

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



**Regional Service Centre for Africa
Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism in Africa: a
Development Approach**



Photo: Lake Chad, Aurelia Rusek for UNDP Chad

Human Rights Observatory in Cameroon and UNDP Somalia Participate in 'Preventing Atrocity Crimes: Role of Countering and Addressing Hate Speech'

On 5th March, as part of the ['UNDP Development dialogues: Rethinking solutions to crisis in the decade of action'](#), UNDP and the UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect (OSAPG) jointly organised a high-level event where, under the Regional PVE Project, Cameroon, Somalia, and their civil society organisation (CSO) partners shared experiences on countering and addressing hate speech.

Complimenting the UN Resident Coordinator for Cameroon's example on hate speech monitoring and early warning/early response, the Human Security Collective (HSC) presented the on-going violations taking place in the Far North of Cameroon in the context of state and military responses to violent extremism. They also shared their experience of using a hands-on approach to mitigate the risk of human rights violations compounding violent extremism and insecurity through the Human Rights Observatory (For further information refer to the 2020 Quarter 4 edition of [PVE Quarterly Newsletter here](#)).

Anshaire Aveved, Executive Secretary of the Human Rights Observatory Steering Committee, shared insights on CSO contributions to a grassroots monitoring approach, and recommendations on using collected data to address grievances.

Responding to emerging hate speech on social media based on misinformation spread by violent extremist groups about COVID-19, UNDP Somalia shared programmatic interventions to identify and address hate speech and incite violence in Somalia with examples from the field. Abdirizaq Omar Bod, PCVE focal point at the HirShabelle Office of the President, Government of Somalia, also shared the roles and responsibilities of Somali religious leaders in addressing incitement to violence. The event focused on the prevention of atrocity crimes by zooming in on one of the main risk indicators – hate speech – as per the Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes. It aimed to raise awareness about the importance of countering and addressing hate speech while stressing the importance of focusing prevention initiatives at the grassroots, including by engaging with local civil society organizations, as per the Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes.

REGIONAL PVE PROJECT OVERVIEW

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

The project is a joint initiative between the UNDP Regional Service Centre for Africa and the Regional Hub in Amman. It articulates development responses and addresses structural, causative and perpetuating factors. The initiative focuses on 18 countries across Africa.

The project has received support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), a 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](#).

UNDP Analyzes Links Between Climate Security and PVE

The Oslo Governance Centre (OGC) partnered with the Regional PVE Project to produce a forthcoming policy brief on ‘Climate Security and Violent Extremism in Africa’.

The purpose of the brief is three-fold: to examine the potential links between climate change and violent extremism in Africa; to assess approaches to preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) in Africa; and to provide recommendations intended to facilitate improved policies and practices. The desk-based research analyzed literature on climate security, violent extremism and intrastate conflict in relation to evidence from cases in Central Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, Mozambique and Somalia.

The policy brief emphasizes the centrality of governance in P/CVE and proposes that climate change is considered a variable that can influence violent extremism, while also suggesting that caution is warranted when it comes to policymaking. Ten recommendations are proposed to national governments and development actors, PVE practitioners, military and security forces, UN peace operations and researchers. The findings also conclude with a recommendation to focus more on violent extremist groups as strategic actors, including how they instrumentalize extreme weather events. Policymakers should also recognize that factors such as state weakness, insurgent financing, core-periphery development, and marginalization of border areas can contribute to the viability of violent extremist groups.

The policy brief will be launched at a panel discussion tentatively scheduled to take place in June 2021 during the Third Oslo Global Preventing Violent Extremism Conference hosted by UNDP and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



UNDP Tanzania Builds Youth Resilience Through Livelihood Intervention

UNDP Tanzania aims to tackle the impacts of unemployment, poverty, homelessness, crime, lack of belonging, sense of marginalization, dropping out of school and inequality which compound to create, particularly for young people, an environment conducive to radicalization towards violent extremism.

UNDP Tanzania’s PVE Project has identified lack of livelihoods and employment opportunities as one of the factors that enable a conducive environment for individuals, particularly youth, to radicalize and become vulnerable to joining extremist groups. To promote new economic opportunities by linking the role of livelihoods with PVE, UNDP Tanzania established a Livelihood Programme to support at risk youth who have previously been involved in activities of violence, victimization and maltreatment.



The programme beneficiaries include school dropouts, individuals holding extremist views and tendencies, and youth who already display intolerant and discriminatory behaviour towards people of other races, ethnicities, political or religious affiliations. A total of 542 at-risk young men and women (260 men, 282 women) aged between 18-25 and living in Tanga, Zanzibar and Mwanza were trained on entrepreneurship skills, food processing, batik, soap, cosmetics and candle making.

At-risk youth were also provided professional mentorship and coaching, on nurturing innovative ideas and sharing practices on how to overcome socio-economic challenges. The Programme is executed jointly with the district and ward officers including Youth Officers, Ward Executive Officers and Community Development Officers.

In addition, the UNDP supported youth to form Income Generating Groups (IGG) to access economic opportunities offered by the government such as loans and grants. UNDP will support established youth groups with start-up kits and provision of mentoring services, thereby helping young people to be more self-reliant and resilient. ***“The program is very helpful for us, you will see now we are not engaging with bad groups because we are concentrating on generating our income,”*** revealed one beneficiary.

In 2021, parents and local leaders acknowledged the positive behavioural change, noting increased focus on income generating activities, assistance in households and regained trust from their communities. Furthermore, the trained youth have started to produce and sell soap and food processing products to local markets while 2 programme graduates secured permanent jobs in the local government authority.

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On-going Activity Brief

The regional project ‘Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism in Africa: A Development Approach’, co-chaired by UNDP’s Regional Service Centre for Africa and the Regional Hub for Arab States, held its 5th Board meeting virtually on Thursday, 21 January 2021.

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On 28 January 2021, the Regional PVE Project organized a “Resource Mobilization for PVE” webinar. With the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, the webinar discussed the likelihood of reduction in ODA flows and the re-allocation of resources to mitigate the pandemic; , and the negative impact of economic growth on funding for PVE. Participants shared insights on the current funding landscape and future projections of donor contributions towards PVE. Sessions included presentations on the landscape of resource mobilization trends in Africa in the COVID-19 context and a recorded interview session with Mohamed Yahya, Resident Representative, UNDP Nigeria (former Regional Programme Coordinator of RSCA). To complement the webinar, an online discussion on the Sparkblue platform was initiated to seek further contributions and share experiences to leverage resource mobilization under the current pandemic.

In January 2021, the Regional PVE Project facilitated a kick-off meeting of the CSO Network on Screening, Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (SPRR) for the Lake Chad Basin, supported by UNDP’s Global Rule of Law Team, the Regional Stabilization Strategy (RSS) team for the Lake Chad Basin, and two leading civil society organizations - Elman Peace and NEEM Foundation. The CSO Network on Inclusive SPRR for the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) project is aimed at broadening the Civic Space in SPRR within the Lake Chad Basin region by further developing and amplifying sustainable, community-driven approaches to reintegration. Elman Peace and NEEM Foundation are in the process of identifying 15 network member organizations and developing a digital platform to launch online engagements.

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