

Helpdesk Research Report

Women and countering violent extremism

Iffat Idris with Ayat Abdelaziz

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Question

What does existing research tell us about women and countering violent extremism (CVE)? How can this be linked to the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda? Describe networks and programmes to promote women and CVE, and summarise key lessons from the latter. What policy guidance have international donor organizations issued on women and CVE?

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1. Overview

There is no consensus on the definition of countering violent extremism (CVE), in part because there is no consensus on the definition of violent extremism (Glazzard & Zeuthen, 2016; Striegler, 2015). The UN Secretary-General's Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism (UN, 2015) does not provide one because consensus could not be reached due to the political sensitivities involved. A working definition cited in *Foreign Affairs* that encompasses the key concepts is: 'the use of non-coercive means to dissuade individuals or groups from mobilizing towards violence and to mitigate recruitment, support, facilitation or engagement in ideologically motivated terrorism by non-state actors in furtherance of political objectives'.¹ The idea underpinning CVE is that violent extremists should not be fought exclusively with intelligence, police, and military means, but the structural causes of violent extremism must also be tackled (Frazer & Nunlist, 2015). Prevention is a major aspect of CVE, aiming to get at the root causes and

¹ <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2015-02-18/why-countering-extremism-fails>

factors that contribute to extremism and terrorism, by engaging with individuals, communities and others. 'It is not enough to *counter* violent extremism – we need to *prevent* it' (UNESCO²).

This review looks at the role that women can play in CVE, lessons from programmes on women and CVE, donor policy guidance and programming approaches, and networks supporting women and CVE. Note that 'women' refers to women and girls: this is consistent with concepts of gender equality, gender violence, and so on, which all encompass both women and girls. [Moreover perceptions of when womanhood starts vary across cultures, with some considering puberty as the point at which a girl becomes a woman.] The available literature largely comprised of government and donor agency reports, think-tank papers and grey literature. Note that some literature refers to just women and CVE, and some to women and preventing/countering violent extremism (P/CVE). For each source, the review uses the term (CVE or P/CVE) used in that source.

Role of women in preventing and countering violent extremism

Women can play diverse roles in relation to violent extremism: The literature highlights a popular misconception that women are 'passive, victims' of violent extremism (OSCE, 2013). In reality they can be mobilisers and recruiters for terrorist groups, play support roles and perpetrate terrorist acts. There is a long history of women actively participating in terrorist groups (Fink et al, 2016) (see examples in Section 2). Perceiving women only as passive victims reinforces gender stereotypes (Oudraat in Fink et al, 2016) and undermines the effectiveness of CVE programmes.

Women can serve as preventers of violent extremism: The literature largely identifies women's potential for P/CVE in relation to the family – spotting signs of radicalisation and delegitimizing extremist narratives – as well in their communities (Majoran, 2015; Calfas, 2016). However, they could also assist security actors to make CVE programme design more effective, and can themselves serve in the security forces to make implementation more effective (Fink et al, 2016; Bhulai et al, 2016). They could play important roles in shaping P/CVE programmes by donor agencies and NGOs, as well as in implementation of these.

Gender equality and empowerment of women are in themselves bulwarks against violent extremism: 'Violent extremism is most effectively countered through increased education, better critical thinking and enhanced opportunities' for women (Couture, 2014: viii). Research suggests that empowering women has positive outcomes on all CVE indicators (ibid: 17). An increasing body of literature shows strong correlation between gender inequality and the status of women and violent conflict (Oudraat in Fink et al, 2016: 28). Promotion of gender equality was included in the recommendations in the UN's Preventing Violent Extremism Plan of Action (UN, 2015).

Challenges facing women in relation to CVE: Until recently the gender dimension was neglected in counterterrorism³ (CT)/CVE efforts (GCTF, 2015a), for example, the 2006 UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy did not specifically mention gender. It was only with a 2014 review resolution⁴ that the UN urged member states to consider women's participation in efforts to prevent and counter terrorism. The 2016 Secretary General's UN Action Plan on PVE also importantly included a pillar dedicated to the role of women and girls and gender equality in increasing PVE efforts. The historic absence of women and girls

² <http://en.unesco.org/preventing-violent-extremism>

³ Defined as 'the practices, tactics, techniques, and strategies that governments, militaries, police departments and corporations adopt in response to terrorist threats and/or acts, both real and imputed'.
<http://usforeignpolicy.about.com/od/defense/a/what-is-counterterrorism.htm>

⁴ UN Security Council Resolution 2178 (2014):

https://www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/docs/2015/SCR%202178_2014_EN.pdf

reflects under-representation of women in CT discussions, and lack of community-level research on women and CVE (Bhulai et al, 2016; Calfas, 2016; Fink et al, 2013). There is also a marked lack of women employed professionally in the security services (Majoran, 2015; Bhulai et al, 2016). However, women's roles in CVE have received increased international attention in recent years.

The women and P/CVE agenda could learn much from the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda from UNSCR 1325: The latter refers to the important role women can play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction, and is well-established. Many lessons from WPS programming would be relevant to women and CVE. However, the WPS agenda has largely developed in isolation from the P/CVE agenda; calls for an integrated approach were only formalised in 2015 (Fink et al, 2013). Other challenges to integration of WPS and P/CVE include: limited opportunities for practitioners from each to exchange good practices and lessons learned; lack of funding for initiatives focused on women and girls in P/CVE; and lack of capacity among some women's groups. In integrating WPS and CVE it is important that gender empowerment not be seen simply as a tool for CVE, but be pursued in its own right (OSCE, 2013; Oudraat in Fink et al, 2016), and security concerns of women/women's groups engaged in CVE be addressed (Huckerby, 2015).

Key recommendations to promote the role of women in CVE include: participation of women in discussions and development of CVE policies and programmes; integration of WPS and CVE agendas; producing context-specific research on women and CVE; promotion of CVE programmes focused on women's empowerment; gender mainstreaming in P/CVE programming; monitoring of CVE programmes from a gender perspective; promotion of partnerships with local organizations to increase outreach and build ownership; capacity building of women and women's organisations; increased representation of women in security services; promotion of gender equality including economic empowerment of women; and facilitation of women's participation in P/CVE programming, including through provision of security for women's groups (OSCE, 2013; GCTF, 2015a; Peters, 2015; Bhulai et al, 2016; Fink et al, 2016).

Programming on women and CVE

Few programmes focus specifically on women and CVE: Far more common are wider CVE programmes in which women are participants/beneficiaries or, to a lesser extent, wider CVE programmes with women-centric components. Women-centric CVE programmes and components generally take one of the following approaches: a) focusing on mothers and building their capacity to influence thinking and behaviour in their children, families and communities; b) building the capacity of women to actively participate in the CVE, peace and security agendas, and c) promoting economic and social empowerment of women, thereby raising their status and voice in their families and communities and reducing their vulnerability to violent extremism (e.g. providing income generating activities so women are not dependent on extremist groups for income).

The review found negligible evaluations of programmes promoting women in CVE: This reflects the fact that recognition of the important role of women in CVE is relatively recent, and as such there are few women-centric CVE programmes and correspondingly few evaluations (Haynie & Oudraat, 2017). There is also reluctance to make such evaluations public (Khalil & Zeuthen, 2014) (see Section 3).

Key lessons emerging from experience to date include (Couture, 2014; GCTF, 2015a; Haynie & Oudraat, 2017):

- **Women can be effective in CVE:** The experience of various women and CVE programmes confirms that women *can* and do play a significant role in P/CVE - *but* they need to be supported and empowered to do so.

- **Need for gender mainstreaming:** It is important to consult women and involve them in programme design and implementation, carry out gender-specific research to inform programming (e.g. are drivers of violent extremism different for men and women? Should the responses be different?), have programmes specifically aimed at women, and ensure gender indicators in programme monitoring and evaluation.
- **No one-size-fits-all solution:** Local context, drivers/factors of recruitment and radicalization to violent extremism and the situation of women can vary hugely from one country/area/community to another. Rather than adopting a 'one size fits all' approach, programme design should be based on rigorous contextual analysis, including of gender dynamics, and tailored to be specific to that local community/population. However, when a successful programme is identified, even if complete duplication is not possible, it could be feasible to replicate elements of the programme in different contexts.
- **Promote gender equality:** Empowering women is a key element of a long-term, sustainable deterrent against radicalization to violent extremism and terrorism. Political, social and economic empowerment of women raises their status within their families and communities. In particular, education for girls and young women should be promoted; education can be used in myriad ways to enhance resilience and reduce radicalization to violent extremism.
- **Governments should develop clearer interagency communication and cooperation.** Gendered empowerment, economic growth, education, and youth engagement should all be components in a coherent, whole-of-government P/CVE programming approach that incorporates all the relevant agencies.
- **Preventive programming requires sustained resources.** This is in keeping with international resolutions, such as the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the SDGs, which see continued investment as important for a sustainable approach to development. The failure to maintain funding can undermine or even reverse any positive impacts of programming. **Build the capacity of women and girls to contribute safely and productively to CVE efforts** in a manner tailored to local contexts, and ensure the security of women and girls involved in CVE. Other risks to guard against include restriction of women's and girls' freedom and rights, and loss of credibility/legitimacy/reputation for individuals and groups.
- **Prioritize engagement with women and groups at the grassroots level** to build upon local practices and support local ownership.

Note that there is a degree of overlap between these programming recommendations and those given above for promoting the role of women in CVE.

Case studies of effective women and CVE initiatives highlight very different approaches: Morocco has sought to empower women economically, politically and socially and give them a voice in religious structures. The latter has been promoted through a training programme for women *murshidats* (preachers), who then work as religious guides within their communities spreading moderate Islam (El Haitamie, 2013). The Mothers Schools initiative has been implemented in a number of countries. It builds women's self-confidence and gives them the skills and knowledge to counter extremist narratives and change mind-sets in their families and communities (Ghosh et al, 2016). Bangladesh sees poverty reduction and gender empowerment as key to CVE, and has sought to promote girls' education, jobs for women in the garment industry, and provision of microcredit to women (Couture, 2014). PAIMAN's 'Let's live in peace!' project in Pakistan combines both approaches: It first raises the status of women by giving them skills to earn a livelihood, then equips them with the knowledge and capacity to recognize and tackle radicalization to violent extremism in their families and communities (Qadeem, 2016).

Policy guidance and networks

A review of donor policies and programming on women and CVE reveals a common pattern. While the role of women in CVE is increasingly recognised as important in donor policies and strategies (see examples below), actual programmes do not reflect this. At best, they will have a few women-centric components, but the norm appears to be 'gender-blind' programmes.

United States: A 2011 US strategy to prevent violent extremism domestically, *Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States*, adopted a community-based approach but was largely 'gender-blind'. The 2016 *Joint Strategy on Countering Violent Extremism* includes the objective to empower locally credible voices to change perceptions of violent extremist groups. Women are to be engaged as key stakeholders in this effort. The strategy calls for expansion of such women programmes, and for these to be informed by rigorous analysis of gender dynamics. USAID has CVE programmes in a number of regions but none of those reviewed were targeted at women, and the majority did not have women-centric components. Women featured as participants/beneficiaries alongside men.

European Union: Policy guidance for EU programming on P/CVE calls for this to be evidence-based, tailored according to the local context, and adopt a multi-disciplinary approach. EU strategies do not specifically stress women's participation, but one of the main documents, the revised EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism, approaches CVE in a wide-ranging manner. In this paper, the Council of the EU resolves to 'promote equal opportunities for all' and to 'support individuals and civil society to build resilience'.⁵ More recent documents - such as a 2016 EU Communication on supporting the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism - do acknowledge the essential role women play in preventing radicalisation, and call for women's empowerment. The review found only one women-centric component in an EU regional CVE programme, STRIVE for Development (European Commission, 2016). However, the gender dimension is taken into account at various levels in programme design and gender-sensitive approaches are adopted as relevant.

United Kingdom: The government's *Prevent* strategy, revised in 2011, aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Priority sectors include education, health, faith and criminal justice. The old *Prevent* strategy had a specific focus on engaging women and women's organizations, but the revised strategy removed this (CHRGJ, 2012). Programmes were found not to be gender-specific, but to have women-centric components/activities.

United Nations: Gender was not mentioned in early UN strategies on counterterrorism, but in recent years the role of women in CT/CVE has gained prominence. UN Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015) on women and P/CVE provides the most guidance on this: calling for gender-sensitive research, participation of women in developing CT/CVE strategies, and greater funding of CVE projects addressing gender dimensions. Moreover, the UN Action Plan on PVE dedicates a whole pillar to the role of women and gender, including marking out a percentage of funding for programmes focused only on women/girls in PVE.

Australia: The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has recently issued a policy framework to guide the inclusion of CVE activities across the country's aid programme (DFAT, 2017). DFAT is also investing extensively in research on women and CVE.

⁵ Council of the European Union (2014), 'Revised EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism', p. 5. Available at: <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9956-2014-INIT/en/pdf>.

Networks

The review found that a large number of networks, groups and NGOs are engaged in promoting women's role in P/CVE (see Annex A for full list). Provision of capacity building and other support to such groups would enable them to more effectively promote CVE.

Need for research

The review highlights the need for research on the role of women in P/CVE, specifically: a) the diverse roles of women in violent extremism (victims, mothers, recruiters, mobilisers, participants, etc.), and the impact of violent extremism on women; b) gender-specific drivers of violent extremism; c) gender analysis of existing P/CVE policies and programming – design, implementation and impact; d) identification of options for gender mainstreaming in P/CVE programmes; and e) lesson learning from individual P/CVE programmes involving/targeting women. Such research will require funding and support, e.g. for technical training of female researchers. By definition, this research will to a large extent be country-specific.

2. Women and violent extremism

Women's roles in committing/enabling acts of violent extremism

The literature highlights a popular 'misconception that violent extremism and terrorism exclusively concern men', with women often seen in situations of conflict and violence 'as passive, victims, helpless, subordinate and maternal' (OSCE, 2013: 1-3). In reality, women can play a range of different roles in relation to violent extremism, serving as mobilisers and supporters for terrorist organisations, recruiters, fundraisers and even as perpetrators of terrorist acts (Bhulai et al, 2016). Perceptions of women solely as victims or passive observers are concerning because, one, they reinforce gender stereotypes (Oudraat in Fink et al, 2016) and, two, they impact negatively on efforts to counter violent extremism (Fink et al, 2016).

Terrorist organisations have been recruiting women for decades: for example, starting in the mid-1980s, Sri Lanka's Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) aggressively recruited women to fight, while in Northern Ireland women were active in republican paramilitaries (Fink et al, 2016). Female suicide bombers have been used by Chechen separatists, Islamic groups in Palestine, ISIS in Iraq, and Boko Haram in Nigeria (Oudraat in Fink et al, 2016). Support from women has been a particularly notable feature of ISIS: women are estimated to make up as much as 10 to 15 percent of the foreign contingent (Bhulai et al, 2016: 2; and Millar in USIP, 2015a).

The reasons for women supporting or participating in terrorist groups are largely the same as those driving men, e.g. grievance about socio-political conditions, fanatical commitment to religious or ideological beliefs, grief about the death of a loved one (Fink et al, 2013: 3). However, the literature also identifies women's participation in violent extremism and terrorism as a reaction against gender-based inequality and discrimination, violence, and denial of rights and opportunities (OSCE, 2013). Oudraat (in Fink et al, 2016: 21) cites a study into the relationship between gender inequalities and terrorist groups: it found that 'gender inequality provides fertile ground for terrorist groups' who 'readily exploit to their advantage the victimization of women in patriarchal societies'. Thus, for example, 'the increase of female suicide bombers is most pronounced in groups operating in societies that relegate women to a lower social status than that of men' (ibid). Women join extremist groups to overcome the feeling of being victimized (ibid: 22).

Women's roles in preventing/countering violent extremism

Women can play important roles in preventing and countering violent extremism. An important publication by Hedayah and the Global Center on Cooperative Security (Fink et al, 2016) brings together contributors from around the world from diverse fields of practice to consider their application to CVE efforts and women's roles in this effort. The study argues that women are often the first to stand up to terrorism 'since they are among the first targets of fundamentalism' and hence, compared to men, 'may be more willing activists in preventing it' (Fink et al, 2016). The literature stresses their role within the family circle as especially conducive to this: 'their traditional roles allow them to shape familial and social norms and promote increased tolerance and nonviolent political and civic engagement' (Fink et al, 2013: 4). Children listen to their mothers because they view them as figures of respect and authority (Majoran, 2015). In addition, women can be critical 'in detecting early signs of radicalization, intervening before individuals become violent, and delegitimizing violent extremist narratives' (Fink et al, 2016: 6). The influence of women extends beyond their families to their communities where 'women can play an important role as mediators as well as authors of counter-narratives challenging violent extremism and terrorism' (OSCE, 2013: 7). Moreover, 'their voices may be especially compelling when they speak out as victims or survivors of terrorist attacks' (Fink et al, 2013: 4).

However, a number of writers question the widespread idea 'that in many cultures women may not be very visible in the public sphere, but wield significant power and influence in the private sphere and hence can counter violent extremism early on' (Oudraat in Fink et al, 2016: 19). Ni Aolain (2015) notes 'the often marginal status of women in the contexts where they are expected to become the "minders and informers" of their sons and daughters for the state' and criticizes 'this rather naive view of women's capacity, in highly fraught communities and societies, where as a practical matter their status is limited, and their equality not guaranteed'. Oudraat identifies empowerment of women as key to them becoming effective agents in P/CVE. The literature does point to correlation between empowerment of women and reduction in violent extremism (Couture, 2014), and conversely, between gender inequality and violent conflict (Oudraat in Fink et al, 2016).

Additional roles women can play in CVE are supporting security actors and those engaged in CVE through provision of vital information and intelligence that might not otherwise be accessible to security actors (Calfas, 2016). They can also inform CVE strategies and programmes to make these more effective. 'Women are frequently victims of both terrorist attacks and counter-terrorism measures, and as such they can point out when preventive practices are counterproductive and cause backlash in their communities. This type of information can be decisive to avoid creating or sustaining conditions conducive to terrorism' (OSCE, 2013: 5).

Women can join security agencies and work on law enforcement and CVE themselves. Female law enforcement officers, for example, are often better at building trust with the community and at community-oriented policing – vital elements of CVE (Fink et al, 2016). 'Policewomen are vital to enhancing counterterrorism and P/CVE efforts because they are more likely to reduce the occurrence of human rights abuses, access marginalised communities, limit the use of excessive force, and more efficiently deescalate tension' (Bhulai et al, 2016: 7). Okenyodo (in Fink et al, 2016: 13) draws on the Nigerian context and women's participation in law enforcement and military agencies to argue that 'women are effective at CVE efforts in circumstances where men may not be able to intervene due to gender differences and cultural expectations'. Finally, women can play a wider role in policy-making, both in public service and as political leaders.

Challenges in promoting women in CVE

As well as the 'standard' gender barriers faced by women, e.g. cultural norms and biases which restrict their roles, movement and opportunities, the literature identifies a number of specific challenges women face in the context of CVE:

Resolutions and strategies

Fink argues that little attention has been paid to integrating a gender dimension into UN and many national counterterrorism efforts (Fink et al, 2013: 2). The 2006 UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy did not explicitly mention the roles of women, and this was only added in later strategy reviews. This absence of women was confirmed by a survey of 139 Security Council resolutions between January 2013 and May 2015 broadly addressing terrorism and counter-terrorism: 'the results demonstrate a dearth of gender awareness....Only a handful of resolutions make reference to women and frequently only stress the prohibitions against sexual violence in situations of violence and terrorism' (Ni Aolain, 2015). She accounts for this as partly due to women's issues being marginalized 'in the name of advancing broader geo-political interests'. Bhulai et al (2016: 7) point out that 'in the space of UN counterterrorism discussions, women have historically been underrepresented'.

There has been some progress though, with the role of women and violent extremism receiving increased international attention. In 2014 and 2015 the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) organized a series of workshops looking at the roles of women in relation to violent extremism (Oudraat in Fink et al, 2016).⁶ The role of women was recognized in the February 2015 White House Summit to Counter Violent Extremism, and was considered by the EU and the European Commission's Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) in P/CVE efforts (ibid). In December 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution 'A World Against Violent Extremism' urging member states to place more stress on understanding the drivers of violent extremism, particularly for women and youth, and to develop targeted and comprehensive solutions (Bhulai et al, 2016). Similarly, the UN Secretary-General's 2016 Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism urged them to maintain gender perspectives in P/CVE efforts (ibid).

Representation in security agencies

One important way to promote women's participation in P/CVE would be through their representation in security agencies. Majoran (2015) highlights the marked lack of women employed professionally in the security services, or indeed in government policy-making. Bhulai et al (2016: 7) claim that, despite the critical importance of female police in CVE efforts, 'a number of structural, cultural and societal challenges and often a lack of political will to advance women's meaningful participation in the security sector have hindered their equal representation'.

Research on women and CVE

The literature highlights the need for more research on women and violent extremism (Fink et al, 2013). Calfas (2016) notes that, despite females accounting for 48.3 percent of the population of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) 'the counterterrorism community has done little to assess their roles in preventing, promoting and participating in violent extremism in the region'. Bhulai et al (2016) call for

⁶ Report of 21-22 October 2014 GCTF-OSCE workshop on 'Advancing Women's Roles in Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation that Lead to Terrorism' available at: http://www.hscollective.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Final-report_OSCE-GCTF-Vienna-Workshop-on-Women-and-CVE.pdf

more research (quantitative and qualitative studies) on women's specific roles in relation to P/CVE, and for this to be shared with civil society and non-government entities who may need it to effectively implement policies and programmes – something that often does not happen.

Women, peace and security (WPS) agenda

There has long been recognition of the important role women can play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction. This was laid out in UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (SCR 1325), approved in 2000.⁷ It calls for equal participation of women in decision-making related to peace processes, protection of women from violence, in particular sexual violence in armed conflict situations, and gender mainstreaming in conflict management and peace building efforts. A series of subsequent Security Council resolutions have reinforced the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda laid out in SCR 1325: 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013)⁸ and 2242 (2015).

Integration of CVE and WPS

The diverse roles of women in relation to violent extremism, and the serious impacts of this on women and girls - including increasing sexual violence, e.g. by ISIS (Oudraat in Fink et al, 2016) - necessitate engagement on CVE by the WPS agenda, and vice versa (Bhulai et al, 2016). 'Experts and practitioners working to advance women's inclusion in peace and security processes...can provide valuable insights to strengthen policy and practice on preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) at the international, national and local levels' (Bhulai et al, 2016: 1).

Despite the obvious links between the WPS and P/CVE agendas, these have developed in 'bureaucratic silos': efforts to address armed conflict are insulated from those relating to counterterrorism (Fink et al, 2013). '(T)here has been little discussion on integrating terrorism prevention efforts into broader conflict prevention efforts, or vice versa, and considering the roles of women in these activities' (Fink et al, 2013: 2). Resolution 1325 did not specifically address terrorism and violent extremism, nor did many of the follow-on resolutions. It was only in 2013, with approval of Resolution 2122, that terrorism was mentioned; even this only called for increased attention to WPS issues in all relevant thematic areas of work, including threats to peace and security caused by terrorist acts (Bhulai et al, 2016). Resolution 2242 was the first to call for an integrated approach to WPS, counterterrorism and CVE, and for the principles enshrined in Resolution 1325 to be applied to counterterrorism and CVE efforts.

Challenges

There are a number of challenges in integrating CVE and WPS efforts. One, because the WPS agenda and CVE agendas are largely separate, 'few opportunities exist for practitioners in conflict prevention, counterterrorism, or gender issues to interact and inform the development of more nuanced, tailored and effective prevention strategies' (Fink et al, 2013: 2). Indeed, Oudraat goes so far as to claim: 'There is a real divide between the WPS community (the majority of whom are women activists) and the intelligence and security community (the majority of whom are men). These two communities do not mix and often show disdain and distrust toward each other' (in Fink et al, 2016: 26). Some of this could be attributed to security classifications of CVE work which cannot be shared with NGOs or people in security agencies without the requisite clearances.

⁷ Full text of UN SCR 1325 available at: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>.

⁸ For details see SCR, 2014: p. 3-4.

Two, there are concerns that the goal of gender empowerment will become subordinate to the CT/CVE agenda. '(G)ender equality and women's empowerment should not be valued only to the extent that it helps national security and counter-terrorism. Gender equality should be promoted in its own right and women should be empowered to participate fully in society, not be instrumentalized to "spy" on their communities' (OSCE, 2013: 5). Oudraat echoes this: 'gender equality and women's empowerment should not be reduced to a counter-terrorism policy, but should be pursued in its own right'. Related points (risks) are that other threats to women's security are neglected (Huckerby, 2015) and that women's rights could be compromised or bargained away in order to bring about security gains (ibid; and OSCE, 2013). One example of the latter is impunity for terrorist violence specifically targeting women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings (Huckerby, 2015).

The literature also highlights the dangers women and women's organizations are exposed to when asked to take on a security role. 'Too close an association between national security and women's rights agenda invites backlash from violent extremists' (Huckerby, 2015). Indeed, a number of writers note that women end up being squeezed between terrorists/violent extremists, who impose restrictions on women and deliberately target them, and counter-terrorist policies, such as restrictions on funding of non-state groups (Fink et al, 2013). Many women's groups have actively opposed counterterrorism policies, particularly those taking a military approach (Oudraat in Fink et al, 2016). Lack of funding, and limited capacity on the part of women's organizations are additional challenges (Bhulai et al, 2016).

Recommendations for promoting role of women in CVE

The literature makes a number of recommendations for promoting the role of women in CVE, and integrating the CVE and WPS agendas. The following list summarises key recommendations from a number of wide-ranging reports and studies, including by the OSCE (2013), Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) (2015a), Global Center on Cooperative Security (Bhulai et al, 2016) and a multi-contributor volume produced by Hedayah and GCCS (Fink et al, 2016):

- Promote dialogue and participation of women and women's organizations in discussions about CVE policies and strategies, and seek their input in the design of CVE programmes (OSCE, 2013; GCTF, 2015a). Without the inclusion of women, particularly from civil society and the security sector, CVE initiatives are likely to overlook many drivers of violent extremism, (Peters, 2015), e.g. influences within families pushing young people to radicalisation or specific factors drawing women to violent extremism.
- Evaluate lessons and draw on experience of women's involvement in prevention and resolution of conflicts and peace-building to identify effective approaches for promoting women in CVE, and to identify synergies and areas for collaboration (OSCE, 2013; Bhulai et al, 2016). Develop and update national action plans on WPS to ensure they integrate a P/CVE dimension (Bhulai et al, 2016).
- Integrate a gender dimension in all CT and P/CVE work, including ensuring a gender dimension is incorporated into assessments, considering the impact of P/CVE programming on women and girls from design to implementation and evaluation (Fink et al, 2016).
- In contexts where gender dynamics play an important role in recruitment and radicalization to violent extremism, introduce CVE programmes specifically focused on women (Fink et al, 2016).
- Monitor CVE programmes from a gender perspective, looking at the extent of women's participation and their roles in such initiatives, and the impact on women. Include specific gender benchmarks (Fink et al, 2013; Fink et al, 2016; OSCE, 2013; GCTF, 2015a).

- Support quality, context-specific research on women and CVE, including drivers of female radicalization, to inform gender-sensitive P/CVE policy and programming (GCTF, 2015a; Bhulai et al, 2016; Fink et al, 2016).
- Promote partnerships with and between local women’s organizations and build local ownership – this is key to effective programme implementation. Support community outreach programmes that raise awareness and inform women on identifying and responding to violent extremism and terrorism (Fink et al, 2013).
- Facilitate the creation of local, national and regional platforms for information exchange between women-led civil society organizations working on CVE and WPS, and government officials and security actors (Bhulai et al, 2016).
- Build capacity of local women’s organizations and of women to promote CVE and implement CVE programmes (GCTF, 2015a; Bhulai et al, 2016; Fink et al, 2016). This includes capacity building for mediation, community engagement, communication, monitoring and evaluation, administration and programme management.
- Increase recruitment and training of women in the security services, including as police, investigators and interrogators, and remove obstacles to their retention and career advancement; carry out gender sensitization of all security sector personnel (OSCE, 2013; GCTF, 2015a; Fink et al, 2016; Bhulai et al, 2016).
- Promote gender equality in its own right: empowerment of women is an important goal in the context of promoting human rights and sustainable development, irrespective of P/CVE. Nonetheless, it can also support the latter (Oudraat in Fink et al, 2016);
- Avoid using women and women’s groups solely for counter-terrorism purposes, as this can lead to negative consequences for those groups, e.g. facing threats from extremist groups, undermining efforts to promote gender equality (if these become equated with a security agenda) (Fink et al, 2013).

3. Programmes on women and CVE

Programme approaches and lessons

This review found very few programmes specifically focused on promoting the role of women in CVE. More common were CVE programmes which included women as participants/beneficiaries alongside men. USAID’s Regional Peace for Development (PDEV) programme, for example, in Burkina Faso, Chad and Niger, applied a holistic, community-led approach to address socioeconomic, political and cultural drivers of violent extremism. Initiatives under the programme targeted both men and women: in Burkina Faso vocational training of youths included training of young women in tailoring; a PDEV funded project in Chad to promote peaceful co-existence involved 1,289 people, of whom 285 were women. Other programmes have a wide CVE focus, but include components aimed at women. One example is the EU’s Strengthening Resilience to Violent Extremism (STRIVE) programme in the Horn of Africa. Among other initiatives, this funds projects which engage with women’s organizations to help build greater resilience in communities vulnerable to radicalization.

The few programmes identified by the review as designed primarily to promote the role of women in CVE are discussed in the case studies. These were found to generally take one of the following approaches: a) focusing on mothers and building their capacity to influence thinking and behaviour in their children, families and communities; b) building the capacity of women to actively participate in the CVE, peace and

security agendas, including engaging with policy makers and security actors; and c) promoting economic and social empowerment of women, thereby raising their status and voice in their families and communities.

A second point to highlight is that the review found negligible evaluations of programmes promoting women in CVE. As well as the dearth of such programmes, this can partly be accounted for by the fact that ‘women-centric P/CVE programming is in its infancy’ (Haynie & Oudraat, 2017): even CVE programming (non-gender specific) is a relatively recent development – ‘traditional’ efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism relied on military and security interventions. Another factor is reluctance to make evaluations of such programmes public (Khalil & Zeuthen, 2014). This often stems from the fact that publicising that small, grassroots organisations are receiving foreign government funding to push back against violent extremists could make programme beneficiaries and implementers a target of such groups (Oudraat in Fink et al, 2016). Further, applying security language to community-based activities could undermine the efficacy of the programming (ibid).

With regard to lessons, many of the recommendations made in Section 2 above have relevance for programme design and implementation. Notably: the need to consult women and involve them in programme design, the need to carry out gender-specific research, the need for programmes specifically aimed at women, and the need for gender indicators in programme monitoring and evaluation. A number of additional lessons/findings emerged from the review. Perhaps most important, the experience of various women and CVE programmes confirms that women *can* play a significant role in P/CVE - but they need to be supported and empowered to do so. ‘As mothers, sisters, wives, teachers and politicians, women offer a unique, essential perspective when addressing and identifying CVE problems and solutions. When empowered in culturally relevant and appropriate ways, women can serve as extraordinarily effective bulwarks against extremism’ (Couture, 2014: 50).

Couture’s report, drawing on the experience of Morocco and Bangladesh from around 2000 to 2014 (see ‘Case Studies’), makes the following programming recommendations:

- ‘There is no better long-term, sustainable deterrent against terrorism and radicalization than educated, prosperous, safe, resilient and empowered communities’ (Couture, 2014: 50). Hence CVE strategies should entail efforts to empower women and promote gender equality.
- Context, drivers of extremism and the situation of women can vary hugely from one country to another and even from one area to another. Rather than adopting a ‘one size fits all’ approach, programme design should be based on rigorous contextual analysis, including of gender dynamics;
- However, when a successful programme is identified, even if complete duplication is not possible, it could be feasible to replicate elements or components of the programme in different contexts. E.g. as part of its CVE measures Bangladesh is promoting education of girls (see below): this could certainly be adopted by other countries;
- CVE can be promoted through programmes that are not labelled as such: indeed, in some cases doing so could place local actors at risk or could be counterproductive;
- Funding for grassroots efforts aimed at empowering women economically, socially and politically needs to be increased;
- CVE is a long-term effort to change mind-sets. As such CVE programming needs to be sustained, which means resource allocations need to be sustained.

A 2017 policy brief on policies and programming in relation to women, gender and terrorism identifies a number of problems with women-centric P/CVE programmes (Haynie & Oudraat, 2017). Firstly, many do more harm than good by neglecting to integrate a gender perspective and by reinforcing gender

stereotypes. For example, many programmes often depict women as helpless victims and overemphasise the role they can play as mothers (ibid: 1). Women are most definitely often on the frontline as victims of violent extremism, but the failure to recognise their wider roles limits the scope and impact of CVE programmes. Secondly, the tendency by policy makers to rely on military and law enforcement responses means that the work of many women and women’s organizations active in conflict prevention have not gained the recognition they deserve. Thirdly, policy-makers continue to search for one-size-fits-all policies and programmes that can be applied across cultures and conflicts. In reality no such ‘silver bullet’ exists; successful programmes reflect the cultures or states that they target. Gender relations also differ widely, so that an approach that works well in one country could be completely inappropriate and ineffective in another. Fourthly, whole of government approaches to CVE – and which integrate a gender perspective – are still lacking. This is partly because of the parochial nature of major government agencies, which means that intelligence is not easily shared, communication networks are rough and evolving; changing such attitudes and approaches takes time. Fifthly, preventative local programming, particularly programmes carried out by women’s groups, is often not acknowledged as part of a whole of society approach to P/CVE. This in turn means such groups and programmes are not funded. Where they are, donor demands in relation to monitoring and evaluation are often beyond the capacity of local groups.

Based on the above critique, Haynie and Oudraat (2017: 2) make the following recommendations for women-centric P/CVE programming:

- Responses to violent extremism should reflect a broad and contextual understanding of how both men and women are radicalized. Policy responses should recognize the increasing body of research that points to gender inequalities (e.g. lack of access to justice) as a root cause of radicalization (OSCE, 2013; Oudraat in Fink et al, 2016).
- Effective P/CVE policies should be tailored to the environments that enable extremism, as well as those cultural and structural characteristics of conflicted states that could affect or inhibit any P/CVE programming. Furthermore, the ideal programmes will envision eventual leadership by local and national governments, including civil society actors. The inclusion of local leaders and agencies from the start should be encouraged.
- Programmes should emphasize prevention versus prosecution and should incorporate gender analyses.
- Governments should develop clearer interagency communication and cooperation. Successful programmes build on one another and are tech-savvy and fluid, with the potential for full interagency communication and coordination. Gendered empowerment, economic growth, education, and youth engagement should all be components in programming as part of a coherent, whole-of-government approach that incorporates all necessary agencies.
- Preventive programming requires sustained resources. It will also require a different approach— one that is less hands-on and displays a willingness to take chances and trust that local actors and communities might know best. In addition, local civil society organizations often do not have the capacity to deal with large grants and their accompanying reporting requirements.

Another useful source of recommendations for programming on women and CVE is the 2015 Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) *Good Practices on Women and Countering Violent Extremism*. Some of the recommendations made there have already been included in the list given in Section 1. However, a number have particular relevance for programming:

- Build the capacity of women and girls to contribute safely and productively to CVE efforts in a manner tailored to local contexts. Capacity building should be tailored to local needs and focus at

the grassroots level. It will often entail imparting skills (e.g. coalition building, communication, mediation) and knowledge (e.g. recognizing warning signs of radicalization) (GCTF, 2015a: 7).

- Ensure the security of women and girls involved in CVE, including in civil society, taking into account when labelling their efforts as such might be dangerous or counterproductive. Guidance should be taken from women and women's CSOs, including how to label their activities and necessary security measures (ibid).
- Prioritize engagement at the grassroots level with women in civil society and CSOs working on women's rights, to build upon local practices and support local ownership. Taking guidance from local women will ensure that CVE is both context-specific and localized. Programmes seen as externally-driven or imposed from above could lack legitimacy and even generate a backlash, especially if they relate to advancing gender equality (ibid: 10).
- Engage girls and young women through education and within formal and informal educational environments to counter violent extremism. Education can be used in myriad ways to enhance resilience and reduce radicalization. Education should also address gender inequalities and gender-specific factors that may drive violent extremism, including among girls and young women (ibid: 11).

Case studies

Morocco's murshidat programme

Following terrorist attacks in Casablanca in 2003 which killed 45 people and wounded dozens, the Moroccan government launched a series of measures to counter extremist ideologies and promote a moderate form of Islam. Women played a key role in this effort. As well as taking steps to promote women's participation in politics, economic empowerment, and access to education and healthcare, in 2004 the government reformed the country's family laws (Moudawana) – based on Islam – to bring these into line with secular standards of women's rights (El Haitami, 2013). However, even more significant were the government's efforts to promote women's participation in the country's religious structures.

The main way this has been done is through a programme launched in 2006 to train female religious preachers or *murshidat*. Under the *murshidat* programme, 50 female preachers and 150 imams graduate each year. Women enrolling for the programme must meet a number of requirements: be under 46 years of age, have memorized at least half of the Quran and have a bachelor's degree. The one-year training consists of a wide range of courses including Islam, Arabic, sociology, economics, law, history and preaching and public speaking. Students learn from senior scholars from the Supreme Religious Council as well as academics appointed by the king. Upon graduating, they are awarded work contracts – usually in locations close to their families – and paid a monthly salary of 5,000 DH (USD 580).

The aim of the programme is to train women so they can offer religious counselling to other women, particularly in under-privileged and deprived areas, and be a voice of tolerant and moderate Islam. The *murshidat* work primarily in mosques but also in other institutions such as schools, prisons and hospitals. El Haitami notes that they have advantages over both female activists operating within the Islamist movement, who face restrictions from the government, and 'westernised' liberal female activists. Compared to the latter, 'they have succeeded in attracting a broad following across different social classes...(they) seem to have a more influential role in promoting the rights of Muslim women. They have proven to be more accepted by the masses because they represent the voice of moderate "Moroccan Islam"' (ibid). 'Mothers, wives and sisters with questions, and who are perhaps "in need" are now able to turn to other women with authority who can help and offer guidance. For example, if a woman feels a

family member is becoming radicalized, it is now a real possibility that such a concern can be conveyed to a *mourchidate* when that avenue for action never existed before.’ (Couture, 2014: 32).

The programme has been criticised as primarily aimed at marginalising the country’s Islamist movement, and as a means of showing Morocco’s liberal credentials to the West (El Haitami, 2013). Nonetheless, it is widely seen as a huge success: as of 2014 there were over 500 *murshidats* working in communities with women and youths in Rabat and Casablanca (Couture, 2014). One analyst identified a number of positive outcomes: women have been given a bigger role in religious affairs; many sensitive women’s issues have become less of a taboo; it has helped overcome the traditional notion that mosques are an exclusive space for men when it comes to preaching and guidance; and misconceptions held by some women, as a result of strict fatwas issued by some extremists, have been addressed.⁹

Mothers’ Schools

The Mothers’ Schools programme is an initiative by Women Without Borders (WWB) and their Sisters Against Violent Extremism (SAVE) which seeks to strengthen CVE efforts by engaging mothers as an embedded security ally. It entails, firstly, building the confidence of mothers and helping them ‘realize their own strengths, qualities and inherent abilities’ and, secondly, providing them with the skills to detect early signs of radicalization leading to violent extremism in their children and what to do (Ghosh et al, 2016). The programme comprises of home-based workshops or forums, each lasting 2-3 hours, and conducted over a ten-week period. The schools target mothers and wives, and are often established in remote areas where women and females are usually undermined and the discussion of extremism and radicalization is taboo. The curriculum has twelve modules, taught by trained local leaders, through which ‘mothers strengthen their own self-confidence and participate in activities and dialogues to understand the psycho-social development of children, communication techniques with teenagers, conflict resolution and the role of mothers in reducing violence and promoting empathy’ (Ghosh et al, 2016: 46).

This review did not come across any evaluations of the Mothers’ Schools programme. But a possible indicator of effectiveness is the fact that, having started in Tajikistan, it has since spread to a number of other countries: India (including Kashmir), Nigeria, Pakistan, Indonesia, Zanzibar and, in 2015, was launched in Austria. A literature review of the role of education in CVE concluded that, ‘Since its launch in 2008, the Mothers’ School project has yielded great success in strengthening women’s resilience, power and confidence in dealing with radicalization issues in their own families and communities’ (Ghosh et al, 2016: 46).

SAVE also have two related programmes: a ‘Mothers MOVE!’ campaign, and Witness in History project. The ‘Mothers MOVE!’ campaign is somewhat similar to the Mothers’ Schools. SAVE collaborates with existing mothers’ groups or creates new ones to bring women together in workshops for income generation and CVE. Topics covered include building self-confidence, benefits of moderation, and signs of radicalism in young people. Again, while no information about the workshops was available online, their success can be gauged from the fact that they are being implemented in a large number of countries: Yemen, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Israel, Egypt, Nigeria, the UK and Ireland (Ghosh et al, 2016: 47).

⁹ Dr Muhammed al-Zahrawi cited in al-Ashraf, H., ‘Morocco’s Murshidat religious guides preach tolerance and moderation’, *The New Arab*, 29 March 2016.
<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/society/2016/5/29/moroccos-murshidat-female-religious-guides-preach-tolerance-and-moderation>

The Witness in History project collects the narratives of those who have experienced or witnessed violent extremism in order to offer different role models for young people to consider. It seeks to 'create new pathways for the young generation to gain access to testimonials of the consequences of terrorism, in order to expose them to the reality of the dangers of extremist ideologies'.¹⁰ The aim is not just to document eyewitness reports, but also find ways to better understand extremist events and analyse the problems to create solutions. The review was not able to find details about distribution of these narratives, or their application in creating solutions.

PAIMAN Trust initiatives in Pakistan

PAIMAN Alumni Trust is a Pakistani NGO that aims to reach out to women and young people in conflict-affected FATA and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province by raising awareness of the impacts of radicalization and extremism, and of the role they can play in combating it. PAIMAN has/is carrying out a number of initiatives in this regard.

The 'Let's Live in Peace Project' targets mothers, as these are seen as shaping the morals and values of their children, and having the influence to create positive relationships within the family and community. However, PAIMAN recognized that in order to get sons, brothers and others to listen to women in what are traditionally highly conservative and patriarchal societies, they first had to raise the status of women. This was done through economic empowerment: training and guiding women to give them marketable livelihood skills, in turn contributing to family income and giving women themselves confidence. The latter was reinforced through building women's capacity for critical thinking, enabling them to recognize indicators of radicalization and violent extremism in individuals and in their communities, and find ways to address these through dialogue and community peacebuilding. At the same time, the project engaged with community leaders and elders to gain their trust. Use of teachings from the Quran to counter the extremist narrative put forward by radical groups was a critical element in this.

PAIMAN founder Musarrat Qadeem acknowledges that progress was slow: 'The metamorphosis of mothers from ones celebrating their sons' martyrdom in suicidal attacks into agents of positive change in the community was a tedious and uphill process. It was extremely difficult for mothers in a patriarchal and conservative society to convince others to embrace their approach' (Qadeem, 2016). Nonetheless, as of April 2016, PAIMAN had trained 745 mothers and helped them to form 30 mothers' peace groups called Mothers Tolana ('together' in Pashto). The Mothers Tolana hold sessions with other mothers in their respective communities and teach them non-violent ways to address extremism. 'PAIMAN mothers' peace groups contribute immensely to community reconciliation, trauma healing and stabilization during these most difficult and uncertain times in the area because of the trust that they build within their communities' (ibid). As of April 2016 some 15,000 female community members in KP and FATA had been educated and sensitized through this approach, thereby sustaining the whole process of community peacebuilding. Young people whom the mothers are able to reach and convince away from extremism, are supported through PAIMAN youth engagement and deradicalization programmes. They also form Youth Tolana which work in the same way as Mothers Tolana, engaging with other young people in their communities and countering the extremist message.

According to Mossarat Qadeem, the lesson from PAIMAN's experience is 'that women can be very effective in transforming conflict and addressing issues of violent extremism, provided that they are economically empowered, are knowledgeable about the issues and have the necessary discussion and negotiation skills' (ibid).

¹⁰ <http://www.women-without-borders.org/projects/underway/37/>

A related PAIMAN initiative seeks to involve women in promoting social cohesion across religious divides. Targeting female madrassa teachers, female activists of all faiths and female leaders of religious political parties, PAIMAN built their capacity and supported them to form a coalition 'Women of faith building social cohesion in Pakistan'. Coalition members work together to promote inclusion, equality and interfaith dialogue in their communities: they celebrate one another's religious festivals and support each other in cases of violent attacks against one or other of their communities. Taking this process forward at national level, PAIMAN organizes women to carry out advocacy through peace rallies, appearing on radio and television discussion programmes, participating in roundtable discussions, and producing and disseminating publications on the impact of violent extremism on women and women's role in CVE.

PAIMAN is also involved in a similar, wider effort called Amn-o-Nisa, Pakistan Women's Coalition Against Extremism, launched in October 2011. This came out of an initiative by the Institute for Inclusive Security, in partnership with the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), to mobilize women leaders in Pakistan to develop unified advocacy platforms, deliver concrete recommendations around peace and security, and forge relationships between these women and policy-makers. Institute members conducted four workshops in Pakistan over a period of time, leading in October 2011 to the formation of Amn-o-Nisa. The coalition operates at two levels: a) at national and international level, where members advocate for policies to address the drivers and consequences of extremism; and b) at local level where members conduct peacebuilding activities to promote tolerance and curb radicalization. Amn-o-Nisa comprises women with diverse experience in women's activism, advocacy, the law and governance (Mirahmadi, 2014).

Bangladesh: economic empowerment of women

A terrorist attack on the Bangladesh Prime Minister in 2005 in which she was injured and 19 people killed, led to intensified CT/CVE efforts by the government. While these included major security components (crackdowns, arrests, etc.) the country's approach to CVE specifically has been rooted in understanding and addressing the root causes. Poverty is seen as one of the main drivers of radicalization and extremism. Based on this the government has fully integrated a number of anti-poverty and, critically, women's empowerment programmes in its CVE strategy. Bangladesh sees women's empowerment and gender equality as important for curbing extremism in the long-term. Three key initiatives in this regard are: micro-lending programmes targeting women, primary school attendance by girls, and garment factory jobs for women. The impacts of these are mutually reinforcing.

Giving women access to micro-credit, notably through the Grameen Bank, has enabled millions in Bangladesh to set up small businesses, become economically empowered, in turn leading to greater education, family planning and personal empowerment (Couture, 2014). 'Increased independence also extends a woman's ability to contribute to CVE; when she can protect her personal rights and safety, she can better protect the rights and safety of those who are close to her' (Couture, 2014: 23). Bangladesh's readymade garment industry is the largest in the world, and the largest employer of women in the country: approximately 80 percent of the workforce is women, largely from rural, poor and uneducated communities. Working in the RMG sector enhances women's 'capacity to negotiate with dominant family members..... to contribute to their families and thus to be perceived and valued as earning family members' (Couture, 2014: 24). Education gives people options, alternatives to extremism: 'if you send your children to school, they will have distance from radical ideas and the allure will fade' (Bangladeshi diplomat cited in Couture, 2014: 25). Education of girls is particularly important to empower them economically and socially, and enable them to effectively counter violent extremism.

Bangladesh's success in promoting women's empowerment can be seen from the figures. Some 8 million Bangladeshi women have benefited from micro-credit provision, accounting for around 98 percent of total such borrowing in the country (Couture, 2014: 23). Since micro-credit began there has been a huge increase in use of contraceptives by women in rural Bangladesh – seen as an indicator of socioeconomic empowerment. Bangladesh has achieved gender parity in female primary and secondary education, and the ruling party (Awami League) has mandated that 60 percent of teachers in rural areas must be women.

However, the impact of such efforts at female empowerment on countering violent extremism is more ambiguous. Couture claims that the number of terrorist incidents in the country has dropped significantly since 2005; indeed, up to the 2016 attack on a Dhaka café in which several people – many of them foreigners – were killed, there had been no significant large-scale incident since 2005 (Couture, 2014: 20). But this overlooks the increasing number of targeted killings of secularists, gay rights activists, academics, members of religious minorities and foreigners in Bangladesh in recent years.¹¹ At least 40 such killings have taken place since 2015 (CEP, 2017: 1). The shift in focus to specific target groups makes them qualitatively different from attacks in the early-mid 2000s. The Holey Bakery attack itself was unprecedented in scale and operational planning. It should be noted that alongside women's empowerment, Bangladesh has seen an apparent increase in religious conservatism. More broadly, critics argue that the government has done little to address the root causes of violent extremism, focusing instead on 'kill and capture' efforts by law enforcement agencies. Since the July 2016 bakery attack, Bangladeshi security forces have cracked down on Islamist militants; police have conducted a series of raids on suspected extremist hideouts in the country, collectively killing around 50 militants (CEP, 2017: 1).

4. Policy guidance and networks

United States

Policy guidance

In 2011 the US government released a domestic CVE strategy entitled *Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States*. The strategy adopted a community-based approach to building resilience against violent extremism, concluding that 'our best defences against this threat are well informed and equipped families, local communities and institutions' (CHRGJ, 2012: 1). Despite this, the document was 'gender-blind', with no explicit focus on reaching out to women or on considering gender in programme design (ibid: 8).

The 2016 *Joint Strategy on Countering Violent Extremism*, issued by the Department of State and USAID, provides a roadmap to mobilize America's diplomatic and development tools to counter violent extremism outside the United States. USAID addresses gender within this space by better understanding and addressing the underlying socioeconomic and political drivers of violent conflict, fragility and violent extremism. The strategy calls for expansion of programmes to engage women in this manner, and for such programmes to be informed by rigorous analysis of existing gender dynamics in local communities, and to take into consideration that women's perceptions of violence and security can be different to those of men.¹² The 2016 interagency update to the National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security

¹¹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-36203768>

¹² <https://medium.com/foggy-bottom/the-department-of-state-and-usaid-release-joint-strategy-on-countering-violent-extremism-f612b1a7b325#.vjfwm83an>

(released in December) reflects the intersection of core WPS objectives and countering violent extremism and forthcoming implementation plan updates will as well.

USAID is conducting regional research and analysis to improve its understanding of the key issues impacting and influencing women and girls as related to violent extremism, including the positive and negative roles women and girls may play. These case studies and resulting recommendations will help USAID better address key gender and violent extremism challenges. Learning from these research activities will inform USAID's integration of gender based approaches into broader CVE programming, as well as the development of stand-alone gender and CVE activities. Two cases are now publicly available: i) *Afghan Women and Violent Extremism: Colluding, Perpetrating or Preventing?* (Ahmedi & Lakhani, 2016); and ii) *People Not Pawns: Women's Involvement in Violent Extremism Across MENA* (USAID, 2015).

The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) has produced a kit for activists and practitioners: *Charting a New Course - Thought for Action Kit: Women Preventing Violent Extremism*. The kit aims to help users engage in reflection and dialogue on violent extremism, and raise awareness of the roles of women and women's organizations in dealing with violent extremist ideologies. The kit has three sections: section one examines the question of gender and why it is important to consider both men and women in addressing violent extremism; section two deals specifically with women and the dynamics of extremist violence, inviting thinking about women as actors in preventative efforts as well as perpetrators of terrorist acts; section three raises issues related to the various ways in which to engage communities, including members of the security sector.

Programmes

USAID has CVE programmes that address drivers of violent extremism in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. It also supports cross-regional programmes in the Maghreb and Sahel, in collaboration with the State Department and other agencies. USAID addresses the drivers of violent extremism through a holistic, community-based approach, such as through initiatives providing assistance to communities in Niger, Chad, and Burkina Faso designed to reduce risks of instability and increase resilience to violent extremism. These initiatives address socioeconomic, political, and cultural drivers of violent extremism and focus particularly on addressing the concerns of young men and women, who are at greatest risk of being targeted or recruited by violent extremist organizations. Finally, in FY16, USAID funded the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to build community capacity through an innovative training curriculum, focused on women leaders in Central Asia and the Balkans.

USAID also supports missions to programme innovative approaches to address CVE from an inclusive perspective. It empowers missions to undertake gender analysis which moves beyond stereotypes of women and CVE, using that analysis to explore the role that gender, not just women, plays in creating vulnerability to recruitment, such as perceptions of masculinity. Refining and expanding this analysis enables the Agency to design programmes that will better respond to the key drivers of violent extremism. USAID works with missions to build analytical capacity, commissioning research and designing and implementing pilot programs, which are operational in several missions.

The US State Department is helping integrate women into its CT and CVE efforts through capacity building, participation, protection, and engagement. For example, it has supported projects promoting women's involvement in CVE efforts, including a global network of women committed to countering violent extremism in their communities, to train other women to recognize the signs of radicalization, and to mediate conflict within their communities in order to reduce violent extremism; training for

female civil society leaders and dialogues with law enforcement personnel, in partnership with local women's networks, to devise CVE strategies and pilot prevention activities; funding a documentary film tour highlighting the devastation and tragedy faced by Somali diaspora communities in Europe whose youth are recruited to fight with al-Shabaab; and, in northern Nigeria, a Hausa-language multimedia platform that provides alternative messaging to political violence and violent extremism, and promotes inter-ethnic and interfaith tolerance. Information on US CVE/CT programmes in individual countries can be found in *Country Reports on Terrorism 2015* (US State Dept., 2016).

Despite the policy commitment to gender in CVE and the initiatives by USAID and the State Department outlined above, a recent assessment still found that 'programs that directly address women's role in violent extremism and CVE/PVE are to date few and far between' and 'in general...gender has not been integrated into CVE activities, ongoing project metrics, or evaluations' (Ahmedi & Lakhani, 2016: 12-13). It cites a report which 'found that CVE programming—even by entities such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) that would normally call for gendered indicators for other kinds of programming—do not require them because of the assumption that these interventions are focused on men' (ibid: 13).

European Union

Policy guidance

The EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism provides the basis for its 'Prevent' work – one of the four pillars of its 2005 Counter-Terrorism Strategy (EPLO, 2016). The strategy, revised in May 2014, identifies priority areas for EU action, both within and outside of the EU, including the promotion of equal opportunities, community-level efforts, counter-narratives and capacity-building. It calls for joint efforts between local, regional, national and international level stakeholders to support vulnerable countries to counter terrorist recruitment and to build community resilience to radicalisation.

EU programming on P/CVE follows a number of general principles:

- it must be evidence-based;
- the local context must be taken into account and programming tailored accordingly;
- a multi-disciplinary approach must be adopted, involving a range of actor beyond traditional law enforcement and military services, including health, education, good governance and human rights agencies, and civil society.

While advocating a comprehensive approach, EU strategies on countering violent extremism do not specifically stress women's participation or provide guidance for promoting this. However, more recent documents do take gender into account. The 2015 European Parliament resolution on preventing recruitment and radicalization of EU citizens (EP, 2015) highlights the growing number of young women targeted by terrorist organizations and calls for programmes aimed at engaging women; it also acknowledges the essential role women play in preventing radicalization. Similarly, the EU's Regional Strategy for Syria and Iraq as well as the Da'esh/ISIL threat includes as a key objective women's empowerment, recognising that 'sustainable political solutions or effective strategies against terrorism and violent extremism cannot be pursued without women's active participation in these efforts'.¹³

¹³ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/03/16-council-conclusions-eu-regional-strategy-for-syria-and-iraq-as-well-as-the-isil-daesh-threat/>

Programmes

A 2016 European Commission report *STRIVE for Development: Strengthening Resilience to Violence and Extremism* details EU CVE programmes (European Commission, 2016). It notes that the EU's approach entails addressing the conditions conducive to violent extremism, and building capacity to reinforce the rule of law and promote development, as well as strengthening vulnerable communities through capacity building (ibid). The report is a non-exhaustive list which includes global initiatives, regional programmes and country programmes to counter violent extremism. Some of the programmes are CVE-specific (this is the main focus) while others are described as CVE-relevant (i.e. CVE falls within wider goals). Global initiatives include Hedayah and the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), the global fund to prevent violent extremism. Regional programmes focus on the Horn of Africa, the Sahel-Maghreb region, and the Middle East and North Africa. Country CVE programmes are described for Pakistan, Israel and Jordan (cross-border), Cote d'Ivoire, Tunisia, Lebanon, Philippines and Israel. This review found only one component that was gender-centric: an initiative under the Horn of Africa regional programme to strengthen the capacity of women's organizations in Puntland and Somaliland to fight violent extremism (EC, 2016: 20).

United Kingdom

The UK Government's *Prevent* strategy, revised in 2011, aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism (UK, 2011). The revised document notes that *Prevent* depends on a successful integration strategy, but recognises that integration has a far wider value than security and counterterrorism, and promises that the government will not securitise its integration strategy. To ensure its distinction from the latter, *Prevent* does not fund integration projects. One analysis thought this would lead to reduction in funding for women's programmes (CHRGJ, 2012). Priority sectors under the *Prevent* strategy include education, faith, health, criminal justice and charities, as well as the internet. While the old *Prevent* strategy had a specific focus on engaging women and women's organizations in preventive efforts, the revised strategy removed this (CHRGJ, 2012). This is despite the fact that the revised strategy sees gender equality as a basic feature of British values and, conversely, identifies gender inequality as indicative of dangerous ideologies and institutions where there are risks of radicalization.

Actual DFID CVE programmes were found to not be gender-specific, but to have women-centric components/activities. The National Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP) in Nigeria, for example, aims to reduce violent conflict; it focuses on wealth creation, service delivery and poverty reduction. Under NSRP a P/CVE national policy framework and action plan is being developed which promotes women's engagement in CVE.

United Nations

The 2006 UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy did not specifically mention gender, but the role of women has gained prominence in recent years, as reflected in UN Security Council WPS resolutions and the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. UN Security Council Resolution 2242 on women and P/CVE provides the most guidance on this. It calls for integration of gender as a cross-cutting issue in WPS, CT and CVE agendas; for gender-sensitive research and data collection on the drivers of radicalization for women and the impacts of CT strategies on women and women's organizations in order to develop evidence-based policy and programming responses; for participation and leadership of women and women's organizations in developing CT/CVE strategies, including through creating counter narratives, capacity building, and empowerment of women; and for greater funding of CT/CVE projects addressing gender dimensions.

Australia

Policy guidance

In March 2017 the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) launched a new policy framework *Development Approaches to Countering Violent Extremism*, to guide the inclusion of CVE activities across Australia's aid programme (DFAT, 2017). The framework is designed to ensure that development assistance considers CVE in targeted and sensitive ways, including across education, civil society, governance, livelihoods, justice and the rule of law. It recognises that the drivers of violent extremism vary across contexts. DFAT's framework sets out three core principles for designing, implementing and evaluating CVE-related investments: a) a do no harm approach which appropriately manages risks to partners; b) robust analysis of local drivers of violent extremism; and c) the selection of tools appropriate to local circumstances (DFAT, 2017).

Research on women and CVE

DFAT is funding research on women's roles in violent extremism to build the capacity of women and civil society to engage in prevention. Initiatives funded by DFAT include a large-scale, in-country study in Indonesia, 'Preventing Conflict and Countering Fundamentalism through Women's Empowerment and Civil Society Mobilisation', and an Asia Foundation report on the role of development assistance in CVE in Asia (Asia Foundation, 2017). The report was based on secondary sources, as well as a workshop bringing together practitioners from government, civil society and the private sector. One of the topics examined in the workshop was women's role in CVE in Asia (Asia Foundation, 2017). Australia is also co-leading, with USAID, a research stream on women and CVE in a new donor community of practice on P/CVE.

Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF)

GCTF is an international forum of 29 countries and the European Union with an overarching mission of reducing the vulnerability of people worldwide to terrorism by preventing, combating and prosecuting terrorist acts and countering incitement and recruitment to terrorism. In 2015 GCTF produced a document *Good Practices on Women and Countering Violent Extremism*, which complemented three earlier documents on good practices in relation to CVE: for a multi-sectoral approach, for community engagement and community policing, and for education (GCTF, 2015a). The women and CVE good practices document stresses the need to address women's differing roles: as victims, as perpetrators and as preventers. It calls for inclusion of women in CVE planning and implementation; gender mainstreaming in CVE programmes, including gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation; research into and programmes specifically targeting female radicalization; provision of security and capacity building of women/women's groups to engage in CVE; involvement of women in community engagement initiatives and community policing; increased participation of women in the security sector; and the wider protection and promotion of women's rights and gender equality. Hedayah is supported by GCTF and is a key partner in implementing its initiatives. GCTF also helped set up the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF). GCERF supports local, community-led initiatives aimed at strengthening resilience against violent extremist agendas.

Networks

Annex A details networks and groups working to promote P/CVE, dividing these into those that are women-centric (primarily aimed at women) and those with a more general focus. It also lists NGOs/initiatives to support P/CVE, again divided into women-centric and general. The listing clearly

shows a large number of networks, groups and NGOs engaged on promoting women's role in P/CVE, and is in marked contrast with the dearth of such programmes by donor agencies. This would appear to confirm the point made earlier in this report, that there is a lack of recognition of the contribution made by women/women's organizations in CVE, particularly at grassroots level, and that provision of capacity building and other support to such groups would enable them to more effectively promote CVE.

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Key websites

- Centre on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation: <http://www.globalcenter.org/>
- Women in International Security: <http://wiisglobal.org/>

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About this report

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Annex: P/CVE Networks and NGOs/Initiatives

Theme	Initiative/ Network	Scale	URL	Focus
Gender-specific and CVE-specific/related Networks and Groups				
Women in CVE	Sisters Against Violent Extremism (SAVE)	Global	www.women-without-borders.org/save/	The world's first research based female counter-terrorism platform. Launched in 2008, SAVE is mobilizing and promoting women's roles in alternative diplomacy, dialogue and leadership for security. SAVE aims to form the missing link between women at the community level where radicalism is propagated and decision-making levels where counter violent extremism strategies are shaped.
Women in peace & security	International Civil Society Action Network for Women's rights, peace and security.	Global	www.icanpeacework.org/	Formed in 2006, the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to strengthen women's participation and influence in conflict prevention, social justice, coexistence, and peacebuilding efforts, in situations of closed political space and conflict affected states.
Women in peace & security	Women's Alliance for Security Leadership (WASL)	Global	www.wasglobalnet/	A group that brings together existing women's rights and peace practitioners, organizations, and networks actively engaged in preventing extremism and promoting peace, rights, and pluralism, to enable their systematic and strategic collaboration.
Women & radicalization	Women Against Radicalization Network (WARN)	Global	http://warn.org.uk/	A network that provides a platform for women to discuss ways to fight extremism, reaching women and children in their community.
Women in peace & security	Women In International Security	Global	http://wiisglobal.org/	WIIS is the premier organization in the world dedicated to advancing the leadership and professional development of women in the field of international peace and security. WIIS sponsors leadership training, mentoring, and networking programs as well as substantive events focused on current policy problems. WIIS also supports research projects and policy engagement initiatives on critical international security issues, including the nexus between gender and security.

Women & extremism	The Women and Extremism (WaE) network	Global	www.waenetwork.org/about.html	Launched in January 2015 by ISD, WaE is dedicated to studying the active and counteractive aspects of women and extremism. WaE network brings together academics, researchers, practitioners, grassroots activists, and others to help produce counter and alternative narrative content, initiatives, and programmes to lessen the threat of violent extremism within this new phenomenon.
Women's empowerment (including women in CVE)	Women without Borders	Global	www.women-without-borders.org/home/	An international research-based NGO, encouraging women to take the lead in their personal and public lives. It brings together women to develop a new female security paradigm and promotes the role of women in the security sphere and sensitizes mothers in particular to their role and responsibility to challenge violent extremist ideologies.
Women in peace & security	Women Without Walls Initiative	Nigeria	http://www.wowwi.org	An NGO that seeks to achieve its vision of developing a non-violent, creative and inclusive approach to conflict resolution in Nigeria, through women as natural agents of social and national change. Its initiatives include mothers school training, and promotion of police-community dialogue.
Women & CVE/ Radicalization	Alliance of Women Against Radicalization and Extremism (AWARE)	Global	euaware.eu/##purpose	The online digital and network to exchange and foster successful initiatives focusing on the crucial role played by women in preventing radicalization.
Women's empowerment (including CVE)	Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equality (WISE)	Global	wisemuslimwomen.org/	(WISE) is a global programme, social network and grassroots social justice movement led by Muslim women. WISE aims to empower Muslim women to fully participate in their communities and nations and amplifying their collective voices. The WISE programme builds on the collective strengths, talents, expertise and experiences of its members to foster collaboration and support the diverse work of these Muslim women leaders worldwide. WISE is developing a community guide for use by Muslim communities to inform and support community leaders in their efforts to challenge ISIL narratives, drawing primarily on religious scriptures and scholarship.

Women in peace & security	The Women Waging Peace Network	Global	www.inclusivesecurity.org/experts/	A network of more than 2,000 women peacemakers from conflict areas around the world. The Network was launched in 1999 to connect these women with each other and with policy shapers. Members of the Network, all demonstrated leaders among women peacebuilders, are elected and appointed government officials, directors of non-governmental organizations and movements in civil society, scholars and educators, businesspeople, representatives of multilateral organizations, and journalists. With varied backgrounds, perspectives, and skills, they bring a vast array of expertise to the peacemaking process. This network is hosted and sponsored by the Institute for Inclusive Security .
Women in CVE	Mothers for Life Network	Global	girds.org/mothersforlife/mothers-for-life-network	A global network of mothers who have experienced violent jihadist radicalization in their own families.
Women and CT	Jihad Against Violence: Muslim Women's Struggle for Peace	Global	www.wisemuslimwomen.org/about/shuracouncil/	A project led by the Global Muslim women's Shura Council aiming to end violence toward women to promote women's advancement in the Muslim world and beyond.
Women / girls in violent extremism	The "WomEx" project	Berlin	womex.org/en/about/the-womex-project/	A project that focuses on the role of women in VE and CVE.
Women in peace & security	Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP)	South Asia/ India	http://wiscomp.org/	A pioneering peacebuilding initiative in South Asia. Established in 1999, it foregrounds women's leadership in the areas of peace and security and promotes cultures of pluralism and coexistence in the region
Women's empowerment (CVE-related activities)	FATIMA Women's Network	UK	fatimawomens.org.uk/	This network's main focus is to empower disadvantaged women, young people and children in Oldham (UK) in order to improve their quality of life.
Muslim Women's empowerment (including CVE)	Muslim Women Network	UK	www.mwnuk.co.uk/	(MWNUK) is the only national Muslim women's organization in Britain. A small national charity (no. 1155092) that works to improve the social justice and equality for Muslim women and girls.

General P/CVE Networks (which include activities focusing on women)				
Counter-terrorism including women & CT	The Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF)	Global	https://www.thegctf.org/	An intergovernmental platform working to strengthen international co-operation and mobilize expertise and resources to support the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy around the globe. The GCTF brings together 29 countries, including 11 OSCE participating States and seven OSCE Partners for Co-operation, as well as the European Union.
CVE Research	RESOLVE Network	Global	www.resolvenet.org/	The RESOLVE Network is a global consortium of researchers and research organizations in agreement that factors contributing to community vulnerability and resilience to violent extremism are contextual. The network was launched in 2015 with an overall objective to generate, facilitate, aggregate, and synthesize methodologically sound, locally informed research on the drivers of vulnerability and sources of resilience to violent social movements and extremism.
Prevention of violence, including women	Violence Prevention Network (VPN)	Global	www.violence-prevention-network.de/en/	A network that works in prevention and first-line de-radicalization with people who are susceptible to violent right-wing extremism or religious fundamentalism.
Counter-terrorism (including women in CT)	CTED global research network	Global	www.un.org/sc/ctc/blog/2015/02/20/counter-terrorism-committee-announces-launch-of-global-research-network/	This network aims at strengthening its capacity to identify new trends and developments related to terrorism and monitor Member States' counter-terrorism efforts.
CVE including women	Strong Cities Network	Global	strongcitiesnetwork.org/	A global network of mayors, municipal-level policymakers, and practitioners united in building social cohesion and community resilience to counter violent extremism in all its forms.
Rehabilitation and Reintegration	Rehabilitation and Reintegration Network	Global	globalcenter.org/project-descriptions/call-for-proposals-engaging-civil-society-actors-in-the-rehabilitation-and-	A network of civil society organizations and community leaders to support the rehabilitation and reintegration of violent extremist offenders who have been released from custody, as well as returned foreign terrorist fighters, including via cooperation with governmental actors such as law Enforcement and prison services.

			reintegration-of-violent-extremist-offenders-and-returning-foreign-	
Peace-building (CVE-related activities)	Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers	Global	www.peacemakersnetwork.org/about-us/	A network that builds bridges between grassroots peacemakers and global players to strengthen the work done for sustainable peace and strengthens peacemaking through collaboratively supporting the positive role of religious and traditional actors in peace and peace-building processes.
CVE-related activities	The Horn of Africa Civil Society Organizations Hub	Horn of Africa	www.globalcenter.org/project-descriptions/horn-of-africa-civil-society-organization-hub/	A “network of networks” for national and regional civil society organizations and other community actors, such as academics and youth, women and religious leaders, involved in P/CVE that provides a platform to discuss national and regional priorities and challenges, share expertise and best practices, consolidate research to better identify regional trends and dynamics, and support and facilitate ongoing efforts to strengthen peer relationships and CSO engagement with national governments, regional organizations, and donors.
Radicalization including women & radicalization	Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)	Europe	ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network_en	The European Commission’s Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) brings together practitioners from around Europe working on the prevention of radicalization.
Radicalization including women & radicalization	Terrorism and Radicalization network (TerRa)	Europe	www.terra-net.eu/index.php	A prevention and learning program network to reinforce the positive role victims and former terrorists can play in relation to the prevention of radicalization and to provide practical guidance to specific target groups.

Violent Extremism (including women & VE)	The VOX-Pol Network of Excellence (NoE)	Europe	http://www.voxpol.eu/	A European Union funded academic research network that focuses on researching the prevalence, contours, functions, and impacts of Violent Online Political Extremism and responses to it.
Families and VE	FATE (Families Against Terrorism and Extremism)	Europe	findfate.org/en/home/	A network working to prevent radicalization and counter violent extremism.
Radicalization and CVE (including women)	The Countering Online Violent Extremism Research Program (COVER)	Australia	www.curtin.edu.au/research/ccat/cover/index.cfm	A hub of multi-disciplinary research activity dedicated to understanding the phenomenon of radicalization – online and in other forms. COVER focuses on social media as a tool for radicalization and countering violent extremism (CVE).
Counter and alternative narratives	Extreme Dialogue	Canada and UK	extremedialogue.org/about/	A platform that aims to reduce the appeal of extremism among young people and offer a positive alternative to the increasing amounts of extremist material and propaganda available on the internet and social media platforms.
Peace and Security in Africa (CVE-related activities including women in CVE)	West Africa Network for peace-building	West Africa	http://wanep.org/wanep/	A hub with more than 500 member organizations that places special focus on collaborative approaches to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, working with diverse actors from civil society, governments, intergovernmental bodies, women's groups, and other partners in a bid to establish a platform for dialogue, experience sharing, and learning, thereby complementing efforts at ensuring sustainable peace and development.
General P/CVE-specific/related NGOs/Initiatives				
CVE including women & CVE	Muflehun	Global	http://muflehun.org/	Muflehun is an independent, non-profit institution that provides countering violent extremism (CVE) related services such as CVE awareness and training workshops, ideological disengagement and spiritual dialogues, law enforcement training, as well as de-radicalization and reintegration practices. Muflehun's programmes focus on building awareness and skills in youth, women, clergy and law enforcement to design their own local solutions. Muflehun runs programmes in Indonesia, Jordan, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan and the USA.

Security threats including women & CVE	Global Center on Cooperative Security	US-based with offices in London	www.globalcenter.org/uk/	The Global Center (UK) is a registered charity in the United Kingdom that works closely with its U.S. counterparts on criminal justice, countering violent extremism, corrections, and rule of law programming that promotes responsive, fair, and accessible justice and security systems to help address a range of complex security challenges, safeguard human rights, and promote sustainable development.
CVE including women & CVE	Hedayah	Global	hedayahcenter.org/home	The International Center of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism, established in Abu Dhabi in December 2012 at the Third GCTF Ministerial Meeting. Hedayah's mission is to serve as the premier international institution for training and capacity building, dialogue and collaboration, and research and analysis to counter violent extremism in all of its forms. Hedayah focuses on the preventive, proactive approaches that support of long-term, global efforts to build community resilience to violent extremism.
CVE including Women & CVE	Global Community and Engagement Resilience Fund	Global	http://www.gcerf.org/	A multilateral funding mechanism. It is the first global effort to support local, community-level initiatives aimed at strengthening resilience against violent extremist agendas. GCERF was established to contribute to the prevention of violent extremism in countries where support is most needed, and specifically to fill a funding gap in global responses to the challenge of violent extremism.
CVE	Youth Against Violent Extremism	Global	http://www.againstviolentextremism.org/	A group that empowers former violent extremists and survivors of violent extremism to work together to push back extremist narratives and prevent the recruitment of at-risk youth.
Youth and CVE	Extremely Together	Global	www.kofiannanfoundation.org/promoting-youth-leadership/extremely-together-initiative-next-generation-counter-prevent-violent-extremism/	A group that empowers young people to counter violent extremism.

Peace and Security including women	Organization for Policy Research and Development Studies (DROPS)	Afghanistan	dropsafghanistan.org	An interdisciplinary and independent research oriented NGO that aims to facilitate and encourage Afghanistan's transition to democratic governance. DROPS has conducted research in the following areas; Peace-building, Human Security, Security, Countering-Violent-Extremism. It has initiated, developed and published the first ever peer reviewed Public Policy Journal authored by Afghan women – the Women and Public Policy Journal – which was launched in October 2015. In March 2015, the first network of female researchers and academics in Afghanistan, called the ' Afghanistan Network of Female Thinkers and Researchers, ' was launched to harness expertise in increasing women's voices and presence in the policy discourse.
CVE including women	Cooperation for Peace and unity	Afghanistan	http://cpau.org.af/?page_id=1180	CPAU is an Afghan-led non-profit organization with around two decades of experience in promoting peace and social justice in Afghanistan.
Peace in Nepal including women	SAMANATA-Institute for Social and Gender Equality	Nepal	https://apwaps.net/2014/09/19/samanata-institute-for-social-and-gender-equality/	The institute has been working in the area of Women and Peace Building for several years in Nepal, in particular since the insurgency took place in the country. Over the years it has initiated alliances such as Women's Alliance for Peace, Power, Democracy And Constituent Assembly (WAPPDCA). SAMANATA has also played an active role in conducting research focusing on impacts of conflict on women, conducting training on peace, as well as raising awareness of UN Resolution 1325 to various stakeholders.
Violent extremism including women and VE	The Transnational Initiative Countering Violent Extremism (TICVE)	Morocco	http://ticve.org/	A Think Tank with an overall objective to engage in outreach at the local level to foster trust, improve awareness, and educate communities about violence risk factors in order to stop radicalization to violence before it starts. Our purpose is to launch pilot comprehensive prevention projects with a focus on two important types of programs: education based program and action research program.
Gender-specific and CVE-specific/related NGOs				
Women's empowerment	Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation	Global	http://kvinnaatillkvinna.se/en/	Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation works to strengthen the organization of women in conflict regions through collaboration with women's organizations and supporting their work to promote women's rights and peace. It supports over 130 women's organizations in five regions afflicted by conflict: Central and Western Africa, the

				Middle East, the South Caucasus and the Western Balkans. Their work includes providing information about the situation facing women in conflict zones, advocacy to increase women's representation in peace processes, and research development by working with individual researchers and research institutes.
Women's empowerment (CVE-related activities)	Women for Women International	Global	http://www.womenforwomen.org.uk/about-us	Women for Women International supports the most marginalised women to earn and save money, improve health and well-being, influence decisions in their home and community, and connect to networks for support. By using skills, knowledge, and resources, they can create sustainable change.
Women in Conflict-affected areas	PAIMAN Alumni Trust (PAIMAN)	Pakistan	https://www.insightonconflict.org/conflicts/pakistan/peacebuilding-organisations/paiman-alumni-trust-paiman/	PAIMAN Alumni Trust (PAIMAN) is a group that aims to reach out to women and young people in the conflict-ridden region of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan, and conflict affected and conflict-prone districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through awareness of the impacts of radicalization and extremism on their lives and the role they can play in combating it. PAIMAN's projects include various stakeholders - including elected representatives, government officials, clergy, teachers, journalists, youth and female - from FATA and other conflict-torn areas as part of its conflict transformation and peacebuilding programmes.
Women in peace and security	Women, Peace and Security Research Institute (RIWPS)	Afghanistan	www.riwps-afghanistan.org	The institute was founded by Afghan women activists following the first Consultative Peace Jirga during 2010, given an increased need for a specific organization working on issues of Women, Peace & Security. RIWSP works closely with the High Peace Council, focusing on women's meaningful participation in the peace processes, and with local organizations and activists to build community-based inclusive peace. Stakeholders also include the Women's Affairs Commission of the Parliament (both houses), the Afghan Women's Coalition, and Shelter's Network in Afghanistan.

Women in peace and security	Javononi Peshsaf	Tajikistan	sfcg.org/tag/kyrgystan	Javononi Peshsaf aims to enhance the role of women and youth for peace and security, prevention of domestic violence and violent extremism, in partnership with the police. The organization conducted research in 12 villages in Penjikent to find out why youth are joining violent extremist groups.
Women in peace and security	Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization (MYWO)	Kenya	http://mywokenya.org/	A voluntary women's organization that works to improve the quality of life of rural Kenyan communities, especially women and youth. It addresses, inter alia, peace-building and conflict management, and gender and governance. Since 2013, MYWO has focused on countering violent extremism with the aim of empowering women to identify signs of violent extremism and engage with young people to discuss ways to build a cohesive community.
Women's empowerment (CVE-related activities for women)	The National Muslim Women's Advisory Group	UK		The National Muslim Women's Advisory Group comprises 19 Muslim women representing a wide spectrum of communities, professions and traditions. They are an independent informal group that meets several times a year to advise on issues including empowering Muslim women; increasing their opportunities for education and employment; facilitating access for women to mosques and their management committees; engaging on cultural barriers including issues around forced marriages and increasing women's participation in civic, economic and social life.
Women's empowerment (CVE-related activities for women)	Fatayat NU	Indonesia	http://fatayat-nu.blogspot.co.uk/	Fatayat NU is a wing of Nahdlatul Ulama organization and focuses on empowering Muslim women. Its mission is eradicating all forms of violence, injustice and poverty in communities by developing social discourse that is constructive, democratic, and gender equal. The group's agenda covers areas impacting women's livelihoods, particularly economic advocacy, political engagement, socio-cultural building, security, and dakwah. In the field of CT, Fatayat NU has cooperated with the government to hold national seminars, forums, and workshops. The Fatayat NU website includes up-to-date counterterrorism articles.

Women's empowerment (CVE-related activities for women)	Aisyiah	Indonesia	www.wisemuslimwomen.org/activism/organizations/aisyiah/	Aisyiah is a wing of Muhammadiyah, Indonesia's second largest Islamic organization. It focuses on the women's movement, social development, and dakwah based on the Islamic way of life and rooted in the Quran and Sunnah.
Women's empowerment	Fempower	Global	quilliamfoundation.org/outreach/empower/	An outreach program on gender extremism addressing women's grievances through community engagement, clear communication of policy, and better reporting structures for anti-Muslim hatred and gender extremism and equipping women, especially mothers, with tools to challenge extremist narratives.
P/CVE	S.A.V.E. Belgium – Society Against Violent Extremism	Belgium	www.savebelgium.org/	An NGO that aims to fight all forms of violent radicalization by creating networks of prevention and awareness, promoting educational networks in schools about preventing violent extremism.
P/CVE	MyHack	Australia	www.myhack.org.au/	An NGO that brings groups of young people, called Hack Teams, together to use their skills, knowledge, and know-how to develop innovative solutions to VE.
P/CVE	Mercy Corps Jordan	Jordan	https://www.mercycorps.org/countries/jordan	An NGO that prevents radicalization through engagement with vulnerable youth and communities through local grassroots-level interventions.
P/CVE	Just Unity	Norway	http://www.justunity.no/	An NGO that offers customized courses, lectures, and workshops for students, teachers, local authorities, police, businesses, and organizations to prevent radicalization and extremism among youth.
Women's empowerment	Prevention Equality for Peace and Democracy (EPD)	Afghanistan	http://www.epd-afg.org/	An NGO that empowers women and young people at the community and policy levels by building coalitions and advocacy networks and promoting human rights, peace, and good governance.
P/CVE	Resilience Against Violent Extremism (BRAVE)	Kenya	www.braveprogram.org/	An NGO that works to address misuse of religion for violent extremist ends, focusing on actions to prevent recruitment, legitimization of extremist ideologies, and intimidation by extremist groups.