

Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE)

Overview

At their roots, displacement and violent extremism are transnational phenomena often emerging from social challenges in fragile and crisis-affected contexts. Violent extremism is also a growing cause of displacement globally. Within IOM's peacebuilding portfolio, preventing violent extremism (PVE) programmes address underlying drivers of motivations for and vulnerabilities involving violent extremism that may arise in contexts of marginalization, exclusion, human rights violations, and social isolation, or through exposure to radical ideologies, lack of livelihood opportunities and defection from armed groups. Recognizing that vulnerability is insufficient to explain why some people become involved in violent extremist groups, the Organization has tailored its prevention and reintegration programmes to address structural motivators, enabling factors, and individual incentives that generate contextual susceptibility to violent extremism. These programmes are informed by robust context analyses and are tailored to local circumstances with an emphasis on improved relations between government and citizens, community-based prevention approaches for youth-at-risk, assistance for returnees, and community projects with psychosocial dimensions and improved access to balanced information and critical thinking skills. PVE takes place across IOM's programmatic areas of assistance, including as part of conflict prevention, post-facto DDR effort, migration management and assistance, and durable solutions.

Key Considerations

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- Violent extremism involves advocating, committing or supporting acts of violence to achieve ideological objectives that are typically based on racial, religious or ethnic supremacy or opposition to democratic principles. Not all "extreme violence" is violent extremism.
- IOM's PVE approach targets contextualized drivers of recruitment and fosters community resilience. PVE projects are based on robust evidence and stress the importance of human rights, conflict sensitivity, gender equality, and partnership.
- Active involvement of local governmental, civil society, and community actors is critical to successful prevention and peacebuilding and works to strengthen their capacities and leadership.
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Relevance to IOM's Emergency Operations

More than 40.5 million people seek refuge within and across international borders annually due to conflict and disasters, increasingly exacerbated by violent extremism. As part of its commitment to addressing adverse drivers of displacement, and to mitigating human suffering, IOM is active in the prevention and resolution of conflict. This includes the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts, such as violent extremism.

IOM's efforts to prevent conflict and violent extremism are grounded in its commitment to prevent, mitigate, and respond to root causes and drivers of forced displacement, re-emphasized at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, as well as in IOM's Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF) and the Organization's Framework for Addressing Internal Displacement. In confronting structural drivers of violent extremism and forced migration, IOM acts pursuant to the Global Compact for Migration (GCM)'s objective to minimize adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, including its affirmation that migration should be a choice, not a necessity.

Coordination

In August 2015, the DG released a memo convening an IOM Task Force on Counterterrorism / Countering Violent Extremism. ODG additionally released a communication in 2015 conferring oversight and endorsement for PVE activities with Peace and Recovery Division (PRD), and counterterrorism related border security activities with DMM/IBM.

Operations

IOM's PVE programmes are focused on identifying and proactively addressing context-specific drivers, risk factors, and individual incentives for joining violent extremist groups. Working at the institutional, community, and individual levels, IOM supports a whole-of-society approach to understanding and addressing underlying vulnerabilities and building community and individual resiliency - including amongst youth. This prevention work is complemented by efforts to support the disengagement, disassociation, reintegration, and reconciliation of those exiting violent extremist groups. Notably, these programmes are not designed to confront violent extremist groups, their messages or methods, but rather may provide positive, pro-social responses to their exclusivist ideologies and they are not specific to any religion, ethnic or racial group or political ideology.

PVE programming is informed by extensive institutional experience in programme areas such as [community stabilization](#), psychosocial recovery, conflict mitigation, [peacebuilding](#), and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR).

Some types of PVE programming include:

- **Community-based approaches**, involving stabilization programming and efforts to enable community actors to play stronger prevention roles.
- **Support to at-risk individuals**, often marginalized youths, women or former combatants, with a focus on livelihoods, education, increased participation, inclusion, and social cohesion.
- **Research**, typically into the localized drivers of violent extremism, occurring at the inception of the project or as continuous situational analysis throughout implementation.
- **Government capacity building**, at national and subnational levels with emphasis on interinstitutional coordination and training, including in some cases support to security and law enforcement sectors.
- **Information programming**, ranging from the promotion of alternative narratives to interventions designed to increase critical thinking skills among potential targets of extremist propaganda.
- **Psychosocial support services**, including activities to strengthen resilience and problem-solving in at-risk populations.

For IOM, the term PVE, which focuses on prevention of recruitment and radicalization, is preferred over countering violent extremism (CVE) which can be confrontational with extremists, their ideology, methods, or messages. PVE focuses on targeting populations not yet engaged in violent extremism.

Requirements:

- Need for nuanced context analysis: establish evidence, defining specific factors contributing to violent extremism and points of entry and populations of concern.
- Need for theory of change: surface assumptions, define logic actions leading to desired outcomes.
- Need for conflict and risk sensitive approaches: the PVE agenda is highly political, prone to abuse, can risks human rights and stigmatization and potentially put individuals at risk.
- Need for dynamic M&E: monitor for effectiveness in real time, apply learning in real time for adaptive programming.

Links

- [Preventing Violent Extremism \(PVE\) page on the TRD SharePoint](#)

References and Tools

Contacts

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