



**AFRICA CENTER**

**AFRICA CENTER  
FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES**



**ACSRT/CAERT**

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*African Centre for the Study & Research on Terrorism*

# **Developing Local Strategies to Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) in Africa**

## **SYLLABUS**

**January-  
February 2022**





# AFRICA CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

## DEVELOPING LOCAL STRATEGIES TO COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM (CVE) IN AFRICA

**25-26 January 2022**

**1-2 February 2022**

**8-9 February 2022**

**15-16 February 2022**

### SYLLABUS

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## ABOUT THE AFRICA CENTER

Since its inception in 1999, the Africa Center has served as a forum for research, academic programs, and the exchange of ideas with the aim of enhancing citizen security by strengthening the effectiveness and accountability of African institutions, in support of U.S. - Africa policy.

### VISION

*Security for all Africans championed by effective institutions accountable to their citizens.*

Realizing the vision of an Africa free from organized armed violence guaranteed by African institutions that are committed to protecting African citizens is the driving motivation of the Africa Center. This aim underscores the Center's commitment to contributing to tangible impacts by working with our African partners – military and civilian, governmental and civil society, as well as national and regional. All have valuable roles to play in mitigating the complex drivers of conflict on the continent today. Accountability to citizens is an important element of our vision as it reinforces the point that in order to be effective, security institutions must not just be “strong,” but also be responsive to and protective of the rights of citizens.

### MISSION

*To advance African security by expanding understanding, providing a trusted platform for dialogue, building enduring partnerships, and catalyzing strategic solutions.*

The Africa Center's mission revolves around the generation and dissemination of knowledge through our research, academic programs, strategic communications, and community chapters. Drawing on the practical experiences and lessons learned from security efforts on the continent, we aim to generate relevant insight and analysis that can inform practitioners and policymakers on the pressing security challenges that they face. Recognizing that addressing serious challenges can only come about through candid and thoughtful exchanges, the Center provides face-to-face and virtual platforms where partners can exchange views on priorities and sound practices. These exchanges foster relationships that, in turn, are maintained over time through the Center's community chapters, communities of interest, follow-on programs, and ongoing dialogue between participants and staff. This dialogue—infused with real world experiences and fresh analysis—provides an opportunity for continued learning and catalyzes concrete actions.

### MANDATE

The Africa Center is a U.S. Department of Defense institution established and funded by Congress for the study of security issues relating to Africa and serving as a forum for bilateral and multilateral research, communication, exchange of ideas, and training involving military and civilian participants. (10 U.S.C 342)

# INTRODUCTION

## Overview

An appreciable number of African countries have developed strategies to prevent and counter violent extremism (P/CVE). These strategies hold great potential as they allow for the setting of priorities, determination of targets and allocation of financial, human, and technical resources, as well as provision of greater coherence and coordination among and between a range of governmental and nongovernmental stakeholders as they strive to attain strategic objectives to address the drivers of violent extremism in their domestic and/or regional context. A common pitfall of these strategies, however, is that they do not often align with the nuances of local contexts and the domestic causal factors associated with violent extremism. Their result is a gap between national governments who control national P/CVE strategies and local authorities that are generally more socioculturally attuned to their communities' attributes and dynamics. To help bridge this divide, the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS) and the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT/CAERT) virtual academic program focuses on the development of local CVE strategies, also referred to as local actions plans. This program builds on both the Africa Center and CAERT's work in helping African security officials, policymakers and practitioners develop and implement more effective and inclusive CVE frameworks and strategies that are better suited to local realities.

Local CVE action plans can help build national-local co-operation by "setting out clear goals, priorities, required resources, key partnerships and realistic timelines for activity delivery." They can also provide the opportunity for communities to build a bottom-up approach to community resilience, "ensuring a cohesive strategy and coordinated approach with a common understanding among local stakeholders of the key issues and of their respective responsibilities." In this regard, the Kenyan County Action Plans (CAPs) model serve "as an emerging practice" for the development of local CVE strategies. The model has been praised "as a marker of success for more effective and localized prevention programming," but its implementation has been plagued by several challenges. The lessons learned from these challenges provide valuable insights for governments and local authorities interested in developing their own local CVE action plans.

## Program Objectives

1. Participants will have a greater understanding of the basic common principles and practices that guide the development of local action plans to counter violent extremism.
2. Participants will have new insights into how to enhance national-local co-operation and implement locally driven strategies and programming to countering violent extremism.
3. Participants will have a greater understanding of the role that collaborative security arrangements between security forces, local government officials, and community leaders play in the design and implementation of local action plans to counter violent extremism.

## Academic Approach

This four week-long seminar will feature presentations by an array of voices – from policy-makers, practitioners, and academics. Interactive question-and-answer sessions will follow the presentations in each plenary session. Participants will be divided into working groups, where facilitators with relevant expertise and background will lead the interaction toward concrete deliverables.

The seminar will be conducted in English, French and Portuguese. In order to foster frank discussions and create trust among participants, discussions will be conducted under a policy of

non-attribution, meaning specific comments or interventions by any participant will not be identified by name or country in any summaries, reports, or sharing of the insights gained from the seminar by any participant, speaker, or the organizers.

### **Syllabus**

This syllabus provides an overview of academic goals and key policy questions related to the development and implementation of local action plans in contexts of countering violent extremism. For each session, we provide a brief introduction and list questions for discussion. We also include selected articles, whose primary purpose is to help frame the issues within the context of available scholarship and policy documents. The syllabus likely covers more issues and materials than can be sufficiently discussed in the available time. It is beneficial to read some or all of the recommended readings on the syllabus prior to the seminar, because the readings will place participant and speaker comments into appropriate context. However, we also hope that you use these materials as resources even after the program concludes, and that you return to them for relevant details.

The outside materials and academic content included in this syllabus do not reflect the views or official position of the Department of Defense or the United States government. This syllabus is an educational document intended to expose participants to a variety of views and perspectives to help prepare them to take full advantage of the program.

### **Preparation for the Seminar**

Before the seminar, we encourage you to:

1. Read this syllabus.
2. Read some or all of the recommended readings.
3. Spend time thinking about and answering the discussion questions.
4. Consider what experiences from your work might be relevant to share in discussion groups.
5. Be prepared to participate actively in discussion groups and to learn from participants from other countries.

# Map of Africa



Map No. 4045 Rev. 7 UNITED NATIONS  
November 2011

Department of Field Support  
Cartographic Section

## Week 1: Understanding the rationale for local CVE action plans

**Format:** Plenary Session: Tuesday, January 25, 1200-1330 GMT

Discussion Group: Wednesday, January 26, 1200-1330 GMT

### Objectives:

- Present a comparative evaluation of national strategies to explore whether and how they align with the nuances of local contexts and the domestic causal factors associated with violent extremism.
- Illustrate how local CVE action plans can help bridge the divide between national level policy-making and the frontline community practitioners that are generally more socio-culturally attuned to their communities' attributes and dynamics.
- Explain how local action plans enable greater local ownership and ensure the building of a bottom-up approach to community resilience.

### Background

Several African countries have developed or are in the process of developing strategies to prevent and counter violent extremism. In spite of these strategies, however, notable progress in addressing the challenge of violent extremism and terrorism is still lacking in many parts of the continent. Some critics point out that some of these strategies remain mere “paper exercises” or rely on “template approaches” which “do not necessarily align with the nuances of their specific country context or the actual causative factors of violent extremism domestically.”<sup>1</sup> Others point to the existing gaps within national governments in “understanding the systems, structures, and processes”<sup>2</sup> necessary to rectify the often weak cooperation among the different levels of actors (national and local) and other stakeholder groups (civil society, youth, women, private sector) in CVE programs and interventions. The persistence of barriers to collaboration compounds the lack of understanding between national and local actors, government and non-government actors, and law enforcement and local communities.<sup>3</sup> This deprives countries of leveraging the comparative advantages that these different levels of actors can bring to the design and implementation of CVE programs. Addressing these concerns and shortcomings are critical for improving the existing CVE strategies in line with the validity of the processes and empirical evidence that led to their development and adoption.

International guidance and emerging good practices from within the African continent all point to the necessity of bridging the void between the national and local. After all, the violent extremist challenges that national actors and strategies seek to address are local, which make it imperative to localize CVE strategies, ensuring in the process that national government plans are informed “by local practice and perspectives” and local action is “in line with national frameworks.”<sup>4</sup> Such an approach recognizes the critical role that local governments and grassroots civil society

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/GCCS-2019-National-Strategies-Prevent-Counter-Violent-Extremism-Independent-Review.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/Framework%20Documents/2020/GCTF%20Memorandum%20on%20Good%20Practices%20on%20Strengthening%20NLC%20in%20PCVE.pdf?ver=2020-09-29-100315-35>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.resolvenet.org/system/files/2021-09/RSVE%20Policy%20Note\\_Rosand\\_September%202011\\_0.pdf](https://www.resolvenet.org/system/files/2021-09/RSVE%20Policy%20Note_Rosand_September%202011_0.pdf)



stakeholders can play in helping design and implement multiagency and multi-stakeholder approaches, plans and strategies to countering violent extremism. Such importance is seen in the growing number of sub-national governments and cities that are developing local action plans that address violent extremism. Local actions plans provide an opportunity for countries to “decentralize their approach” in tackling challenges that are often community-specific. They also provide an avenue for local governments to utilize their “convening power by mainstreaming P/CVE activities into broader development plans and adopting a ‘whole-of-city’ approach.”<sup>5</sup> These plans “should flow from and be consistent with the national framework.”<sup>6</sup> In Kenya, for example, it was the national government that mandated the creation of local action plans “and accompanying local co-ordination mechanisms and structures.”<sup>7</sup>

### Discussion Questions:

- How do you assess the level of effectiveness of a national CVE strategy in your country?
- What are the obstacles that local authorities face in engaging in countering violent extremism efforts?
- Are there any promising approaches and lessons learned that address specific challenges to national-local cooperation?
- Do you see any value for local action plans in countering violent extremism and why?

### Recommended Readings:

Patricia Crosby and Dominic Pkalya, “Developing and Implementing Local Action Plans for P/CVE in East Africa: SCN Toolkit with lessons from Kenya,” The Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) & Strong Cities Network (SCN), May 13, 2021, pp: 5-13,

**English:** [https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit\\_EN.pdf](https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit_EN.pdf)

**French:** [https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit\\_FR.pdf](https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit_FR.pdf)

Global Counterterrorism Forum, “Executive Summary of the National-Local Cooperation Memorandum,” September 2020,

**English:**

[https://www.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/Framework%20Documents/2020/Executive%20Summary\\_Memorandum%20on%20Good%20Practices%20on%20Strengthening%20NLC%20in%20PCVE.pdf?ver=2020-09-29-100320-737](https://www.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/Framework%20Documents/2020/Executive%20Summary_Memorandum%20on%20Good%20Practices%20on%20Strengthening%20NLC%20in%20PCVE.pdf?ver=2020-09-29-100320-737)

**French:**

[https://www.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/Framework%20Documents/2020/Executive%20Summary\\_Memorandum%20on%20Good%20Practices%20on%20Strengthening%20NLC%20in%20PCVE%20FR.pdf?ver=2020-10-01-134520-907](https://www.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/Framework%20Documents/2020/Executive%20Summary_Memorandum%20on%20Good%20Practices%20on%20Strengthening%20NLC%20in%20PCVE%20FR.pdf?ver=2020-10-01-134520-907)

### Additional Readings:

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<sup>5</sup> [https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit\\_EN.pdf](https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit_EN.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/GCCS-PB-Civil-Society-Inclusion-National-Frameworks-Prevent-Counter-Violent-Extremism-2021.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit\\_EN.pdf](https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit_EN.pdf)

David Dews, "A 'Whole of Society' Approach? Exploring Civil Society Inclusion in National Frameworks to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism," Global Center, July 2021, <https://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/GCCS-PB-Civil-Society-Inclusion-National-Frameworks-Prevent-Counter-Violent-Extremism-2021.pdf>

Steven Feve & David Dews. National Strategies to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism: An Independent Review, Global Center on Cooperative Security, 2019. Available online at: <https://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/GCCS2019-National-Strategies-Prevent-Counter-Violent-Extremism-Independent-Review.pdf>

Carlsson, Yngve. Violent Extremism: Prevention of a wicked problem – the role of local authorities. Oslo: Center for Research on Extremism, September 2017. <https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/publications/crex-working-paper-series/Violent-extremism-working-paper-2-2017.pdf>

## Week 2: Designing and drafting a local CVE action plan

**Format:** Plenary Session: Tuesday, February 1, 1200-1330 GMT

Discussion Group: Wednesday, February 2, 1200-1330 GMT

### Objectives:

- Discuss the key guiding principles in developing local CVE action plans
- Explain the practical process and steps of designing and drafting a local CVE action plan
- Share some of the challenges faced to ensure local CVE action plans are holistic, inclusive and implementable.
- Share some of the critical lessons learned during the development processes of local CVE action plans.

### Background

Localized approaches to countering violent extremism are the backbone of state efforts to tackle the underlying drivers of the phenomenon. Yet, knowledge on how national CVE strategies are translated into actions at the local level is limited. To date, we have little insight into how cooperative and coordinated efforts between and among government actors and non-governmental actors are established and integrated into national and local CVE action plans. There are still distinctive gaps into how relevant government agencies (national security committees, the police, and ministries of interior, labor, education, just to name a few) and non-governmental actors are integrated into the stages of conceptualizing, developing, implementing, and monitoring CVE activities and programs. Gaps also remain in understanding how local action plans to CVE are planned, designed, and implemented. There are not many countries around the world, particular in the global south, that have developed sub-national plans. In Africa, besides Kenya, which has the most extensive local action plans, only a handful of countries have developed policies or strategies which encompass some elements of local action plans. The latter necessitate engagement with a number of stakeholders across multiple levels. Understanding how these actors interact within a specific framework and the roles they play in achieving a shared goal is key to the development of sustainable CVE capacity-building at the local. Ultimately, local CVE plans need to nest within national CVE strategies to tackle the structural conditions that contribute to violent extremism.

Naturally, not all counties, municipalities, provinces, or states need to develop local action plans to CVE. Doing so requires first undertaking a risk assessment to map and analyze the level and degrees of threat and its contextual circumstances. An acute overall threat might necessitate the development of a local action plan. There is not a one-size fits all template for the development of such plans. There are, however, key principles and considerations which should be part of any successful local action plan. The latter must be rooted in whole-of-city approach that is multisectoral, evidence-based, and community-led “with the local government playing a coordinating role.” It must also be financially sustainable, “embedded within existing structures and budgets where possible,” and have the political buy-in of government stakeholders at the national and local level. Local CVE action plans must also have “a clear goal and attainable outcomes” and be “embedded in local legislation or policy frameworks.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *ibid*

## Discussion Questions:

- Does your country have local strategies for countering violent extremism? If yes, how were they developed and are they linked to national countering violent extremism policies? If not, what is the level and extent of engagement of local stakeholders in conceptualizing and developing countering violent extremism activities and policies?
- What are some practical steps taken to ensure all stakeholders; particularly women, youth, civil society and opposition groups were consulted during the drafting of a CVE strategy or other relevant national framework in your country?
- What are some practical steps taken to ensure effective coordination and collaboration among national and local stakeholders during the drafting of a CVE strategy or other relevant national framework in your country?
- What is the experience of your country in reaching compromise when there are different and conflicting views and interests during the process of developing a CVE strategy or other relevant national framework?

## Recommended Readings:

Patricia Crosby and Dominic Pkalya, “Developing and Implementing Local Action Plans for P/CVE in East Africa: SCN Toolkit with lessons from Kenya,” The Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) & Strong Cities Network (SCN), May 13, 2021, pp: 5-27.

**English:** [https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit\\_EN.pdf](https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit_EN.pdf)

**French:** [https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit\\_FR.pdf](https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit_FR.pdf)

Eric Rosand, “20 Years After 9/11: Why Cities Matter More than Ever When it Comes to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism,” Resolve Network, 16th September 2021,

[https://www.resolvenet.org/system/files/2021-09/RSVE%20Policy%20Note\\_Rosand\\_September%202011\\_0.pdf](https://www.resolvenet.org/system/files/2021-09/RSVE%20Policy%20Note_Rosand_September%202011_0.pdf)

## Additional Readings:

Africa Center for Strategic Studies [NSSD Toolkit](#): Phase 3&4, Pages: 22-34, Section 3, Pages: 44-49.

<https://africacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/National-Security-Strategy-Development-in-Africa-Toolkit-for-Drafting-and-Consultation-Africa-Center-for-Strategic-Studies.pdf>

Malmros, Robin Andersson. “Translating Ideas into Actions: Analyzing Local Strategic Work to Counter Violent Extremism.” *Democracy and Security*, September 5, 2021.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17419166.2021.1971524>.

Muro, Diego, ed. *Resilient Cities. Countering Violent Extremism at Local Level*. Barcelona Centre for International Affairs, September 2017. <http://doi.org/10.24241/ResilientCities>.

Rosand, Eric, and Ian Klaus. “It Happens on the Pavement: Putting Cities at the Center of Countering Violent Extremism.” Brookings Institution, June 1, 2016,

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-fromchaos/2016/06/01/it-happens-on-the-pavement-putting-cities-at-the-center-of-counterintextremism/>.

## Week 3: Implementing a local CVE action plan

**Format:** Plenary Session: Tuesday, February 8, 1200-1330 GMT

Discussion Group: Wednesday, February 9, 1200-1330 GMT

### Objectives:

- Understand how local CVE action plans define responsibilities for its implementation.
- Explain the different funding streams for local action plans
- Share some of the common challenges during implementation of a local action plan and how these challenges can be overcome
- Recognize the importance of flexibility and capacity for adaptation in the implementation of a local action plan

### Background:

The previous sessions examined various aspects of the strategic formulation process of local action plans for countering violent extremism. This session will discuss their implementation. Implementing local action plans necessitates multisectoral co-ordination between different state agencies and actors, “including local and national legislators, as well as non-state actors.”<sup>9</sup> Local action plans need to designate the roles and responsibilities of the institutions charged with carrying out objectives as well as the mechanisms to coordinate their activities and decisions. Certain roles are defined via legislation. Once roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, primary and secondary roles must be delineated. Often, the co-ordination structures include a multisectoral co-ordination committee that oversees the implementation of the local action plan. This body, also referred to as local prevention network, is composed of representatives from the national and local government as well as other relevant stakeholders. Each year, the local prevention network responsible for implementing the local action plan should create a work plan “which sets out the outputs and activities for how it will work towards the goal and outcomes.”<sup>10</sup>

Implementation strategies for each activity can contain key performance indicators and verification methods. All activities must also be fully funded. Even if resources are scarce, local action plans “should be mainstreamed into existing financial resources as much as possible.”<sup>11</sup> Local and national governments can factor local action plan “priorities into their existing sectoral plans,” ensuring “that they are planned and budgeted for in the annual budgets.” There are other funding options that local action plans can tap into to maximize existing resources, including through private sector support. In the end, whatever form a specific implementation plan takes, it must have flexibility and adaptability built into it. The document must acknowledge the changing nature of the security landscape, and provide relevant ministries and agencies with the resources to adapt and react accordingly. It is, therefore, critical to “review and refresh” local action plans “to incorporate lessons learned, changes in context and any changes in co-ordination structures or implementation plans.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

## Discussion Questions:

- Have you been involved in the implementation of a CVE strategy or any other security strategy in your country? Was the policy or strategy successfully implemented? Did it deliver the expected results? Why or why not? Please share your experience.
- What are the conditions or tools necessary for implementing CVE strategies at the local level in your country (current or future strategy)?
- Do you think local action plans for countering violent extremism may help improve the implementation of national CVE strategies or frameworks?

## Recommended Readings:

Patricia Crosby and Dominic Pkalya, "Developing and Implementing Local Action Plans for P/CVE in East Africa: SCN Toolkit with lessons from Kenya," The Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) & Strong Cities Network (SCN), May 13, 2021, pp: 28-35,

**English:** [https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit\\_EN.pdf](https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit_EN.pdf)

**French:** [https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit\\_FR.pdf](https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/SCN-EA-LAP-Toolkit_FR.pdf)

Artur Bala, "Bottom-Up Approach to Countering Violent Extremism in Tunisia," Search for Common Ground, July 2018, [https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Final\\_External\\_Evaluation\\_Report\\_on\\_Bottom-Up\\_Approaches\\_to\\_CVE\\_Project\\_-\\_SFCG\\_Tunisia.pdf](https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Final_External_Evaluation_Report_on_Bottom-Up_Approaches_to_CVE_Project_-_SFCG_Tunisia.pdf)

## Additional Readings:

Africa Center for Strategic Studies [NSSD Toolkit: Phase 7, Pages: 40-42.](#)

<https://africacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/National-Security-Strategy-Development-in-Africa-Toolkit-for-Drafting-and-Consultation-Africa-Center-for-Strategic-Studies.pdf>

"The role of cities in preventing and countering violent extremism in East and West Africa," The Strong Cities Network, June 2017, [https://strongcitiesnetwork.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/SCN-Assessment-Report\\_East-and-West-Africa\\_June17.pdf](https://strongcitiesnetwork.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/SCN-Assessment-Report_East-and-West-Africa_June17.pdf)

Eya Jrad, "Promoting Civilian Engagement in Security Sector Reform Processes in Tunisia," Mid Term Evaluation Report (October 01, 2015 to March 31, 2018), Search for Common Ground, February 2020, [https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Midterm\\_Eval\\_SSR\\_29\\_08.pdf](https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Midterm_Eval_SSR_29_08.pdf)

Akinola Olojo, "Making sense of resilience in the Boko Haram crisis," Institute for Strategic Studies, June 2020, <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/war-30.pdf>

## **Week 4: Challenges and lessons learnt from the Kenyan county action plan (CAP) model**

**Format:** Plenary Session: Tuesday, February 15, 1200-1330 GMT

Discussion Group: Wednesday, February 16, 1200-1330 GMT

### **Objectives:**

- Provide a broader understanding of the various stakeholders involved in countering violent extremism in Kenya
- Assess the evolution of the approaches adopted by state and non-state actors in countering violent extremism in Kenya
- Discuss how the embrace of local based approaches to countering violent extremism can contribute to sustainable outcomes.
- Examine the link between the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism (NSCVE) and the County Action Plans (CAPs), and how do they support implementation of the NSCVE.
- Share some of the common challenges during the Kenyan CAP implementation and how these challenges can be overcome

### **Background**

Kenya's experience of tragic terrorist attacks started with the 1998 truck bombs that exploded at the American Embassy in Nairobi. Since then, the threat has evolved and been superseded by the Somali-based violent extremist group, Al-Shabaab. The latter has subjected Kenya to most of its strikes outside Somalia, attacking government and security personnel operating along the Kenya-Somalia border as well as civilians in northeastern Kenya, in particular non-locals and individuals suspected of being government spies. In response to these attacks, particularly the deadly 2013 terrorist attack on Nairobi's Westgate Mall and the 2015 horrific killing of 148 students in Garissa, which borders Somalia, Kenya has invested significant resources in its struggle against violent extremism. In 2016, the country unveiled the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism (NSCVE). Besides acknowledging the necessity of adopting a multisectoral approach to CVE, the novelty of the NSCVE resided in its mandating counties to develop their own county action plans (CAPs). Today, Kenya "is one of the only countries in the world which has national government-mandated local actions plans and accompanying local co-ordination mechanisms and structures."<sup>13</sup> The result is that each county in Kenya has developed its own action plan as well as a county engagement forum (CEF). The latter is "the body responsible for implementing the CAP, and it is co-chaired by the County Commissioner and the Governor." The forum also includes several stakeholders from the government and non-government.

These innovations have helped improve cooperation and coordination between and among several agencies and actors at the national and county levels. These achievements have made the Kenyan CAPs model "an emerging practice" in localized programming to CVE. The implementation of the CAPs, however, has been plagued by several challenges, including "competing priorities at the

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid



county government level and the lack of resources on the civil society side.”<sup>14</sup> The lessons learned from these challenges provide valuable insights for governments and local authorities interested in developing their own local CVE action plans.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- Who are the key actors involved in countering violent extremism in your country?
- How do you establish the appropriate balance between national leadership and local ownership in developing and implementing local CVE action plans?
- How do you overcome the challenges that are bound to happen when widening ownership of CVE policies and strategies beyond government actors to include an array of non-governmental actors? How do you successfully deal with the problems of lack of trust and lack of consensus on how violent extremism should be understood, as well as those relate to a lack of capacity and expertise or “center on a reluctance of some national governments to relinquish control or resources over what they perceive to be national security concerns, offering few opportunities for city leaders and practitioners to contribute to national P/CVE policy or program formulation.”
- What are the lessons learned from the implementation challenges of the Kenyan CAP model, and how can those lessons assist national and local governments in their efforts to develop locally based strategies to countering violent extremism?

### **Recommended Readings**

Roba D Sharamo and Adan A Mohamed, "Countering violent extremism in Kenya: Experiences and innovations," Institute for Security Studies, December 2020, <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/ear-36.pdf>

Michael Jones, "A Template for the Global South? Understanding the Promises and Pitfalls of Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism in Kenya," Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, 17 December 2020, [https://static.rusi.org/250\\_ei\\_pcve\\_kenya\\_web\\_version.pdf](https://static.rusi.org/250_ei_pcve_kenya_web_version.pdf)

### **Additional Readings:**

Dominic Pkalya, “Kenyan Stakeholders Call for Implementation of Local Action Plans to Stem Youth Radicalisation and Extremism”, Strong Cities Network (SCN), 15 January 2021. Available online at: <https://strongcitiesnetwork.org/en/kenyan-stakeholders-call-for-implementation-of-local-action-plans-to-stem-youth-radicalisation-and-extremism/>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid