



NEWSLETTER



REGIONAL PROGRAMME IN PREVENTING VIOLENT
EXTREMISM: UPDATE

July - September 2020



In this quarterly newsletter, for the period July - September 2020, you will get an update of recent activities and upcoming events in the Regional Programme Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism Project in Africa.

PVE REGIONAL PROGRAMME NEWS

UNDP Tunisia's TARABOT Project Adapts in Times of Covid-19 to Support Over 10 000 People

Due to movement of restrictions, UNDP Tunisia faced the challenge of implementing its community-level projects, with civil society organisations, during the Covid-19 crisis. The "TARABOT* - Cohesion to prevent violence" project works to strengthen the capacity of the Tunisian government, specifically the National Counter Terrorism Commission, through training, research and analysis to inform the deployment of national PVE strategy. The project focuses on creating trust in competent, effective and accountable institutions by opening channels of consultation and collaboration with Tunisian society, including academia, the private sector and civil society organisations (CSOs), in the pilot governorate of Médenine, in south eastern Tunisia.



Disinfecting Local Public Institution, Association Nour Féminine, UNDP Tunisia

Since April through July, the TARABOT team consulted with CSOs to share their ideas and suggestions on strengthening social cohesion, engagement of youth and women, and constructive collaboration between civil society and local authorities in the midst of a pandemic. The consultations resulted in the development of six action plans to implement PVE-relevant activities, supporting the distribution of material aid while ensuring transparency and accountability; supporting youth and women through awareness raising; promoting dialogue and collaboration with public authorities and security forces.

Specific interventions targeted training of university staff and municipality officers on crisis management while providing disinfection and protective kits. It also aimed to engage youth by producing awareness raising radio messages for university students, as well as radio airing of songs by youth groups to encourage students throughout the time of their final examinations with messages of hope and solidarity. Importantly, the project provided sensitization services to the public and referred 33 women - victims of domestic violence - to authorities to receive psychological, legal and material support.

By September, implemented interventions indirectly reached a total number of 10 724 beneficiaries (547 direct beneficiaries) of which 68% were women.**

* Tarabot in Arabic means "connections".

** The 547 beneficiaries refer to members of the CSOs and their volunteers, national partners and the selected youth groups and staff at selected universities in Medenine and Gabes. The indirect beneficiaries are the people in daily contact with the direct beneficiaries and who benefit from the effects of the project through communication.

Community Security Dialogues in Mali and Civil-military dialogues in Chad Concretize Action Plans for PVE

The Regional PVE project supported community dialogues in Mali and civil-military dialogues in Chad with the objective to serve as platforms to openly discuss security concerns in these respective communities. In Mali, the dialogues were facilitated through close coordination with implementing partners WANEP (West-African Network of Peace-builders) and Azhar. In Chad, UNDP's field office in Bol supported the dialogues in close collaboration with the governorate, prefects and heads of cantons of the Lac province.



Establishment of Local Committees , UNDP Mali

In the Central-Mali region, the epicenter of violence and insecurity, UNDP, Azhar, a Mali-based NGO, and WANEP have been working alongside local communities in the Djenné-region to develop community driven action plans to reinforce community resilience to actively drive prevention and response to the threats of violent extremism. These have been accompanied by newly revitalized local early warning committees that serve to strengthen community leadership to track and monitor the conflict dynamics, as well as inter-community dialogues and sensitizations efforts that through a community policing approach (CPA) have contributed to restoring trust within communities and between the population and state institutions, including self-defense groups and security actors. As part of this, a documentary was screened to showcase CPA as a model for reinstating confidence between populations and police. These efforts have been exclusively localized, with each municipality leading efforts to drive a more inclusive vision for peace in Mali.

Meanwhile in Chad, 82 participants from 18 Chadian island communities in the townships of Bol and Boudouma Dalla participated in two sessions of civil-military community dialogues. The participants included village chiefs, representatives from CSOs, vigilante committees, women, youth and religious leaders. In addition, 17 soldiers from the defense and security forces were involved in the dialogues. Constructive discussions were held on the main causes of extremism; collaboration between civilians and soldiers; the difficulty of welcoming and reintegrating ex-associates with Boko Haram; and the situation and role of women. Based on these discussions, 19 priority villages were identified and the participants formulated action points and recommendations to the government and UNDP for support, with a focus on strengthening of existing local crime prevention dialogues for PVE-purposes, to enhance capacities for Early Warning and Early Action.

UNDP and Institute for Economics and Peace Launch a Regional Report



MEASURING THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM LEADING TO TERRORISM IN AFRICA



REPORT 2019

Cover Page of UNDP & IEP Report

On 13 August, the UNDP PVE Regional Project and the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) organized a [virtual event](#) to launch a report titled "[Measuring the Economic Impact of Violent Extremism Leading to Terrorism in Africa](#)".

The report, also [available in French](#), estimates that 16 focus countries have lost an average of \$97 billion per year in informal economic activity since 2007. Using primary research, the study examines the impact of attacks on infrastructure and physical damage, formal and informal economies as well as the impact of 'security spending' on development processes. The study shows economic impact of market and infrastructure disruptions in affected communities, including restrictions on movement of people and goods, which is highly relevant in the context of Covid-19.

Providing a first-hand perspective from Adamawa State in Nigeria's north-east, panelist Mr. Mallam Bashiru Ahmad recounted that *environments affected by violent extremism need rebuilding in all aspects, from schools and hospitals to roads and secure infrastructures. While governments are often not in a position to fund the kickstarting of the informal sector, they can provide support in the form of grants and investments in social protection measures.*

One key finding is how violent extremism affects women in the informal economy, shared researcher Ms. Andrea Abel. Since young men are more likely to be recruited or forcefully taken by extremists, the burden on women becomes greater in terms of providing a livelihood and caring for their families. Findings from the report aim to equip key stakeholders and policymakers to make evidence-based decisions and choices to address violent extremism from a sustainable development and inclusive livelihood support perspective.

ONGOING ACTIVITY BRIEF

With support from UNDP, the IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (ICEPCVE) has launched a research initiative that will investigate to what extent the COVID-19 pandemic has been providing a combination of push and pull factors to violent extremism in eight IGAD member states and Tanzania.*

* Although Tanzania is not an IGAD member state, due to the geographical proximity, it is part of the IGAD P/CVE East African Strategy

On 2 September, project staff from Mali, Nigeria (including the Knowledge Hub) and Tunisia shared their experience in community perception studies for PVE and M&E capacity building. While sharing their most recent update on the M&E and data collection, the virtual meeting highlighted the importance in utilizing local government capacity in PVE intervention and exchange of existing tools to better integrate PVE into other domains such as social cohesion and conflict prevention.

In the effort to promote new economic youth-led opportunities by linking the role of livelihoods with PVE in Tanga Region, the UNDP PVE team in Tanzania interviewed 110 youth in 3 districts identified as at-risk by the Regional Government. The survey, complemented by focus group discussions, gathered evidence-based data on the youth employment situation, aspirations, obstacles, employment challenges and opportunities and will ultimately support UNDP PVE and Inclusive Growth teams to jointly shape a new livelihoods programme in Tanga.

The Regional PVE Project is in the process of finalizing a toolkit that will enhance early warning on violent extremism at the national level. The toolkit, developed jointly with the African Centre for the Study & Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), the Peace and Security Department of the African Union Commission (AUC/PSD), ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN) and the West Africa Network for Peace-building (WANEP), will be validated in October 2020. After validation, the pilot phase will commence in collaboration with the Government of Burkina Faso and the Government of Kenya.

On 21 July, UNDP and Radio Ndarason convened a virtual brainstorm on religious narratives in the Lake Chad Basin. The event explored views from a small group of opinion leaders regarding the potential for religious narratives to be 'regionalized' in providing an alternative to violent extremist propaganda, including their potential for reformulation into discussion topics for regional-level radio programming. Participants further discussed about new and emerging religious narratives, and requirements for their credibility in the entire Lake Chad Basin.

The partnership between Radio Ndarason and the PVE Project furthermore resulted in community perception studies on the impact of Covid-19 in the Lake Chad Basin region from June to September. Key findings help to predict how the health crisis has the potential to further compound drivers for violent extremism in the region. For example, 70% of 750 radio listeners from Diffa, Niger, indicated that they lost their source of revenue because of Covid-19. The majority of a small sample (24) of Community Youth Reporters and Journalists supporting the radio station in Northeast Nigeria indicated that they perceived the Covid-19 lock-down causing greater recruitment by VE groups. Lastly, 33% of the over 670 interviewees from Chad indicated that local Imams provide for the most credible source of information to counter Covid-19.

Regional PVE Programme Overview

Preventing and Responding To Violent Extremism in Africa: A Development Approach, UNDP'S six-year regional development project is designed to strengthen the development responses to mitigate the growth of violent extremism in Africa.

The Project is a joint initiative between **UNDP Regional Service Centre for Africa** and **Regional Hub in Amman**. It articulates development response and addresses structural, causative or perpetuating factors. The initiative focus on eighteen countries across Africa.

The project has received support from **the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)**, government agency working on behalf of the Swedish government, and by the **Government of Netherlands**. In the period between 2016 - 2018, the project also received financial support from the Government of Japan and the Government of the United Kingdom.

Read more information about the project in the **Regional PVE Project Document**.

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