United Nations Development Programme

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PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM
THROUGH PROMOTING INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT, TOLERANCE AND RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

A development response to addressing radicalization and violent extremism

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Context and challenges

In recent years, the world has witnessed new waves of violent extremism that have taken the lives of many innocent people. Whether based on religious, ethnic or political grounds, extremist ideologies glorify the supremacy of a particular group, and oppose a more tolerant and inclusive society. This poses two distinct but related challenges for contemporary societies: the rise of violent extremism and its spread across national borders and the governance of increasingly diverse and multi-cultural societies.

While violent extremism requires interventions to protect the security of people and assets, prevention of violent extremism needs to look beyond strict security concerns to development-related causes of and solutions to the phenomenon. Experiences in both development and peacebuilding show that an increase in the levels of inclusion and tolerance in communities can lead to both better governance of diversity, and to societies better inoculated against violent extremism. Tolerance for diversity and intercultural understanding are also at the heart of the new 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and particularly Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, on building peaceful, just and inclusive societies. UNDP takes a development approach to the prevention of violent extremism (PVE).

This paper does not focus solely on religiously-inspired violent extremism. Many drivers apply to other forms of extreme behavior. Radical behavior in itself is not necessarily a problem. Non-violent radical behavior, especially if undertaken purposely in the political, economic or cultural sphere, can help to promote positive change. Violent extremism kicks in when radical behavior starts making use of indiscriminate violence as the means of expression.

This corporate framing paper to prevent violent extremism is fully in line with the UN Secretary-General's Plan of Action for Preventing Violent Extremism that was released in January 2016.

Drivers of violent extremism

The root causes of violent extremism are complex, multifaceted and intertwined, and relate to the structural environment in which radicalization and possibly violent extremism can start to take hold. Violent extremism is the product of historical, political, economic and social circumstances, including the impact of regional and global power politics. Growing horizontal inequalities are one of the consistently cited drivers of violent extremism. Critically, unemployment or poverty alone is not the only push factor inciting violence and extremism: perceptions of injustice, human-rights violations, social-political exclusion, widespread corruption or sustained mistreatment of certain groups, are also considered important push factors. When all these horizontal inequalities come together for a particular group, radical movements and violence are more likely to erupt.

A State's failure to provide basic rights, services and security not only contributes to growing inequality, it also creates a vacuum that allows non-state actors to take control over State sovereignty and territory. There is a risk that failed political transitions, with weak institutions, law enforcement and checks and balances provide a fertile ground for violent extremism. Weak States thus create opportunities for the physical location of extremist groups.

Other structural drivers include the rejection of a State's socio-economic-political system and rejection of growing diversity in society. The banalization of violence through its daily projection and consumption (via media, books, movies, magazines, video games) should not be ignored as a contributor to the rise in violent behavior.

From radicalization to violent extremism

In addition to these structural drivers, people get pulled into radical and violent movements through well considered manipulation and accompaniment (socialization) processes, often facilitated by personal, emotional or psychological factors, such as alienation, a search for identity and dignity, revenge for previous mistreatment, breakdown of communication between authority figures and youth, as well as through virtual communities on social media. Preventing people from joining violent extremist groups thus requires deeper analysis and reflection on the foundations of the social fabric of countries at risk from violent extremism.

Preventing violent extremism

Development practice has a critical role in providing the foundation for preventing violent extremism. UNDP's conceptual framework proposes eleven interlinked building blocks for a theory of change explaining how development can help prevent violent extremism. These building blocks, which will inform global, regional and national strategies for PVE include:

1. Promoting **a rule of law and human rights-based approach** to PVE;
2. Enhancing the **fight against corruption**;
3. Enhancing **participatory decision-making** and **increasing civic space** at national and local levels;
4. Providing **effective socio-economic alternatives to violence for groups at risk**;
5. **Strengthening the capacity of local governments** for service delivery and security;
6. **Supporting credible internal intermediaries** to promote dialogue with alienated groups and re-integration of former extremists;
7. **Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment**;
8. **Engaging youth in building social cohesion**;
9. **Working with faith-based organizations and religious leader**s to counter the abuse of religion by violent extremists;
10. **Working with the media to promote human rights and tolerance**;
11. Promoting **respect for human rights, diversity and a culture of global citizenship** in schools and universities.

The manner in which regions, sub-regions and countries are affected by violent extremism differs. Regional research and region-specific initiatives will therefore be an important aspect of UNDP's approach.

UNDP's plan of action

UNDP's corporate initiative will look at two main components of work: a) a research, policy and advocacy agenda, and b) an action-oriented agenda aimed at meeting prevention targets at regional and country level. Further policy research and analysis will ensure a better understanding of the contextual drivers that have tipped disaffection and radicalization into violent extremist behavior and inform more effective conflict-sensitive programming on the ground.

The initiative will specifically look at the role of women, youth, religious organizations and leaders, and media when analyzing problems and generating solutions, and at the way these play out in diverse socio-cultural and political settings. The research agenda will also contribute to a better understanding of the challenges to achieving effective governance of diversity in multi-cultural and multi-confessional societies. UNDP will also develop advocacy and communications toolkits for outreach to alienated and radicalized groups and individuals.

Using the building blocks for preventing violent extremism UNDP will support the design/adaptation of regional, sub-regional, national and sub-national strategies. Strategies at the national level will not only consider the design of new initiatives (including fast track projects needed to respond to immediate challenges), but will also include an analysis and adaptation of UNDP's existing portfolio of projects, examining how they may positively or negatively influence the drivers of radicalisation and violent extremism. An early warning tool with reliable risk indicators of violent extremism, as well as a programming guide will be developed to support these country strategies. Specific regional action plans will be further tailored at the national level. Initial target groups of countries would be 25-30 countries essentially in four regions (Africa, the Arab States, Europe and the CIS, and Asia-Pacific).

In implementing this corporate initiative, UNDP will work with interested Member States, development partners, representatives of media, academia, the private sector, youth groups, women's organizations and faith-based organizations; and with members of the judicial, law enforcement and security communities who have engaged systematically with these issues. UNDP will also work with global, regional and national research institutions and think tanks and ensure that research is grounded in the daily realities faced by affected communities.

I. INTRODUCTION: THE CONTEXT

The future of humanity is a future of co-existence.[1]

In recent years, the world has witnessed a new wave of violent extremism that has taken the lives of many innocent people of different faiths, races and nationalities. Since the beginning of the 21st century there has been more than a nine-fold increase in the number of deaths from violent extremism and terrorism, from 3,329 in 2000 to 32,685 in 2014.[2] 2015 saw a decline but with 29,376 deaths it was still the second deadliest year on record. OECD countries however saw an increase in terrorist related deaths from 77 in 2014 to 577 in 2015. 2015 was also the deadliest year for the Taliban in Afghanistan (both terrorist deaths and battle field deaths). [3] Five countries — Iraq, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Syria - accounted for 72 per cent of the lives lost in 2015. But violent extremism is spreading: the number of countries experiencing more than 500 deaths has increased from 5 to 11 during 2014, a 120 per cent increase from 2013. The six new countries with over 500 deaths are Somalia, Ukraine, Yemen, Central African Republic, South Sudan and Cameroon.[4] Globally, the list of attacks from violent extremists is increasing.[5] But while numerous events captured international attention, most of the daily victims of violent extremism – in countries in the Arab States, Africa, Central Europe and Asia – stay unnoticed.[6]

All these actions were inspired by ideologies varying from religious fundamentalism to separatism xenophobia and radical nationalism.[7] In essence, extremist ideologies glorify the supremacy of a particular group, whether based on religion, race, citizenship, class or conviction, and thus oppose the idea of a more open and inclusive society.[8]

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1 Minister of Foreign Affairs of Jordan, Global Conference on Youth, Peace and Security, Amman, 21-22 August 2015.

2 Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), 2015: Global Terrorism Index 2015 (available at http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf).

3 Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), 2016: Global Terrorism Index 2016. (available at http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2016.2.pdf).

4 IEP, 2015.

5 It includes (inter alia): Shooting at a nightclub in Istanbul on New Year's evening (January 2017); the truck attack on Christmas market in berlin, Germany (December 2016); killing of the Russian ambassador in Ankara, Turkey (December 2016); Al-Karak attack in Jordan (December 2016); the Ohio State University attack (November 2016); the bomb explosion at a night market in Davao City, Philippines claimed by ISIS (September 2016); the bombing of a Sunni mosque in Pakistan, claimed by the Taliban (September 2016); the New York and New Jersey pipe bomb and pressure cooker bombings (September 2016), the bombings in Hua Hin, Surat Thani and Trang (Thailand) by Islamic fanatics (August 2016); the truck massacre in Nice, France killing 89 people and wounding over 300 (July 2016); the attack on a train in Würzburg, Germany (July 2016); the murder by ISIS of a French priest in his church (July 2016); the attack on Ataturk Airport in Istanbul, Turkey (June 2016), the attack by gunmen on a restaurant in Dhaka (July 2016); the Orlando (Florida) nightclub shooting (June 2016); the suicide bombings in the Brussels Airport and metro station (Belgium, March 2016); the Lahore (Pakistan) suicide bombing in a popular park (March 2016); the Tel Aviv (Israel) knife attack (March 2016) and restaurant shootings (June 2016); the Grand Bassam hotel attacks in Ivory Coast (March 2016); the attack by Al Shabaab on hotels in Mogadishu (February and June 2016); the throwing of petrol bombs at a Moroccan mosque by right wing extremist in Enschede, the Netherlands (February 2016); the attack in January 2016 on a luxury hotel in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), and the attack near a shopping mall in central Jakarta (Indonesia); the killings (December 2015) of 14 people in San Bernardino (California); the attack on a hotel in Bamako (Mali) in November 2015; the shooting of 130 people in the heart of Paris (November 2015); the killing of three people at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs (Colorado) in November 2015; the suicide bombings in Beirut (November 2015); the downing of a Russian plane carrying 224 passengers and crew over the Sinai peninsula in Egypt (October 2015); the killings of 38 tourists at a beach hotel (June 2015) and of 20 people at a museum in Tunis (March 2015); the racially motivated killings in a church in Charleston, South Carolina (June 2015); the killing of 147 students at Garissa University in Kenya (April 2015); attacks on Charlie Hebdo and a Jewish supermarket (January 2015).

6 The majority of deaths from terrorism and violent extremism do not occur in the West. Excluding September 11, 2001, only 0.5 per cent of all deaths from violent extremism and terrorism have occurred in Western countries in the last 15 years (IEP Index 2015).

7 Different groups operating within a single geographical area may have different objectives. For example, Ansar Dine (defenders of the faith) in Mali wants to turn Mali into a national theocracy under Sharia Law, including the Azawad region in the northeast, while the main objective of the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (NMLA) is independence.

8 Religious extremists tend to reject the notion of peaceful co-existence between different faith-based communities; they reject dissent and choice. Extreme right-wing nationalist movements, usually associated with fascism or neo-Nazism, glorify the identity of a race or nationality, and oppose trends towards more diverse societies that can undermine the supremacy of that identity. Extreme left-wing movements oppose capitalism, aim to establish through violence a new politico-economic order, and are sometimes associated with violent anarchistic movements. Separatist groups – often with a strong identity-based inspiration – aim to withdraw from existing entities through independence or some form of political autonomy.

Radicalization, an important precursor to violent extremism, is also on the rise globally. Radicalization impacts different age categories (although youth are more involved than others),[9] different faiths, the educated as well as the non-educated, the employed and the unemployed, and men as well as women (although more men are involved than women).[10] The more recent radicalization of American and European citizens has contributed to an increased global coverage of the debate on the prevention of violent extremism (PVE).

Conflicts in Africa, the Arab States and Western Asia as well as the impact of climate change and natural disasters fuel the waves of refugees and migrants[11] who seek asylum or better livelihood opportunities in neighboring countries, Europe or the United States. Ten of the eleven countries with more than 500 deaths from violent extremism in 2014 also had the highest levels of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) in the world. In 2014, the five countries with the highest levels of terrorist/violent extremist attacks generated over 16 million refugees and IDPs.[12] The unprecedented number of displaced people poses a variety of challenges. The massive influx of foreigners spurs fears that are exploited by extreme right-wing political parties that call for the protection of national borders. There is also a risk that radicalization among refugees and migrants could rise if their aspirations for a better life end in poverty or stigmatization. It is therefore important for both host communities and refugee and migrant populations to work towards integration.

Analysts agree that lasting peace and sustainable development are contingent on the peaceful and inclusive co-existence between groups. A return to divisive politics (us vs. them) will only lead to more conflicts. Different faiths, political parties, human-rights defenders, media, educational institutions and others need to promote tolerance and respect for diversity (in political opinion, in faith, in lifestyle, in social behavior). Future and current political settlements therefore need to adjust institutions and processes so that they can promote the peaceful governance of increasingly heterogeneous societies.

Many recent societal conflicts are interlinked and point to two distinct but related challenges for global, regional, national and local governance: the rise of violent extremism and its spread across national borders; and the governance of increasingly diverse, multi-cultural societies.

This paper provides the conceptual framework for UNDP's development and peacebuilding approach to PVE. Countering violent extremism requires interventions to protect the security of people and assets. Integrated approaches to PVE need to go beyond strict security concerns, and also look at the conditions conducive to violent extremism. Hence, after identifying commonly accepted drivers of radicalization – structural as well as psychological - that can ultimately result in violent extremist behavior, this paper suggests a package of integrated actions aimed at mitigating and preventing violent extremism through more inclusive development and promoting tolerance and respect for diversity. The proposed framework of action is fully in line with the Secretary-General's Plan of Action for PVE.

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9 The average age of the foreign fighter in the western Balkans is 32.6 years; in contrast the average age in France is 27and in Belgium 23.6 (Caleb Odorfer,2015: *The root causes of radicalization in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States*),

10 That pattern seems to be changing. For example, 40% of all Chechen suicide bombers since 2000 were women (http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/31/opinion/31pape.html.). Boko Haram also increasingly uses female suicide bombers.

11 While the terms "refugees" and "migrants" are increasingly used interchangeably in the media and public discourse, there are important differences between the two categories. Refugees are persons fleeing armed conflict or persecution. They seek safety in other countries. They are defined and protected by international law (the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees; the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (http://www.unhcr.org/43ce1cff2.html) and the 1991 UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cmw/cmw.htm).

12 IEP, Global Terrorism Index 2015.

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A State's failure to provide basic rights, services and security not only contributes to growing inequality, it also creates a vacuum that allows non-state actors to take control over state sovereignty and territory. There is a risk that failed political transitions, with weak institutions, law enforcement and checks and balances provide a fertile ground for violent extremism. Weak States thus create opportunities for the physical location of extremist groups.

II. UNDERSTANDING THE RISE IN VIOLENT EXTREMISM

The ability of violent extremist groups to expand and project themselves beyond their national points of origin has grown exponentially over the last decade with the increased movement of people, goods and ideas across borders. ISIS[13] and al-Qaeda, despite their origins in Syria and Saudi Arabia respectively, have struck violently throughout their region as well as in parts of Asia, Africa, Europe, and North America. Boko Haram and al-Shabaab now have significant regional outreach. Tens of thousands of lives have been lost to violent extremism, 32,000 in 2014 alone and 29,376 in 2015.[14] Extreme right-wing hate groups have been equally adept at mobilizing recruits online across national borders. The killing of 77 young people in Norway in 2011 and the murder of nine worshippers at a church in South Carolina in 2015 both originated from the same hate-filled ideology.

Violent extremism is not a new phenomenon and is not associated only with radical religious beliefs. 1.5 million Cambodians were killed as a result of Pol Pot and his Khmer Rouge's brutal, radical policies to purify the country and establish a communist peasant society. The origin of World War II was Nazism, a violent totalitarian ideology that crossed national borders and took the lives of millions of civilians around the world. Ethnically motivated violence - even between communities practicing the same religion - has claimed millions of lives (e.g. most recently in Rwanda and Burundi). But new today are four important developments:

a) The *globalization* of violent extremism or the cross-border nature of a group's reach, including their span of recruitment and operations, which can be sub-regional, regional and for some groups even global.

b) The ability to *use modern communication technology* (social media in particular) in addition to the more traditional networks (universities, religious communities, social groups) ideologically to seduce groups and individuals into carrying out acts of violent extremism across widely dispersed territories.

c) The level of *unpredictability* of violent extremist attacks, due to the random selection of targets (from a girls' school to a concert, a clinic, or an office party) and the fact that a number of violent extremists commit in advance to die while perpetrating their random killings.

d) An *unprecedented access to lethal weapons* including devices that can inflict mass destruction.

Despite important differences in ideology, composition, and targets, groups and individuals practicing violent extremism also share a number of characteristics:

a) A deliberate targeting—with the objective of inflicting harm–of civilians [15], both individuals and communities, based on their identity;

b) A lack of tolerance for multiple narratives that challenge their fundamentalist belief system;

c) A related and violent disregard for civic discourse, culture, scientific or rational thought, human rights, due process, and for the traditional and modern embodiments of law and authority;

d) A reference to symbols, whether religious (Sharia law, the Bible) or other (e.g. the Swastika).

e) In some cases, a rejection of the nation - state or at least of the existing boundaries;

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13 In this framing paper we use the term ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) even though this group has been identified with different names (ISIL, Daesh, etc.).

14 IEP, Global Terrorism Index 2016.

15 In 2014 an estimated 77% of victims of violent extremism were private citizens. In 2000, there were nearly 2000 deaths of private citizens from terrorist attacks. That figure rose to 12,500 in 2015, an increase of 550% (IEP, 2016).

f) In other cases a glorification of the nation - state linked to a rhetoric of supremacy of one people/ class over others (this was the case of the Nazis, the Pol Pot regime, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK)).

g) The statement of individual or group objectives in nihilistic, millenarian, or apocalyptic terms, rather than as realizable political objectives (albeit with the caveat that for many leaders of violent extremist groups, these lofty statements often disguise more practical aspirations for power or territorial control).

h) The systematic discrimination and abuse of women and their subordination through rape, enslavement, abduction, denial of education, forced marriage, sexual trafficking, which has been part of the ideology or practice of several violent extremist groups.

Violent extremism offers critical challenges at the national, regional and global levels, rendering inadequate many of the traditional tools of violence prevention, peacebuilding and democratic governance. It requires policy makers and practitioners to appreciate the unique nature of these ideologies, many of them seeking the wholesale destruction of civic order as opposed to its reform or even restructuring.

Conflicts incited by violent extremism are forcing the displacement of millions. The operations of Boko Haram have displaced 1.2 million people internally in Nigeria and forced more than 200,000 Nigerians to flee to Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Massive migration into Europe also finds its causes in the conflicts and related violent extremist groups operating in Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Afghanistan and other weak states. Of the 970,000 refugees and migrants crossing the Mediterranean to Europe in 2015, 49% came from Syria, 21% from Afghanistan and 8% from Iraq. 58% of the migrants and refugees were men, 17% women and 25% children.[16] Most violent extremist fighters are also men. Violent extremism and the displacement that comes with it thus has a strong gender dimension.

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16 Refugee/migrant data from UNHCR website, accessed 21 December 2015: http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php

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III. THE GOVERNANCE OF DIVERSITY IN SOCIETY

Experiences in development and peacebuilding show that more inclusive and tolerant societies are better able to achieve lasting peace and sustainable development.[17] Over time, societies have become more diverse because of migration and the flow of ideas and people across borders in an increasingly global and interconnected world. In many societies, an increasing belief in the universality of the human rights of all people have also led to more open attitudes towards gender, sexual orientation, religious practice and other forms of beliefs and lifestyles.
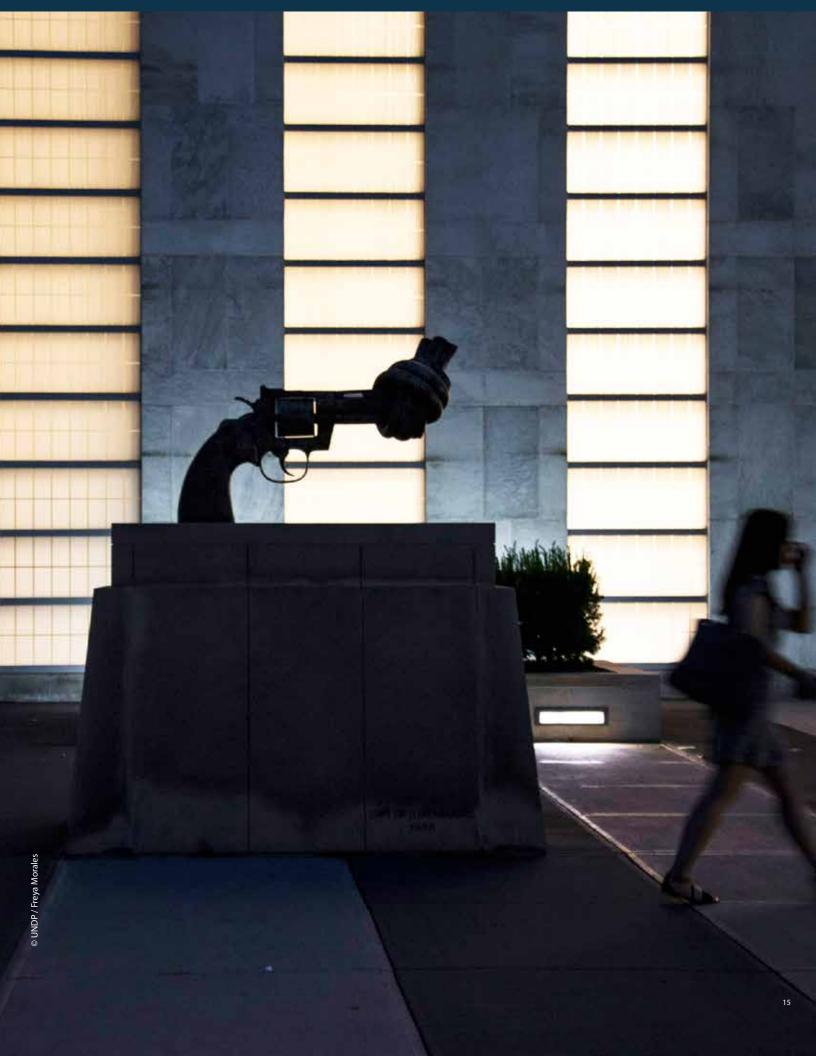
There is a range of evidence about the positive impact of the flow of people across borders on human development.[18] Throughout the world, the number of refugees and migrants returning to their home countries continues to decline as they seek to integrate into the economies of their new homes. This generates challenges of adjustment and adaptation for both residents and immigrants. Negative outcomes can arise in the recipient communities when basic rights, like voting, schooling, housing and health care, are denied to refugees and migrants and when mounting hate speech incites a climate of intimidation, discrimination and even violent extremist behavior. The problem is witnessed in both developed and developing economies. Somali migrants and refugees in Kenya, as well as Syrian refuges in Lebanon and Jordan, have found themselves the subject of local anger and profiling. Similar opinions are now aired in reaction to the massive wave of migrants entering Europe. Diversity, when coupled with exclusive political and economic systems and rent seeking, generates horizontal inequalities that may become a driver for violent extremism.

Tolerance and understanding for diverse ideas and cultures is at the heart of the new development agenda. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 commits Member States to "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels". This goal cannot be achieved in an environment characterized by violent extremism; nor can it be achieved when there is widespread inequality and exclusion. The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda envisages a just, equitable, tolerant and socially inclusive world, where there is respect for human rights, for race, ethnicity and cultural values. With its focus on poverty eradication, reduction of inequality, decent work and well-being for all, and peaceful, just and inclusive societies in which no one is left behind, the 2030 Agenda is to be seen as the broader development framework that will help in the prevention of violent extremism around the world.[19]

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17 UN Security Council, 7361st Meeting, "Maintenance of International Peace and Security", 19 January 2015.

18 Human Development Report, 2009, "Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development".

19 Paragraph 31 acknowledges the cultural diversity of the world and emphasizes the importance of inter-cultural understanding, tolerance, mutual respect and the ethics of a global citizenship. Paragraph 37 calls on countries to cooperate internationally to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration involving full respect for human rights and the humane treatment of migrants, refugees and displaced persons.

IV. EMERGING INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

The challenges of preventing violent extremism on the one hand, and of improving the governance of diverse societies on the other, are both unique and closely linked. At the national and local levels, an increase in the levels of inclusion and tolerance will lead to better governance of diversity, and to societies better inoculated against violent extremism. The need to formulate international responses to violence that are rooted in fundamental development principles is now widely understood and forms part of the 2030 Development Agenda.

The UN Security Council Resolution S/RES/2178/2014 condemned violent extremism, and called on Member States to support efforts to adopt longer-term solutions rooted in addressing the underlying causes of radicalization and violent extremism, including by empowering youth. The resolution provides a basis for the Secretary-General's Plan of Action released in January 2016.

UN Security Council Resolution 2242 on Women, Peace and Security commits to a gender analysis of the drivers and impacts of violent extremism and to increased consultations with women's organizations affected by violent extremism. It also recognizes the differential impact on the human rights of women and girls of terrorism and violent extremism in terms of health, education and participation in public life.

UNDP's own corporate Strategic Plan for 2014-2017 calls on the organization to strengthen its support for inclusive and accountable governance, human rights, the rule of law, and the building and application of national and local capacities for conflict prevention. It also calls for the promotion of gender equality.

UNDP's Youth Strategy (2014-2017), aligned with UNDP's Strategic Plan, the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Youth and the UN guiding principles for youth participation in peacebuilding (2014) articulates UNDP's vision for youth empowerment and engaging with youth as a positive force for change. The new (2015) Resolution 2250 of the UN Security Council on youth, peace and security recognizes the rise of radicalization and violent extremism, and stresses the importance of addressing conditions and factors leading to their impact on youth. The Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism recommends youth participation, leadership and empowerment as core to the UN's strategy and responses.

The European Union launched its Strategy on Counter-Terrorism in 2005, which placed emphasis on the promotion of "good governance, human rights, democracy as well as education and economic prosperity, and engaging in conflict resolution" and on "target[ing] inequalities and discrimination where they exist and promot[ing] inter-cultural dialogue and long-term integration where appropriate." That strategy has since been updated in 2008 and, most recently, in January 2014, in line with evolving trends, means and patterns of radicalization [20].

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20 http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/crisis-and-terrorism/radicalisation/docs/communication_on_preventing_radicalisation_and_violence_promoting_extremism_201301_en.pdf

V. UNDP'S CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

UNDP's conceptual framework for preventing violent extremism looks at potential drivers of radicalization that can ultimately lead to violent extremism. "Radicalization" is not necessarily the problem; the term is becoming associated solely with an anti-liberal, anti-democratic and religiously fundamentalist agenda and its links to the use of violence. However, history is replete with examples of radical movements that have created positive societal change (e.g. gender equality, the human rights movement). Groups such as Occupy Wall Street and citizens' movements in countries as diverse as Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Myanmar, Burkina Faso, and Tunisia have sought progress, change and empowerment through peaceful protest, and have inspired many emulators of the same approach. Danger arises when radical movements start to use fear, violence and terrorist activities to achieve their ideological, political, economic or social aims; it is then that radicalization turns to violent extremism.

The growth in violent extremism around the world, and the attendant risks to development, have been linked to a set of wider phenomena that in varying combinations jointly facilitate the spread of violent extremism.[21] UNDP's conceptual framework highlights the following eight drivers that can lead to radical behavior and result in violent extremist action: (1) the role and impact of global politics; (2) economic exclusion and limited opportunities for upward mobility; (3) political exclusion and shrinking civic space; (4) inequality, injustice, corruption and the violation of human rights; (5) disenchantment with socio-economic and political systems; (6) rejection of growing diversity in society; (7) weak state capacity and failing security; and (8) a changing global culture and banalization of violence in media and entertainment.

In addition to these, people get pulled into radical and ultimately violent movements through well-considered manipulation and accompanying socialization processes (via media, schools, family, religious and cultural organizations), and enabled by personal, emotional or psychological factors such as alienation, search for identity, a sense of injustice, loss of a family member, previous mistreatment or imprisonment etc.). Also, when socialization processes that aim to foster social cohesion fail, individuals become more vulnerable and may get attracted to more radical and violent beliefs and attitudes.

This paper does not focus only on religiously inspired violent extremism. Many drivers also apply to other forms of radicalization and extremist behavior. There are more than 1.5 billion Muslims worldwide — who live peacefully. In 2014 more than 120 of the world's top Muslim leaders and scholars wrote an open letter to the ISIS leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and his followers, arguing that the group's practices are not legitimate in Islam. Muslims on the ground throughout Iraq and Syria are leading the fight against ISIS; they also constitute the overwhelming majority of victims of extremist violence there. An exclusive focus on Islamic extremism belittles the severity of the danger posed by other groups.[22]

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21 A report of the US Institute of Peace, "Countering Violent Extremism," September 2013, argues for a better link between more security-oriented approaches and well-tested peace-building methods to engage with some of these phenomena linked to violent extremism.

22 According to data from EUROPOL's "European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Reports" (TE-SAT) for the years 2010 to 2014, religious violence accounted for only ten of 2,176 total attacks, or 0.5%. Separatists accounted for 70% of the attacks (1,516). Similarly right-wing extremists committed six attacks over the five-year period, or 0.3%, while left-wing extremists committed 164 attacks, or 8%. Left-wing extremists thus committed ten times more attacks over the five-year period than did right-wing and religious groups combined (Odorfer, *The root causes of radicalization*).

Drivers of violent extremism

Economic exclusion and limited opportunities for upward mobility	Political exclusion, shrinking civic space and limited opportunities for participation	Rejection of growing diversity in society	Changing global culture and banalization of violence
Role of global and regional politics	Perceptions of injustice, corruption and mistreatment of certain groups	Rejection of socio-economic and political system	Weak state capacity and failing security

Individual, emotional and psychological factors → **Radicalisation** ← **Socialisation** (friends, family, education, church, mosques...)

Active recruitment

↓

Violent extremism

V.1. Drivers of violent extremism

The drivers of violent extremism are multiple and interrelated, with political, economic, historical, ideological and religious dimensions; they engage and affect communities, groups, and individuals at local, regional, national and global levels. While a global, transnational challenge, violent extremism thrives on and draws recruits through a combination of fanatic ideology and the challenges of inequality, exclusion, unemployment, intolerance, and alienation plaguing many societies and communities.

Role of global and regional politics

Violent extremism is the product of complex political, economic and social circumstances, including colonial legacies, as well as the impact of regional and global geo-politics[23] that have destabilized regimes or inflamed regional or sub-regional tensions. The promotion of international human rights and gender equality that interfered with traditional local customs has also incited violent reactions. The decision to dissolve the Sunni-dominated Iraqi Armed Forces, without alternative livelihoods or socio-political (re-) integration in the country's new structures left thousands of well-trained Iraqi soldiers and officers bitter and unemployed. It is reported that many of these now provide ISIS with military expertise.[24] The power vacuum in Libya has resulted in the emergence of a variety of armed insurgent groups that are destabilising Libya and neighboring countries. International foreign policy positions on the Israel-Palestinian conflict continue to fuel perceptions of a biased approach towards development and conflict. The decision taken by European leaders to accept a large cohort of refugees and migrants from crisis-affected countries is fueling nationalist extremist behaviour.

The convergence of horizontal inequalities

Inequality as a driver of violent extremism has global as well as national and local dimensions. Oxfam International recently reported that the world's richest 85 people have as much combined wealth as the poorest 3.6 billion.[25] In a globally connected world, where information is openly available on the web or through other media, the picture of a global inequality problem does influence violent contestation. At national and local levels, horizontal inequalities (economic, political, social, cultural) linked to a lack of identity and perceptions of injustice that can persist for generations, are important drivers of radicalization. The risk of violent contestation increases when some groups witness inequality across different dimensions[26] (political exclusion; lack of access to assets, land, jobs and social services; and discrimination based on culture, religion or language.)[27] Economic, social and cultural inequalities tend to mobilize people; political inequalities tend to mobilize elites. Policies to correct economic, social, and political inequalities and unequal cultural status[28] should therefore be prioritized in multi-ethnic societies.

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23 ISIS explicitly addresses itself to those still carrying the historical grievances generated by the drawing of the modern boundaries of the Arab world by colonial powers, and it publicly destroys markers of these boundaries.

24 http://time.com/3900753/isis-iraq-syria-army-united-states-military/

25 Oxfam International, "Working for the few", 20 January 2014.

26 Frances Stewart, *Horizontal inequalities as a cause of conflict*, Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity (CRISE), 2010.

27 Ibid. Culture (ethnicity, religion, language) is what binds people together as a group. Cultural inequalities can therefore increase the salience of group identity. There are three important elements involved in cultural status: treatment with respect to religion and religious observation; language recognition; and respect for ethno-cultural practices.

28 Ibid. For example, in Sri Lanka, economic and political exclusion were accompanied by a worsening of the cultural status of Tamils through the adoption of Sinhala as the official language.

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Economic exclusion, unemployment and limited opportunities for upward mobility
When associated with specific identity groups, unemployment and in particular the systematic denial of
opportunities for upward mobility can lead to alienation, frustration and, from there, to radicalization and
violent extremism. The high number of well-educated young people without jobs is an issue of concern in
many developing countries. Statistical data also show a correlation between violence and income inequality.[29]
Unemployment thus provides a potential fertile ground for recruitment by extremist groups. ISIS is reported
to pay some US$500 a month to its fighters, which remains very attractive to uneducated, unskilled, rural
and unemployed men (and increasingly also women).[30] But salary is clearly not the only incentive - Western
jihadists may get more income from social welfare in their home countries – so there are other factors that
pull people into extremist groups.[31]

Political exclusion and shrinking civic space
While economic needs are important, the lack of political inclusion, limitations on freedom of expression and
shrinking civic space are considered primary drivers of radicalization and violence. This has been witnessed
in the Middle East as well as in Central Asia and the Caucasus. The Arab Spring movements enabled many
people to vent their frustrations, yet in many countries the underlying causes have remained unaddressed.
Egypt curbed opportunities for civic engagement after the military coup in 2013. Countries in transition
often find themselves with an inexperienced civil society that is unable to channel people's frustrations
into constructive communication. Even in democratic societies where civic space is abundant, feelings of

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29 Jeffrey Dixon, "What causes civil wars? Integrating quantitative research findings", *International Studies Review* 11, 2009, 707-35.

30 ISIS reportedly pays US$500 a month to fighters, and US$1200 a month to commanders (Jessica Stern and J.M. Berger, ISIS: The state of terror, New York 2015),
al-Shabaab reportedly offers US$500 a month (Anneli Botha and Mahdi Abdile, "Radicalisation and al-Shabaab recruitment in Somalia", Institute for Security
Studies 2014), and groups in Pakistan pay roughly US$250 a month just for joining a group (Government of Pakistan and Cabinet of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 2010).

31 The current estimates are that since 2011 over 40,000 fighters, from 120 countries, have arrived in Iraq and Syria (figures 2016). Europe comprises 21 per
cent of all foreign fighters, while 50 per cent are from neighboring countries (IEP, Global Terrorism Index2015).

alienation can lead people to renounce more open platforms for participation and either act in isolation[32] (e.g. the Colorado Springs shooter and Anders Breivik in Norway) or become attracted to other venues of the like-minded (on social media or places of culture and worship). Perceptions of disempowerment perpetuated *over extended periods of time* can drive some or all of their members towards violent extremism. For instance, strong perceptions of alienation from the national center, as well as of repeated political manipulation by national authorities, have led certain communities in northern Nigeria and central Iraq to offer refuge to Boko Haram and ISIS militants respectively.

Injustice, corruption and mistreatment of certain groups

The correlation between poverty and unemployment and young people's willingness to engage in political violence is not explicit.[33] There appears to be a stronger correlation between political violence and experiences or perceptions of injustice, corruption and systematic discrimination. People do not take up guns because they are poor, but because they are angry and frustrated. Perceptions of injustice may also be fueled by **high levels of corruption** - domestic as well as international (e.g. illicit financial flows). These and protracted impunity for corrupt behavior in particular are important drivers of violence,[34] as they fuel sentiment that violent action is justified when it aims to rectify the inequality and injustice that result from it.[35] The targeting or profiling of particular groups or entire communities can, over time, also provoke violent group reactions.[36] Insensitive policing or profiling in public locations and at security checkpoints and lack of awareness of social or cultural particularities of minority groups can add up to a sense of persecution. For instance, extremist violence in Kenya has risen due to particular profiling of Somali Muslims by security agencies, a challenge that the leadership in Kenya has recognized. Across different faiths and cultures throughout the world sectarian schisms, often politically manipulated, have greatly bolstered violent extremists. The highly securitized response to radical movements is also considered a major factor driving individuals and groups into the arms of violent extremist groups.

Rejection of the socio-economic and political system

Most violent extremist groups offer an ideological alternative to the combined narrative of free markets, democracy and multicultural diversity. This was also the ideology used in the past by groups such as the Baader-Meinhof Group in Germany or the Red Brigades in Italy, rejecting the established global order and many of the parameters of the modern nation-state. The world's growing economic inequality—whereby nearly half of the wealth is owned by 1% of its population – and the sense of injustice that stems from this, are projected by violent extremists as a result of a socio-economic and political system that is rigged to serve a wealthy and powerful few. In contrast, the narrative professed by extremists offers empowerment, order

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32 Since 2006, lone wolf attacks have accounted for 70 per cent of all terrorist deaths in the West, with 80 per cent of deaths in the West from lone wolf attacks being attributed to a mixture of right-wing extremists, nationalists, anti-government elements, and other types of political extremism and supremacism (IEP, Global Terrorism Index2015).

33 In Somalia, youth surveys found no relationship between job status and support for – or willingness to participate in – political violence. In Afghanistan, research found that increases in employment and income did not lead to significant changes in youth support for armed opposition groups.(Mercy Corps, Youth and Consequences, Unemployment, Injustice and Violence, 2015)

34 Institute for Economics and Peace, "Peace and Corruption", 2015.

35 A 2013 survey of Afghans found corruption second only to insecurity as the most frequently cited national challenge. In December 2015, the Chairperson of the National Accountability Bureau in Pakistan said that corruption was the second national threat after terrorism.

36 In Eastern Europe, for example, despite the fact that religious extremism only counts for 0.5% of all attacks, law enforcement is proportionally more focused on religious extremists than on separatists, right- or left-wing extremists. (Odorfer, *The root causes of radicalization*)

and security, with violence as one of the tools for imposing this view on the wider society. Hence they often allude to the necessity for a violent overthrow of a decadent and corrupt system. This perverse ideological narrative seems to appeal to groups and individuals of all ages, across all lines of identity and income.[37]

Rejection of growing diversity in society

Diversity can give rise to feelings of fear or anger because certain benefits that were previously the privilege of a group or community may now be distributed among a larger group, some of whom may speak a different language or belong to a different race, religion or ethnic group. The tendency to maintain the supremacy of a certain group vis-a-vis others can lead to violent extremist behavior (the Knights of the KKK in the United States is a good example of racially-inspired violent extremism). Extreme right-wing nationalist reactions to the wave of refugees and migrants in Europe and the United States are also inspired by a rejection of diversity. Religious extremists usually also reject religious pluralism. Hence, while diversity is not a problem per se, it can become so when specific groups feel their interests or safety threatened by other groups.

Weak State capacity and failing security

A State's failure to provide citizens with basic rights, services and security not only contributes to growing inequality, it also creates a vacuum that allows non-state actors to appropriate state functions, including the monopoly of violence.[38] There is a risk that *political transitions*, with weak institutions, poor law enforcement and inadequate checks and balances, when protracted, provide a fertile breeding ground for violent extremism, which banks on the State's incapacity to control (for example) the trafficking of people, weapons and drugs, which in turn can provide income to extremist networks. Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, Mali, Syria, Somalia, and the Central African Republic are examples of countries where weak state capacity and a deteriorating security situation have led to a power vacuum that non-state groups attempt to exploit and sustain by offering services and security.[39] Weak states not only provide a safe haven for radical extremists, they also do so for international organized crime syndicates, thus providing a fertile ground for the cementing of ties between them.

Changing global culture and banalization of violence in media and entertainment

Societies have become saturated by images of violence, from 24-hour news coverage, movies, magazines, books, and increasingly brutal interactive games. People no longer witness violence as something exceptional, but are entertained by it on a daily basis, which poses serious questions about the way in which societies teach the ethics of violence. Research on the impact of violence on human behavior concludes inter alia that children in elementary school who watch many hours of violence on television show higher levels of aggressive behavior as teenagers. Research has also found that exposure to media violence can

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37 While the majority of ground troops are uneducated and previously unemployed men, the ranks of violent extremists of all sorts often also include individuals from the upper-and middle-income groups usually in positions of leadership. This has been the case with the Red Army Faction, al-Qaeda, the Ku Klux Klan, the Khmer Rouge, etc.

38 The World Development Report 2011, *Conflict, Security and Development* concluded that the risk of violence is higher when internal and external stresses combine with weak state and societal institutions. The report also stressed that when states or sub-national governments do not provide protection and access to justice, markets do not provide employment opportunities and communities have lost the social cohesion to contain conflict, violent groups can fill these gaps.

39 ISIS offers medical services, courts and police, and has even introduced new vehicle license plates, a new taxation system and a consumer protection bureau (D. Byman, *The six faces of the Islamic State*, Brookings Institution, 2015.
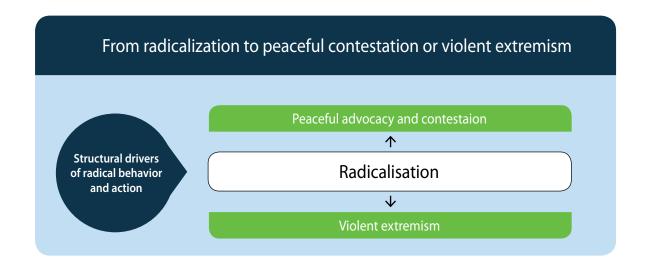
desensitize people to violence in the real world and that the frequent watching of violent video games can increase a person's aggressive thoughts and behavior. Other research rather pointed to a negative impact only on individuals already at risk (e.g. delinquent youth). The routine exposure to violence is thus a factor contributing to a culture of violence exploited by violent extremists.

V.2. From radicalization to violent extremism – where is the tipping point?

People get pulled into radical and violent movements through socialization processes that are usually facilitated by personal, emotional and psychological factors: alienation, search for identity and dignity, revenge because of loss of a family member, previous mistreatment or imprisonment, the breakdown of communication between authority figures and youth, and through virtual communities on social media. These have proven to be powerful incubators of violent extremism in both developed and developing countries,[40] from Somalis in Kenya and Muslim minorities in Paris, Brussels and Moscow, to disenchanted white radicals in the American heartland.

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40 Conventional explanations for why youth join armed groups often focus on employment or availability of opportunities. There is little systematic evidence for this. A very complex mix of factors tending towards a violent assertion of identity and search for self-respect and empowerment in a rapidly changing environment may provide a better explanation. (M. Sommers, *the Outcast Majority: War, Development and Youth in Africa*, Athens, Georgia 2014).

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From radicalization to peaceful contestation or violent extremism

Structural drivers of radical behavior and action

Peaceful advocacy and contestaion

↑

Radicalisation

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Violent extremism

Scholarly analyses of the manner in which individuals and groups are co-opted into violent extremism have pointed to three broad phases: initial *alienation* from the processes and institutions that confer identity or authority in a given society and the effort to seek a different identity; *subsequent radicalization*; and then transition from radicalization to *the conduct of (often mass) violence*. Not all alienated groups or individuals adopt radical attitudes and ideologies, and not all radicals travel an inevitable path to violent extremism. Crucial for the prevention of extremist violence is thus an understanding of the factors leading from each phase to the next:

i. **Alienation:** Alienation can emerge from a persistent pattern of exclusion, humiliation, selective mistreatment, and prejudice towards particular groups or individuals by a community, the state and its institutions, or the wider society. Unequal access - or recourse to - essential services and the rule of law by particular minorities or groups could also be a critical factor. Alienation may emerge from perceptions of gross inadequacy at the individual or group level resulting from the inability to deal with widespread or sudden social or demographic change. In this first phase, relations between a particular individual or group and the wider structures of family, society and the state become characterized by withdrawal, anomie, grievances and decreasing political or economic participation.

ii. **Radicalization:** As frustration and grievances grow, individuals and groups begin to search for organizations or ideologies that can either help to channel those frustrations or can blame them on external actors. Radicalization may thus emerge from the inadequacy of wider systems for dialogue, communication and mediation among groups, the absence of inclusion and tolerance within the social and political environment of a particular community, an inability to contain provocateurs and radicalizing agents, and the absence of viable alternatives for genuine empowerment in both the personal and the public spheres. The weakening of the institutions of the family and the community as instruments of social control plays a role in this process. Radical recruiters focus their attention on vulnerable alienated groups in society, and manipulate their feelings of frustration and anger. Non-violent radical behavior—especially if undertaken purposively with the objective of reforming systems or generating innovation—can be an asset to society and promote positive change. Violent extremism emerges when radical behavior starts to make use of violence as the means of expression.

iii. **Adherence to Violence:** The final phase is what separates radicals from violent extremists. Radicals choose peaceful contestation or advocacy to accomplish their objectives; violent extremists are those who have chosen violence as a means for imposing their world view on society. Violence gradually moves from being instrumental to becoming symbolic. Ritualized murder, such as practiced by ISIS, al-Shabaab or the KKK, becomes a means for branding and for providing collective inspiration. This third phase in a sense also represents the failure of systems for early warning and response with regard to emerging incidents and signs towards extreme violence. Inability to contain the immediate raw materials for violence—including the movement of illicit weapons and persons—and the inadequacy of essential security services also help to create an environment enabling acts of violent extremism.

Alienation however does not explain all actions taken by religious, right- and left-wing nationalists, and by other extremists. Violent extremist groups such as ISIS, al-Qaeda, the KKK and the former Red Brigades have been joined by educated persons from apparently well-adjusted, middle- or even high-income families. A number of extremists were previously engaged in criminal activities. Analysts therefore point to more nebulous, and less well-understood, psycho-social factors (e.g. resentment against particular groups) that seem to orient individuals towards "the cause", where they can seek empowerment through mass violence against others. All potential reasons need to be analyzed, including the centuries-old recruitment of mercenaries for money, as well as the quest of young men for a sense of heroic purpose or the use of weapons to speed up transition to manhood.

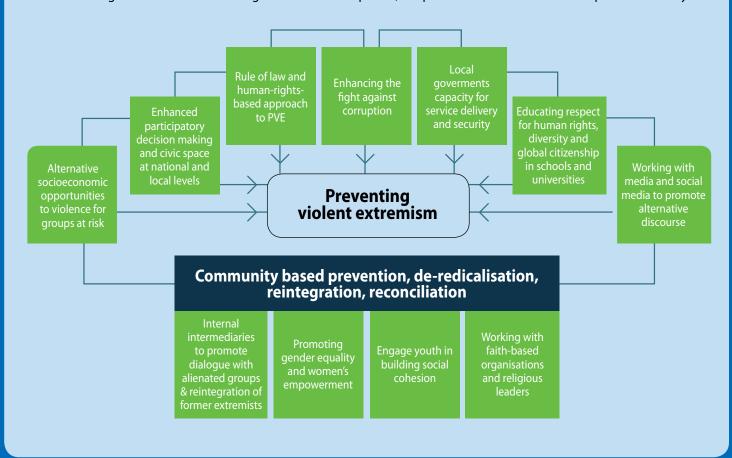## V.3. Building blocks for preventing violent extremism

Violent extremism is indeed a security problem. But the hard-line approach, inspired only by security measures, risks further inflaming violent extremism. In the rare cases where societies have managed to limit the problem, a multi-dimensional approach has been key. For instance, state and civil society have coalesced around a forward-looking manifestation of modern Islam in Indonesia and Malaysia that has served as an important bulwark against violent extremism. In the Western democracies, attacks by right-wing extremists have invited condemnation from across the political spectrum as leaders have sought to reaffirm democratic values and human rights.

As states and communities begin to close their doors to certain groups, the economic potential of a society is reduced and development is negatively impacted. Alongside the economic impact, closed doors also mean an erosion of equal rights, of equitable access, and of the rule of law, hence potentially further amplifying certain drivers of violent extremism. The growth of violent extremism also drains resources from development as a society invests more in security. Growth areas such as tourism and economic innovation are usually also negatively impacted.[41] In already fragile or conflicted societies, this obstructs the search for negotiated solutions and for sustainable peace.

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41 IEP estimates that in 2015 the global economic impact of terrorism was around US$ 89.6 billion (Global Terrorism Index 2016)

Building blocks of regional and national strategies for preventing violent extremism

Preventing violent extremism through inclusive development, the promotion of tolerance and respect for diversity

Rule of law and human-rights-based approach to PVE

Enhancing the fight against corruption

Local goverments capacity for service delivery and security

Enhanced participatory decision making and civic space at national and local levels

Educating respect for human rights, diversity and global citizenship in schools and universities

Alternative socioeconomic opportunities to violence for groups at risk

Working with media and social media to promote alternative discourse

Preventing violent extremism

Community based prevention, de-redicalisation, reintegration, reconciliation

Internal intermediaries to promote dialogue with alienated groups & reintegration of former extremists

Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment

Engage youth in building social cohesion

Working with faith-based organisations and religious leaders

Sustainable solutions for the prevention of violent extremism therefore require an inclusive development approach anchored in tolerance, political and economic empowerment, and reduction of inequalities. UNDP's conceptual framework and theory of change defines eleven interlinked building blocks of strategies for preventing violent extremism:

The building blocks are: (1) Promoting a rule of law and human rights-based approach to PVE; (2) Enhancing the fight against corruption; (3) Providing effective socio-economic alternatives to violence for groups at risk; (4) Enhancing participatory decision-making and increasing civic space at national and local levels; (5) Strengthening the capacity of local governments for service delivery and security; (6) Supporting credible internal intermediaries to promote dialogue with alienated groups and re-integration of former extremists; (7) Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment; (8) Engaging youth in building social cohesion; (9) Working with faith-based organizations and religious leaders to counter the abuse of religion by violent extremists; (10) Working with the media to promote human rights and tolerance; and (11) Promoting respect for human rights and diversity and a culture of global citizenship in schools and universities.

To address horizontal inequalities and perceptions of injustice, the UNDP action plan proposes 4 building blocks:

Promoting a rule of law and human rights-based approach to PVE

There is a need to respond to the imminent threat that violent extremism poses and to reassure fearful populations. The heightened terrorist alerts many countries currently operate under are a reaction to these security challenges. It is likely that the future in many societies will be one of more robust security systems to prevent possible terrorist attacks. But the manner in which security institutions respond to potential threats could lead to the stigmatization of certain groups and could thus become a driver in the radicalization process. UNDP's global initiative will therefore include as one of its pillars for preventing violent extremism, measures to increase the capacity of the justice and security sectors, not only to detect and prevent violent activities, but also to ensure that the proper judicial process and the legal and human rights of those being prosecuted are followed and respected. This also includes ensuring well-capacitated staff to run prison facilities and to offer rehabilitation and re-integration support for inmates in general, and in particular the ones convicted of violent extremism. These initiatives will ensure that prisons become centers for de-radicalization rather than a source of recruitment for violent extremists. This also means working with national human rights institutions to ensure that the delivery of justice, security and surveillance is done with respect for human rights and the rule of law.

Enhancing the fight against corruption

An increased focus on fighting corruption helps to enhance the legitimacy of state institutions and directly contributes to reducing perceptions of injustice and inequality. Countries or local communities that make a solid effort to reduce the petty and grand corruption that fuel people's perceptions of injustice provide a visible sign that the causes of inequality and unequal opportunities are being addressed. UNDP has long experience in building capacities of anti-corruption institutions, fostering capacities of civil society to monitor transparency and accountability in government and in assessing corruption risks in specific sectors and at the local community level.

Creating effective socio-economic alternatives to violence for groups at risk

UNDP's initiative will focus on improving the livelihoods of groups at risk (youth in particular), meaning improving their skills and education levels and ensuring better access to jobs and upward mobility. The combination of these is important as supply-side vocational training projects that are not linked to meaningful employment in the marketplace risk raising expectations that cannot be satisfied, hence possibly aggravating perceptions of unfairness and discrimination. Special attention will need to be paid to adolescent girls to reduce their vulnerability to trafficking and gender-based violence.

Enhancing participatory decision-making and increasing civic space

Economic empowerment through the creation of jobs and livelihoods is not sufficient. It is equally important to ensure that disenfranchised men and women - young people in particular - are provided with the space and platforms for civic engagement and participation in decision-making. UNDP's integrated approach to support inclusive political processes works with women and men of all ages to strengthen civil society capacities and expand and protect spaces for citizen participation in public life, with a special focus on groups experiencing discrimination and marginalization. Regular engagement with political leaders and decision-makers in particular at the local level can yield important peace- and social-cohesion dividends. Creating opportunities for men and women to organize, culturally, politically, or for sports, also helps in managing frustrations. Genuine participation in, or access to, decision-making generates a strong sense of inclusion and tolerance, and hence decreases alienation.

Legislatures can support the adoption of laws that protect fundamental freedoms, and that entrench and strengthen human-rights protections, minority-rights guarantees and gender equality. They can exercise caution in the passage of anti-terrorism legislation that could violate human rights and freedoms. Both legislation and budget allocations can help to address the problem of exclusion. Legislators can also champion national consensus-building around common values. Parliamentary oversight of the executive's use of power can enhance public confidence in the integrity of the executive's activities and make the public more willing to accept the legitimacy of decisions taken to address violent extremism. UNDP's global initiative will therefore include measures to increase the capacity of legislatures and political actors to prevent violent activities.

To address the challenge of weak state capacity, the UNDP action plan will strengthen rule of law and security institutions (see above) but also ensure the extension of state authority to the local levels:

Strengthening local government capacities for service delivery and security

Limited state capacity particularly manifests itself at the subnational level where people have the most direct contact with state institutions, and where the lack of services and security becomes most apparent. Improving the quality of services and of engagement between authorities and people enhances public trust and state legitimacy that are at the root of just and peaceful societies. UNDP support focuses on strengthening the capacities of local institutions, local economic actors, and communities to develop and pursue the realization of local development outcomes that are relevant to local needs and aspirations. By grounding development choices in the needs of the people – particularly the poor, marginalized and traditionally excluded groups - and fostering transparency, accountability, participation and ownership, local governments become forefront players in combating exclusion and reverse long-held perceptions of economic and social injustice.

To address the challenges of weak social cohesion and contestation in society as well as the reintegration of returning extremists into society, the UNDP action plan proposes the following building blocks:

Supporting credible intermediaries to promote dialogue and re-integration

The more a society provides opportunities for dialogue, and for different groups to develop mutual understanding with one another, the greater the chance that trust, tolerance and respect for diversity will flourish. But many authorities today, in particular in urban communities, claim they no longer feel the pulse of their communities and lack the capacity for outreach and communication with those inclined to join the ranks of violent extremists. Conversely, many disaffected and alienated persons complain that they are no longer understood, respected, or accepted by their families, community, or state authority structures. This is partly due to the profound gaps in intergenerational communication generated by modern technology and culture. Approaches centered on an active listening of their concerns, on inclusive dialogue, and on fostering active and open participation in public processes, can have a transformative impact. But critical changes in political and social attitudes and behaviors cannot be manipulated from the outside. They have to emerge from the organic conditions of a society. This requires trusted and credible "insider mediators" able to engage relevant political, social, and civic leaderships, build dialogue across lines of tension, and convene and facilitate critical conversations.

These mediators – traditional or religious leaders (women or men), civic activists, artists, teachers, media anchors etc. with legitimacy to mediate – can play an important early warning role, identifying potential signs of radicalization or recruitment by extremists. The spread of ideologies that preach intolerance for divergent opinions or lifestyles as well as increased gender-based violence are key precursors of extremism spreading into the mainstream. Building on a recently released Guidance Note on support for "insider mediation," prepared jointly with the European Union, UNDP will work with partners to develop in-depth guidance on identifying and working with credible intermediaries in situations characterized by the risk of violent extremism.

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Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment

The systematic discrimination and abuse of women is a strategic and deliberate tactic of a number of violent extremist groups. As the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict has written, "extremist groups like ISIL and Boko Haram view female bodies as vessels for producing a new generation that can be raised in their own image, according to their radical ideology."[42] Even before violent extremism has taken root, key indicators of the spread of extremist ideologies include increased discrimination against women and girls. That is why advocating for and reinforcing the equal rights of women and girls and ensuring that gender equality laws and policies are put in place and enforced, are important building blocks of an action plan to prevent violent extremism.

In many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, South East Asia and the Middle East, women have been at the forefront of efforts to counter the political, social and cultural factors that enable violent extremism. Women are among the most powerful voices of prevention – in their homes, schools and communities - and women's organizations and movements have played a significant role in advocating for inclusion and tolerance. Women's organizations also provide alternative social, educational and economic activities for at-risk young women and men. Hence they can uniquely help build the social cohesion needed to resist the appeal of a violent extremist group. Most of the current counter-violent extremism programs however focus only on men. Women are also absent from the decision-making processes on how to address violent extremism.[43] A closer understanding of the roles women play in relation to violence and conflict is critical to the development of tailored strategies to strengthen resilience against violent extremism and to support victims and survivors. This not only requires reaching out to natural allies such as human-rights organizations, educational institutions and policy-makers already engaged in preventing violent extremism, but also calls for engaging with religious leaders, the media, community leaders, women's organizations, security forces and the private sector to promote values in compliance with international human rights standards and norms. Investing in women's economic autonomy is also critical in preventing violent extremism as women's economic status builds their own resilience, as well as that of their families, against joining extremist groups.

Engaging youth in building social cohesion

More than half of the world's population is under the age of 30, and while most youth are peaceful, they nevertheless form the backbone of the world's paramilitary and terrorist groups.[44] Violent extremism is thus disproportionally impacting young people, as they more easily get lured into radical thinking. The vulnerability of youth seems to be increasing as families lose control over the education and lifestyle of their children, in particular because young people increasingly move to urban areas in search of jobs. When societies fail to integrate youth in meaningful ways, young people are more likely to engage in political violence. Young people however do play an important positive role. Youth are already transforming their communities, countering violence and building peace. Yet their efforts remain largely invisible due to lack of adequate mechanisms for participation, and lack of opportunities to partner with decision-making bodies. UNDP's work on youth therefore supports young men and women and their organizations as leaders and peacebuilders, as promoters of social cohesion in their communities and as actors for early warning and re-integration.

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42 Zainab Bangura, UNSG Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, "Faith in Islam and Faith in Women: why gender justice is key to an Islam without extremes", International Crisis Group, October 2015.

43 Resolution 2242 (2015) of the Security Council stressed the increasing need to ensure that the protection and empowerment of women is a central consideration of strategies to counter terrorism and violent extremism.

44 The name of Africa's most feared terrorist group al-Shabaab translates in English simply as "the youth".

Working with faith-based organizations and religious leaders

UNDP's approach reflects a growing appreciation for the unique role that religion, faith, and religious communities and leaders can play in global development efforts[45]. Religion is a source of motivation and inspiration for the vast majority of people around the world, who act in a spirit of generosity and kindness. Strategies to combat violent extremism must be rooted in a nuanced understanding of the role of religion, ideology and identity and its impact on individuals, communities and institutions. It is also important to counter the growing narrative that it is religion per se that is the cause of violence; manipulation of religious politics and fanatical ideas is the challenge. Religious leaders therefore bear a particular responsibility to help prevent violent extremism. "Intra-faith" and "inter-faith" dialogues at the regional and global levels can promote a counter-narrative to violent extremism, and also develop more concrete

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45 See also UNDP's "Guidelines on Engaging with faith-based organisations and religious leaders" (2015)

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measures at the local and community levels that could be implemented through networks of religious organizations and institutions. Regional context needs to be taken into account.[46]

To improve social cohesion, and promote a more tolerant society, the UNDP action plan proposes two building blocks.

Working with the media to promote human rights and tolerance

To counter the narrative of radical groups to convince people to join their ranks, a communications strategy needs to be proactive, not only reactive to the seductive language used by extremists.[47] UNDP will work with select partners to develop an online interactive platform for those advocating creative approaches to enhance inclusion, promotion of human rights, social cohesion and tolerance, gender equality and women's empowerment; and to reach out to and engage in dialogue with disaffected groups and individuals. The voices of women, youth, and religious leaders as well as victims, survivors and returnees are important in this approach. A communications tool-kit, including a guide for the use of social media, will be developed for use by development partners, governments, media and civic organizations in reaching out to and engaging with those susceptible to violent extremism. UNDP will partner with global and regional media to create messages of tolerance and respect for diversity and gender equality that can be launched on national and local TV, in schools, universities, sports clubs, and religious and community centers to discourage people from joining radical groups or to encourage them to disengage from these groups. The usefulness of "social marketing" approaches and "strategic communications" will also be examined to see how peaceful activism and mobilization might be promoted as a viable alternative leading to individual and collective empowerment.

Promoting respect for human rights, diversity and a culture of global citizenship in schools

The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda pledges to foster inter-cultural understanding and an ethic of global citizenship, which means tolerance, respect for human rights and for different cultures, genders, religions and lifestyles. Education plays a key role in creating this ethic of global citizenship. UNDP will work with the education system including religious, public and private schools that are directly engaged in educating youth. Many religious schools operate unregulated and it is not always known whether their curricula promote global citizenship and respect for human rights or instead preach conservative sectarianism and contribute to radicalization.[48] Experts have therefore called for the standardization of school curricula (including in religious schools) to prevent the radicalization of schoolchildren.

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46 For example, in the Middle East a particular focus will have to be on the Shia-Sunni sectarian and Muslim-Christian divides, and on the development of viable platforms for dialogue. The dynamics in the ECIS region are different, with separatist movements playing a more dominant role in radicalization.

47 In Kazakhstan the government has invested significant financial resources in programs such as shutting down extremist websites, creating their own anti-terrorism website, and changing "the Criminal Code and the Law on Combating Terrorism to combat the use of information systems or educational materials to radicalize others" ("Kazakhstan's Counter-terrorism strategies for the post-2013 Security Environment", a publication of the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program Joint Center, September 2013).

48 In Somalia, recruitment to al-Shabaab has been facilitated by the radicalization of religious and educational institutions.

VI. AN APPROACH BASED ON RESEARCH, ADVOCACY AND ACTION

UNDP's corporate initiative will have two main components: a Research, Policy and Advocacy Agenda and an Action-oriented agenda. Policy research and advocacy will take place at headquarters level, in the Oslo Governance Centre as well as in the Regional Hubs. Action-oriented initiatives will take place at the regional and country office level. While there is a need for a corporate approach to a challenge that has global reach, some regions are more affected than others and the manner in which they are affected by violent extremism, its drivers and various forms of expression, also differs. Region-specific analysis and initiatives will thus be part of UNDP's approach. The initial target group of countries would be 25-30 countries essentially in 4 regions (Africa, the Arab States, Europe and the CIS, and Asia Pacific).

In implementing this corporate initiative, UNDP will work with interested Member States, development partners, representatives of media, academia, the private sector, women's and youth groups, and faith-based organizations; and members of the judicial, law-enforcement and security communities who have engaged systematically with these issues. UNDP will also work with global, regional and national research institutions and think tanks and ensure that research is grounded in the daily realities people face.

The UNDP corporate approach is fully in line with the UN Secretary-General's Plan of Action for Preventing Violent Extremism, which outlines seven key actions: (1) Dialogue and conflict prevention; (2) strengthening good governance, rule of law and human rights; (3) engaging communities; (4) empowering youth; (5) empowering women; (6) education skill development and employment generation; and (7) strategic communications and media. UNDP's framing paper pays particular attention to the fight against corruption, the capacity of local governments, participation and civic space, engagement of religious leaders, and promoting a culture of global citizenship.

VI.1. Policy research and advocacy

A better understanding of violent extremism at the regional, national and local levels requires a deeper examination of the contextual drivers that have tipped disaffection and radicalization into violent extremist behavior. Special attention will be paid to the gender and youth dimensions of the problem. UNDP's research agenda will be steered by the Oslo Governance Centre and conducted in collaboration with the regional hubs and in partnership with academic and research institutions from the North and the South, as well as with UN entities such as the UN Department of Political Affairs, the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute and others. The research agenda will also include a series of global and regional policy dialogues. UNDP will join existing and future research networks and use all its assets, including its global coverage, to support the analysis, dialogue and reflection that could yield contextually specific, operationally grounded, and realistic steps at both the global and the national levels.

> ### Researching solutions against Violent Extremism (RESOLVE)
>
> On the margins of the UN General Assembly in September 2015, stakeholders launched a research network focused on promoting local research on drivers of radicalization and recruitment. The RESOLVE network will help to fill a gap in providing an evidence base for Countering Violent Extremism programs and policies. An international Steering Committee led by the US Institute of Peace (USIP) will work to guide and direct the network. An annual event, the CVE Research Conference, will provide a platform for CVE researchers to share the most current, up-to-date research and analysis of CVE on an international scale. The first CVE Research Conference was held in December 2014 in Abu Dhabi.[49]

Research output 1: Better understanding of the underlying factors driving violent extremism, through comparative analysis.

Analysis of the process of emergence of violent extremism: Scholarly analyses of the manner in which individuals and groups are drawn into violent extremism have pointed to three broad phases: the *alienation* phase, the subsequent *radicalization* phase, and finally habituation to violence when extremists choose to use violence as a tool to impose their views. Specific factors at the local, national and global levels lead to the onset of each phase, and need to be understood. Not all alienated groups or individuals adopt radical attitudes and ideologies, and not all radicals travel an inevitable path to extreme violence. Crucial to the prevention of extremist violence is to understand the factors leading from each phase to the next, as the progression is not foregone.

UNDP will apply a specific gender and youth lens to the research. What are the links between the status of women and gender equality and the ability of extremists to promote a narrative that violates women's rights? How to understand violent masculinities and the transformation of masculinities as a result of radicalization and how that impacts social cohesion? What explains the effectiveness of women's initiatives (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Palestine) to prevent young people from joining radicalized groups and how to work with parents and family? What economic policies are effective in promoting inclusion in the short term?

The research is action-oriented in that it will enable UNDP and its partners to better identify entry points in addressing the root causes and to work with the relevant national and local partners concerned. As such the development agenda will be able to address the issue of violent extremism from within society and initiate structural changes enabling more solid preventive governance structures at local and national levels.

Research output 2: Better understanding of the challenges to achieving the effective governance of diversity and multicultural and multi-confessional societies, through comparative analysis.

Comparative analysis of approaches to the governance of diversity: Countries have followed unique approaches in how best to govern diversity, drawing on their own history and circumstances. A global comparative analysis will focus on the following elements:

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49 The conference produced an edited volume of essays based on the speakers' presentations which can be found here: http://www.hedayah.ae/pdf/cve-edited-volume.pdf

a) The manner in which societies deal with regular and irregular demographic flux, including from immigration, and the sudden influxes of undocumented refugees and migrants. Some countries have developed programs for the economic and political integration of migrants and refugees. Others have been less welcoming, some resorting to offshore detention centers.

b) The manner in which societies address and regulate access to social services (health, education, etc.), employment opportunities, land and immovable property for non-native residents. The United States largely leaves the responsibility to local governments to provide services in accordance with whatever resources they mobilize through taxation and investments. In contrast, many European countries, as well as Singapore, Japan, and South Korea, subsidise these services nationally and make them available to citizens, but not necessarily dependent on residence location (e.g. schools). Developing countries have in turn developed their own variations, but are also challenged with weak institutional and financial capacity to provide such services.

c) The different approaches used to foster greater participation of multiple and diverse groups both in terms of political choice as well as more regular engagement with public decision-making (access to political and government office, right to vote etc. for refugees and migrants).

d) The different approaches used to foster greater tolerance or social cohesion, structured dialogue and the management of inter-group conflict. The United States protects all speech, including hate speech, as long as it does not target named individuals, while many European countries have legally condemned it. Other countries have developed their own approaches, including—in many instances—standing national and local platforms for structured dialogue and the management of inter-group conflict. The research will also look at the role of faith-based organizations and religious leaders.

e) The manner in which the media engage the issue of diversity in society.

f) The manner in which the composition of institutions reflects that of their communities, and their behavior towards members of specific demographic groups (maintaining the distinctiveness of multiple cultures versus policies in favor of social integration and cultural assimilation).

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Research output 3: Advocacy platform and communications tool-kit, developed for outreach to and communication with alienated or radicalized groups and individuals.

UNDP will work with select partners to develop an online interactive platform for those advocating creative approaches to enhance inclusion, social cohesion and tolerance and reach out to and engage in dialogue with disaffected groups and individuals. The platform will include a communications tool-kit with regard to inclusive development, tolerance and respect for diversity — commissioned by UNDP and engaging select partners. The toolkit will include references to the use of social media—for use by development partners, governments, media and civic organizations in reaching out to engage with those susceptible to violent extremism.

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VI.2. An action-oriented agenda at regional and country level

Using the eleven PVE building blocks, UNDP will support the design of regional, sub-regional, national and sub-national strategies for the prevention of violent extremism. The elements of this global framework will be adapted to the regional, national and local contexts. UNDP's programmatic agenda will include:

Policy dialogues: discussing and adapting research findings to context and exchange experiences in terms of coordination, legal frameworks, policies, implementation, monitoring and more.

Program Support: support countries in developing specific programmatic responses including legal reforms, advocacy, communications, inter-faith dialogues, building capacity of governments to reintegrate and rehabilitate former extremists etc.

Lessons Learned: identification and mapping of good practices, promoting south-south exchanges and global and regional collaboration.

PVE grants mechanism: the approach will include support to selected civil society actors for the important and often dangerous work they do.

Strategies at the national level will include an analysis and adaptation of UNDP's existing portfolio of projects, examining how they may positively or negatively influence the drivers of violent extremism. For example, a livelihoods project that mainly provides jobs for elite youth may aggravate frustrations that amplify the risk of radicalization. In addition to an adaptation of the existing portfolio, a country strategy will also consider the need to design new catalytic projects to support PVE. It will also include the launch of fast-track projects needed to address immediate challenges.

Taking into account regional strategies and local context, UNDP will also work with partners to develop:
(a) An "early warning" assessment tool that provides reliable indicators of risks of violent extremism in a particular community or society; and
(b) A programming guide that would address the elements of the two programmatic dimensions mentioned above – new, targeted initiatives, as well as adjusting or adapting existing programs.

UNDP will work with interested member states from both programme and non-programme countries to promote possible twinning arrangements whereby a non-programme country from north or south, facing violent extremist movements, would support a programme country in addressing the root causes of radicalization and violent extremism.

VI.3. UNDP's implementing capacity

UNDP has been working on violent extremism for some time, starting with a global expert consultation on radicalization (Istanbul May 2014).[50] The Addis Ababa Regional Hub, with help from UNDP's Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS), conducted research on radicalization in Africa[51] and convened an expert meeting in Nairobi (July 2015). From there a regional initiative for Africa was developed and launched in November 2015, and research is currently being conducted in eight countries in the Sahel on perceptions of violent extremism. The Istanbul Regional Centre, with BPPS support, conducted a study on the root causes of radicalization in the ECIS Region (July 2015).[52] More evidence and in-depth understanding of the push and pull factors will enable a more refined agenda to adequately address PVE.

In March 2016, through its Oslo Governance Centre, UNDP organized a global policy dialogue on the subject, bringing together a large variety of stakeholders. In 2016, regional workshops were also organised in Dushanbe (Tajikistan), Amman (Jordan), Jakarta (Indonesia) and Nairobi (Kenya). These regional workshops will inform the design of targeted and contextual responses, which will be further tailored at the national level.

UNDP has been intensively involved in discussions with young people and their organizations on how to boost their contribution to securing a more peaceful future. UNDP is currently co-leading the UN interagency Network on Youth Development and will continue to advocate for the positive role that youth can play in conflict prevention and peace-building. An important milestone was the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security (December 2015), recognizing the role of youth as positive contributors to peace, justice and reconciliation and calling on national and local authorities to facilitate an enabling environment in which young actors, from different social, political, economic, ethnic and religious backgrounds can support PVE activities.

With offices in 177 countries and territories, five regional centers, and six global centers, UNDP can tap into a global network of policy and practice and facilitate analysis and action. UNDP's comparative advantage lies exactly in addressing the development dimensions as well as the conflict prevention and peace-building-related solutions of complex problems like violent extremism and the governance of diversity.

Within UNDP, BPPS guides and leads the research, advocacy, policy and programming development for PVE and the coordination/sharing of regional research and analysis, initiatives and experiences. BPPS teams in the Regional Hubs conduct regional research and support the Regional Bureaus and the country offices with PVE programming and implementation of regional and national strategies. The UNDP Country Offices are responsible for implementing country programs and projects and for cross-country/cross-border collaboration.

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50 UNDP," Radicalisation and its implications for development, violence prevention and conflict resolution", Summary Report of the Global Expert Consultation in Istanbul, May 21-23, 2014.

51 Ayesha Imam, "Radicalisation and Extremist Violence in Africa: Framing the issues and the strategies to address them" (paper commissioned by UNDP).

52 Odorfer, *Root causes of radicalization in Europe and in the Commonwealth of Independent States.*

CONCLUSION: THE NEED FOR AN INTEGRATED AND MULTI-DIMENSIONAL APPROACH

The problems addressed in this framing paper call for a global, integrated, and multi-dimensional approach combined with regional and country-specific analysis and initiatives. While responses at regional and country levels are urgently needed and funding needs to be secured, it is equally important to provide a global strategic framework and corporate guidance on policy and programming to support a long-term, coordinated response.

The corporate framework for action presented in this paper provides an indicative plan of action to ensure that innovative programs and initiatives that are already being undertaken and/or planned for the near future – at regional or country level - benefit from a global research-informed policy and programming perspective that has been developed with the engagement of a wider group of partners.

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PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM
THROUGH PROMOTING INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT,
TOLERANCE AND RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY