

## **ROLE OF COLLABORATIVE POLICING IN COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM**

### **DRAFT CONCEPT PAPER**

**WHAT:** The Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS) and the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT/CAERT) will convene a three-day roundtable to discuss the role of collaborative approaches by security actors in countering violent extremism (CVE), with a primary focus on West Africa. This roundtable will consider a set of formidable challenges surrounding the adoption and implementation of proactive, community-based approaches to policing and other security functions in contexts of hybrid insecurity.

**WHERE:** Nouakchott, Mauritania

**WHEN:** January 30 – February 01, 2024

**WHO:** This program is designed for 34 African national police leaders and operational officers, mayors, community organizations, and non-governmental organizations' representatives, who will provide context-based insights into the hurdles, opportunities, and strategies of adopting and operationalizing a partnership-based approach to CVE within their organizations and at the frontline in local communities. Participants will come from the following countries and institutions: Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, AFRIPOL, the West African Police Chiefs Committee (WAPCCO), and the Central African Police Chiefs Committee (CAPCCO). Representatives of the United States government will also be invited.

Participants must be able to read and engage in detailed, sector-specific discussions in English or French.

**WHY:** In several African countries affected by the threat of violent extremism and terrorism, collaborative policing approaches to countering violent extremism and counterterrorism have emerged as an important complement to traditional military and law enforcement responses. Traditionally, counterterrorism practices have involved little engagement with local communities and have seldom taken into account their diverse needs, concerns, and perceptions. The limitations of these methods, however, have highlighted the necessity of drawing on the support of local communities to successfully counter violent extremism and terrorism.

Implementing a community-oriented approach to preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism, however, is a complicated and multifaceted process that demands the effective engagement of communities in the problem-solving process as well as sound changes in the structures and management styles

within law enforcement and other relevant security and government agencies. Operationalizing security forces–public partnerships necessitates political will, sufficient resources, and careful coordination between multiple stakeholders. None of this is easily achievable, particularly in conflict-affected areas where police forces in particular are under-resourced, unmotivated, and may lack cultural ties to the community.

This roundtable provides context-based insights into the hurdles, opportunities, and strategies for adopting and implementing collaborative security approaches to countering violent extremism.

**HOW:** The roundtable will consist of in-person panels and breakout group sessions, conducted in French and English, and moderated by ACSS and ASCRT/CAERT experts. The Chatham House rule will apply.

**PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:**

1. Assess the role and contributions of defense and security forces in building trust and fostering cooperation with local communities.
2. Examine the challenges, opportunities, and strategies of adopting a proactive, community-based approach to policing and other security functions in contexts of hybrid insecurity.
3. Explore the operational requirements needed to make security services–public partnerships in CVE successful.
4. Informed by the useful case studies, catalyze strategic recommendations for improving community integration in security-related activities intended to counter violent extremism.