



2023 Counter-Terrorism Week SIDE EVENTS

19–23 JUNE 2023

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS • NEW YORK



Promoting PVE through Fostering Peace, Resilience, Equality, and Pluralism (PREP) in collaboration with Community-Based Actors

Wednesday, 21st June 2023 | 11:00AM (Virtual)

Summary Report

Objective

On 21st June 2023, the European Union (EU), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN), jointly organised a side event, “Promoting PVE through Fostering Peace, Resilience, Equality, and Pluralism (PREP) in collaboration with Community-based Actors”, during the 3rd UN Counter-Terrorism Week. The event aimed to convey how the international, national, and local stakeholders, with different but complementary perspectives, effectively collaborate to address violent extremism at the community level with a preventative and human security lens. Specific examples came from Iraq, Kyrgyzstan and Nigeria.

Opening Remarks

The session commenced with opening remarks by Maria Rosa Sabbatelli, Head of Unit, [Foreign Policy Instruments \(FPI\), European Commission](#). She highlighted the EU’s contribution to combat terrorism and violent extremism through a four-pillar strategy as defined in the Counter Terrorism Agenda (2020): Anticipate, Prevent, Protect and Respond. Noting there is no one-size-fits-all approach to preventing/countering violent extremism (P/CVE), Ms Sabbatelli called for whole of society interventions that adhere to the needs of the local context and ensure the involvement of not only law enforcement and security actors, but also civil society, public institutions, businesses and leading figures within local communities. Going beyond traditional actors generates greater positive impact.

2023 COUNTER-TERRORISM WEEK

www.un.org/counterterrorism/CTweek2023-SE
[@UN_OCT](#) | [#CTWeek](#) | [#UNiteToCounterTerrorism](#)

Panel Discussion

Moderated by Nika Saedi, UNDP Crisis Bureau [PVE](#) Team Leader.

Making the case for community-based partnerships

Sanam Naraghi Anderlini, CEO and founder of [ICAN](#), highlighted that individuals are propelled to join violent extremism not only from fueled local grievances but also from aspirations. Violent extremist groups would often tap into the people's sense of belonging, need for purpose, unemployment, and protection. This was particularly evident during the COVID pandemic where violent extremist groups were offering basic services and access to [education](#). As the essence of extremism is around weaponizing and separating society around singular identity, in a world characterized by extreme diversity, Ms. Anderlini advocated for articulating a positive alternative to violent extremisms which promote peace, resilience, equality and pluralism ([PREP](#)) which foster common values and social cohesion.

Manas Sakataev, monitoring and evaluation specialist, [Eurasia Foundation Kyrgyzstan](#), provided specific engagement with the communities through the community prevention centre (CPC) that operate in accordance with the Law of Kyrgyz Republic on prevention. Through providing rigorous capacity building of the CPCs, actions plans were developed to implement PVE, peacebuilding and resilience interventions. Progressively, the CPCs have engaged local authorities and expanded their partnership with relevant stakeholders such as the the administration of women religious school, noting the important on the role of education institutions, to sensitize PVE to scholars and academic practitioners.

[Fatima Al-Bahadly](#), Al-Firdaws Society in Iraq and founding member of the Women's Alliance for Security Leadership ([WASL](#)), showcased the impact of youth who were previously affiliated with violent extremist groups. ICAN spearheads WASL which remains the first and only global network which specializes in women-led P/CVE work informed by a gendered perspective. Through a series of vocational trainings and peacebuilding initiatives, Iraqi youth who previously carried arms now joined the Al-Firdaws Society to facilitate dialogue session in school and in public spheres. In addition, during COVID, these youth acted as civilian monitors whereby recording incidents of violence in the communities and reporting back to the police to be addressed accordingly.

Moncef Kartas, Head of Maiduguri sub-office, [UNDP Nigeria](#), highlighted examples from the northeastern regions of Nigeria that have particularly been affected by the Boko Haram insurgency since 2009. Noting the need for an approach to complement military efforts, programmes in [stabilization](#); [early recovery](#); [reintegration](#), [reconciliation](#) and social cohesion (for example through [sports](#)) have complemented each other. In particular, bringing women, youth and other marginalised groups on to the same table with the community leaders and empowering them to raise their voices to be part of the deliberation around how to improve community safety, how to hold a security force accountable, has a huge impact on actually disrupting strongly established power relations.

Key recommendations for PVE practitioners

The following are a compilation of recommendations that the panelists have conveyed when engaging community level partners to implement impactful PVE interventions.

- Nika Saeedi, UNDP Crisis Bureau PVE Team Leader: Violent extremism is not a local phenomenon. There is a need for a comprehensive global review of how to address and engage practitioners working in the PVE field. This would also include create alliances with the security actors and government.
- Moncef Kartas, Head of Maiduguri sub-office, UNDP Nigeria: We need to mobilise and engage communities to disrupt power relationship that are reproducing the drivers of radicalization, marginalization and inequality.
- Sanam Naraghi Anderlini, CEO and founder of ICAN: Acknowledging international, local and online media can also fuel violent extremism, we need to ensure the media house is able to tell good stories highlighting the work of women peacebuilders, create spaces for dialogue, and excavate role models to be local superheroes.
- Manas Sakataev, monitoring and evaluation specialist, Eurasia Foundation Kyrgyzstan: We should have a sustainable plan, a long term strategy, there by engage with people who can continue the work even after the end of a project period. This would be looking into existing leaders, particular (in)formal leaders of the community, head of village, representatives of NGOs, mass media, elder court, women council, school teachers and not creating new figures.
- Fatima Al-Bahadly, Al-Firdaws Society in Iraq and Women’s Alliance for Security Leadership (WASL) Founding Member: Violence should not be mitigated with violence. For peace to be successful, we need to believe in it and carry it. For example, we need to engage in broader scope not only youth but also those that are labelled as “extremist”.

Conclusion

With an attendance of 54 participants from various paths of development contributing to the prevention of violent extremism, the side event provided a platform for fruitful discussions on the importance of engaging local communities in countering violent extremism. The event underscored the need for comprehensive approaches that address root causes, promote peace, resilience, equality, and pluralism, and involve diverse community actors. The recommendations put forward during the event will contribute to the development of effective strategies and policies in the global fight against terrorism.