from the Center's conflict resolution work in Syria and a recognition that any sustainable peace process at the political level must be complemented by grassroots efforts to prevent the rise and spread of violent extremism. Over the course of three years, the Center has designed a rigorous grassroots methodology based on inclusivity, social justice, and human rights for confronting and preventing violent extremism (PVE) in all its forms. To explain the development of the Center's PVE methodology, five interrelated subthemes are developed: (1) the flaws of security-based approaches to prevention in the context of the global war on terrorism; (2) the rise of Daesh and the success of its propaganda; (3) the response of states and faith-based leaders to the rise of Daesh; (4) the importance of addressing the rise of Islamophobia and white supremacy; and (5) the current state of extremism, persistent trends, and setting the stage for detailing the methodology and implementation of the Center's PVE work.

1 Neta C. Crawford, "United States Budgetary Costs of the Post-9/11 Wars Through FY2019: \$5.9 Trillion Spent and Obligated," Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs, Nov. 14, 2018, available at https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2018/Crawford_Costs%20of%20War%20Estimates%20Through%20FY2019.pdf; see also Daniel R. DePertis, "The War on Terror's Total Cost: \$5,900,000,000,000," *The National Interest*, January 12, 2019, available at <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/skeptics/war-terrors-total-cost-5900000000000-41307>.

2 This number includes U.S. military personnel, national military and police, opposition forces, journalists, humanitarian workers, and civilians (which account for over half of those deaths). For more, please see: Neta C. Crawford, "Human Costs of the Post-9/11 Wars: Lethality and the Need for Transparency," Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs, November 2018, available at <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2018/Human%20Costs%20Nov%208%202018%20CoW.pdf>.

The Rise of Daesh and Globalization of the CVE Policy

The original “Countering Violent Extremism,” or CVE, was designed to take a broader “whole of society” approach to counterterrorism by enlisting local authorities, community organizations, and religious communities in terrorism prevention. The intent of these policies is laudable, but they have largely failed to distinguish themselves in practice from the security-based approaches they were designed to supplement. Also, increasingly, CVE has been used as a tool of repression by governments seeking to silence legitimate democratic expression or used to further institutionalize oppression of minority communities.³

The rise of Daesh⁴ in 2014 in Iraq and Syria significantly broadened and intensified the scope of counterterrorism policy, prompting a globally coordinated implementation of CVE programming. An estimated 40,000 foreign fighters from over 100 countries joined Daesh in Iraq and Syria.⁵ The ease of recruiting foreign fighters stemmed from alienation, humiliation, and discrimination in home societies that often provided a dearth of educational and employment opportunities.⁶

Daesh deployed sophisticated social media strategies, including the production of slick recruitment videos and glossy magazines in multiple languages, to recruit vulnerable youth to a renewed “caliphate” in Syria and Iraq. Most of the foreign fighters who traveled abroad to join Daesh and similar violent extremist groups lacked religious literacy and had no prior connection to Syria. Many initially went for humanitarian reasons, shocked by the civilian casualties of the war. Some went seeking a utopian society, living under what Daesh portrayed as a pure Islamic state. Some were simply tired of living under constant discrimination and left looking for belonging and a better life. Others joined for a sense of adventure.

During its territorial control peak, Daesh perpetrated a series of high-profile terrorist attacks that threw the European and American public into a posture of perpetual fear. The most significant incident was the November 2015 attack on the Bataclan theater in Paris that left 130 dead, but subsequent high-casualty attacks in Belgium, Tunisia, Egypt, Turkey, and the United States, either directed or inspired by Daesh, continued to drive the rapid expansion of global counterterrorism and CVE programming.

Daesh and the problem of foreign fighters placed CVE at the top of the international policy agenda. In 2014, U.S. President Barack Obama urged member states at the U.N. General Assembly to accept responsibility for “countering violent extremism”—the first time the phrase had been used in the body’s history.⁷ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2178⁸ called upon member states to stem the flow of foreign fighters; the subsequent Secretary General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, issued in January of 2016, called on states to develop their own national plans of action.⁹ New organizations focused on

3 A glaring example of this worrying trend is the housing of a million Chinese Uighur Muslims in concentration camps by the Chinese state under the cover of preventing extremism. Phil Stewart, “China putting minority Muslims in ‘concentration camps,’ U.S. says,” Reuters, May 3, 2019, available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-china-concentrationcamps/china-putting-minority-muslims-in-concentration-camps-us-says-idUSKCN1S925K>; Stephen W. Hawkins, then executive director of Amnesty USA, warned against this possibility during then U.S. President Barack Obama’s push to enshrine CVE as policy at the UN in 2015. Stephen W. Hawkins, “Obama’s anti-extremism plan lacks human rights safeguards,” Al Jazeera America, Feb. 19, 2015, available at <http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2015/2/obamas-extremism-plan-lacks-human-rights-safeguards.html>.

4 Daesh, as opposed to ISIS or simply IS. Daesh is the acronym for the group’s original name in Arabic, *al-Dawla al-Islamiya fil Iraq wa al-Sham*. The term Daesh deprives the organization of the legitimacy to claim an Islamic identity or the status of an established state. For more on the term Daesh, please see: <http://blog.cartercenter.org/2016/08/02/war-of-words-helping-muslim-leaders-fight-terrorist-propaganda/>.

5 Soufan Group, “Beyond the Caliphate: Foreign Fighters and the Threat of Returnees,” Oct. 24, 2017, available at <https://thesoufancenter.org/research/beyond-caliphate/>.

6 The Carter Center, “Daesh Meta-Narratives: From the Global Ummah to the Hyperlocal,” June 2017, available at https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/countering-isis/narratives-report-final-02june2017.pdf.

7 “Remarks by President Obama in Address to the United Nations General Assembly,” Sept. 24, 2014, available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/24/remarks-president-obama-address-united-nations-general-assembly>; see also David H. Ucko, “Preventing violent extremism at the United Nations: The rise and fall of a good idea,” *International Affairs* 94:2 (2018), pp. 251-270.

8 UN Security Council Resolution 2178, 24 Sept. 2014, pp. 6-7. https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2178%20%282014%29.

9 United Nations General Assembly, “Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism,” A/70/674, Jan. 15, 2016, available at https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/674.

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 that it is time for “Muslim communities” especially to “explicitly, forcefully, and consistently reject the ideology of organizations like al Qaeda and ISIL.”¹⁰ But repeatedly asking Muslim communities to condemn terrorism assumes, falsely, that all Muslims are somehow responsible for the actions of Daesh or are potentially susceptible to its ideology and are therefore under suspicion. Such rhetoric, even if well intentioned, only serves to further stigmatize Muslim communities and feed the narratives of grievances that groups like Daesh so adeptly manipulate.

Muslim communities are all too aware of the dangers posed by groups like Daesh. Indeed, Muslims are the primary victims of terrorism, and the collective response of Muslim institutions in the global public sphere has been consistent in rejecting violent extremism. In September of 2014, six days before President Obama delivered his speech at the United Nations, an international coalition of Muslim scholars and jurists released an open letter to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the self-appointed “caliph” of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, rejecting on scriptural, theological, and jurisprudential grounds point-by-point the ideology of Daesh. The letter’s signatories now include well over a hundred prominent Muslim scholars and organizations from every majority Muslim country and among minority communities.¹¹

In addition to the letter, prominent Islamic organizations have been at the forefront of explicitly arguing from a Muslim perspective against violent extremism. Egypt’s Dar al-Iftha, an educational institution and governmental body, now regularly includes advice and legal rulings rejecting Daesh and violent extremist ideology.¹² King Muhammad VI of Morocco hosted a conference of religious scholars, academics, ministers, and muftis from across the Muslim world on the rights of religious minorities in Muslim states and collectively issued the Marrakesh Declaration (2016) that reaffirmed the inviolable rights of religious minorities based on scriptural precedent and international law.¹³ In India, 70,000 Muslim religious leaders signed a fatwa, or religious ruling, condemning the extremist violence carried out by groups like Daesh and al Qaeda, and 1.5 million Indian Muslims endorsed the document as signatories.¹⁴ Dozens of prominent North American Muslims, including Suhaib Webb and Hamza Yusuf, have spoken out repeatedly against Daesh and its ideology, drawing public death threats in Daesh’s propaganda.¹⁵ So many individual Muslims and Muslim organizations have “explicitly, forcefully, and consistently” condemned Daesh that the Islamic Networks Group, an interfaith engagement nonprofit, developed a website to organize them all.¹⁶

However, the condemnation of violence by faith-based leaders, while well intentioned, has been slow to adapt to a set of challenges that have left some small populations of Muslim youth vulnerable to

10 “Remarks by President Obama in Address to the United Nations General Assembly,” Sept. 24, 2014, available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/24/remarks-president-obama-address-united-nations-general-assembly>.

11 The full text of the letter in multiple languages and the full list of signatories are available at <http://www.lettertobaghdadi.com/>.

12 Dar Al-Iftha Al-Missriyyah, “Is it permissible for young Muslims to join QIS to establish an Islamic State?,” available at <http://dar-alifta.org/Foreign/ViewFatwa.aspx?ID=7540>. A list of fatawa rejecting Daesh ideology in Arabic can be found at <http://dar-alifta.org/AR/jihadFatawa.aspx?sec=fatwa&Type=1>.

13 “The Rights of Religious Minorities in Predominantly Muslim Lands: Legal Framework and Call to Action,” Marrakesh Declaration, Jan. 27, 2016, available at <http://www.marrakeshdeclaration.org/marrakesh-declaration.html>.

14 Michael Kaplan, “Indian Muslim Leaders Condemn ISIS, Trump: 1.5M Muslims Sign Fatwa Against Islamic State, Al Qaeda and Taliban,” *International Business Times*, Dec. 9, 2015, available at <https://www.ibtimes.com/indian-muslim-leaders-condemn-isis-trump-15m-muslims-sign-fatwa-against-islamic-state-2217715>.

15 Laurie Goodstein, “Muslim Leaders Wage Theological Battle, Stoking ISIS’ Anger,” *The New York Times*, May 8, 2016, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/09/us/isis-threatens-muslim-preachers-who-are-waging-theological-battle-online.html>.

16 Islamic Networks Group, “Global Condemnations of ISIS/ISIL,” available at <https://ing.org/global-condemnations-of-isis-isil/>.

recruitment. Too often these condemnations are constructed in classic Arabic and rely on orthodox jurisprudence. 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 this to be possible, violent extremism must be understood more broadly and with more nuance, and policy responses must be much more inclusive and locally adapted.

For example, the rise of Islamophobia and white supremacist violent extremism is a significant problem, and one that has not yet been adequately recognized by governments on the national or international level. In 2017, most terrorist attacks committed or attempted in the United States were connected with far-right ideologies, which include racist, anti-Muslim, homophobic, anti-Semitic, or anti-government conspiracies.¹⁷ According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, there were 100 anti-Muslim hate groups in the United States in 2018; a vocal anti-Muslim movement continues to grow politically with the success of President Donald Trump's ban on immigration from majority-Muslim countries and the appointment of several high-profile Islamophobes to government positions.¹⁸ Similarly, The Anti-Defamation League found that 2018 was a record year for white supremacist activity in the U.S., with 1,187 leaflet drops and 91 events across the country.¹⁹ The February 2019 arrest of Coast Guard Lt. Christopher Hasson²⁰ brought to light the long and worrying history of violent extremism in the U.S. military and recruitment of military veterans by white supremacist groups.²¹ White supremacist networks have gone global; 51 Muslims were murdered in their houses of worship on March 15, 2019, in Christchurch, New Zealand, by a confessed Islamophobe with extensive ties to white supremacist networks in Europe.²²

Secondly, if Muslim communities are to be engaged as equal partners in the prevention of political violence, they need to be the authors of policy, not its objects. State-based countering/preventing violent extremism (C/PVE) programming as currently practiced continues to have severe consequences for Muslim communities. Many religious leaders and congregants report limiting what they say, or how they practice, for fear that anything can be taken out of context and misinterpreted.²³ Muslims should be brought in as equal partners in the process of preventing violent extremism, and that requires recognizing Islamophobia as a driver of extremism and as reflected in policies designed to prevent terrorism. It means recognizing far right and white supremacist violent extremism as real threats alongside other forms of violent extremism and designing policies in appropriate proportions to address all forms of violent extremism.

The Center has been working since 2014 toward a holistic approach to PVE, built on the belief that the sustainability of peacebuilding and political processes depends on effective interventions to prevent the growth and spread of violent extremism on the local level. Initiated in response to the conflict in Syria, the

17 Luiz Romero, "US terror attacks are increasingly motivated by right-wing views," Quartz, Oct. 24, 2018, available at <https://qz.com/1435885/data-shows-more-us-terror-attacks-by-right-wing-and-religious-extremists/>.

18 "Anti-Muslim," Southern Poverty Law Center, available at <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/anti-muslim>.

19 "White Supremacist Propaganda and Events Soared in 2018," ADL, March 5, 2019, available at <https://www.adl.org/news/press-releases/white-supremacist-propaganda-and-events-soared-in-2018>.

20 Greg Myre and Vanessa Romo, "Arrested Coast Guard Officer Allegedly Planned Attack 'On A Scale Rarely Seen,'" National Public Radio, Feb. 20, 2019, available at <https://www.npr.org/2019/02/20/696470366/arrested-coast-guard-officer-planned-mass-terrorist-attack-on-a-scale-rarely-see>.

21 Jeff McCausland, "Inside the U.S. military's battle with Shiite supremacy and far-right extremism," THINK by NBC News, May 25, 2019, available at <https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/inside-u-s-military-s-battle-white-supremacy-far-right-ncna1010221>.

22 Jason Wilson, "Christchurch shooter's links to Austrian far right 'more extensive than thought,'" The Guardian, May 15, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/16/christchurch-shooters-links-to-austrian-far-right-more-extensive-than-thought>.

23 "Mapping Muslims: NYPD and its Impact on American Muslims," CUNY School of Law Occasional Papers Series, N.D., available at <https://www.law.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/page-assets/academics/clinics/immigration/clear/Mapping-Muslims.pdf>.

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 workshop 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

Propaganda Collection and Coding

Central to the initial effort of countering Daesh recruitment propaganda and its appeal was developing a nuanced understanding of Daesh's communication strategies, the diverse narratives it employed, and its target audiences. The Center's research employed a mixed methodology that focused on how offline and online Daesh recruitment propaganda strategies converge, contest, and interact in various socio-economic, regional, gender, and organizational contexts. For a better understanding of how hyperlocal appeals manifest, Daesh propaganda materials were analyzed in multiple languages. For instance, the arguments Daesh makes to French Muslims, to local Iraqis or Syrians, and to Tunisians are drastically different.

Online and Offline Daesh Propaganda Analysis

For the online analysis, Abadi developed a detailed qualitative and quantitative coding methodology that tracked 31 variables, including the use of master narratives, religious texts, language, region, symbols employed, race, geography, and image composition. This monitoring and coding methodology allowed for tracking of Daesh online recruitment strategy by region and, over time, by other factors.

The Center's PVE research team collected and analyzed Daesh recruitment videos from 2015 to April 2019, just after Daesh's last territorial holding in Baghuz, Syria, was eliminated. Videos were collected and

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, Tetouan, and Martil—all cities with high flows of foreign fighters joining Daesh in Syria and Iraq.²⁵ Interview subjects included religious and community leaders, at-risk youth, ex-foreign fighters and ex-detainees, female chaplains, journalists, and the families of those who had been detained on terrorism-related charges or who had lost children to Daesh recruitment.

The Center published six research reports on the following themes: (1) Daesh's meta-narratives, (2) women in Daesh, (3) Daesh's territorial loss and the evolution of propaganda narratives, (4) children in Daesh, (5) religious appeals in Daesh propaganda, and (6) an analysis of *Dabiq*. The individual research reports are available in English, French and Arabic and have been collected into a research guidebook, also available via the Center's website.²⁶

Expert Symposia

The Center sought to bridge the divide between academics and policymakers through two symposia. The goal of each symposium was to bring together policymakers and experts conducting cross-cutting research on topics central to the Center's PVE project interests—Daesh recruitment propaganda and the rising tide of Islamophobia in the West—to inform our own capacity-building work and to advocate for evidence-informed policies.

Each symposium concluded with a public panel hosted at the Center and streamed and archived online.²⁷ The public panels were designed to engage the wider community on timely and important geopolitical issues, while encouraging discussion among practitioners, policymakers, and the public. The public hunger for engagement on these issues was evident: Within the first week of posting, the Center's webcast on the rise of Islamophobia in the United States and Europe had over 22,000 unique views.

A series of analytic essays from the symposia were published by the Carter Center and are available on the Center's website.²⁸

Daesh Propaganda Symposium Findings (February 2016)

The Center convened the Countering Daesh Propaganda Symposium, Feb. 22 through 24, 2016, in Atlanta. The workshop brought together leading scholars and practitioners from 10 countries to discuss

²⁴ In total, the Carter Center PVE team collected over 2,000 videos. Videos were coded if they were released from an officially recognized transnational or provincial media center. Videos released by 'Amaq, Daesh's semi-official "news" channel, and those released by media outlets supportive of Daesh but not generally recognized as official media outlets, were excluded from analysis.

²⁵ Interviews were conducted in October 2016 and December 2016.

²⁶ "Guidebook of Research and Practice to Preventing Violent Extremism," The Carter Center, 2017, available at https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/countering-isis/guidebook-of-research-and-practice-to-preventing-violent-extremism.pdf.

²⁷ Links to recordings of the public panels are available on the Carter Center's Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism website at https://www.cartercenter.org/peace/conflict_resolution/countering-isis.html.

²⁸ *Countering Daesh Propaganda: Action-Oriented Research for Practical Policy Outcomes*, The Carter Center, Feb. 2015, available at https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/countering-isis/counteringdaeshpropaganda-feb2016.pdf; *Countering the Islamophobia Industry: Toward More Effective Strategies*, The Carter Center, May 2018, available at https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/countering-isis/cr-countering-the-islamophobia-industry.pdf.

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.

At the close of the symposium, the Center issued a statement condemning Islamophobia, the first major non-Muslim nongovernmental organization to do so.²⁹ In the conference proceedings, later published as a series of essays, President Carter authored the foreword, arguing, "When we turn a blind eye to discrimination against our Muslim neighbors, we cannot claim to remain true to our American values, and if we tolerate discrimination against those of another faith, we undermine our own cherished religious freedom."³⁰

Capacity Building with Faith-Based and Community Leaders

The Carter Center PVE project's action-oriented research and consultative symposia with experts drove the content and design of its capacity-building work with participating community and faith-based leaders. This work mobilized those leaders to counter violent extremism while addressing Islamophobia as both an aggravating factor of Muslim extremism and a threat to Muslim communities. The Center placed faith-based leaders' role at the heart of its preventative efforts, moving beyond the narrow understanding of their role as solely religious actors to highlight the important place they occupy socially and politically within their communities. To examine the Center's PVE capacity-building workshops, four subthemes will be discussed: (1) the role of faith-based and community leaders in preventing violence and promoting peace; (2) the selection process of participants; (3) gendered approaches to PVE; and (4) the Center's design logic model.

29 <https://www.cartercenter.org/news/pr/conflict-resolution-092917.html>.

30 Jimmy Carter, foreword, in *Countering the Islamophobia Industry: Toward More Effective Strategies*, The Carter Center, May 2018, page 4, available at https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/countering-isis/cr-countering-the-islamophobia-industry.pdf.

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 are affiliated with recognized religious institutions. From this perspective, academic scholars of religion, women trained in theology, or even activists and social workers in religious organizations are not considered faith-based leaders.

The Center chose to view faith-based leaders from a holistic and inclusive perspective, engaging leaders across the ideological spectrum. In parallel, the Center understands faith-based leaders as social actors who have the moral authority to deconstruct ideology, provide counteroffers to disenfranchised members of the society, and address local political and economic drivers of violent extremism. Male and female faith-based leaders have considerable influence on their communities and play various roles in serving their congregations. They strive to create a safe and inviting space for families and youth in their communities, where shared grievances can be discussed and skills and synergies channeled toward common goals. Their grassroots credibility and their deep understanding of the local context and the challenges faced by the community enable them to play crucial roles in (1) offering psycho-social support to the most vulnerable; (2) alleviating economic burdens by helping unemployed youths find jobs; (3) implementing effective programs of civic engagement in settings such as religious camps, sports leagues, and organized youth activities; and (4) mobilizing their communities as they have the networks and tools necessary to deal with the structural injustices and human rights abuses of the marginalized and excluded.

While faith-based and community leaders have been active in immunizing their local communities, they too often have relied on rational appeals and traditional forms of communication. Recruitment is rarely about rational appeals to religious doctrine. Daesh recruitment propaganda is effective because of its reliance on emotional appeals.³¹ Faith-based and community leaders must incorporate emotional appeals that speak directly to the lives and grievances of Muslim youth in a medium that youth intuitively understand.³² These leaders are best placed to foster a sense of identity on the local level and promote cohesion around a sense of purpose and social justice. Leaders must speak the language of youth and explore every avenue to connect with them spiritually, psychologically, and socially. In a minority context, they play the additional role of representing their communities' interests and reframing debates around identity, grievances and civic engagement. Their moral authority is a potent force in addressing social, political, and economic drivers of violent extremism.

Daesh has monopolized the online space; Muslim peacemakers need to compete. Faith-based and community leaders also need to understand the narratives that Daesh employs and the grievances they seek to activate in specific contexts. This is often difficult in the hyper-securitized environment that surrounds issues of terrorism and political violence in both Muslim majority countries and under the surveillance pall that covers Muslim minorities in the West. However, Muslim community leaders must be empowered and informed to engage youths in their communities on the grassroots level. This can be through the use

31 Houda Abadi, "Daesh Media Strategies: The Role of Our Community Leaders," The Carter Center, 2015, available at https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/syria-conflict/ISIS-media-strategies-role-of-muslim-religious-leaders-2015.pdf.

32 In their work within Carter Center workshops, Muslim religious and community leaders consistently cited the need to reclaim the voices of the majority of Muslims in the media and "compete with Sheikh Google" in the online space beyond simple rational text-centric argument and counternarratives. The Carter Center, "Countering Daesh Recruitment Propaganda I: Mastering the Message, Engaging Our Youth," September 2016, available at https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/peace/conflict_resolution/countering-isis/countering-daesh-workshop-1-report-092916.pdf.

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 remote from their constituencies. They lack credibility with precisely those grassroots communities most affected by extremist violence. Youths are not attending mosques on a regular basis; local faith-based leaders seem distant or their credibility is undermined by, for example, requirements to deliver state-approved sermons or interpretations of Islam that only serve to legitimize the very regimes that make youth feel abandoned or oppressed.

The Carter Center was determined to select faith-based leaders who possessed the credibility and social capital to challenge their communities on difficult issues and influence large numbers of constituents. The Center engaged with mainstream and conservative faith-based leaders across political, ideological and gender divides. Participants included female and male faith-based leaders, lawyers, human rights activists, teachers, and journalists with large networks and ability to exert influence on public opinion. The women participants in particular assumed a very active role during deliberations and brought a fresh perspective to discussions. As one of the experts stated, “The greatest strength of the workshop was the multifaceted diversity of participants: men-women; young-senior; Salafi-orthodox-liberal; clergy-activist-professionals; majority-minority.” Workshop design, combined with participant profiles, ensured that the local PVE projects our participants implemented had the potential for sustainability beyond the life of the project.

In addition, the Center’s PVE project adopted four core principles of participant selection that were critical to its success:

1. **Promoting dialogue and cohesion between adversary groups:** PVE workshops were especially valuable because they embraced an intercommunity approach, sought to engage groups across the ideological spectrum and facilitated dialogue between groups that otherwise never would have met. Perhaps the most important outcome of the workshops was the sense of community and collective responsibility that developed among participants. Regardless of ideological and political orientation, participants built trust and developed strong, mutually beneficial relationships, shared lessons learned, and collaborated on their community projects. Ideological diversity is not without its pitfalls; conversations, particularly around theological and political matters, were occasionally tense, but participants were committed to remaining engaged with their colleagues and allowed for even heated exchanges to remain productive. Workshops also included a more specific focus on intra-Muslim dialogue and coalition building as effective strategies for civic engagement and preventing violent extremism of all kinds.
2. **Staying away from “embassy imams”:** Focusing solely on state-sanctioned leaders had the potential to reduce dramatically the impact of workshop trainings. While viewed by the West as representative of their faith communities, state-sanctioned faith leaders are often detached from community-level concerns. The Center aimed to prioritize those with large grassroots followings whose views may not necessarily align with the perspectives of the workshop organizers and the majority of the participants, including members of conservative and Salafi communities. By way of illustration, the Center has collaborated with conservative faith leaders who have received threats from Daesh and abuse from European press outlets for their unapologetic conservatism. This amounts to recognition that these leaders are beholden neither to violent extremist groups nor to governments. Rather, they are making full use of their social capital to influence PVE practice and policy within their communities.

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 religious, professional and ideological diversity, both among the five countries and within each individual country. The process of recruitment was based on extensive research and mapping of local social and political contexts and drew on pre-existing networks as well as connections forged during country visits. The selection of countries relied on three main factors: (1) high contribution of foreign fighters that have joined Daesh; (2) the level of access that the PVE team had to official institutions and to insular communities in the countries; and (3) fostering intra-Muslim collaboration within North African diaspora communities. An initial mapping of local PVE actors offered the Center insight into communities' existing PVE projects, the actors' ties to the government, civil society, and their partnerships with other main PVE catalysts. It also provided an overview of the PVE challenges and opportunities in each country and shed light on the concerns of faith-based and community leaders in Muslim-majority North Africa, compared to their Muslim-minority European and American counterparts. Center staff visited prospective participants in their local communities and observed their social standing and interactions with their constituents. Field visits to Morocco, Tunisia, Belgium, and France were instrumental in establishing trust with local partners; field visits to marginalized neighborhoods were devoted to individual discussions with each potential participant, enabling the Center staff to answer questions, clarify misunderstandings, and request inputs.

A Gendered Approach to PVE

The Center's PVE project incorporated an explicitly gendered approach in its project design, including the selection of participants and experts, topics covered, and project implementation. It centered the role of women in both recruitment and prevention through comprehensive research and active collaboration with subject experts and grassroots community institutions. By building awareness of women's multifaceted roles, the workshops encouraged participants to acknowledge women as important community gatekeepers who can play a significant role in peace and security. Organizers made sure women were always placed at the head of tables, had enough time to express their opinions, and could equally share the space with their male colleagues.

One unique element of the Center's PVE project was its conviction that understanding violent extremism through a gendered lens is incomplete if toxic masculinity is left unaddressed. Toxic masculinity, male entitlement and abuse of power, is increasingly being recognized as a key factor in extremist violence. Men who subscribe to toxic forms of masculinity feel betrayed and alienated and believe that women's rights have left them victimized and discriminated against. Preventative measures must address

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

practice to engrain the necessary skills; (3) creating an interactive learning experience through case studies and simulations; and (4) fostering supportive environments to promote trust and form bonds outside of the workshop. Daily evaluations allowed Center staff to get immediate feedback and incorporate suggestions, even when this required changing the agenda. Furthermore, experiential learning was enhanced through practical activities and case studies that allowed the participants to experiment, often tangibly, with the new skills and theories. This provided a participatory, interactive learning experience where participants were invited to contribute to discussions, reflect on their own experiences, learn how to interpret problems embedded in social practice, shape innovative ideas, and develop new skills to respond to these problems. Examples of short case studies are provided in annexes A, B, and C.

5. **Language:** The smooth running of the workshops depended to a large extent on the choice of language. They were conducted in English with simultaneous interpretation in Arabic and French. The ability to change register from modern standard Arabic to colloquial Arabic also played an important role and highlighted hyperlocal nuances. The choice of terminology, how concepts were defined and discussed, was equally important. Terms, especially those related to religion, violence, extremism, gender, etc., can be loaded and politicized. For this reason, it was important to work toward having agreed-upon definitions to develop a shared vision and goals.
6. **Do no harm:** This was a fundamental element in the project's design and implementation. The Center identified critical assumptions at the strategic, operational, personal, and security levels. Flexibility and responsiveness to local conditions and needs was a hallmark of the project's success. Equally important was the Center's long-term relationship with partners based on mutual respect and honest communication. The Center did not seek visibility; this allowed work in genuine partnerships and minimized the chance that poor design or implementation choices would lead to greater harm. Given the forceful security approach adopted by many countries toward conservative religious communities, as well as the threats some of these leaders have received from extremist groups, they requested that neither their identity nor their affiliation be revealed, and that workshops be hosted outside of their home countries and in a location perceived as neutral. As such, the Center operated under the Chatham House Rule³³ and provided a safe space in which new ideas could be shared and explored.
7. **Respecting cultural and religious norms:** The Center's approach required promoting a culture of respect where participants are treated as equals. One of the participants, a senior female community leader from North Africa, stated that what she appreciated the most about the Center's approach was that she felt "talked to, not talked at" where "participants' voices and experiences count." Workshops were adapted to consider the cultural norms of the participants. In many cases, this required the provision of a special diet (Halal food, no alcohol), the provision of prayer space, and integrating spirituality in the program design. For instance, the project did not shy away from including religious hymns and prayers after a long day of training.

³³ Participants are free to use information received during workshops, but neither the identity nor affiliation of the participants or experts may be revealed.

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—all countries with a high rate of nationals traveling to Syria and Iraq to join terrorist groups. The second cohort included 23 additional faith-based and community leaders from the same four countries, adding four participants from the United States, itself experiencing a dramatic rise in Islamophobia and white nationalist violent extremism. The Center recruited participants with the following attributes: (a) significant credibility among their constituents; (b) outreach and power to influence public discourse; and (c) insight into the nuances of the political and social climate of their countries.

Participant Profiles

Combining the two cohorts, the Center engaged 46 faith and community leaders who shared their new knowledge and tools within their circles of influence, estimated to reach more than 5 million social media followers. Forty-one percent of participants were women.

The largest category of PVE peacebuilders engaged in the workshops were faith-based leaders. This included imams, classically trained women faith leaders, and leaders in faith-based activist movements. All came from diverse religious perspectives, and many performed multiple roles by engaging with civil society or municipal organizations.

Participants also included lawyers, human rights activists, teachers, scholars, government officials, journalists, and civil society actors. Female participants filled a variety of roles, including a teacher in a French Islamic school, the executive director of a Moroccan human rights organization, two Tunisian activists who worked with women and youth in Tunis’ most marginalized neighborhoods, and prominent

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.

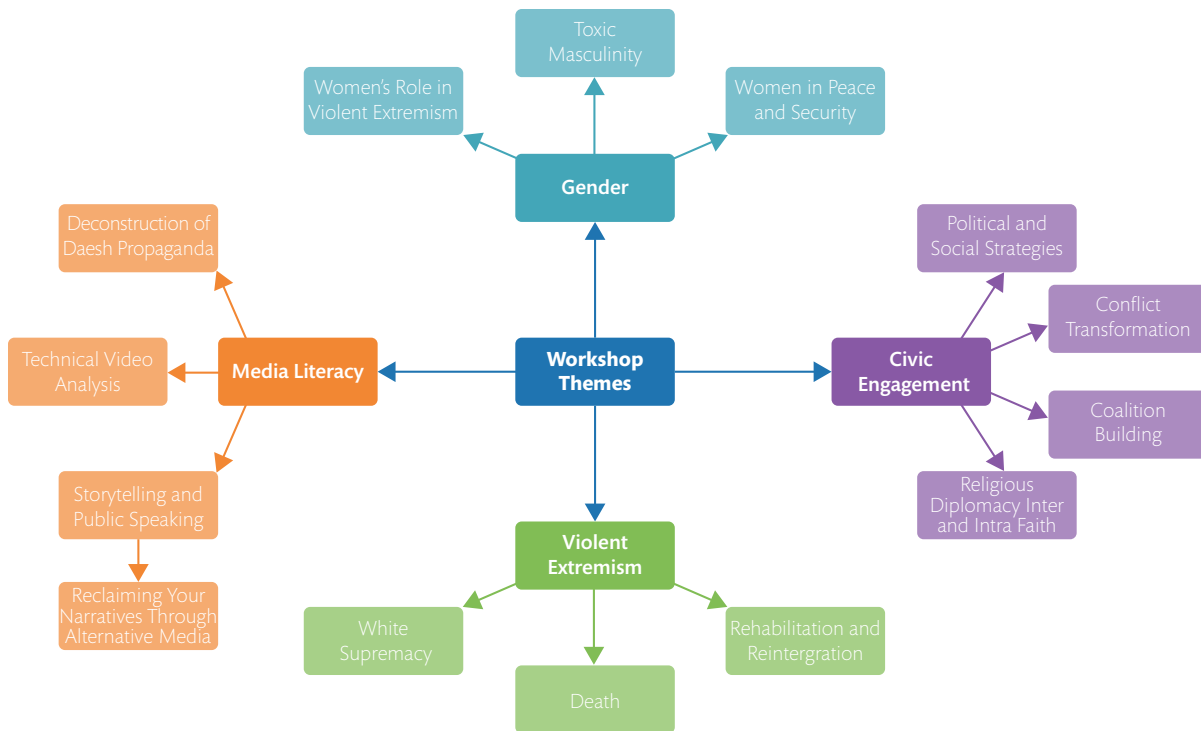


Figure 1. Themes in the Carter Center workshops covered four broad categories: violent extremism, civic engagement, media literacy, and gender.

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 leadership 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

the North African diaspora in Francophone Europe, efforts were made to select experts who were not only fluent in the languages of the participants (Arabic and French, mostly), but also knowledgeable about and sensitive to the challenges and possibilities of preventing violent extremism in those regions. Amplifying voices, experiences and knowledge of minorities and experts from the global South enriched and deepened the discussions as well.

In parallel, developing relationships of trust, mutual respect, and commitment to positive change was critical in the design of the PVE project to cultivate a strong community of practice.

Country Projects

Workshop participants in both cohorts were expected to develop through the workshop cycle a focused and attainable PVE project or program, adapted to their local context and based on workshop trainings. Trainings were also provided on branding and seeking funding from governments or foundations. Participants from past workshops are currently working with and soliciting funding from organizations like USAID, UNESCO, the EU, and local embassies.

Phase One

Tunisian participants from the first cohort have collaborated with various domestic and international civil society organizations, such as ENDA, Ertiqa Association, and Families Against Terrorism and Extremism (FATE), to provide training to key local constituencies on topics like community-based rehabilitation and women's role in sustainable peacebuilding, including within at-risk communities on the Tunisian-Algerian border. A highly influential Salafi imam and workshop graduate has built networks among imams across Tunisian mosques to oppose violent extremism. The Tunisian group has also been very active in terms of media initiatives, publishing magazine articles and posting sermons online that deconstruct and delegitimize Daesh's propaganda while offering empowering alternatives. Moroccan participants developed and executed a series of workshops with Moroccan youth on acceptance and preventing extremism, using art as a medium for change. Moroccan participants of different political and religious orientations have also collaborated on a proposal to the government, asking to launch the first community-led reintegration and rehabilitation center in Morocco.

French participants from the first cohort have published high-tech counter-messaging videos, released online sermons, and organized e-conferences debunking Daesh's theological positions. One French participant, a conservative imam with a large congregation and social media following, launched an online crowdsourcing campaign to raise funds to publish an interfaith booklet on the Islamic teachings on respect, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence. Another French participant, a very active female community leader, participated for the first time in a televised panel discussion on Islamophobia and its role in reinforcing Daesh propaganda. One French imam, a convert to Islam, launched a mentoring project to provide psychosocial support and care for Muslim converts in collaboration with human rights lawyers, psychologists, and community leaders. Belgian participants have been involved with various domestic and international human rights groups to combat both Daesh and far-right ultranationalist groups. They have partnered with institutions like Amnesty International and the EU Parliament to discuss deep-rooted causes of extremism and ways to overcome them. On a more grassroots level, Belgian participants organized local marches against hatred and terror and later mobilized the Muslim community in Brussels on the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad to hand out roses and small cards with sayings of the Prophet promoting love, peace, and solidarity.

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 decisions about adapting programming and confirming that the project's assumptions continued to hold. Central to this effort was assessing the influence and impact of our two cohorts of faith-based and community leaders, from recruitment through to the implementation of their own local PVE initiatives.

The Carter Center conducted a series of assessment surveys among participants to gauge their influence and skill level in a range of topics relevant to the workshop trainings. We collected data among all participants via surveys on, for example, participants' number of followers online and off, knowledge of social media, and demographics of their target audiences. Data collected directly informed workshop design and topic selection, such as in trainings on toxic masculinity and the recruitment of young men by violent extremist groups.

Qualitative field-based analysis sought to capture the nuance of participants' networks, their connections, and their relative social capital and reach within their local communities. The social capital and reach of workshop participants are best illustrated through their own activities. For example, one Moroccan female participant is the host of a popular religious-themed television program. Another participant, also from North Africa, connects with over 5,000 youth annually through his organization's youth summer programming.

Monitoring and Evaluating Capacity-Building and Research Activities

During the implementation of the capacity-building workshops, the monitoring process consisted of the following: (1) baseline assessments for each cohort, (2) participants' daily workshop evaluations, (3) participants' post-workshop evaluations, (4) experts' post-workshop evaluations, (5) workshop summary reports, (6) field follow-ups, (7) attendance monitoring, and (8) presentations on the design and implementation of local projects/initiatives. In addition, workshop participants were asked to periodically document how they have engaged local actors to address issues of preventing violent extremism in their local contexts, and what types of programs they had developed or activities they had engaged in. Center staff used the monitoring data to evaluate the relevance, impact, effectiveness, and sustainability of the project's design and implementation. These various evaluation methods offered participants the opportunity to share their reflections on all workshop sessions and provide recommendations for future activities and collaborations.

In qualitative monitoring data collected via surveys and one-on-one dialogues, our faith-based and community leaders noted that they appreciated the safe space provided by the project where they could engage on difficult subjects, even within such politically diverse groups. Participants also expressed their gratitude anecdotally for an opportunity where their experiences and expertise were respected and listened to, and where they were "talked to and not talked at." The average attendance rate at workshops across the project cycle was 92%, attesting to the relevance and utility of the workshop trainings from the perspective of the participants.

Experts invited to participate in the workshops were also asked to evaluate content, themes, and effectiveness of the workshops. All experts expressed satisfaction with the workshops' outcomes and the enormous commitment of the participants. Our faith-based and community leaders were also asked in their final evaluations how they applied the knowledge gained in the workshops in their own work. Participant responses included: (1) more media visibility; (2) coalition building across political divides; (3) adopting a holistic approach to countering violent extremism; (4) reaching out to build intercommunity partnerships; (5) utilizing all available platforms to propagate their message; (6) shifting from Islamization to humanization; (7) using alternative participatory media (e.g., production of Moroccan rap songs); and (8) training other religious leaders on the deconstruction of violent extremist narratives.

At each workshop, opportunities were provided for our faith-based and community leaders to discuss the obstacles they might have faced, how receptive their communities were to their interventions, and any challenges they had or might face. Workshop sessions for each cohort were devoted to training our faith-based and community leaders in design, monitoring, and evaluation (DM&E) by the Center's DM&E expert. Interactive sessions required participants, individually and in groups, to refine their vision into a fully articulated project that was specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound. Participants received training in the establishment of robust goals, defining activities, envisioning the expected changes resulting from the planned activities, and pinpointing underlying assumptions. Participants from both cohorts developed log frames for their projects, listing their activities and their associated outputs and outcomes. Continual assessment of progress toward realizing the overall goal, on both the project and participant level, provided an evolving picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the Center's approach, which in turn drove changes in program design and implementation.

As described above, the Center's PVE project also included a robust research agenda, including the publication of multiple research reports, guidebooks and symposia proceedings. Research products were shared both publicly via the Center's website³⁴ and distributed to relevant stakeholders for feedback,

³⁴ All of The Carter Center PVE reports can be found here: https://www.cartercenter.org/peace/conflict_resolution/countering-isis.html.

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.

360-Degree Project Evaluation and Outcome Harvesting

In addition to the qualitative and quantitative evaluation data collected with workshop participants and the assessments of research impact, the Center's PVE project was the subject of a two-day project evaluation midway through its three-year cycle. The review was a pilot effort for Peace Programs at the Carter Center. It brought together Center staff, program beneficiaries, outside experts, and program partners in a 360-degree evaluation. The review was led by the Carter Center's DM&E advisor and reflected on the project's actionable goals and how project activities connected to the change it hoped to influence.

The review was participatory and focused on listening to stakeholders, especially program beneficiaries, and adapting program goals and activities based on the feedback provided. Program beneficiaries, the faith-based and community leaders who participated in the two cohorts, were invited to the table to make the Carter Center's part of the partnership stronger; their feedback offered necessary course correction and generated ideas for future trainings while also confirming the importance of the Center's work in building capacity and forging a community of practice among grassroots PVE practitioners.

Perhaps most importantly, the project review was an opportunity for the Carter Center to measure local impact reported by the faith-based and community leaders who have joined our network of PVE practitioners. In PVE programming, direct cause-effect relationships between program activities and the prevention of extremism can be difficult to assess. But what we most want to know is, what are the impacts our programming has had on workshop participants? What changes have our emerging PVE practitioners experienced that pay direct dividends on the ground in local communities and among networks of social actors? As a method, outcome harvesting for monitoring and evaluation was useful to describe the changes taking place beyond quantitative analysis.

Outcome harvesting, at its most basic level, documents a change in a social actor. Outcome harvesting with program participants was continuous, and the 360-degree project review gave project staff the opportunity to organize harvested outcomes and engage in the necessary steps of analysis and interpretation. Several of the individual examples of change documented in the course of the project are illustrated in Figure 2.

In parallel, participants were asked at various stages, within the confines of the workshops, in open-ended surveys, and via in-person interviews and informal conversations, to describe the changes they have experienced in action or worldview as a result of their participation in the series of workshops.

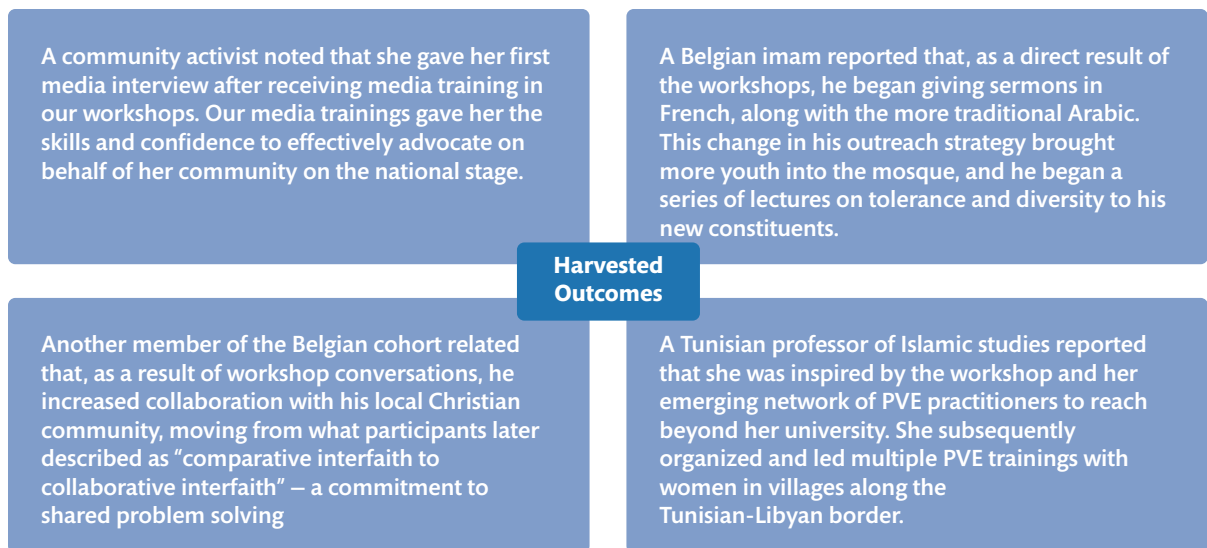


Figure 2. Examples of individual and community changes as reported by workshop participants.

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—governments, NGOs, civil associations, religious actors—who seek effective, community-led approaches.

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

Can the Muslim community be united sufficiently into a voting bloc, on its own and in alliance with others, in order to leverage the Muslim vote through access to voters, projecting human values and getting returns?

TOOLBOX

1. Maqasid al Shariah (MaS): How do we rank and sequence the MaS to answer the question?
2. Objectives and Outcomes: What are the primary, secondary, and tertiary objectives we would want to achieve?
3. Leadership: What kind of leadership could effect both the intra-Muslim and inter-community coordination and outreach?
4. Audience: Who are the various constituencies we need to reach?
5. Coalitions and Alliances: With whom and how do we strike strategic and tactical alliances—Parties? Voters? Groups?
6. Communication: What are the messages, means,, and media we use for this purpose?

TASK

Construct a lobby and advocacy strategy to gain leverage.

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

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

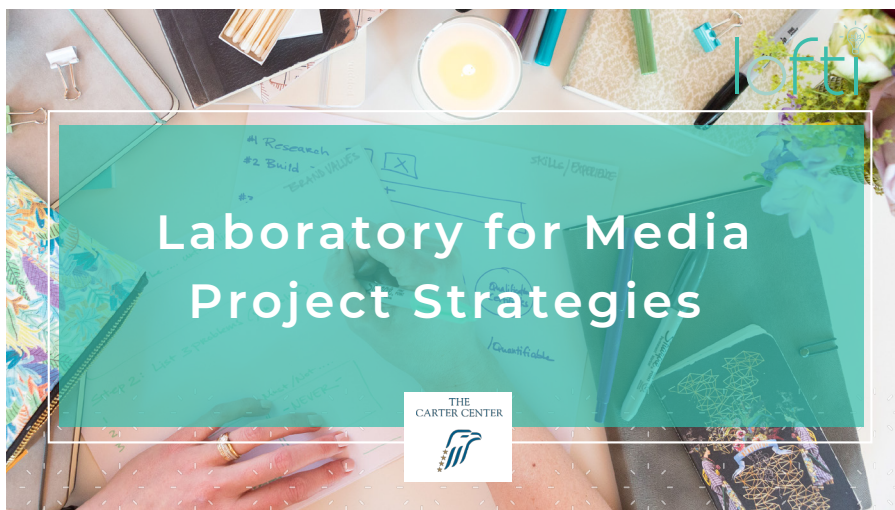
1. Maqasid al Shariah (MaS): How would we rank the MaS?
2. Objectives and Outcomes: Which ones are primary, secondary, and tertiary?
3. Leadership: What qualities of leadership do we need?
4. Audience: Who are we speaking to?
5. Coalitions and Alliances: How do we build these for this purpose?
6. Communication: 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

One of the most effective ways to raise awareness, funds, and publicity for a project is through branding, which spans both the online and offline worlds. This exercise will assist with understanding how an organization's brand can influence its goals and objectives and in crafting integrated marketing communications aimed at generating funds, resources, and visibility. It adopts an integrated approach to storytelling that amplifies and brings visibility to the core message of the project. Social and digital media strategies serve as a vehicle to the message, boost engagement and visibility, and deliver measurable results.



Reference: Lofti, brand strategy agency, www.getlofti.com



Strategize & plan for how you will handle it.

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STEP 1: EXPLORE YOUR RISK

Who are they?

01

What is your top risk?

Describe the risk.

02

What I know about the source of your risk

Describe who the source that causes this risky scenario is.

03

What I think their motivation was/is:

Describe what you believe they need – what led to them taking this action?

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STEP 2: EXPLORE YOUR PLAN

What can you share?

01

Who are your key stakeholders?

Think about who in your community will care most about your response.

02

What do they need to know?

What research do you need to do to create your response?

03

How will you take action?

What are the communication channels you will use?

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STEP 3: EXPLORE YOUR PLAN

What can you share?

03

What are the most important three steps you will take?

1. **What is your operational impact (what do we need to do operationally such as close a bank account, hire legal counsel)**
2. **What will you communicate (what message, talking points)**
3. **How does your organization learn from this? (you didn't have an internal audit process, you didn't have training) How will you implement this learning internally?**

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STEP 4: EXPLORE YOUR IMPACT

How will this effect your overall operation?

01

How can you turn this into a positive for your overall organization? (From crisis to antifragility)

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**Get into your regional groups
share your risk. As a group, pick
the top risk.**

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For the selected risk, as a team, refine the plan that was created.

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**Pick a spokesperson.
Share the risk and how you will turn it into a positive?**

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