Violent Extremism in Africa Drivers

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FATALITIES LINKED TO MILITANT ISLAMIST GROUPS IN AFRICA BY THEATER

Data source: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project
AFRICA’S ACTIVE MILITANT ISLAMIST GROUPS

MILITANT ISLAMIST GROUP-LINKED FATALITIES BY THEATER

Updated: January 2024

Notes: Compiled by the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, this graphic shows violent events involving the listed groups over the 12-month period ending December 31, 2023. Data on attacks or fatalities do not attempt to distinguish the perpetrators of the events. Group listings are intended for informational purposes only and should not be considered official designations. Due to the fluid nature of many groups, the listed affiliations may change.

Sources: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED); Centro para Democracia e Direitos Humanos; HIRAX Institute; HumanAngle; International Crisis Group; Institute for Security Studies; MENASTREAM; the Washington Institute, and the United Nations.
Common assumption:
Radical religious ideologies as a driver of extremism

What is violent extremism & radicalization?

Cognitive vs behavioral
Drivers: How do we determine?

- Structural Factors
- Group Factors
- Individual Factors
Structural Factors

- Marginalization
- Inequality
- Low Public Confidence
- Deeply Divided
- Corruption
- State Repression
- Weak RoL

Dysfunctional Governance
Group Factors

- **Founders**
  - **Why**: Explains and justifies the cause and drives reason for group’s existence
  - **How**: Designs the methods and means to achieve goal via tactics and resource mobilization

- **Successors**
Individual Factors

Journeys Through Extremism: The Experiences of Former Members of Al-Shabaab

The Last Frontier: Prisons and Violent Extremism in Mali
Authors: Liesbeth van der Heide and Julie Coleman

Deradicalisation and Disengagement in Somalia: Evidence from a Rehabilitation Program for Former Members of Al-Shabaab
James Khalil, Rory Brown, Chris Chant, Peter Olowo and Nick Wood
Individual Factors – Defectors, Detainees & Current Members

2017: 718 Interviewed
2023: 2,196 Interviewed

UNDP, Journey to Extremism in Africa (2017; 2023)
Individual Factors – Defectors, Detainees & Current Members

Religion **NOT** main factor explaining recruitment
Way Forward?

Prevention