Lessons learned from Danish and other international efforts on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) in development contexts

Evaluation Study

Lessons learned from Danish and other international efforts on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) in development contexts

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Abbreviations

ALS	Al-Shabaab
AML	Anti Money Laundering
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
CTF	Counter Terrorist Financing
CT	Counter Terrorism
DAC	(OECD) Development Assistance Committee
DANIDA	Danish International Development Assistance
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DFID	UK Department for International Development
EU	European Union
FIU	Financial Intelligence Unit
GCTF	Global Counter Terrorism Forum
GiZ	German Agency for International Development
IGAD	Inter Governmental Authority on Development
GCCS	Global Centre on Cooperative Security
INCAF	International Network on Conflict and Fragility
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (also known as Islamic State (IS) and Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS))
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NCTC	(Kenyan) National Counter Terrorism Centre
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development
PET	Danish Security and Intelligence Service
PPN	Policy Planners Network
RAN	Radicalisation Awareness Network
RUSI	Royal United Services Institute
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEED	(DFID) Sustainable Employment and Economic Development programme
SSP	(Danish) Schools, Social services and Police cooperation
STRIVE	(EU) Strengthening Resilience to Violence and Extremism
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNODC	United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Executive summary

This evaluation study collates lessons being learned from Danish efforts and those of other development actors on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) that can inform evidence based policy making and increase shared understanding on CVE-related programming in development contexts. The study is based on the premise that *CVE concerns policies and actions designed to prevent individuals from engaging in violence associated with radical political, social cultural and religious ideologies and groups.*[1] As such, it forms part of the broader response to countering terrorism.

The study notes that, while violent extremism is clearly a global problem, it is developing countries that bear the brunt of its social and economic costs. In the countries most affected, it increases insecurity, has links to organised crime, lowers investment and increases the costs of economic activity, destroys infrastructure, and can cause significant human displacement and migration. The foreign fighter phenomenon, whereby nationals from one country join extremist movements in another, is a significant factor fuelling conflict. With many of these individuals coming from developing countries, preventing and mitigating radicalisation and violent extremism is becoming a development priority.

The study provides an overview of current thinking on CVE and the key challenges being faced. The central feature of this is that radicalisation processes are individual and include a range of push, pull and enabling or facilitating factors. *Push factors* are the political, socio-economic and cultural conditions that favour the propagation of extremist ideologies and narratives. *Pull factors* are the personal rewards that embarking on an extremist cause may confer. These may include financial and other material benefits and social status. *Enabling factors* relate to the radicalisation process and include social networks and the activities of motivators who groom potential recruits. It follows that, to be successful, CVE initiatives need to address in a holistic way the particular set of factors affecting the individual or group identified as being at risk. In non-permissive environments, this is likely to be particularly challenging.

Key findings

Context sensitivity of CVE interventions. Due to the individual and multifaceted nature of the phenomenon, there is no universal blueprint for countering radicalisation and extremism. Strategies must instead be based on an empirical understanding of why and how people join extremist organisations. There is a need to distinguish between *push*, *pull* and *enabling* factors as part of identification and

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[1] Countering Violent Extremism: A Peacebuilding Perspective, Georgia Holmer, USIP, September 2013

response. The more specific and context-related this understanding is, the stronger will be the likelihood of positive effects when it is applied in CVE programming.

Two kinds of CVE engagement are likely to be most suitable in development settings using development aid. The survey of CVE projects suggest that these are:

- Firstly, *preventative* activities that aim to mitigate specific *push* factors affecting at-risk communities by enhancing their resilience to extremist recruitment. Examples could include strengthening livelihood opportunities so that at risk groups (especially youth) are gainfully employed, enhancing youth engagement and sense of belonging within their local communities, reducing discrimination from service providers, promoting human rights compliant law enforcement etc. These could be the subject of specific CVE initiatives or included as CVE elements within broader development programmes.

- Secondly, *anticipatory* measures that involve contact with communities and individuals that are at imminent risk of moving towards an extremist organisation. The objective here will be to identify and address early signs of radicalisation or radical agency by mitigating *pull* factors, such as extremist narratives. Inputs could involve offering viable alternatives to the messaging coming from the recruiter; for example, through counselling and mentoring, skills training, spiritual guidance etc.

There are a variety of entry points. The experience suggests that CVE objectives can be pursued in a range of sectors and thematic areas, such as education, livelihoods, human rights, governance, social services, sports and culture, justice and rule of law. Policing, prisons and probation services are frequently highlighted as important areas for attention and the focus should be on ensuring that they are human rights compliant.

CVE may be undertaken by governments, international organisations and civil society. The experience suggests the value of promoting dialogue between state authorities and civil society and in strengthening horizontal institutional cooperation across government. Civil society may have distinct advantages in strengthening inter-community dialogue and tolerance and reducing discrimination.

CVE will benefit from a Whole of Government approach that involves all state authorities with a CVE interest, including law enforcement, the justice sector, social services, and education. Denmark's domestic CVE/crime prevention arrangements adopt this model. It is important to clarify roles. The obvious benefit of promoting cohesion amongst state actors is that it will help to reduce the risk that one part of the state system undermines the efforts of another. But it will also strengthen synergies and mutual learning. Inter alia, the new Sustainable Development Goals

draw attention to the need to strengthen national institutions to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime within an overall frame of promoting peaceful and inclusive societies.

Prioritise human rights. There is evidence that extremists draw upon heavy handed or discriminatory responses from law enforcement in their narratives to justify violence and recruit others. Enhancing human rights compliance within police, prison services, and other security agencies will help reduce this risk.

However, CVE remains controversial and involves higher than normal risks compared to traditional development activity. A *Do No Harm* approach to CVE will prioritise the human rights dimensions of initiatives so that potentially adverse effects (such as stigmatisation of certain groups) are identified and monitored. This will include the appropriate choice of partners, implementation methodologies, and communication strategies. Risks can be mitigated by a gradual step-by-step approach to projects and by drawing from local knowledge (including from trusted networks used by embassies and aid agencies). CVE initiatives should also ideally be based on a theory of change and include results frameworks with relevant indicators.

Where human rights safeguards are not in place or cannot be guaranteed, the risks for CVE interventions obviously increase. CVE programming then faces several choices, including the "do nothing" option; working through trusted civil society partners on *preventative* activities; and/or building the capacity of state agencies so that a more human rights based approach is taken.

Conclusions

The study's principal conclusion is that there is scope to include CVE objectives in development programming in fragile states or other locations where a threat of radicalisation and extremism exists. CVE initiatives may sit best within stabilisation programmes that make use of a mix of ODA and non-ODA funds. The study distinguishes between development anchored initiatives (using, for example, civil society as the vehicle for change) and those that require specialist knowledge and capacities normally found within security agencies. It suggests that development programmes can address radicalisation provided that they are sufficiently targeted on at-risk groups, reflect the push and pull factors involved, and draw from implementing partners with sufficient credibility and access.

However, practice is still developing here and the evidence indicates that a more rigorous approach to project planning and implementation would be beneficial. Denmark's experiences in Kenya demonstrate that there can be scope for drawing upon domestic CVE models, although these need adapting to the recipient environment. Finally, while civil society-based initiatives can play an important role in reaching out to communities and individuals, a holistic approach that also

involves government authorities is needed for sustainable results in the long-term. Development programmes can, for example, work with government counterparts to promote coherent and human rights compliant approaches to reducing radicalisation and the threat of violent extremism.

Recommendations

The study has a number of recommendations for the Danish MFA. These are:

- If Denmark decides to pursue CVE further, the most obvious vehicle for doing so would be through stabilisation programmes in fragile and conflict-affected states. It is relevant that these programmes are able to draw from both ODA and non-ODA funding, which makes them an inherently flexible tool and thus well suited to CVE interventions. In certain cases, it may be worthwhile considering whether other mainstream development interventions can be adapted to a CVE perspective.

- In order to inform decision-making in these cases, radicalisation and violent extremism risks should be assessed during preparatory context analyses, alongside other security, political and societal risks. Based on this, down-stream programme design processes could consider whether development engagements require or are suitable for incorporating CVE objectives. If so, the focus should be on targeting populations that are most at risk rather than providing blanket coverage.

- In order to share risks and increase resources and reach, opportunities for joint engagements with like-minded development partners could be sought. Joint arrangements should in all cases involve sharing of information and decision-making. In order to minimise the management burden, consideration could be given to outsourcing programme implementation and (some elements of) monitoring and quality assurance.

1   Introduction

This evaluation study collates lessons learned from Danish efforts and those of other development partners on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) that can inform evidence based policy making and increase shared understanding on CVE programming. The study is based on the premise that *CVE concerns policies and actions designed to prevent individuals from engaging in violence associated with radical political, social cultural and religious ideologies and groups.*[2] CVE initiatives may be undertaken by governments, international organisations and civil society.

Thus far, CVE has received most focus as part of an overall approach to countering terrorism. In Afghanistan and Iraq, countering extremism was among the objectives of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). Considerable attention has also been given to strengthening countries' domestic anti-terror frameworks and live up to the requirements of international standards, such as those presented by the UN Security Council. Various policy fora, think tanks and knowledge centres have begun collating and disseminating good practice.[3]

However, an important aspect that has so far received relatively less attention concerns how development assistance and CVE can be mutually supporting. This includes the question of how development interventions focused on poverty reduction, governance, human rights, livelihoods etc. can also address push factors associated with radicalisation and violent extremism. A further question concerns how experiences from Western domestic CVE programmes, such as relating to education, countering narratives and mentoring, can be used to target pull factors in development settings. Answering these questions demands a more nuanced understanding of CVE and how it might be applied, of what works and why, and of the risks involved.

At the strategic and policy level, there is some movement on these issues. In May 2015, the OECD DAC's working group on conflict and fragility (INCAF) held a discussion on the nexus between fragility and extremism and its implications for development programming. A ministerial meeting on CVE hosted by the U.S. administration in April 2015 resulted in an action agenda with development assistance and stabilisation efforts to prevent violent extremism as one of nine action items. This included a recommendation to use explicit language in the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals acknowledging the linkage between tackling the local drivers of violence and preventing and countering violent extremism.[4]

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[2] Countering Violent Extremism: A Peacebuilding Perspective, Georgia Holmer, USIP, September 2013

[3] Important examples are the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF), the UAE-based Hedayah Centre, the Radicalisation Awareness network (RAN), and the Policy Planners Network (PPN). See Annex A.

[4] Draft Follow-On Action Agenda: The White House Summit to Counter Violent Extremism, April 2015

Further development policy level inputs are expected within the margins of the 2015 United Nations General Assembly.

However, there remains a need for further knowledge on practical CVE programming. Consultation with Danish MFA officials, for example, indicates a strong wish to include CVE-relevant programming in current and prospective responses to crises, in particular Iraq/Syria, elsewhere in the MENA region, in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel. They point to (a) the political demand for responses to the threat posed by ISIL and other terrorist groups, (b) that there is a willingness to take calculated risks but that issues of Do No Harm and financial accountability are important, (c) that there is an interest in joining like-minded development partners, (d) that the basis for decision-making is often weak, and (e) that the influence of the context has a major effect on the level of ambition and implementation modalities.

1.1 Purpose of this study

This study collates lessons learned from Danish efforts and those of other development partners on CVE that can inform evidence based policy making and increase shared understanding on CVE programming. The study has been asked to examine and report on three main areas:

a) Experiences gained through Denmark's domestic and international development efforts. Specific questions here relate to the relevance of CVE interventions to the overall CVE agenda; the quality of entry in terms of the design of such interventions, including the formulation of objectives and the underlying theory of change, harmonisation with other partners, the application of Do No Harm, ownership, human rights principles; and the experiences in terms of processes, partnerships and effects.
b) Experiences being gained from the activities of other international actors, including challenges with regard to CVE programming.
c) Recommendations regarding CVE programming that can assist authorities in designing and managing relevant interventions.

1.2 Approach

The study has been informed by recent open source literature on CVE and by interviews with officials and other experts either working on CVE directly or who are involved in programming and managing interventions that are CVE-relevant. As part of a portfolio review, Danish Embassies in developing countries were consulted and have provided input regarding initiatives that have been supported locally with Danish funding.

Following this introduction, a brief summary of key themes relating to CVE is provided in Chapter 2 in order to help describe the terminology. This is followed in Chapter 3 by an overview of recent Danish CVE initiatives and experiences from Denmark's domestic and international development work. Lessons being learnt by

other international actors are summarised in Chapter 4. Drawing from these overviews, a number of conclusions and recommendations for CVE and development assistance are provided in Chapter 5.

2 Background

This Chapter provides a brief background on the nature of violent extremism and possible preventative measures. It is not intended as an exhaustive survey and attention is drawn where appropriate to other sources that provide further discussion and guidance.

2.1 Key messages

- CVE has emerged as a key theme within governments' counter terrorism strategies underpinning prevention efforts but also informing other elements as part of a multi-dimensional approach. Within this, radicalisation, extremism and violent extremism are key concepts determining specific types and levels of response.
- Developing countries (particularly fragile states) are significantly more vulnerable to violent extremism than OECD countries and terrorism is part of an overall security and conflict pattern that constrains their development and presents security risks beyond their borders.
- As part of a holistic approach to CVE, there is a case for considering the possible role that development assistance could have in preventing or mitigating radicalisation drivers and pull factors, including choices regarding the demographic, sectoral, geographic, and methodological focus of programmes. For a CVE approach to be relevant, it must be focused on at-risk groups and individuals.
- The current categories of ODA funding allow for support to CVE. However, some aspects of this support may need to utilise non-ODA funding channels.
- CVE programming in development contexts faces risks due to legislative, structural and institutional shortcomings, problems of counterpart capacity, inter-agency competition, access and knowledge. These risks are, however, not unique to CVE.

2.2 CVE within the current political and security context

CVE has emerged is a major topic within the overall political and security agenda and the current focus on it is a response to changing security and conflict patterns and the need to take a more holistic approach to countering terrorism. The latest Global Terrorism Index, for example, reports a five-fold increase in the number of deaths from terrorism since 2000. Between 2012 and 2013 alone, there was a 61% increase to nearly 18,000 fatalities and the number of countries experiencing more than 50 deaths rose from 15 to 24. Although fatalities in Western countries represent only a small proportion of these statistics (less than 5% since 2000)[5], recent attacks from "home grown" terrorists, including in Copenhagen, and the

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[5] Global Terrorism Index, 2014.

continuing conflicts in Syria/Iraq and elsewhere and role of so-called foreign terrorist fighters in them have increased the political and public attention on the issue.

Attention is also being paid more broadly to the challenges facing fragile and conflict affected states and transnational factors due to the expansion of groups with an extremist and violent outlook from Afghanistan and Pakistan through the Middle East and across the Horn of Africa, parts of North Africa and the Sahel. The participation in conflicts in these regions by terrorist fighters from other countries has achieved prominence because of their role in fuelling conflict as well as from the perspective of their eventual return to their home environments.[6] In May 2015, the UN reported that more than 25,000 known foreign terrorist fighters from over 100 countries had travelled to join or fight with al-Qaida and associated groups. Included here are substantial numbers in Syria and Iraq, including at least 115 Danish nationals. In addition, the violent ideologies and narratives promoted by groups such as al-Qaida and ISIL feature in assessments of terrorist threats in Western countries and against nationals of these countries elsewhere.[7]

2.3 CVE as part of overall counter terrorism efforts

CVE is generally seen as part of the broader effort to counter terrorism and is developing into a distinct sub-sector in its own right. The UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy and Plan of Action (2006), for example, distinguishes between measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism (such as conflict, inadequate rule of law, political exclusion etc.) and measures to prevent and combat terrorism (including apprehension and prosecution of terrorists, actions facilitating, financing, tolerating terrorist acts etc.).[8] The UK's Counter Terrorism Strategy (2011) distinguishes between *Pursue* (to stop terrorist acts), _Prevent_ (to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism), *Protect* (to strengthen protection against terrorist attack), and *Prepare* (to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack).[9] The EU's Counter Terrorism Strategy (2005) uses a similar optic. The Danish approach is broadly in line with these. It places CVE within the overall approach to *prevention*, while use of the term "counter terrorism" also covers law enforcement, intelligence and investigation activities that are similar to the UK's *Pursue* focus.[10]

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[6] The evidence base relating to foreign fighter risks in OECD countries is disputed. See, for example, *Global eller regional jihad? Foreign fighters og al-Qaida retorik i al-Shabaabs nationalistiske oprørskamp*. Lars Erslev Andersen og Louise Wiuff Moe in Politica, 47.årg.nr 2 2015

[7] From example, PET's assessment of the terror threat to Denmark, 19 March 2015

[8] United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy, UNGA Res 60/288 (2006). The two other pillars of the strategy are measures to build states' capacity and measures to ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law.

[9] CONTEST. The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism, July 2011

[10] PET, interview, 25.8.15

The normative basis for counter terrorism has evolved considerably since the UN Security Council passed the landmark Resolution 1373 (2001) in the aftermath of 9/11. It has included, not least, an increasing focus on the need to preserve human rights in accordance with international standards and the recognition that holistic approaches are required that go beyond security measures alone. These perspectives feature strongly in the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy (2006). The approach combines preventative measures, legal and law enforcement, sanctions, human rights and capacity development and assistance. In late 2014, the Security Council added Resolution 2178 addressing the issue of foreign terrorist fighters, including through CVE initiatives. As part of this, member states are encouraged to engage with local communities and non-governmental actors to counter extremist narratives, address conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism, and adopt tailored approaches to counter recruitment, including through promoting social inclusion and cohesion.[11]

In response, Governments have stepped up their national counter terrorism efforts, including strengthened legislation and frameworks for preventing radicalisation and violent extremism. The Danish Government's latest Action Plan on Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism is an example of this.[12] Some countries, including Denmark, have also begun to work on CVE internationally, including through development channels.

Most recently, the goal of strengthening relevant national institutions, particularly in development countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime has been included in the new Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 16a). This is within the overall frame of promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions (Goal 16).[13]

2.4 Understanding of CVE

A quite basic problem is that the concept of CVE, how to apply it, and the value of applying it are disputed. Defining radicalisation and extremism is challenging because the terms are vague, subjective and political. Critics argue that imprecise, overly narrow or culturally based interpretations are difficult to measure and can lead to discrimination and negative profiling that serve to undermine the overall objective of preventing terrorism by constraining civil liberties and possibly

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[11] UNSCR 1278

[12] National Action Plan on Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism, 2014. The Danish Government

[13] The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

contribute to making violence more likely.[14] As highlighted in recent UN resolutions, there is a general appreciation of the need to reach beyond security measures for more holistic approaches to preventing people from being drawn towards and into groups advocating and using violence. But the individual and multifaceted nature of the processes involved makes it difficult to determine common patterns and responses that work.

There is some convergence around an understanding that radicalisation is a multi-dimensional process (not a direct "conveyer belt") and that the term extremism needs to encompass political, ideological and religious perspectives that oppose (moderate, mainstream) norms and values. It needs to recognise that the vast majority of people in any one setting are likely to be affected by similar macro-level grievances and frustrations but do not act on them by resorting to violence. For individual reasons, a smaller group is, however, susceptible to extremist narratives and therefore can be considered at-risk of recruitment. Even amongst these, however, not all will resort to violence. Some sources note that the link between extremist beliefs and the propensity to use violence is contentious, arguing that the former does not necessarily imply the latter and that the decisions relating to the use of violence will depend upon a range of push and pull factors unique to the individual.[15] Conversely, there have been cases where individuals with a criminal violence background have been radicalised and used extremist religious narratives as part of their justification for subsequent acts of violent extremism.

The definitions used in recent Danish policy papers allow for this nuancing and are:

"[Radicalisation] is a process that takes various forms. Sometimes it happens relatively quickly, sometimes it can be long and drawn out. There are no simple causal relationships – radicalisation is triggered by different factors and leads to different forms of involvement. It can assume forms such as support for radical views or extremist ideology, and it can lead to acceptance of violence or other unlawful acts as a means to achieve a political/religious goal".

"[Extremism] is used to describe groups that can be characterised by their: simplistic views of the world and "the enemy", in which particular groups or aspects of society are seen as a threat; intolerance and lack of respect for other people's views, freedom and rights; rejection of fundamental democratic values and norms, or non-acceptance of democratic decision-making processes; and use of illegal and possibly violent methods to achieve political/religious ideological goals". [16]

Among other examples, USAID defines violent extremism as *advocating, engaging in, preparing or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social,*

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[14] See for example, Liberty's response to the Home office consultation on the Prevent strand of the UK counter-terrorism strategy, Liberty, December 2010 and A decade lost: Rethinking radicalisation and extremism, Arun Kundnani, Claystone, January 2015.

[15] Kundani, 2015

[16] Danish action plan on prevention of radicalisation and extremism (2014)

economic and political objectives".[17] DFID defines violent extremism as being *"the use of and facilitation of violence targeted on civilians as a means of rectifying grievances, real or perceived, which form the basis of increasingly strong exclusive group identities".*[18]

It follows that <u>countering</u> violent extremism is going to involve actions that address the above factors or, in other words, consists of *policy, programmes and interventions designed to prevent individuals from engaging in violence associated with radical political, social, cultural and religious ideologies and groups.*[19]

Each of these definitions reflects the understanding that radicalisation and extremism encompasses a range of motivations, including political, ideological and religious, and that the individual road taken is the product of a complex interplay of external and internal factors. CVE thus needs to take its starting point in a robust understanding of why people join extremist groups. It follows that **CVE strategies and initiatives need to identify and focus on specific individuals and communities at risk and take account of the specific recruitment tactics used by the extremist groups concerned**. Empirical studies from Kenya and Somalia shows that these factors vary even in the same locality between different terrorist groups and that individuals each have their own unique paths to radicalisation (although there may be some commonality between them).[20]

This complexity is often presented in terms of the interplay between various *push, pull* and *enabling* factors:[21]

- Structural *push factors* or "drivers" are the political, socio-economic and cultural conditions that favour the propagation of extremist ideologies. These can include localised historical antagonisms and perceptions of cultural threats, the actual political context and disillusionment with the prevailing political system (including perceptions of hypocrisy, kleptocracy and impunity for political, clan, religious and other elites; corruption, inequalities, marginalisation and discrimination, human rights abuse and other forms of repression from law enforcement and other state authorities etc.). Socio-economic factors also fall into this category, including economic marginalisation, poverty (although its role as a direct driver is disputed), and poor or inequitable delivery of basic services.

- Individual *pull factors* are the personal rewards, whether perceived or actual, that embarking on an extremist cause, membership of an extremist group and/or participation in its activities may confer. These may include financial (cash) and other material benefits and social status. But it is also recognised that the individual may be driven by internalised/emotional factors, including the sense

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[17] The development response to violent extremism and insurgency, USAID Policy, September 2011

[18] Countering violent extremism and terrorism: DFID's role and contribution, 2013

[19] Countering Violent Extremism: A Peacebuilding Perspective, Georgia Holmer, USIP, September 2013

[20] Radicalisation in Kenya, Institute for Security Studies, September 2014

[21] Guide to the drivers of violent extremism, USAID, February 2009 and Development Assistance and Counter Extremism: A Guide to Programming, USAID, October 2009

of belonging and empowerment, enhanced self esteem, lust for adventure, and/or religious fulfilment. Different terrorist groups also have different pull factors and recruitment tactics reflecting their ideologies and goals.

- It is also recognised that *enabling or motivating factors* are important to the radicalisation process; for example, social networks (including actual and on-line networks), venues and institutions (such as places of worship) can draw vulnerable individuals closer together. Extremist groups also use motivators to groom individuals. Groups such as al Qaeda and ISIL have become highly sophisticated in their use of social media for grooming and recruitment of new members. Evidence from Kenya and Somalia indicates that a significant proportion of al-Shabaab recruitment has involved people associated with mosques, while recruits often join up with friends. Equally important may be *triggers* or events (for example, police victimisation) that push the individual away from mainstream society and into the extremist milieu.

To sum up, the fundamentally individual nature of the radicalisation process means that not all people faced with the same set of circumstances will become radicalised and not all those who have become radicalised will join a terrorist organisation or engage in acts of violence or terrorism. Equally, there is a need to understand why, once recruited, individuals remain with organisations and do not leave or have difficulty leaving. These observations have critical implications for CVE targeting and programming, which must therefore be based on empirical evidence and involve tailored activities focused on at risk groups and informed by that evidence. Without this approach, CVE activities will not succeed and, at worst, may do harm.

2.5   Applying a development lens to CVE

CVE is particularly relevant to developing countries that display a relatively higher incidence of social unrest and conflict, including terrorism. The Global Terrorism Index illustrates very clearly that certain developing countries are those most affected by extremism and terrorism. Over 80% of the terrorism related fatalities in 2013 occurred in countries falling within five fragile and conflict-affected states (Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria, Pakistan and Syria), with other fragile states seen as having a heightened at-risk status (including Burundi, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Myanmar). In the countries most affected, it increases insecurity, facilitates organised crime, lowers investment, increases the costs of economic activity, destroys infrastructure, and causes significant human displacement.

Inter alia, the 2011 World Development Report drew renewed attention to the links between development and conflict, pointing in particular to structural weaknesses as a central cause of fragility. Its key message was that "strengthening legitimate institutions and governance to provide citizen security, justice and jobs is crucial to

break cycles of violence."[22] Three indicators of vulnerability appear particularly significant to the incidence of terrorism, these being: political instability, inter-group cohesion, and the legitimacy of the state. [23] These factors are displayed by relatively higher levels of economic and social marginalisation, ethnic and religious discrimination or perceptions of it, and profiling and perceptions of victimisation by security forces that feature strongly among individuals stated reasons for joining extremist groups.[24] Some extremist ideologies (notably from al Qaeda, ISIL, and Boko Haram) draw from these weaknesses and carry explicitly anti-development messages in their narratives.

As well as being difficult development environments in general, fragile and conflict affected states present particular challenges for CVE. Due to restricted access, it is likely to be more difficult to undertake empirical analysis of motivating and enabling factors, capacities of potential partners may be weaker, and monitoring will be more complex. CVE will also need to take account of vested interests and elite-driven, exclusionary politics, competition between different parts of state structures, as well as the impact of externally driven stabilisation activities. These factors result in greater uncertainty and a higher degree of risk.

The basic **theory of change** underpinning CVE in development contexts is similar to that for stabilisation and for conflict prevention. That is to say, that well-targeted interventions that take account of local factors and individual motivations will contribute to reinforcing the capacity and resilience of communities to manage and withstand shocks, thus supporting the creation of stable conditions conducive to development. With a CVE lens, this suggests that properly targeted inputs that address push and full factors can discourage potential terrorist recruits by addressing their perceived grievances and by offering attractive alternatives to the paths articulated by extremist groups. For example, CVE-relevant development can empower local change agents who can make demands on governments for improved transparency and accountability and assist in their development, thus strengthening the relationship between citizens and the state. Thus, while CVE should not be the prime driver for development programming, the possible presence of extremist organisations and their methods of recruitment should feature within Political Economy Analysis (PEA) and thus help identify and inform programming.

2.5.1 Typology of CVE programming within development contexts

Broadly speaking, development aid contributes to reducing radicalisation push factors through its focus on poverty reduction and supporting effective and legitimate states. While this may have positive effects, the results will be unclear

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[22] World Development Report, 2011, World Bank

[23] Global Terrorism Index, 2014

[24] Radicalisation in Kenya, Institute for Security Studies, September 2014

unless specific targeting of risk factors takes place. CVE-relevant programming relates to a range of activities that are progressively more focused on preventing or mitigating specific radicalisation and extremist risks and threats.

CVE is usually seen as a sub-set of actions related to counter terrorism (CT) that is focused on prevention (see section 2.3 above). Although distinctions between different types of engagement may be blurred, they can be illustrated using a prevention pyramid showing different target groups, levels of intervention and approaches, as in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Prevention pyramid and CVE intervention focus[25]
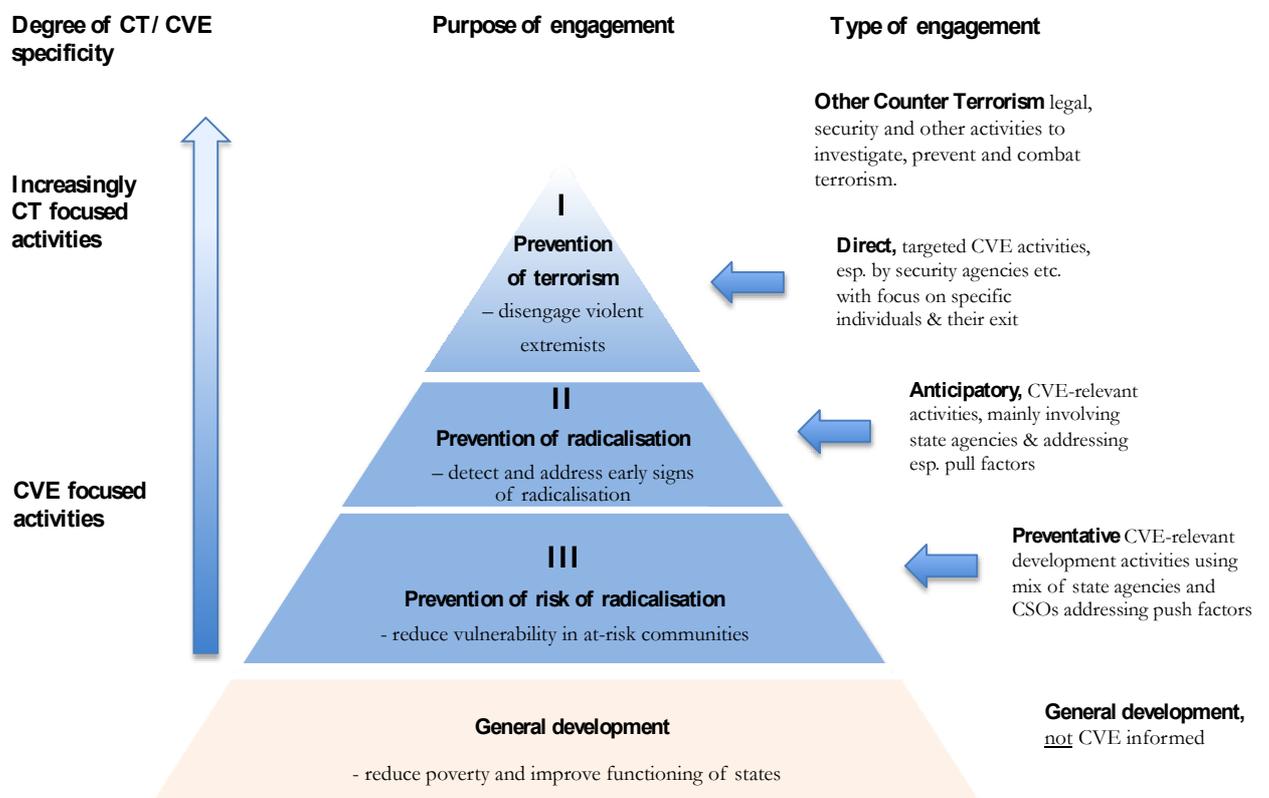
According to this model,

- <u>General development</u> activities (at the base of the pyramid) provide support to poverty reduction, human rights and the effectiveness of states. While these may help reduce overall push factors, they will typically not include CVE objectives and their effectiveness against specific radicalisation and extremism threats will therefore be minimal (or at best opportunistic) and difficult to measure.

[25] Adapted from Denmark's Prevention of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (PREVENT) pilot programme in Kenya, Status Report, February 2015

- CVE-relevant activities on the other hand relate to programmes that have been informed by an assessment of radicalisation and extremism risks and where CVE objectives and approaches are identified either as part of programmes with broader objectives or as stand-alone engagements. In considering these types of activity, it may be helpful to sub-divide the category into two groups:

  - Preventative activities (level III) that employ methods that draw from development practice (e.g. livelihoods, income generation, human rights training etc.) but where the focus is specifically on mitigating specific push factors affecting at-risk communities by enhancing their resilience. Actors involved can include civil society organisations, social services and local authorities etc.

  - Anticipatory activities (level II) that involve contact with communities and individuals identified as at-risk of moving towards an extremist organisation. The objective here is to respond to early signs of radicalisation by mitigating specific pull factors (for example, extremist narratives and benefits). The actors involved will depend upon the focus of the intervention but could include state authorities (for example, in relation to prison and probation services) and possibly civil society.

- CVE-direct activities (level I) focus on individuals who have already joined extremist groups and where the objective is to encourage or support their exit. This aim is closely linked to counter terrorism goals. While CVE-direct efforts will typically involve trained intelligence and police officials, there may be links to other types of activities (e.g. alternative sources of income, psycho-social rehabilitation) depending upon the individual profile and need to support sustainable exit.

- Other Counter Terrorism activities tend to be more operational and focused on objectives seeking to stop terrorist acts, apprehend, investigate and prosecute people suspected of being involved. These activities are carried out by state authorities.

2.5.2   CVE actors and roles

The literature underlines that radicalisation is not a linear process, which suggests that different actors with different mandates and skills sets need to be involved at different points in countering the phenomenon. Civil society organisations with local knowledge and legitimacy may be well placed to undertake community level activities that are informed by CVE (for example, inter-faith dialogue aimed at promoting tolerance). However, as the degree of direct engagement with at-risk individuals and actual extremists increases, the involvement of specialised

security/intelligence agencies and external experts associated with them can also be expected to increase.

Although CVE is therefore not the responsibility of one organisation alone, a lesson learnt is that sharing of information and harmonisation of initiatives will help strengthen the overall effort by increasing the cohesion and synergies of the overall effort; by disseminating knowledge of what works; and by helping to prevent actors from undermining each other's activities. Most obviously, there is a critical need for security and intelligence agencies to harmonise their approaches so that their operational and preventative arms are coherent. This appears to be quite challenging in countries where there are a large number of such agencies that may also be competing amongst each other or where oversight and control mechanisms are not sufficiently present.[26]

2.5.3 Guidelines for CVE development programming

While there is a substantial amount of good practice available, there is little specific guidance available regarding how to design and implement CVE initiatives within development contexts.

In 2006, Danida produced a backgrounder and guidance note – *Countering Radicalisation through Development Assistance – A Country Assessment Tool* – but this is no longer available amongst the Ministry's Aid Management Guidelines (AMG). The assessment tool provided a broad analytical framework (similar to that outlined in chapter 2 of this study), suggestions for possible areas of intervention (governance, security sector, the socio-economic area, and culture and religion), and finally a checklist for country analyses (along the lines of a Political Economy Analysis).[27] Although providing an overall CVE framework, the tool involved a significant leap between the analysis and the somewhat sketchy programming phases. This is possibly a consequence of its publication before the emergence of the current focus on theory of change, which is helpful in this respect. If it is decided to update and review the guidance note, it will be worthwhile making it more practical as a design tool.

More recently, USAID's CVE and development guidance note from 2009 provides a six step programming process based on the recognition that interventions must be built from a solid contextual understanding. The six steps are:

1. Determine the characteristics of the extremism phenomenon in the specific setting.

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[26] "We are tired of taking you to the court". Human Rights Abuses by Kenya's Anti-Terrorism Police Unit. Open Society Justice Initiative & Muhuri. 2013

[27] Countering Radicalisation through Development Assistance – A Country Assessment Tool, Danish MFA, 2007

2. Assess whether prevention or mitigation is the main task and whether recruitment, community support for extremism, or an enabling environment that permits violent extremist groups to operate are the most pressing concerns.
3. Identify which populations, geographical areas, and institutions are particularly vulnerable and why.
4. Ascertain those social processes and group dynamics that are critical to facilitating or undermining recruitment and/or community support.
5. Determine the key political, socio-economic and cultural drivers at work and assess their salience.
6. Prioritise drivers (push and pull factors) and target locations and determine development and strategic communications interventions.[28]

2.5.4 *Importance of human rights and gender*

The normative framework for CVE (and counter terrorism) is very clear that activities must be undertaken in such a manner that preserves human rights and the rule of law. Equally, human rights deficiencies and violations are often cited as one of the conditioning factors (push factors) in the radicalisation process and in terrorist rhetoric.[29] Civil society, in particular, may be very wary of being seen to be openly working on CVE or with government on CVE for these reasons. These observations have significant implications for CVE programming. On the one hand it suggests the relevance of working with state security actors to promote human rights compliance. On the other, it may require the toning-down of the use of CVE labels and objectives.

It is also becoming more recognised that CVE interventions need to be acutely conscious of the impact of gender. CVE has tended to focus on young men and ignore women and girls. In a recent study commissioned by DFID/FCO, it was found that the drivers of women and girl's involvement in jihadi groups were broadly the same as those for men and boys, although the local context can be critical (with the result that local group identities determine allegiances) and entry points are different (women typically require familial links to engage). However, while both women and men perform non-combat roles, women were found to rarely act as front line fighters (although there are exceptions) in jihadi missions, whereas they do so in those with an ethno-nationalist cause. It was also found that wives and mothers may support jihad through their roles in society as educators and influencers of the next generation.[30]

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[28] Development Assistance and Counter Extremism: A Guide to Programming (USAID, 2009)

[29] ibid

[30] Women and extremism: The association of women and girls with jihadi groups and implications for programming. Sarah Ladbury, January 2015.

It was also found that women civil society actors undertake significant CVE work and understand the complex issues facing women and girls but they are rarely asked for their advice on programming and funding for their work is limited. This can be because of the CVE-label. The study recommended that gender be mainstreamed in all CVE programming, that the involvement of women and girls in forced acts of violence should be seen as a form of violence against women and girls. And that specific programming is required to support those who wish to leave jihadi groups and reintegrate into civilian life. For example, on-line and social media work needs to address women and girls in a way that makes them listen and rethink.[31]

2.6 Are CVE activities DAC-able?

There is currently some doubt about the degree to which CVE activities supported by development partners in developing countries can be considered as development assistance, i.e. the degree to which they fall under the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC)'s definition of development assistance. As illustrated in Table 1 below, CVE straddles areas that are DAC-able and those that are not. For example, preventative dialogue and awareness raising can be included but capacity development of intelligence agencies (to undertake it) may not. Recent Danish programmes have managed this difficulty by including CVE interventions within programmes that offer the possibility to draw from both ODA and non-ODA funding sources.[32]

Table 1: Categories of stabilisation activity that can be considered as DAC-able

Types of Stabilisation activity that are DAC-able
• Demobilisation, disarmament & rehabilitation of former combatants
• Police reform and other support to police (incl. salaries)
• Good governance, including anti money laundering
• Mediation and peace processes
• Peace building, incl. short term stabilisation activities (e.g. infrastructure, service delivery, and confidence building civil inputs)
• Prevention of radicalisation, e.g. dialogue initiatives and awareness raising)
• Establishment and management of prison services
• Development of anti-piracy legislation and capacity development of civil coastguard
• Border control through civil authorities
• Democratic control of military and security services, incl. parliamentary control
Types of stabilisation activity that are not DAC-able

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[31] Ladbury

[32] Drawing from the cross-ministerial Peace and Stabilisation Fund (PSF)

- Strengthening of military capacity
- Capacity development of civil and military intelligence services
- Counter terrorism
- Ammunition and weapons
- Core support to special international courts

The issue is currently being discussed with in the DAC as part of a broader exercise to improve the precision of current definitions and consider the extent to which development assistance categories might be extended. A decision is expected in early 2016.

3 Recent experiences from Danish CVE-related inputs

This chapter provides an overview of Denmark's recent CVE engagements both at home and within a development environment.

3.1 Key messages

- Danish domestic CVE initiatives build upon an established cross-sectoral approach to crime prevention involving the police and intelligence services, schools and social services (the SSP-system). The approach is being enhanced in order to reach young adults. There is a focus on prevention, identification and exit.

- While caution should be exercised in extrapolating experiences directly from one environment to another, there appears to be some scope for drawing from Denmark's domestic experiences in development contexts. This could be studied further. Productive areas include lateral institutional cooperation and the use of targeted, trained coaching and mentoring services.

- Denmark's willingness to engage in fragile and conflict affected states and its long track record of overseas development provide a basis for including CVE approaches within development and stabilisation activities. Within the last five years, around 17 CVE related interventions have been funded and Denmark has contributed to international policy and learning on the issue.

- While there is room for policy work on CVE and exchanges of lessons learned, we should be realistic about its impact unless action plans etc. are matched with implementation mechanisms and the resources required.

- Danish CVE projects have produced results in relation to pull factors and exit because dedicated expertise has been made available alongside various permissive factors, including access to decision-makers, the presence of *political will* to make change happen, and a focus on well-known risk areas (prisons, probation etc.). Some of these permissive factors need to be cultivated but gaining access appears to be key.

3.2 Danish domestic CVE initiatives

Denmark's domestic approach to CVE builds on the national inter-sectoral collaboration between key actors in existing social protection and crime prevention measures.[33] The Government's response has been set out in two national action plans, the most recent in 2014. Denmark's domestic approach to CVE is described in more detail at Annex C.

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[33] The key state bodies involved are the Ministry of Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the National Board of Social Services, the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET), the Danish Prison and Probation Service, and local authorities, mainly municipalities and police.

A central part of the overall preventative effort is based upon the collaboration between schools, social authorities and police (SSP), which is in most cases the established focus of youth crime prevention efforts. Under the auspices of the SSP collaboration, regional and local networks have been set up with specialised knowledge about radicalisation and extremism, including identification of vulnerable individuals. In relation to exit, initiatives include the establishment of exit-centres and a strengthening of dialogue and counselling activities provided by social authorities and the intelligence service. This is sometimes also referred to as the Danish Model.

The underlying logic of Denmark's domestic preventative approach is that *if…* the preventative efforts are well informed, built on strong and broad inter-sectoral collaboration and out-reach measures that are sufficiently broad to reach vulnerable groups, *then…* they can contribute to preventing people from being radicalised, *through…* early detection, monitoring and targeted preventative interventions. The approach therefore prioritises direct contact with youth and young adults, inclusion and non-discrimination, dialogue and information, democratic cohesion, a focus on vulnerable communities, special efforts in prisons, and a joined up response from government authorities.

Key lessons arising are that effectiveness depends upon there being sufficient capacity and other resources available, taking into account that the numbers of individuals at risk is probably relatively small compared to other vulnerable groups and that it varies from municipality to municipality. The system depends upon sufficient coverage and effective targeting and, absolutely fundamentally, the relatively robust societal structure that is found in Denmark. Even with these advantages, there is a fundamental challenge to identify people with extremist opinions and who intend to translate these into criminal actions, in circumstances where such people are otherwise well functioning and integrated into the labour market and social life. This fact underlines the necessity of involving a broad range of actors and institutions, especially those closest to youth, and ensuring that they have the knowledge and the capacity to detect early signs of radicalisation and to refer these to competent authorities. [34]

3.3   Danish CVE development assistance

Over the past decade, Denmark has strengthened the policy basis for its work in fragile and conflict-affected states. The current development strategy – *The Right to a Better Life* – includes a clear focus on promoting stability and protection. [35] This is further defined in a separate whole of government policy paper for stabilisation (2013), including dedicated funding combining ODA and non-ODA funds. The policy underlines the importance of taking an outset in a robust contextual understanding, drawing from integrated approaches using the mix of resources

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[34] Evaluering af indsatsen for at forebygge ekstremisme og radikalisering (in Danish). COWI, January 2014

[35] The Right to a Better Life, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012

and capacities available, a focus on institution building, underpinning in human rights, and willingness to take risks. One of the underlying assumptions in the policy is that preventative security assistance will help "enable drivers of conflict to be managed before they erupt into unmanageable open, violent conflict".[36] Inter alia, this provides a policy basis for Danish interventions relating to CVE.

Danish support to CVE as part of its development assistance should be seen in the context of the priority attached to stabilisation. The perspective is that stabilisation requires state building and peace building at the same time and that there is a need to adapt conventional development tools and allow for fast, flexible, risk-adaptive and context sensitive responses that are integrated and also locally owned.[37] Within this framework, Denmark operates a small number of regional stabilisation programmes (in the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan/Pakistan, and the Sahel) and it here that the majority of CVE related initiatives are anchored.

It is also worth noting that Danida does not currently have any practical tools for CVE development programming and most initiatives involve some input from the Ministry's security policy unit and its technical advisory services (UFT). As already noted, the 2007 *Country Assessment Tool* is no longer available amongst the Ministry's Aid Management Guidelines (AMG).[38]

3.4   Typology of Danish CVE interventions

A rapid portfolio review reveals 17 Danish CVE related engagements in development contexts over the past five years. There is some difficulty in applying a rigid typology to the support, possibly due to the fact that CVE is still emerging as a distinct theme within the security-development nexus. The portfolio review has thus taken a broad perspective and included both initiatives that are clearly CVE and those that are related to CVE.

Most of the Danish support has either been at a policy level or has had relatively vague or indirect CVE linkages. Some initiatives have fallen under a counter terrorism umbrella. Only three initiatives have clear CVE labelling and objectives. Broadly speaking, however, the support falls into the following four categories. Some initiatives cover more than one category:

   a. <u>Direct</u> interventions that seek to support partner efforts to disengage extremists from extremist groups and support their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. There are two interventions that fall into this

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[36] Denmark's integrated stabilisation engagement in fragile and conflict-affected areas of the World, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013

[37] Stabilisation Leaders Forum II report, comments from Christian Friis Bach, November 2014

[38] Countering Radicalisation through Development Assistance – A Country Assessment Tool, Danish MFA, 2007

category, these being the PREVENT project in Kenya and the Serendi rehabilitation and exit project in Somalia). As noted, CVE-direct interventions require specialist knowledge of CVE. In the Kenya case, this has been provided by the Danish intelligence service.

b. <u>CVE relevant</u> interventions that address the second (anticipatory) tier of the typology and seek to strengthen state and non-state efforts to identify individuals at risk and strengthen resilience to pull factors. These contain specific CVE objectives. An example of this type of engagement is the support that has been provided through the OSCE in Tajikistan to strengthening national CVE responses. Likewise, the PREVENT project in Kenya includes anticipatory CVE.

c. Other <u>CVE relevant</u> interventions that broadly address the third (preventative) tier of the typology and strengthen community resilience. There are relatively more of this type of intervention and they mostly focus on conflict prevention and conflict transformation objectives rather than CVE per se. Examples include the Kenya Coast civil society support and similar initiatives in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso.

d. <u>Policy interventions</u> that contribute to disseminating knowledge on CVE good practice and encourage a pro-active and rights-based response from governments. Denmark has supported a number of initiatives of this type, including a side-event at the 2014 UN General Assembly as well as regional assessments and action plans to counter violent extremism in West Africa (undertaken by the U.S-based think tank, the Global Centre on Cooperative Security, GCCS). Other indirect knowledge support comes via core support to think tanks, particularly the South Africa-based Institute for Security Studies, which also regularly contributes applied research material on violent extremism.

An overview of the recent Danish interventions reflecting the categories described above provided at Annex B.

3.5 Lessons learned

Denmark has actively supported regional policy development in West Africa and the Horn of Africa, including CVE relevant good practice mapping of possible initiatives[39] that is in line with recommendations emerging from sites such as the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF). As with the GCTF, a general lesson from these is that they all require unpacking and follow up at national level if they

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[39] Countering violent extremism and promoting community engagement in West Africa and the Sahel: An action agenda. CGCC, July 2013. Strengthening sub-regional cooperation and expertise in preventing terrorism in East Africa. CGCC, 2012

are to produce results on the ground. While offering some benefits in terms of sensitisation, their real value depends upon the degree to which recommendations are taken up by other actors. In the Horn of Africa, part of the initiative under an IGAD umbrella included the establishment of a follow-up task force comprising regional officials, although it is unclear how for long this functioned and what its effect was. The final report from this initiative raised a note of caution regarding the utility of training and strategy events at the regional and sub-regional level and underlined the importance of transforming skills and training into institutional practice.[40]

Another (and larger) batch of Danish initiatives do not carry CVE labels and may not have CVE-relevant indicators, raising the question of whether they are in fact "CVE-blind" or whether this was deliberate in view of the sensitivities involved. Nonetheless, where such initiatives work on conflict factors at community level they may contribute to strengthening community resilience to drivers of radicalisation and extremism and as such offer opportunities for CVE relevant results. Alternatively, such opportunities may be missed. Irrespective of the labelling issue, it would seem relevant to assess such initiatives using a CVE-lens for their potential and include objectives and indicators where appropriate.

Within the Danish portfolio, a good example of this type of intervention is the support provided to civil society in the Kenya coastal region, which has had a focus on inter-community tolerance and inter-religious understanding, conflict mitigation, and institutional responses to emerging crises. The most recent intervention was partly a response to the election violence in 2007/2008 but it built upon an existing cooperation between Denmark and well-placed civil society organisations. Despite not having distinct CVE objectives, vulnerability to radicalisation and extremism among youth was identified in the programme rationale and previous support to civil society networks was highlighted as having had positive benefits for diversity, inclusion and tolerance. While the support provided through these organisations appears CVE relevant, it had a broad conflict mitigation and peace building focus and this is reflected in its methodology and results framework. One effect of this may be that results relating to radicalisation and extremism will not necessarily be identified. Indeed, when the predecessor programme was externally reviewed in 2009, it was highlighted that an in-depth monitoring mechanism was needed to provide a comprehensive understanding of impact.[41] The issue was also raised in the 2013 Danida (UFT) mid term review of the Kenya Governance Programme, of which the civil society support was part.

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[40] Strengthening sub-regional cooperation and expertise in preventing terrorism in East Africa. Penultimate report. CGCC, April 2012

[41] External review of the Peace, Security and Development Project in Kenya, Katarina Westman, March 2008

The portfolio review shows that only three Danish CVE initiatives fall into the direct and anticipatory categories (these being PET's PREVENT project in Kenya, the Serendi rehabilitation project in Somalia, and the support to the OSCE's VERLT project in Tajikistan). Of these, the PREVENT project offers the strongest basis for assessing the value of CVE programming in development contexts as it works directly with state and non-state actors in Kenya on exit and pull factors.

The **PREVENT** project in Kenya is directly managed by the Danish intelligence service. It has a clear CVE focus and draws from the Danish prevention model, although with modifications. It is not, for example, possible to draw upon the comprehensive SSP cooperation as in Denmark and there is instead a greater emphasis on building the capacity of the main Kenyan partner (the National Counter Terrorism Centre), on selected civil society actors and enhancing the awareness and skills of staff in the prisons and probation services. The latter were chosen in order to narrow the focus of the project and increase its impact on two categories of individuals known to be at risk. However, it would have been equally relevant to focus on education.

From a Danish perspective, PREVENT is relatively unique in its scope (extending to both direct and anticipatory types of intervention) and methodology (direct cooperation with state authorities at operational level rather than just civil society). A key factor has been anchoring in the National Counter Terrorism Centre, which is strategically located. And the assignment of a project manager from within the Danish intelligence service who is regularly in Kenya has helped inter-agency dialogue and trust as well as follow-up. This is probably a critical factor and lesson to take away for this type of engagement.

The project has produced results in terms of sensitising stakeholders and increasing linkages (and trust) between state and civil society actors; in detecting and addressing early signs of radicalisation by state actors; and in disengaging known extremists (not otherwise under criminal investigation), i.e. exit. It has also promoted lateral cooperation across institutions at headquarters and operational levels that have previously not had a strong tradition of cooperation. Similarly, it has also strengthened institutionalisation of CVE knowledge at headquarters and local levels through appointments of CVE focal points, reporting and oversight (steering group) arrangements, capacity building, and allocation of front line practitioners. As part of counter radicalisation and exit, the Kenyan authorities have also drawn upon the more rehabilitation-orientated aspects of the Danish model, including counselling and mentoring. The latter is a valuable lesson learned given the individual nature of radicalisation. The experience has also been that both state authorities and civil society actors have required capacity development in order to

adequately perform their roles. Administrative and technical capacity development should thus be included with CVE programming on the basis of a needs analysis.[42]

By contrast, the **Serendi** project is essentially a disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) programme for al-Shabaab defectors (and thus also working on exit). The project is uniquely located in Somalia, where al-Shabaab remain the main conflicting party. The context is thus extremely fragile and sustaining and extending Federal Government control requires innovative solutions across the board, of which removing al-Shabaab fighters from the scene through the provision of viable alternatives to violence has a key role to play. In May 2015, Serendi was externally reviewed and found to be delivering good results in very difficult circumstances. At the time, over 900 al-Shabaab defectors were being accommodated. The review found that it was highly relevant to provide viable and sustainable alternatives for defectors, without which there would be a risk that the intersection between crime and violent extremism would be exacerbated. More generic issues included the need to manage risk (personal and reputation), provide mechanisms to receive child defectors, ensure the flexibility to be able to respond to developments, promote linkages with other stakeholders (including its eventual transition to a comprehensive DDR programme with the Federal Government and the UN/AU).[43]

The OSCE's **VERLT** has sought to strengthen Tajikistan's national responses to radicalisation and extremism through contextual mapping, sensitisation and capacity development of state actors and civil society, policy and strategy support, and bridge-building between state actors and civil society. However, implementing VERLT has proved challenging due to mistrust between stakeholders and the generally securitised response to radicalisation and extremism, which both provides a key rationale for the project but also raises the risks of inadvertently doing harm. From a donor perspective, lessons are that there needs to be adequate management and implementation capacity in place, including robust monitoring mechanisms, given the lack of Danish MFA presence in Dushanbe and difficulties in ensuring oversight.[44]

To briefly sum up, a number of conclusions can be drawn from the examples given here. Firstly, while there is room for policy work on CVE and exchanges of lessons learned, we should be realistic about its impact unless action plans etc. are matched with implementation mechanisms and the human and financial resources required. Thus, it would be useful if these policy initiatives were accompanied by a focus on

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[42] Interviews with PET, June & August 2015

[43] Review of the Serendi project for the reception and reintegration of former al-Shabaab fighters, Mark Shaw, May 2015

[44] The Danish support to this has now been suspended.

"what it takes" as well as "what works". <u>Secondly</u>, Denmark's willingness to include conflict mitigation activities within its stabilisation programmes could be complemented through more focused CVE programming (if a decision is made to pursue this) so that at-risk communities are more clearly targeted and monitored using an appropriate range of tools and that a fuller range of effects are observed. <u>Thirdly</u>, results in relation to pull factors and exit have been possible because of dedicated expertise being made available alongside various permissive factors, including access to decision-makers, the presence of *political will* to make change happen, and a focus on well-known risk areas (prisons, probation etc.). Some of these permissive factors need to be cultivated but gaining access appears to be key.

4   Recent experiences from international efforts

This section provides examples and lessons learned from the efforts of international actors on CVE development programming. It draws from open source material supplemented by interviews with a number of experts involved in implementation of CVE projects. There are relatively few recent external reviews or evaluations of CVE activities openly available, although some useful examples from Kenya, Somalia and the Sahel have been accessed and are summarised below.

There also exists an extensive body of general good practice on sites such as the GCTF, Hedayah etc. These can be useful if they are properly contextualised and they demonstrate that CVE approaches are relevant to a wide range of sectors, including many traditional development fields. Notably, the CGTF's *Ankara Memorandum on a Multi-Sectoral Approach to Countering Violent Extremism* provides an overall strategic framework but also here its recommendations need to be complemented by nationally owned processes that operationalize them.[45] In this respect, USAID's guidelines on CVE programming provide a useful framework within which CVE in development contexts can be considered.[46]

4.1   Key messages

- There is a growing body of general policy level guidance available but a shortage of empirical evidence of what works. The few open source reviews and evaluations demonstrate results at programme output level but weaker evidence at outcome level. This attribution problem is not unique to CVE
- Experiences suggest the importance of basing interventions on the evidence provided by robust design studies (including Political Economy Analysis and an explicit theory of change) and involving local partners.
- Experiences suggest the relevance of paying particular attention to youth and to the role played by women and girls. Broader community engagement (including parents/carers and religious figures) also appears important. There should be a focus on prisons and education services.
- There is a need to be clear about physical, programmatic and financial risks. Risk taking and risk mitigation measures need to be well informed. It will be important to determine whether an adequate level of security exists to permit implementing partners to operate, monitor, and communicate.
- CVE programmes operate in a politicised environment where sudden and unexpected programme changes and cancellations may produce negative

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[45] Ankara Memorandum on a Multi-Sectoral Approach to Countering Violent Extremism. Can be accessed on www.thecgtf.org.

[46] Development Assistance and Counter Extremism: A Guide to Programming (USAID, 2009). See also Chapter 5.

(and harmful) results. Communication and labelling should be carefully considered and the latter should be discreet.

- CVE programmes should be subject to periodic reviews and evaluations in order to check their programme logic still holds, minimise and mitigate risks, and document results and good practice.

4.2 CVE programming under USAID's Kenya Transition Initiative

The Kenya Transition Initiative (KTI) is a USAID supported CVE initiative that has had a focus on selected communities in Nairobi and on the coast (Mombasa, Lamu etc.). It is a flexible funding mechanism that has supported individuals, networks and organisations with small grants designed to mitigate key push and pull factors. The programme was externally reviewed in 2013.[47]

The review notes that examples of push factors are police harassment, unemployment and racial or ethnic profiling. Examples of pull factors include a highly radicalised religious environment, the personal appeal of religious leaders, material incentives (cash), vengeance, status, peer pressure, the influence of social media, and possibly a search for adventure. The review highlights the importance of sufficiently robust assessment and design studies that provide the basis for programming (in KTI's case, the allocation of grants) and monitoring. A key question of such analysis concerns what makes certain individuals more vulnerable than others to the radicalisation process and ultimately to violent actions. The review notes, however, that the background research for KTI did not appear to capture all the push and pull elements (or prioritise them sufficiently) and that this had an impact on the relevance of grant allocations. On the other hand, the flexibility of KTI grants (based on the use of small scale pilots that could be scaled up) was found to be useful. Recommendations relating to CVE programming include:

- Develop a strong evidence base through detailed and robust research prior to programme design. Ensure sufficient precision in targeting at-risk groups. Takes account of potential biases through triangulation of evidence.
- Ensure that sufficient attention is paid to individual level drivers and pull factors, such as status seeking, vengeance, material incentives.
- Build a system to articulate and test assumptions in the intervention logic; for example, through use of Theory of Change approaches.
- Focus on avoiding/mitigating negative effects. The review highlights a number of risks, including effects from external development partners being seen to meddle in local affairs, physical threats to individuals/entities, and reputation risk. Communication and labelling needs to be carefully thought through to avoid exposing partners and may need to be discreet.

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[47] Qualitative study on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) programming under the Kenya Transition Initiative (KTI), USAID. Supplemented by interview with evaluation team member, August 2015.

- Recognise the time needed for CVE programmes to become established.[48]

4.3 Other USAID CVE programmes in Kenya and Somalia

In addition to the Kenya Transition Initiative discussed above, USAID has also supported youth programmes in North Eastern Kenya (the Garrissa Youth Programme) and in Somalia (Youth Livelihoods Programme). The programmes had a common CVE-relevant purpose to promote a positive sense of identity through increased engagement and livelihoods for youth vulnerable to recruitment by extremists, including al-Shabaab. All three programmes were designed in line with USAID's guidance on CVE development programming.[49] The programmes were independently evaluated in 2013 using a participatory approach with a focus on attitudes.[50] The findings demonstrated that the programmes had a positive effect on increased youth engagement, the efficacy (usefulness) of this, and on attitudes (although it also notes that these do not necessarily translate into behavioural change in relation to violent extremism). Recommendations in relation to CVE programming include:

- Emphasise projects addressing youth voice and influence. A key finding (from Hargeisa) was that youth who are engaged but have a low sense of efficacy were frustrated and possibly vulnerable to extremist attitudes. To counter this, programmes must emphasise the efficacy of engagement.
- Ensure the participation of women and girls in CVE programming.
- Include media messaging to address the enabling environment, equally in relation to countering narratives and encouraging moderate attitudes.
- Careful targeting to ensure that most at-risk groups are included. As part of the design phase, a youth risk profile for the community should be developed that identifies most at-risk youth and their pathways of influence.
- Emphasise broader community engagement. The lack of involvement of parents/carers was seen as a critical oversight. There is a need to consider engagement with madrassas and Muslim leaders.
- Integrate capacity development in grant programmes. It was found that even the most experienced partners required capacity development in relation to administrative and programming issues.
- Improve monitoring and evaluation of CVE programmes, including a greater degree of standardisation relating to indicators.

4.4 USAID's CVE engagements in the Sahel

In parallel with the CVE development engagements in East Africa, USAID has also implemented CVE activities in Niger, Mali and Chad through a regional, multi-sector Peace for Development (PDEV) programme. Similarly to those in East

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[48] Ibid.

[49] Guide to the Drivers of Violent Extremism (USAID, 2009) and Development Assistance and Counter Extremism: A Guide to Programming (USAID, 2009)

[50] Mid-term evaluation of Three Countering Violent Extremism Projects, USAID, February 2013

Africa, the activities target local communities (particularly youth) in at-risk regions through youth employment and outreach, vocational skills training, and community development and media activities. These complement other USAID development programming, including on governance issues. The CVE interventions were independently evaluated in 2011 and it was found that they had had positive impact at programmatic level, although outcome results were more modest. The most successful and popular interventions appear to have been radio programmes where there was evidence of impact on public attitudes and understanding about tolerance and peace, particularly when complemented by other (governance) interventions. This points to the relevance of promoting overall coherence between development interventions.[51] Other key findings include:

- Programmes targeting youth are especially important to develop leadership within the community and resolve tensions and grievances. The programmes were primarily seen by youth as paths to employment and a better life. However, expectations need to be carefully managed.
- Political and development commitments need to be sustained as it may take only one failed commitment to setback relations with a community and produce negative results.
- Youth programmes should focus even more on linking training and employment so that people have job prospects after training.
- Local partners will be the prime avenue for programming in insecure areas and the need for capacity development should be expected.

4.5 EU's STRIVE programme in the Horn of Africa

The European Commission has launched CVE programmes in the Horn of Africa and in Pakistan (outsourced to RUSI and GiZ respectively) within the framework of strengthening resilience to violence and extremism (STRIVE) in line with the EU's Counter Terrorism Strategy. Both combine learning with practice. The programme in the *Horn of Africa* aims to build the regional capacity of security sector and law enforcement agencies to engage with civil society on CVE, to strengthen the capacity of women's organisations in Puntland and Somaliland on CVE, to increase the understanding of the challenges faced by EU-born Somali youth in Somaliland, and to increase the understanding of drivers of radicalisation among youth in Kenya. Meanwhile, the programme in *Pakistan* aims to strengthen Government, media and civil society capacity to implement and monitor CVE programmes. Its focus is on strengthening provincial government capacity in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces to operationalize and monitor STRIVE strategies, strengthening the resilience of youth to extremism and violence, strengthening resilience to extremism and violence through media ethics, and generating an

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[51] Mid-Term Evaluation of USAID's Counter Extremism Programming in Africa, USAID, February 2011. The initiatives evaluated fall within US Government's Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP).

improved understanding of 'what works' in strengthening resilience to extremism and violence in Pakistan. Both programmes will run between 2014 and 2017.

Early (generalizable) findings emerging from the Horn of Africa work include:

- The experience underlines again the importance of context. Only through a comprehensive understanding of local dynamics and through feeding awareness of these dynamics into the design of activities will programmes be effective.
- Government has a central, but not exclusive, role. Civil society is also important where it is well anchored in local communities. In Kenya, it has been useful to strengthen linkages between government authorities and civil society actors. There is a need to ensure that preventative approaches are considered at all levels and across government.
- Education institutions (religious and secular) constitute a gap in the current focus as there is a need to engage with youth before they drop out of school. The quality of religious education needs to be strengthened.
- Prisons are regarded as key sources for recruitment.
- Focus on reintegration of returning foreign fighters.
- Mentoring services offer potential for engaging with at-risk individuals (e.g. through trained teachers, social workers, religious figures etc.) but may best be placed within existing structures with other functions (e.g. job centres, youth centres, schools, prisons and probation services etc.).
- CSOs can provide a mechanism to access at risk groups where they are anchored in local communities, are credible and have capacity. They may be relevant in relation to both push and pull factors. Selected CSOs should be able to demonstrate work in related areas (e.g. inter-faith dialogue, youth engagement etc.).
- Carefully consider approaches to communication and visibility to influence perceptions in at-risk communities on a case-by-case basis.
- Small initiatives that are successful need scaling up to enhance impact and maintain momentum.
- There is a need for greater awareness, discussion and coordination across development partners, governments, implementers and local partners in relation to patterns of vulnerability. These patterns are complex and subject to large variations. Thus, the more specific the response, the higher the likelihood of success. Peer-to-peer learning should recognise that CSOs have developed innovative approaches. A CVE civil society platform could provide a platform for this.[52]

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[52] STRIVE recommendations for the CVE community in the Horn of Africa, RUSI, March 2015 supplemented by interview with STRIVE team leader, August 2015

4.6 DFID's Sustainable Employment and Economic Development Programme

In Somalia, DFID's sustainable employment and economic development (SEED) programme provides an example of a mainstream livelihood programme in a fragile setting where the theory of change includes expected results in relation to reducing support for armed groups. An evaluation of the programme in 2015 found that, despite its CVE sub-objective, the SEED programme selected youth primarily based on livelihood vulnerability (rather than vulnerability to extremist recruitment). The lesson from this is that selection criteria for CVE programming need to be explicit and clearly target those at risk of radicalisation. The evaluation also noted that income and unemployment are not the only factors driving extremism. A significant pull factor, for example, is related to the perception of government failure and that al-Shabaab provides stability, justice and basic services. Recruitment patterns were found to be based both on individual and group factors, with the former being influenced by personal needs/gain and the latter being driven by clan elders taking decisions based on political opportunism. This again underlines the importance of contextual understanding and including conflict drivers as part of this. Overall, the evaluation concluded that the space for "dual programming" of development and CVE will be limited unless it takes into account the local drivers of radicalisation and recognises that these may be multifaceted (requiring a comprehensive approach).[53]

4.7 Monitoring and evaluation

Compared to other areas of development and stabilisation, there is relatively little open source evidence of what works in the area of CVE development programming. As already noted, there is a substantial body of good practice available on GCTF, Hedayah and other websites, but this is quite generalised and cannot be applied directly. The few evaluations that are available relate primarily to initiatives in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel (see above), although it can be expected that the EU's STRIVE programmes will contribute further to the evidence base. These show that evaluation of CVE is possible and useful but often let down by inadequate results frameworks. With the support of the Canadian Government within the GCTF framework, further work is being undertaken on CVE evaluation.

On the one hand, programme evaluation is frequently highlighted as essential to provide empirical evidence of the success or otherwise of CVE programmes. On the other, it is acknowledged as a significant challenge because of the difficulties in gaining evidence and it has proven difficult to attribute wider change to project outputs achieved. CVE shares this with other concepts and practices within the

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[53] Evaluation of Somalia Sustainable Employment and Economic Development programme (SEED) Evaluation, DFID (Powerpoint headlines) supplemented by interview with evaluation team member, August 2015

conflict/peacebuilding area. The challenge is partly due to the lack of consensus on core definitions (which makes it difficult to set the boundaries for key terms) and the absence of models explaining why certain people becomes violent extremists while others do not.[54] This makes it difficult to adopt a programmatic approach. Moreover, the general lack of empirical data on numbers (of people at-risk) makes it difficult to develop baselines. There is thus a methodological difficulty attached to "evaluating the negative" where preventative interventions are concerned.

As a consequence, there is little opportunity to attribute broader changes in society to specific interventions and there tends to be a "leap" involved between concrete project outputs (numbers of extremists disengaged, CVE mentors trained, dialogue fora established etc.) and expectations relating to outcome and impact (lower threat levels etc.). This predicament is compounded where decisions are made to reduce the political sensitivity of CVE interventions by avoiding or toning down CVE relevant criteria in project documentation and communication.

In the light of the above difficulties, which as noted are not unique to CVE, there are several basic steps that can be taken to strengthen the monitor-ability of CVE programmes. These include strengthening empirical data through field-based research (particularly involving data collection from active and former extremists), design work based on this analysis and triangulated as far as possible to produce political economy analysis (PEA) that feeds into a theory of change, results framework and risk assessment. The importance of theory of change is that it can help identify key dependencies and assumptions and thus enables testing. In this respect, DFID's Drivers of Radicalisation studies have tested programming hypotheses/assumptions, in some cases, leading to their dismissal.[55]

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[54] Evaluating CVE programming, CGCC, September 2013

[55] DFID internal note on Drivers of Radicalisation Methodology

5 Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Overall conclusions

The study finds that there is an increasing interest in CVE as part of the overall response to terrorism and a recognition that it is not sufficient to focus on this from a domestic perspective alone. The phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters has internationalised certain conflicts, fuelling them and presenting risks when individuals return to their countries of origin. Equally, extremist narratives and ideologies cross borders and present radicalisation risks. Global indices suggest that the impact of these is greater in development contexts where local resources and weaker governance and rule of law offer opportunities for extremist recruitment. The rationale for including CVE objectives in development programming is to prevent and mitigate these risks through a more coherent and comprehensive approach than if left to security-based interventions alone.

CVE relevant development programming is a particularly challenging area of development cooperation. The demands of robust, holistic programming pose a dilemma in most fragile and conflict affected states where the need for CVE responses is significant yet the context and institutional framework is unlikely to be permissive. Risk mitigation methods are likely to be relatively resource intensive, requiring either experienced personnel on the ground or access to trusted local partners with sufficient capacity and access enabling them to undertake and monitor implementation.

The study highlights concerns that poorly designed and/or implemented and coordinated interventions may do harm; for example, by placing implementing parties and individuals at risk or by stigmatising specific groups. To mitigate this, CVE projects must be appropriately labelled or packaged so that they do not draw adverse attention to themselves or those engaged in them. It may be necessary to avoid the emotive words "radicalisation", "extremism", "counter terrorism" etc. Equally, donor labelling may need to be toned down or avoided so that local anchoring is most prominent. Decision-making in these respects needs to involve local stakeholders who are aware of possible sensitivities.

The survey of CVE projects nonetheless demonstrates that CVE can be included in development programming, in particular when this is already taking a stabilisation perspective. The latter means that design processes will be alert to the need to take a Political Economy Analysis (PEA) perspective to the context, including consideration of drivers of change, spoilers and conflict risks. Although in practice, these design processes are often constrained in terms of time, the value added of including them within a development-driven stabilisation framework is that

attention is paid to broader governance and human rights implications of potential interventions.

The evidence strongly suggests that CVE programming must prioritise human rights and be conscious of peripheral actions (for example from law enforcement) that may inadvertently undermine them. There is evidence that violent extremists draw upon heavy-handed responses from law enforcement that undermine human rights in their narratives to justify violence and recruit others.[56] This observation underlines the need for a Whole of Government approach within an overall framework of "Do No Harm" that covers not only CVE but also other anti-terrorism and law enforcement initiatives and is based on legislation that is clearly defined, includes due process guarantees and is otherwise in line with international human rights standards. Without this, there is a risk that the activities of one arm of the state may undermine those of another, thus undermining the overall effort.

Where such standards are not in place or cannot be guaranteed, the risks for CVE interventions obviously increase. CVE programming then faces several choices, including the "do nothing" option; working through trusted civil society partners; and/or building the capacity of state agencies so that a more human rights based approach is taken.

With regard to entry points, the experience suggests that CVE-relevant development interventions can be implemented in a range of sectors and thematic areas, such as education, employment, governance and rule of law (particularly policing, prisons, probation services etc.). A critical factor concerns the need to focus such interventions on communities at risk. Experiences suggest the relevance of paying particular attention to youth and to the role played by women and girls. Broader community engagement (including parents/carers and religious figures) also appears important.

The specificities of individual contexts mean that what works in one environment may not be appropriate in another or will, at least, require careful tailoring. Thus, what may work in Kenya, may not work in Pakistan or Syria. Equally, translation of domestic (Western) approaches into much more fluid and weak development contexts will need to be approached with caution, although Danish domestic experiences have to some extent influenced Danish CVE programmes in Kenya. USAID's CVE guidance note from 2009 provides a useful six step programming process based on the recognition that interventions must be built from a solid contextual understanding.[57]

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[56] "We are tired of taking you to the court". Human Rights Abuses by Kenya's Anti-Terrorism Police Unit. Open Society Justice Initiative & Muhuri. 2013

[57] Development Assistance and Counter Extremism: A Guide to Programming (USAID, 2009)

Experiences suggest that a key success factor is likely to be the availability of individuals and organisations capable of partnering with governments, development partners and other aid agencies on CVE. The evidence suggests that some degree of capacity development will often be required.[58] One immediate issue that arises concerns the identification and selection of implementing partners, taking into account also the potential for politicisation and risks in relation to personal safety and (possibly aggressive) intelligence gathering by extremist groups.[59] Partners need to be aware of these risks and be able to handle them. Equally, prospective partners may be wary of being identified with governments and external actors on counter terrorism agendas due to their political sensitivity. This suggests the need to draw from local knowledge (including from trust networks used by embassies and aid agencies). Avoidance of CVE or counter terrorism labelling in relation to the way in which projects are communicated is likely to be relevant.

While the cases examined in this study have demonstrated results at output (programmatic) level, there appears to be a lack of strong evidence of results at outcome level. However, this is partly due to the problem of how to measure prevention and it should be noted that similar concerns also apply to other peace and security related areas, including conflict prevention. The relative absence of independent reviews and evaluations of CVE in development settings suggests that further attention should be given to these important processes. Mid term reviews should be a standard part of CVE programmes and be tasked to consider thematic issues as well as programme management.

Related to the impact issue are problems of scale in the sense that CVE interventions concentrating on push and pull factors alone may not be extensive enough to produce broader change. Again, this is not a condition unique to CVE and is likely to be most acute in relation to broad, sectoral push factors (e.g. shortage of economic opportunities). Ways of mitigating this will include targeting interventions on communities most at risk, utilising joint approaches with like-minded development partners, and ensuring complementarity and coherence with other engagements.

Finally, the study finds that the demands outlined above can result in a relatively higher management burden for donor agencies in terms of programming, facilitating access and monitoring. This is an acute issue where agencies are facing contradictory pressures to engage more on stabilisation and conflict issues while management resources are limited. In most of the cases surveyed in this study, these management costs have been reduced through outsourcing. However, other possibilities to consider include:

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[58] PET (Kenya), STRIVE

[59] ISS, September 2014

- Joining forces with other like-minded development partners and maximising overall coherency with other initiatives, including hard security.
- Drawing analysis from a range of available sources (including sources on the ground where feasible and think tanks, humanitarian actors etc.).
- Ensuring that programme staff have access to CVE knowledge covering development and security fields and/or contracting such capacity.
- Aligning possible interventions with available resources. Without credible local partners, it is unlikely to be possible to design and implement activities on the ground and options will be restricted to those that can be implemented remotely.
- Being clear about the theory of change will help identify critical assumptions and risks and allow them to be tested. There should be a focus on "what it takes" as well as "what works".
- Small-scale pilot projects will allow for innovation, limit risks, and permit either cancellation or scaling up. However, they will still need to be informed by the points highlighted above and be accompanied by adequate monitoring in order to inform decision-making.

5.2 Recommendations

The study has a number of recommendations for the Danish MFA. These are:

- If Denmark decides to pursue CVE further, the most obvious vehicle for doing so would be through stabilisation programmes in fragile and conflict-affected states. It is relevant that these programmes are able to draw from both ODA and non-ODA funding, which makes them an inherently flexible tool and thus well suited to CVE interventions. In certain cases, it may be worthwhile considering whether other mainstream development interventions can be adapted to a CVE perspective.

- In order to inform decision-making in these cases, radicalisation and violent extremism risks should be assessed during preparatory context analyses, alongside other security, political and societal risks. Based on this, down-stream programme design processes could consider whether development engagements require or are suitable for incorporating CVE objectives. If so, the focus should be on targeting populations that are most at risk rather than providing blanket coverage.

- In order to share risks and increase resources and reach, opportunities for joint engagements with like-minded development partners could be sought. Joint arrangements should in all cases involve sharing of information and decision-making. In order to minimise the management burden, consideration could be given to outsourcing programme implementation and (some elements of) monitoring and quality assurance.

Annex A: International knowledge sharing

There are a large number of governmental and non-governmental organisations and platforms producing knowledge products relating to CVE. In many cases, these treat CVE as a sub-set of research and practice relating to counter terrorism.

The **Global Counter Terrorism Forum** (GCTF) is an inter-governmental body set up to share experience, expertise, strategies, capacity needs, and capacity-building programmes relating to counter terrorism. CVE is a key GCTF priority area. The Forum consists of a strategic-level Coordinating Committee, co-chaired by Turkey and the United States; four thematic and two regional expert-driven Working Groups; and a small Administrative Unit. Denmark is one of the 30 founding members. The current Working Groups are: Countering Violent Extremism, Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law, Detention and Reintegration, Foreign Terrorist Fighters, Horn of Africa Region Capacity Building, and Sahel Region Capacity Building. Each working group has two co-chairs (pairing countries in the global north and south). The GCTF's homepage (www.thegctf.org) covers a wide range of CVE related issues and good practice relating broadly to the scope of the various working groups. There is also a secure site for GCTF members.

Linked to the GCTF, the United Arab Emirates hosts the **Hedayah Centre**, which seeks to promote dialogue, training, and research on CVE. GCTF members support its governance and operation, including by providing voluntary financial contributions, delivering courses, and seconding staff. As with the GCTF, the Hedayah Centre hosts a substantial number of good practice guides and other documents on its website (www.hedayah.ae).

Within the EU context, the **Policy Planners' Network** on Countering Radicalisation and Polarisation (PPN) is made up of the security and integration ministries of the UK, France, Germany, Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Finland, Spain and Canada. It provides a mechanism for sharing information on policy and practice; offers an 'institutional memory' for PPN members; commissions research on issues of mutual interest; holds meetings for discussion, exchange and presentations from non-governmental experts; works to upgrade and coordinate strategies; and enjoys close cooperation with the EC Coordinator for Counter-terrorism. The PPN is hosted by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (www.strategicdialogue.org).

The EC also set up the EU-wide **Radicalisation Awareness Network** (RAN) in 2011 (http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs) to help first-line local practitioners and to facilitate the exchange of experiences and best practices between them. The RAN comes under the PREVENT strand of the EU Counter-Terrorism strategy

and is guided by the EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism.

In addition, there are a large number of think tanks producing and exchanging information on CVE at the policy and practical level, often relating more directly to CVE within the development context. These include the U.S-based Global Centre on Cooperative Security (www.globalct.org) and the South Africa-based Institute for Security Studies (www.issafrica.org) – both of which straddle the policy-practitioner area and have been supported by international development partners, including Denmark. The Global Centre has recently contributed useful agenda setting inputs on the Sahel and Horn of Africa (with Danish support), including side-events at the UNGA, as well as insights on CVE monitoring and evaluation.[60] In addition to its other work on political/security analysis, ISS has undertaken field research with the goal of strengthening the evidence base for CVE programming.[61]

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[60] www.globalcenter.org

[61] www.issafrica.org

Annex B: Overview of Danish CVE projects

Horn of Africa	Project	Overall objective	Level of intervention	CVE-specificity[62]
HoA 1	Strengthening Sub-regional Cooperation and Expertise in Preventing Terrorism in East Africa. 2011-2012	Encourage national implementation of counter terrorism laws; fostering sub-regional support for law enforcement cooperation network; training sessions for network members; development of follow-up strategy.	Policy level, regional Some capacity building Mainly state actors	CVE-relevant, CVE policy
HoA 2	Serendi Rehabilitation Centre for Former al-Shabaab Fighters. Since 2013. Somalia	Establish facilities to receive defectors from ALS; rehabilitation and reintegration; prevent them from returning to ALS, and encourage further defectors, weakening ALS	Targeted assistance to ALS defectors	CVE-direct
HoA 3	Anti-Money Laundering (AML) & Counter Terrorist Financing (CTF). Kenya, Somalia. 2013-14	Increase efficiency of AML and CFT. Strengthen Kenyan FIU and begin initial sensitisation in Somalia	Policy. Capacity development of FIU and basic ground work in Somalia	CVE-relevant
HoA 4	Support to Ethiopian Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU). Ethiopia. 2013-14, 2015-2017	Improve Ethiopia's capacity to deter, detect and punish facilitators of money laundering and financing of terrorism. National and regional aspects of strengthening Ethiopia's AML/ CFT-capacity	Policy. Institutional capacity building	CVE-relevant
HoA 5	Peace and security	Enhanced engagement with	Capacity building,	CVE-relevant

[62] Broadly, this can be seen as a continuum, with CVE-direct (i.e responding non-coercively to a distinct extremist threat); CVE-relevant anticipatory (i.e. responding to individual/community vulnerability, including pull factors, that unless addressed would increase the risk of violence) and CVE-relevant preventative (i.e. contributing to reducing more general risks that could lead to radicalisation and then violent extremism, including push factors). For interventions to qualify under these headings, they need to have a focus on at-risk groups and individuals. In certain of the cases reviewed here, the degree of specificity is unclear. In others, the main focus is on policy.

	promoted as the basis for democratic development at the coastal areas of Kenya. 2010-2015	government agencies and other stakeholders to address issues of peace and security.	indirect implementation, through CSO partners	
HoA 6	Prevention of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (PREVENT), Kenya, Since 2014	To improve Kenya's capacity to detect and prevent threats to national security resulting from radicalisation and violent extremism	Policy and capacity development (support to NCTC & CSOs)	CVE-direct

West Africa	Project	Overall objective	Level of intervention	CVE-specificity
WA 1	Countering Violent Extremism and Promoting Community Engagement in West Africa and the Sahel	Increase stability in the Sahel and West Africa region and enhance human rights and poverty reduction by strengthening community resilience and capacity to counter narratives.	Policy level Supports UN Global CT Strategy, ECOWAS, GCTF Sahel WG, & EU Strategy for Sahel	CVE-policy
WA 2	Border Security Management in the Sahel. 2015-17. Danish Demining Group	Contribute to peace and stability in the Sahel region. Improved border security management for local pastoralist and refugee communities	Mixed - policy level, capacity development of local actors, incl. community leaders	CVE-relevant
WA 3	Observation of the dynamics of cross-border movements by cattle herders and creation of network of leaders from the nomad population. Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, 2015-17 Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue	Contribute to peace and stability in the Sahel region Local conflicts prevented in border areas	Capacity building	CVE-relevant
WA 4	Improved stability in Niger 2015-17 EU	Contribute to peace and stability in the Sahel region Diminish risks of insecurity and instability in Niger	Capacity building	CVE-relevant

		caused by terrorist threats, religious extremism and tensions between communities		
WA 5	Capacity development of the community police. Burkina Faso, 2015-2017	To promote community engagement, trust and social cohesion	Capacity building	CVE-relevant
WA 6	Reinforcement of warning mechanisms and community based conflict resolution, Burkina Faso, 2015	Strengthening the prevention of violent extremism through promoting peaceful religious values and coexistence	Capacity development through local partners and INGOs	CVE-relevant
WA 7	Prevention and resolution of conflict in Mali and the Sahel region, 2011-12, 2013 -14

Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue | Support prevention and resolution of conflict in the Sahel region though networks of community leaders and youth in northern Mali and neighbouring countries; Reduce risk of Malian conflict extending to other countries in the Sahel region; Respond to economic and political situation of young Malians who have joined Islamist movements; Raise awareness of mediators and political actors on the complexity of inter-communal relations | Mix of political & community levels, enhancement of peace negotiations, mediation | CVE-relevant |

Asia	Project	Overall objective	Level of intervention	CVE-specificity
Asia 1	Towards building a better counter terrorism regime in Bangladesh, 2009 - 2011	Strengthen the counter terrorism regime through advocacy for a government-owned and implemented National Counter Terrorism Policy in Bangladesh	Policy level	CT policy
Asia 2	Reconciliation and trust building, Pakistan, 2015-17	To bring together players in the region, primarily from Afghanistan with the	Policy, capacity building	CVE policy .

		purpose of discussing current issues in the joint fight against terrorism and extremism		
Asia 3	Core support to The Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC), Indonesia, 2013 - 2018	Capacity development of Indonesian and regional law enforcement experts and officers with responsibility for transnational crime and terrorism in line with human rights standards.	Financial support to capacity development within the project	CVE relevant
Asia 4	Violent Extremism Leading to Terrorism (VERLT), Tajikistan, 2012-2015	Strategic understanding of violent extremism, governmental capacity to detect and counter extremism, community resilience is enhanced	Policy & capacity building	CVE-relevant
Global 1	Core contribution to UNODC	Support UNODC's efforts to fight international terrorism, piracy and drug related crime.	Policy level	Non-specific

Annex C: Danish domestic initiatives

Overview

Denmark's domestic approach to CVE builds on the national inter-sectoral collaboration between key actors in existing social protection and crime prevention measures.[63] The general preventative efforts are anchored in the Ministry of Social Affairs[64] which also operates a website with a variety of background information and practical tools relating to prevention, including a series of handbooks with concrete examples of good practice.[65] The Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET) is also a key actor with roles across the preventative spectrum.

The terrorist attacks in Copenhagen in February 2015, coupled with current official estimates are that at least 115 Danish nationals are participating in the conflict in Iraq and Syria, has significantly increase the domestic focus on counter terrorism and CVE.[66] The issue of foreign fighters (where Denmark has the second largest number per capita amongst OECD countries) is argued to exert risks for both the people going abroad and for Danish society when they return. The approach being taken by the authorities is to reduce the number of people leaving Denmark to participate in conflicts and provide exit support for people returning. This includes the possibility for direct prevention; for example by confiscating passports. In relation to exit, initiatives include the establishment of exit-centres and a strengthening of dialogue and counselling activities provided by social authorities and the intelligence service.

The underlying logic of Denmark's domestic preventative approach is that *if…* the preventative efforts are well informed, built on strong and broad inter-sectoral collaboration and out-reach measures that are sufficiently broad to reach vulnerable groups, *then…* they can contribute to preventing people from being radicalised, *through…* early detection, monitoring and targeted preventative interventions. This builds upon the assumption that the methods and tools that are used to prevent general social and criminal risk behaviour will also have an effect regarding the prevention of radicalisation and recruitment into extremist environments.

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[63] The key state bodies involved are the Ministry of Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the National Board of Social Services, the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET), the Danish Prison and Probation Service, and local authorities, mainly municipalities and police.

[64] Ministry of Children, Gender Equality, Social Affairs and Integration.

[65] *14 cases on handling radicalisation*, Ministry of Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs, 2011. The booklet is primarily aimed at professionals participating in Denmark's preventative SSP cooperation between schools, social services and police. But it also has wider utility. http://english.sm.dk/arbejdsomrader/forebyggelse-af-radikalisering-og-ekstremisme/forebyggelse-af-radikalisering-og-ekstremisme

[66] Terrorism assessment, PET/CTA, 18 March 2015

A Common and Safe Future

Denmark's approach was set out in a national action plan - *A Common and Safe Future (2009)* - with a range of CVE-relevant initiatives grouped around seven distinct focus areas:

1. *Direct contact with youth.* This includes preventative talks and mentoring schemes, as well as more tailored inputs for individuals identified as being in the early stages of radicalization. There is also a wide range of preventative approaches, including awareness raising and capacity development where counter radicalization efforts are incorporated into local crime prevention. This responds to the observation from actors on the ground that they need knowledge and tools to understand and interact with youth showing signs of radicalisation.
2. *Inclusion based on rights and obligations.* This includes strengthening inclusion; for example, through underlining parental responsibility on the one hand and non-discrimination on the other.
3. *Dialogue and information.* Including efforts to embrace unity and diversity (for example through role models), this includes information about the objectives and results of Danish foreign policy and efforts to stimulate a more nuanced understanding of geopolitical and social issues. The domestic intelligence set up a dialogue forum to promote interaction and confidence building with local community leaders. The assumption here is that such people are closer to risk groups and may have positive influence.[67]
4. *Democratic cohesion.* This includes various steps to enhance understanding of democracy and citizenship in the school system, through social and sports associations, and so on.
5. *Efforts in vulnerable residential areas.* This includes, for example, preventing the development of parallel societies and ghettos through residents associations and leisure opportunities.
6. *Special initiatives in prisons.* This includes specialized training for prison staff and initiatives directed toward prison inmates.
7. *Knowledge, cooperation, and partnerships.* This includes a "joined up" approach from government authorities, improved knowledge management, improved international cooperation, research and mapping, and enhanced communication methods to counter misinformation and propaganda. [68]

The Danish model

A central part of the overall preventative effort is based upon the existing collaboration between schools, social authorities and police (SSP), which is in most cases the established focus of youth crime prevention efforts. Under the auspices of the SSP collaboration, regional and local networks have been established with specialised knowledge about radicalisation and extremism, including identification of vulnerable individuals. Participants are kept updated on CVE issues, including through the information centres, annual

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[67] Recent Danish Counter-radicalization Initiatives: A Case Study on the Danish Security and Intelligence Service's Dialogue Forum. Policy Brief, April 2014. Julian Brett, Tana

[68] A common and safe future.

conferences and regular participation by officials from Ministry of Social Affairs/intelligence service in network meetings. SSP is locally anchored and over the years the network has expanded significantly.

Box 1: The Danish model

> Anchored in the SSP-network, social services and the police focus on prevention of radicalisation and exit from extremist groups based on dialogue, awareness raising and direct support. The effort is a supplement to the on-going crime preventive efforts for people under 18, but now also targets people up to 25. Counter radicalisation is implemented in the crime preventive work based on three levels of engagement: (a) preventative interventions aimed at general socialisation and crime prevention; (b) anticipatory interventions aimed at identified vulnerable groups and individuals, and (c) direct prevention and exit aimed at individuals how are already part of the extremist milieu. The strategy is to approach radicalisation in the same way as other crime preventive work, which needs both a group related and an individual approach. As part of the project "Info-houses" have been established in some cities to function as the focal point for contacts. The project further includes mentoring, which gives the opportunity to directly support individuals with coaching as part of the intervention.

Today, job centres, educational youth facilities, local businesses, sport clubs etc. are also connected to the SSP-network. In principle, it enables a multidisciplinary, coherent and holistic approach to preventive work, which enhances the chances for early detection and intervention. Concrete examples of the SSP approach are included in the good practice papers on the Ministry of Social Affairs counter radicalisation website.[69] Similarly, an inter-sectoral collaboration has also been established between Police, Social authorities and Psychiatric services to coordinate the efforts involving people with psychological problems, who are at risk of ending up in a vacuum between different authorities, and who thus do not receive sufficient and adequate support.[70]

In 2014, an external evaluation of selected elements of the 2009 Action Plan concluded that the initiatives examined had contributed to dissemination of knowledge among actors at national and local levels, and that these actors had been equipped with relevant tools and methods to prevent, identify and tackle radicalisation and extremism. Most stakeholders consulted noted that the capacity development of resource persons and awareness raising had improved their ability to identify behaviour of concern. CVE was regarded as part of the general criminal preventative work and it was found that similar approaches could be used, with a focus on vulnerable individuals. It was also highlighted that the relevance of CVE varies according to municipality. A number of cities (notably Copenhagen, Aarhus and Odense) had a particular focus on the issue reflecting a higher than average incidence of vulnerability and had prioritised resources accordingly. Stakeholders noted that it would

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[69] www.sm.dk

[70] PSP-samarbejdet, En kortlægning af PSP-Frederiksberg, Odense, Amager og Esbjerg. Vitus & Kjaer, 2011

be relevant to increase the focus on early preventative inputs; for example through opening discussion on issues such as discrimination, inclusion, prevention of hate speech and hate crimes. The evaluation also found that there would be value in integrating smaller municipalities better in the initiative, at improving the ability to encompass individuals over 18 years old, and at enhancing the approach to increase its ability to identify persons that are not otherwise socially vulnerable and also those within the immigrant population that are most vulnerable. The latter reflects the fact that youths and young adults from vulnerable communities in Denmark are participating in armed conflicts abroad.[71]

The Danish intelligence service has also pursued a collective dialogue with selected Islamic community leaders (the so-called dialogue forum). The 2014 evaluation found that this was useful, although there were limitations as it relied upon interlocutors that were willing to participate and may not be representative. Thus, reaching individuals within extremist environments could be limited.[72] This obviously presents a dilemma, although it needs to be seen as one element of a multi-pronged effort. It can be argued that including groups with openly extremist views could compromise the dialogue by shutting off more moderate avenues. Nonetheless a general lesson is that participants should well-connected and thereby provide a channel of contact with individuals and groups at risk.[73]

On the basis of the experience from the first action plan, a new version was launched in September 2014 with four key priorities:

1. Greater involvement by local authorities so that they are able to recognise signs of radicalisation and take the necessary preventive action – including for people aged 18 or over.
2. New tools for prevention and exit that focus on the prevention of online radicalisation and recruitment to armed conflicts, as well as exit strategies for individuals in need of support to leave extremist groups.
3. Enhanced international partnerships, including capacity development in third countries to help them prevent extremism.
4. Mobilising civil society to involve relevant stakeholders in preventive work, including efforts to minimise the negative influence of "radicalisers".[74]

The focus on online radicalisation is new and has emerged based on recent developments in the use of social media by extremist groups to disseminate propaganda as part of the radicalisation and recruitment processes. The assumption behind initiatives targeting online-radicalisation is that if young people's capacity to navigate in and critically approach social media content is enhanced, then the likelihood of successful influence from the "radicalisers" will be reduced. Further, and alongside such actions, it is emphasized that civil society has

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[71] Evaluering af indsatsen for at forebygge ekstremisme og radikalisering (in Danish). COWI, January 2014

[72] ibid

[73] Brett, 2014

[74] National Action Plan on Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism, 2014. The Danish Government.

a role to play in offering alternatives to extremist messages and that capacity development may be required in this respect.

Lessons learned

The Danish model for prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism is anchored in collaboration between relevant educational actors, social authorities, and law enforcement that has its roots in a broader approach to social protection and crime prevention and in Danish society in general. Its effectiveness, however, depends upon there being sufficient capacity and other resources available, taking into account that the numbers of individuals at risk is probably relatively small compared to other vulnerable groups and that it varies from municipality to municipality. The system therefore depends upon sufficient coverage and effective targeting and, absolutely fundamentally, the relatively robust societal structure that is found in Denmark.

Even with these advantages, which the 2014 external evaluation viewed positively, there remains a fundamental challenge to identify people with extremist opinions and who intend to translate these into criminal actions, in circumstances where such people are otherwise well functioning and integrated into the labour market and social life. This fact underlines the necessity of involving a broad range of actors and institutions, especially those closest to youth (e.g. educational, sports and religious facilities) in the preventative work. However, involving such actors is necessary but not sufficient. Ensuring that they have the knowledge and the capacity to detect early signs of radicalisation and to refer these to competent authorities appears paramount. [75] A further lesson is therefore that national strategies should be followed up with practical and concrete information, methods and tools. In this regard, the training and follow up embedded in SSP, the availability of trained mentors, and the resources openly available on the Ministry of Social Affairs' website appear as good practice.

A further observation is the need to take a holistic approach and to work with all factors surrounding vulnerable individuals and groups. The Danish model is to a high degree built on the premise of collaboration between authorities, civil society and people at risk. Especially preventative and anticipatory initiatives are based on the assumption that there is an internal motivation for positive change that will lead the person to reach out to or cooperate with authorities to retreat from the radicalisation process and/or exit the extremist environment. As reflected in the 2014 action plan, this must reach out to young people who have left school (and who are thus beyond the reach of the SSP cooperation). With 115 or so Danish nationals currently participating in Iraq and Syria, the efforts are not yet sufficient. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge the difficulty of measuring the negative. So, while concrete examples will be known of individuals who have been turned away from the course towards violent extremism, the true extent of preventative results will be difficult to assess.

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[75] COWI

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