

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism in Africa

Snapshot

Between 30-31 March 2022, the UN Office of Counter Terrorism (UNOCT) held a high-level parliamentary conference in Doha, Qatar, to stimulate a discussion around 'Understanding terrorist threat in Africa: new challenges and necessary measures'. UNDP was represented by the PVE Programme Specialist who highlighted the UNDP PVE approach on the continent and reflected on the achievements of the Regional Project on Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism in Africa: A Development Approach.

Following the scoping mission on "Strengthening Social Cohesion through Prevention of Violent Extremism and Conflict", and a multi-stakeholder event, organized by the UNDP Cote d'Ivoire Country Office, "Development Solutions to Address Violent Extremism in Cote d'Ivoire", a project proposal on "Youth and women engagement for crisis prevention, social stability, peace consolidation and community violence reduction in Northern Côte d'Ivoire" was developed and successfully approved by the Federal Government of Germany.

The final evaluation of the Regional PVE Project led by a team of independent consultants was completed on 28 February 2022. Overall, the project was perceived to be a highly successful pilot initiative that has built credible and productive partnerships; effective in achieving initial outputs and outcomes; and remains relevant at the continental, regional, sub-regional, and national levels.



Regional PVE Team

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Empowering Civil Society Organizations in Insider Mediation for PVE in the Great Lakes Region

In the complex fragile context of the Great Lakes Region, the UNDP Regional PVE Project, in collaboration with the UNDP Resilience Hub for Africa and the UNDP Global Programme on Strengthening the Rule of Law and Human Rights for Sustaining Peace and Fostering Development, mobilized support to create a civil society organizations (CSOs) Network under the continental Africa wide CSO Network, [Peace by Africa](#), with a focus on Insider Mediation for Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration on a sub-regional level in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda.

From 12-13 January 2022, UNDP jointly with the leading CSO partner of the network – Elman Peace Centre – hosted a symposium of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) on Insider Mediation, Reintegration, Reconciliation and Preventing of Violent Extremism, in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The 2-day event, designed by and aimed for CSOs, gathered 26 civil society actors from the region and demonstrated UNDP's ongoing commitment to promote and enhance enabling environments for CSOs to amplify their peacebuilding efforts. The symposium provided a unique opportunity for knowledge sharing between grass-root civil society organizations from across the Lake Chad Basin. In June 2021, UNDP supported to form a sub-regional network on Inclusive Reintegration, embedded within the Lake Chad Basin Civil Society Platform as well as the Great Lakes Region and established a basis for the locally rooted CSOs to be more broadly connected with each other and collectively create efforts to widen the role of civil society in mediation, reintegration and PVE.



Mission to Comoros to support the formulation of a Social Cohesion Programme

Responding to the request of the UNDP Comoros Country Office, a mission was conducted from 9-24 January to support the formulation of an offer on social cohesion with a PVE lens. The mission also intended to leverage on opportunities for youth, who make up a significant proportion of the demographic and also play a crucial role in the country's socio-economic development and in maintaining social cohesion and stability. The mission team, comprised of a lead consultant, Youth Empowerment Specialist and PVE Programme Analyst, developed an offer to be integrated as a programmatic approach, for short and mid-term goals, which will support the implementation of the 2022-2026 Country Programme Document. In addition to the mission report, a project proposal for the UNDP Windows Fund for urgent social cohesion actions; and a mapping of potential donors/funding sources (traditional and innovative) at national, regional, and international levels, for the implementation of the social cohesion, peacebuilding and prevention of violent extremism agenda were provided to the Country Office.

The social cohesion offer, developed in consultation with various stakeholders, was based on the following methodology:

- Clarification of concepts pertaining to social cohesion (vertical and horizontal dimensions) and PVE
- Rapid assessment of social cohesion through focusing on youth dynamics and risk of violent extremism at regional, national, sub-national and community levels
- Analysis of the identified root causes of conflicts and identification of challenges at national, sub-national and community levels
- Recommendations to strengthen social cohesion and prevent violent extremism
- Recommendations and proposed interventions (short, medium, and long term) to strengthen participation of women and youth in public spaces and in the socio-economic development of the country.

Media Coverage on Prevention of Violent Extremism in Kenya

Communication plays a vital role in prevention. Delivering its mandate to provide accurate information, responsive news covering, and reporting can help counter and prevent violent extremist narratives which also includes misinformation and hate speech. More importantly, media coverage on terror attacks and violent extremist incidents have different effects on the general public. Depending on the selection of vocabulary, the tone set by the news caster, an actual event may be perceived in various angles. Therefore, the engagement with the media has been one of the major mechanisms of creating awareness on radicalization leading towards violent extremism. Editors, who are the gatekeepers in media houses and online platforms, should be abreast with guidelines on reporting and covering terror attacks. This is out of a growing bid to deny terrorists with undue publicity that often glorifies the perpetrators of violence rather than report objectively.

In this context, following trainings held in 2020 for editors and sub editors by the UNDP Kenya Country Office, the National Counter Terrorism Centre of Kenya was invited by various national media houses to elaborate on different topics on violent extremism. In 2021, some debates were aired on the Kenya Television Networks (KTN) News Kenya, a 24-hour based television network that provides current events and affairs facing in Kenya. The discussions, which are a valuable asset to peacebuilders and PVE practitioners, available in English and Swahili on the KTN YouTube account.



- KTN: Expert discussion on media coverage on prevention & violent extremism | Newsroom
- KTN: Reporting on Terror: How should journalists cover terrorism and extremist attacks?
- KTN: How do young people get into terrorism? (Part 1) (Swahili)
- KTN: How do young people get into terrorism? (Part 2) (Swahili)