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National Approaches to Extremism

JORDAN

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COUNTRY REPORTS ON NATIONAL APPROACHES TO EXTREMISM
Framing Violent Extremism in the MENA region and the Balkans
JORDAN

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Overview

COUNTRY PROFILE

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (HKJ) is situated in one of the most uniquely placed locations in the Middle East. It is in the heart of Levant, bordering Syria, Palestine, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, and is essential for what is considered the crossroad for Muslims, Christians and Jews as the Holy Land. The Kingdom was part of the Ottoman Empire for over 400 years (Fannack, n.d.) until 1918 when the empire ended, and in 1921 the British gained protectorate status over Transjordan, which covered the area of Jordan, including some parts of Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan gained its independence in 1946 (Irvine and Abu Jaber, n.d.).

Jordan is well known for opening up its borders to its neighbouring countries' populations in need of refuge, from welcoming the Palestinians in 1948 and 1967 to the influx of Iraqi refugees after the 2003 US invasion of Iraq and to a greater arrival of Syrian refugees in 2012 that was so large it resulted in one of their settlements, a UNHCR-run camp, being considered the fourth largest city in the Kingdom (Hawkins, Assad and Sullivan, 2019). As of 2019, according to a UNHCR report, Jordan registered the number of persons of concern that stands at 744,795, with approximately 655,000 Syrians, 67,000 Iraqi, 15,000 Yemenis, 6,000 Sudanese, and 2,500 refugees from a total of 52 other nationalities.

Government system

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a constitutional monarchy that practices democracy and is governed by the rule of law. In the case of Jordan, the constitution grants substantial discretionary powers to the sovereign in the exercise of his authority: the King has the executive and legislative powers to, for example, ratify or veto laws and treaties, dissolve or suspend the parliament, appoint the government (for a four-year term) or dismiss it.

Jordan is a unitary state with the text of the constitution adopted for the first time in 1952, and amended and updated since. The constitution provides a framework under which the sovereign, government, legislature and judiciary are governed. The bicameral legislature is translated in the national assembly – parliament – with two houses: the Upper and the Lower House. The Upper House or Senate, also known as the House of Notables, is appointed by the King, who, in accordance with the constitution, usually nominates 65 members: former prime ministers, military commanders, former judges or diplomats (minimum age is 40) who had served either in the Lower House or in the government. The Senate is a respected and influential body that advises the Lower House on general policies. The Lower House members, 130 of them, are directly elected by the Jordanian citizens through universal adult suffrage (not guaranteed by the constitution), thus the House is known as the House of Representatives. The membership is elected for a four-year term through party-list proportional representation in a total of 23 constituencies. Due to the diverse population, the minimum quota system provides for a number of seats reserved for individual representatives: for instance, nine seats for Christians; nine seats for Bedouins; three seats for either Chechens or Circassians; and 15 seats for women (Inter-Parlamentary Union – Majalis Al-Nuwaab [House of Representatives], 2018). In addition, there are more

than 45 registered active political parties – 49 in 2019 – (Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, n.d.) that play a part in parliamentary structure and functioning, with the list including the new Muslim Brotherhood Society, Islamic Centrist (Wasat) Party, Jordan National Alliance, etc. (Central Intelligence Agency, 2019). The multi-party system returned to Jordan in 1992 (having been abolished in 1957) with promulgation of the Political Parties Law, which was followed a year later by a single-member-district system being introduced, resulting in tribal and family ties being favoured over party/political and ideological affiliations. Several modifications of electoral laws, the latest being in 2016, ensued a system in which, in spite of a list-based electoral process intended to encourage voting on political affiliations, to date the majority of the Lower House representatives are not affiliated with any party. This in turn further contributes to tensions over the voting system, with the critics emphasising that, as it stands, the law favours less populated tribal constituencies (so-called "East Bankers")[1] over the almost over-crowded populated urban areas where mostly Jordanians of Palestinian descent (so-called "West Bankers") live, areas that are highly politicised and described as Islamic strongholds.

The government is appointed for a four-year term and can be dismissed by the sovereign or by a majority vote of no-confidence by the elected House of Representatives.

Finally, the constitution also provides for an independent judiciary, with civil, religious, and special courts. The constitution also provides for religious freedoms in spite of Islam being the state religion. Religious law extends to the matters of personal status, and is partially based on Islamic Sharia law.

Population

The population of Jordan is 10,209,819 as of 26 July 2020 (World Population Review, 2020). Some 98% of the population is Arab (Jordanians, Palestinians, Syrians, Iraqis, etc.), with non-Arabs accounting for 2% (Circassians, Chechens, Armenians, Kurds, Turkmens, etc.). Jordan granted citizenship to the Palestinians under the law of 1954 stipulating that "any person who, not being Jewish, possessed Palestinian nationality before 15 May 1948 and was a regular resident in [Jordan] between 20 December 1949 and 16 February 1954" (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near Est, n.d.) will have been considered a Jordanian citizen. As a result, a significant number of the Jordanian population are of Palestinian origin; there are also Palestinians who have been granted a passport but have no national ID number and therefore are not considered fully-fledged Jordanians. On the other hand, Iraqi refugees were never granted citizenship; instead Jordan considers Iraqi refugees as visitors but provides them with crucial services such as education and health. The influx of Syrians posed a question to Jordanian authorities on the threat of such a great number of refugees being present, whether it be the spill over of radicalisation or tension between governments or smuggling and trafficking on the border (Alshoubaki and Harris, 2018).

Main ethnic/religious groups

Sunni-Muslims are the dominant religious denomination, that make to up 92% of the population; the other 8% comprises minorities such as Christians, Shia Muslims, and Druze (Fanack, 2020). Christians altogether are

[1] Significant influxes of Palestinian refugees arrived in Jordan in both 1948 and 1967, concentrating primarily in urban areas. Most Palestinian refugees were given Jordanian citizenship. The presence of this large Palestinian Jordanian population contributed to a sense among "East Bankers" (primarily Jordanians descended from those resident in Jordan before 1948) that their national and cultural identity was being gradually eroded, particularly following a violent civil war in 1970 during which armed Palestinian groups were defeated by Jordanian government forces (International Crisis Group, 2012; El-Abed, 2004).

composed of different groups – Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Catholic and Protestants – and, in numbers, there are around 170,000-190,000 Christians and 15,000 Druze (Ibid.).

CONTEXTUALISATION OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION IN THE COUNTRY

Overview of radicalisation and violent extremism

Jordan has struggled with radicalisation for an extended period. It is no secret that radical ideologies are influenced by the political stability and events of the surrounding countries, and having had the approach of open borders for migrants and refugees from those neighbouring countries Jordan has found itself in a situation where the segments of that same population posed a threat to its security (Alshoubaki and Harris, 2018). In 2017, only 12% of the Jordanian population considered religious extremism to be a top priority concern (Counter Extremism Project, 2015).

A previous survey showed that 67% of the Jordanian adult population viewed Al-Qaeda as a legitimate resistance movement. However, after the 2005 attacks on Jordanian hotels, the percentage that still viewed them as a legitimate resistance organisation was a mere 6.2% (Speckbard, 2017; Braizat, 2006).[2]

Although Jordan does not disclose its official data, various local and foreign organisations have shown that Jordanians amount to being one of the highest contributors to foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) in the world, with 315 militants per million citizens on a per capita basis. Jordan also appears to be in the ranks of the top 10 countries that "provide" foreign fighters involved in the Syrian conflict (Speckbard, 2017).

Director of NAMA - Strategic Intelligence Solutions Fares Braizat said that "Jordanian fighters are principally males from impoverished backgrounds, who were previously underemployed or unemployed."[3] However, according to the WANA Institute (2018), factors like the "search for personal identity and purpose, the presence of corruption and cronyism, distrust in the government, weak youth engagement, economic pressures and unemployment, and strong opposition towards Israel, the West, and their perceived influence over the country" are equally important drivers pushing the young people to join violent extremist organisations. Furthermore, a drastic socio-economic situation, such as increased living costs, high unemployment rates and the economy which is at standstill, are all underlying push factors contributing to the increase of radicalisation.

The influx of refugees also makes the economic situation worse and makes unemployment rates higher. The security apparatus in particular has a concern about Syrian refugees being in fact disguised foreign fighters, particularly in the urban areas (Counter Extremism Project, 2015).

Citizens reported to have joined ISIS and other violent movements inside and outside the country

Data surrounding the involvement of citizens joining ISIS is contested as different sources provide different numbers, and there is a far too large gap for the data to be reliable. Speckhard (2017) suggests that there

[2] This survey, on file with Anne Speckhard, investigated Arab and Muslim support for terrorism. A three-level framework for analysis was applied: 1) examining respondent perceptions on killing civilians of an occupying state/country, 2) examining respondent perceptions towards groups such as Hamas, Hezbollah, Al-Qaeda (Bin Laden and al-Zarqawi), and 3) examining respondent perceptions towards government/state armed forces actions in terms of whether they could be viewed as terrorist or non-terrorist. The poll was conducted between 1-7 December 2005, sampling 1,417 respondents throughout the Kingdom, including 669 public opinion leaders (political leaders, business executives, and the media).

[3] Fares Braizat, director at NAMA – Strategic Intelligence Solutions, interview by Anne Speckhard, Amman (2 November 2016).

are around 3,000 to 3,950, whereas the Soufan Group (2015) claims that there are around 1,500 to 2,500 foreign fighters.

There is little to no data covering this aspect although there are studies previously highlighting the sympathy many citizens had for Al-Qaeda pre-2005 (Department of State, U.S. - Refworld, 2018). The November 2005 attacks were a series of near-synchronised bomb explosions at three hotels in the capital Amman. Around 60 people were pronounced dead and 115 were injured. All identified bombers were of Iraqi nationality and had apparent ties to Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who fled to Iraq to be part of Al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia (Fattah, 2005).

There is no exact number of how many Jordanians left to join a terrorist organisation or how many joined internally, but through these attacks it became apparent that there is/was involvement in terrorist organisations locally.

Presence of radical and violent groups in the country

The groups that have had traction within the country and have gained support internally as well as externally are mainly ISIS, Al-Qaeda and Al Nusra/Jabhat Al-Sham (Milton-Edwards, 2017). Many well-known figures in these terrorist groups are originally Jordanians; figures such as Abu Qatada, an Al-Qaeda preacher in Europe (Pantucci, 2008); Abu Muhammad Al Maqdisi, an influential radical cleric; and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, an Al-Qaeda leader in Iraq, are all result of homegrown radicalisation — in some cases a prison-related radicalisation, as in the case of Al Maqdisi and Al Zarqawi (Gunaratna, 2004).

Framing radicalisation and violent extremism

Scientific and academic state of the art

For Jordan, which is hailed as an oasis of stability and order in an increasingly chaotic and volatile region, violent extremism has been a real concern. Notwithstanding the country's longer battle in the fight against terrorism and the close security surveillance over potential threats since the 2005 Amman bombings, which killed 60 people in a series of coordinated attacks on three famous hotels (NPR.org, 2005), preventing/countering violent extremism has become an increasingly more difficult task.

The state of the art points to three characteristics governing Jordan's fight against extremism. The following characteristics are inspired both by an analytical reading of the Jordanian battle against extremism and terrorism (Hazza, Majali and Rumman, 2016) as well as the synthesis of the literature by the Global Firearms Programme (GFP)'s team and their experience working on P/CVE issues in the country.

First, it has been largely led by the state's capable security apparatus, whether through laws and regulations, or the proactive engagement of security agencies through operations that aimed at careful monitoring of extremist groups and potential suspects. However, the increased complexities of the landscape created by the constant remodelling of the extremist groups' tactics and methods prompted a broader response beyond security and law enforcement agencies. More so, given the increased concern over the security loopholes in a number of recent operations: from the Irbid attack (March 2016) and the attack on the office of the General Intelligence Department (GID) in Ain Al Basha District (June 2016) to the car bomb targeting a military post near an earthen berm by the Rukban refugee camp (June 2016) (Hazza, Majali and Rumman, 2016).

This prompted the second characteristic: the relatively recent engagement of civil society and non-governmental actors. Albeit on the awareness and prevention level only, this engagement sought to expand the outreach of P/CVE efforts to address socio-economic and political drivers of radicalisation. International non-governmental actors and different United Nations (UN) agencies are an integral part of said efforts, providing significant funding for these and for research projects focusing on the topic.

Third, the creation of evidence-based knowledge around this topic in Jordan has been slow. For instance, there is no database, national or unofficial, to document interventions, track policies or measure the impact of P/CVE efforts. Likewise, the policy literature on the issue is still limited, with only a handful of national institutions and actors generating local knowledge on the issue. This stands as a real challenge given the fact that radicalisation in Jordan does not follow a linear trajectory; it is rather highly individualised, contextualised and influenced by shifts beyond the country's physical borders, namely developments in neighbouring Iraq and Syria. To elaborate, the book *The Salafis of Ma'an: A Sociological and Anthropological Study* sheds light on socio-economic structural factors that impacted the shape and rise of the Salafist movement in the southern city of Ma'an, which include the geographical location, the complex citizens-state relations there, as well as the socio-political discourse that the group built, which made their individual relations with the local community there a positive one (Centre for Strategic Studies, 2018).

Sociology of Extremism and Terrorism in Jordan: An Empirical and Analytical Study offers further insights into the state of the art in Jordan. For instance: the recruits and foreign fighters seem to go firstly to join ISIS (36.4%), second with the *Takfiri* movement (31%), third with the Al-Nusra Front (24.9%), Al-Qaeda fourth with a dismal 4.2%, and the remaining 3.6% join other extremists groups. Moreover, two thirds of them are married and the rest are single, with varying educational levels: 42.5% stopped at secondary school education, 31.1% did not finish secondary school, 21.6% have a bachelor's degree, 1.8% have a master's degree or higher, and around 3% hold a diploma, technical qualification or other type (Alghad Newspaper, 2018).

For instance, no evidence was found that fighters or their families are being compensated by armed groups in Syria (Proctor, 2015). Rather, the fiscal motivation driving recruitment, when spotted, appears to be on the part of the recruiters and not the recruits (Ibid.). Also, religion was not an obvious driver of the state of the art of radicalisation in Jordan, and social media plays a powerful recruitment role by glamourising the struggle and dramatising the plight of fellow Sunnis in Syria (Ibid.).

Prominent studies

In terms of studies, the aforementioned lack of data translates into a limited academic discourse and discussion around VE and radicalisation in Jordan. Security and law enforcement have been generally reluctant to disclose, for instance, official figures for Jordanian fighters and/or assessments of at-risk individuals within the country, and the number of studies published by security agencies on the topic ranges from few to zero. Arguably, more disclosure can be spotted recently with the State Security Court publishing terse details of certain cases they unfolded or some proceedings of court deliberations and sentences of accused individuals (Husseini, 2018).

Beyond official studies, non-governmental actors and think tanks have been contributing to the literature on VE and radicalisation in Jordan. Prominent studies include a series of books published by the Centre for Strategic Studies (University of Jordan), including: *The Salafis of Ma'an: A Sociological and Anthropological*

Study, which provides a deep analysis of the historical conditions and the specific geographic, political and cultural context in the southern governorate of Ma'an and tracks the development and emergence of the Salafist group and the transformations it went through, leading to the inception of the Salafist Jihadist movement (Center for Strategic Studies, 2013).

Another book, *Sociology of Extremism and Terrorism in Jordan: An Empirical and Analytical Study,* discusses in detail the results of an analytical field study that included nearly 760 jihadists, of which 190 were killed in Iraq and Syria, and offers 11 studies of in-depth cases tracking their journey into extremism (Alghad Newspaper, 2018). Moreover, the Centre for Strategic Studies (2013) produces a series of policy papers, including "'Salafist Transformations: Significance, Implications and Prospects", which was produced jointly with the German Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Office in Jordan.

Similarly, FES has actively contributed to the literature by sponsoring a number of publications. These include: *Post-Islamism: A New Phase or Ideological Delusion; From Caliphate to Civil State: The Young Face of Political Islam in Jordan after the Arab Spring; I Am a Salafi: A Study of the Actual and Imagined Identities of Salafis; Infatuated with Martyrdom: Female Jihadism from Al-Qaeda to the Islamic State, as well as Methods of Preventing and Combatting Terrorism in the MENA Region and in the West* (Friedrich-Ebert-Shiftung Jordan & Iraq, n.d.).

On the policy level, the West Asia-North Africa (WANA) Institute has produced a number of important studies. These include: *Trapped Between Destructive Choices: Radicalization Drivers Affecting Youth in Jordan; Examining Psychological Drivers of Radicalization in Jordan; Journey Mapping of Selected Jordanian Foreign Fighters; Charter on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism; Engendering Extremism: Gender Equality and Radicalization in the WANA Region; From Bladed to Brains: A New Battleground; Post-ISIS and Still Desperate: The Ongoing Drivers of Violent Extremism in Jordan, Tunisia and Lebanon, in addition to White Paper and a Theory of Change Towards More Effective Human Security Approaches in the Context of the Emerging Threat of Violent Radicalization in Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia* (WANA Institute, n.d.).

The studies of other actors covered additional aspects of violent extremism in Jordan, such as a policy brief produced by Mercy Corps, *From Jordan to Jihad: The Lure of Syria's Violent Extremist Groups* (Proctor, 2015), which highlighted the diverse socio-economic background of fighters, challenging the role of poverty as a key driver. Equally, the International Republican Institute (IRI)'s qualitative research on the local drivers of violent extremism in Mafraq and Zarqa, two municipalities which have been traditional hotbeds of radicalisation and host to large numbers of Syrian refugees, generated data that formed the basis of their report *Violent Extremism in Jordan: Local Governance, Tribal Dynamics and Forced Migration* (International Republican Institute, 2018). Additionally, a joint UN Women and Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) study examined in a technical report the under-researched angle of *Women and Violent Radicalization in Jordan* (United Nations Entity for gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2016).

Main research and knowledge producers

Mostly non-governmental actors and think tanks have been contributing to the literature on VE and radicalization in Jordan.

Defining violent extremism and radicalisation

Establishing consensus on VE and radicalisation definitions is a difficult task. Yet, two key definitional elements can be highlighted.

First, whether radicalisation and VE are defined at the individual or radical group level. In Jordan, the existing literature largely views radicalisation and VE at the personal level, unpacking personal transformations that an individual goes through in response to different socio-economic and/or political contextual grievances (Bondokji, Aghabi and Wilkinson, 2016).

Second, the distinction between radicalisation and VE in terms of ideology and behaviour. In other words, the radical ideology that an individual could carry, which can be captured in elements of a dichotomous black-and-white thinking and constant "othering" of different groups, and the radical behaviour that entails exercising varying degrees of physical violence (Alrai Newspaper, 2018).

Definition targets

Three groups are typically covered by these definitions: explicit supporters/members of the Salafist Jihadist movement, which are dealt with through law enforcement and security agencies; potential recruits and at-risk youth, which are dealt with via a combination of law enforcement and security agencies as well as non-governmental and civil society actors (awareness and prevention); and the last group which concerns the Jordanian Foreign Fighters' returnees, whom the state is strictly in charge of handling, whether in terms of prosecution and sentences, or rehabilitation and reintegration into society. Geographically, several reports and experts — including an expert from the Ministry of the Interior in conversation with WANA's research team for a publication (WANA Institute, 2017) — refer to four cities as recruitment hotbeds in Jordan: Ma'an, Salt, Rusayfeh and Irbid.

Ethnics or religious communities considered by violent extremism and radicalisation approaches

No specific non-Muslim communities are considered and, importantly, no Muslim community is considered per se. This is an extremely important distinction to make —Jordan looks at the issue from an ideological / behavioural / political, and not religious, vantage. More often than not, the rhetoric on radicalisation and VE targets the narrative and act of radicalisation, which could be manifested along tribal, regional or gender lines, or sometimes over a soccer match between the two most-famed football teams in the country. Furthermore, Jordan's journey with P/CVE so far shows that radical groups and individuals engineer their attacks against hard rather than soft (civilian) spots, such as military and security targets, which drives home the point of VE in Jordan being a state versus non-state actors, above all else.

Methodologies employed to study violent extremism and radicalisation

A few empirical methods have been applied to understanding and analysising radicalisation and violent extremism in Jordan, the most prominent of which were abovementioned. Partially, this is attributed to the nature of violent extremism, which makes it difficult to access or trust primary resources such as fighters or recruiters. Additionally, there is the challenge of this issue being largely considered a security issue that is dealt with via law enforcement and security agencies. Lastly, there is little material investment in, and support for, empirical and policy research at the national level.

Strategies to counter/prevent Violent Extremism and Radicalisation (C/PVE)

C/PVE INITIATIVES

Mapping of C/PVE actors

In Jordan, the relevant C/PVE actors can be identified at three main levels: governmental, international non-governmental and national non-governmental (community-based organisations – CBOs).

At the governmental level, an official C/PVE Unit was first established in November 2015 (Assabeel Newspaper, 2015). The Unit was under the mandate of the Jordanian Ministry of the Interior and was led at the time by a retired General who served in Jordan's Public Security Directorate. In November 2016, the Unit was moved from the mandate of the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Culture (24.ae Newspaper, 2016). The Unit remained under the Ministry of Culture until February 2020, when it was yet again moved, this time to fall directly under the mandate of the Jordanian Prime Minister's Office (Alwakeelnews, 2020). Therefore, all said official entities are considered key governmental P/CVE actors, for they have worked on the issue at some time.

At the government's executive level, CVE more specifically is the clear mandate of the Ministry of the Interior. A role that is played by the different security and law enforcement agencies falling under the Ministry's mandate, from police and counter terrorism special unit, to the Directorate of Correctional and Rehabilitation Centres, which hold suspects/convicts of violent extremism. For instance, the Community Peace Centre of Jordan's Public Security Directorate (PSD) was established in 2015 as a project of the Directorate's strategic plan to combat violent extremism. It works on issues of awareness, prevention and treatment of the dangers of extremist thought (Public Security Directorate, 2015).

On the second level, a number of international non-governmental actors have been actively supporting Jordan's P/CVE efforts since the early years of the Arab uprisings, as the chaos that ensued afterward, particularly in neighbouring Syria and Iraq, facilitated the rise of numerous extremist groups. Key amongst such actors stands the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s Office in Jordan, which has worked closely with local authorities and stakeholders – municipalities, CBOs and academia – to produce Jordan's PVE strategy. A significant part of funding this effort came from the UNDP itself.

Additionally, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) launched a project entitled "Strengthening Criminal Investigation and International Cooperation for Organized Crime Cases in Jordan" (Abdelhamid, 2019). Funded by the government of Japan, the UNODC continued to extend its support to law enforcement institutions in prevention of violent extremism and the international cooperation in criminal matters through an integrated set of activities including capacity-building trainings, the development of training guidelines, and introducing international practices in PVE and international cooperation (Ammar, n.d.).

Likewise, the German Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Foundation contributed to the P/CVE literature in Jordan by designing surveys on the subject, doing so in collaboration with local entities such as NAMA Strategic

Intelligence Solutions. Equally outside the UN's umbrella, PeaceGeeks, a Canadian-Jordanian civil society organisation (CSO), has worked on a number of monitoring and evaluation concepts and assessments, while the International Alert engaged jointly with the UNDP on a project centred on improving the impact of PVE programming (United Nations Development Programme and International Alert, 2018). Recently, the Spanish International Institute for Nonviolent Action (NOVACT) has been initiating conversations about the P/CVE scene in Jordan, and contributing notably to the work of the Observatory to Prevent Violent Extremism (OPEV) by trying to establish a stronger Jordanian presence in it (Observatory to Prevent Extremist Violence, n.d.).

Finally, on the third level, a number of national non-governmental actors – and CBOs – have been having a prominent role in P/CVE in Jordan. An organisation such as the WANA Institute, a policy think tank, has been working on P/CVE issues from a human security and research perspective since 2015. Other active stakeholders include the IDare for Sustainable Development organisation that works on P/CVE from a youth and a programmatic perspective, and the Arab NGO Network for Development, as well as the Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD), both of which are OPEV members. Furthermore, national non-governmental actors such as the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD) and the King Abdullah Fund for Development (KAFD) have integrated a PVE project within their strategic plans since 2017, targeting Jordanian youths across the Kingdom from the ages of 18 to 35 (King Abdullah II Fund for Development, 2018).

Public policies and programmes

At the public policies level, official P/CVE efforts in Jordan were launched back in 2014, at the time when the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) – or ISIS in the Arabic acronym – came to light. During this period, the Kingdom had established experience with counter terrorism (CT) efforts, however the P/CVE terminology was not very familiar. Nonetheless, P/CVE efforts were driven by a grave official concern regarding the increasing number of Jordanian fighters who became ISIS supporters and enlisted with the group.

In 2014, Jordan's National Policy Council along with a number of its specialised committees launched a nationwide campaign involving all relevant levels of government and security (the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Religious Endowments, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Education, for instance), asking them to come up with a comprehensive strategy to combat violent extremism. A series of consultations, exchanges and discussions resulted in the National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism, the details of which were published in 2016 and took the official title of The National Plan to Counter Extremism (Alghad Newspaper, 2016).

According to the Plan, confronting extremism requires joint efforts that include all aspects related to this phenomenon: educationally, culturally, politically, socially, economically and religiously. The Plan emphasised the necessity of "enlightening with an open and tolerant religious culture that would allow pluralism and acceptance of the others to flourish, be it an opinion, an individual, a society, a religion or a culture." (Ibid.).

In its text, the Plan called for the promotion of the values of tolerance, pluralism and respect for human rights, as well as the acceptance of the "other". To do so, it tried to outline the general framework for how Jordanian institutions should move in and work towards achieving the goals the plan sets by developing detailed strategies and plans. Importantly, the Plan acknowledged the weak coordination that exists between various P/CVE stakeholders. (Ibid.).

In January 2019, the Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF) – Arab Army announced the development of their own specific strategy to counter violent extremism and terrorism, based on the directives of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the time. The JAF's strategy was built on three pillars: military, security and technical. The aim of this strategy, from one side, is to protect and strengthen the capacity of the members of the Armed Forces in dealing with violent extremism and terrorism. From the other side, the same strategy enables JAF to take proactive measures that are aligned with what various state institutions and security agencies were already doing in this field, all while responding to the fast-changing strategic and geopolitical environment (Roya News TV, 2019). Specifically, the JAF's strategy seeks to:

- Introduce the members of the Armed Forces to the extremist organisations active in the regional arena and to the principles that underpin these organisations and their work;
- Educate the Armed Forces personnel about the methods used by the extremist organisations to attract their supporters;
- Ensure intellectual "immunisation" of the Jordanian Armed Forces personnel, and their protection against the methods used by extremist organisations to recruit members of the military into extremist thought;
- Cement the concepts of responsible citizenship, loyalty and affiliation among the Armed Forces members and promote a culture of tolerance, moderation and acceptance of others;
- Protect all enlisted officers and units of the Armed Forces from potential terrorist acts; and
- Establish a focal point to manage, unify and synergise the efforts of all those who are involved in implementing the strategy within the Armed Forces. (Ibid.)

On strategies, it is worth noting that, after the establishment of the government-level P/CVE Unit, a number of other P/CVE-related units that existed before were cancelled; the P/CVE Unit at the Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs is one case in point (Alrai Newspaper, 2019). Such efforts are explained within the context of the Kingdom's attempt to have a single reference point regulating and coordinating P/CVE issues.

Official definitions of violent extremism and radicalisation

As it stands, there is no official definition of violent extremism and radicalisation that is endorsed by the Jordanian government. The aforementioned National Plan did, however, emphasise the need to use an "appropriate verbal terminology for the reference and meaning implied in the mind of society" when discussing violent extremism and radicalisation. Note, for instance, that the use of the term "Salafist Jihadists" when referring to the Takfiris in Jordan beautifies the image of Takfiri in the mind of the recipient, the same way referring to "terrorist organisations" as "fundamentalists" could mislead the recipient (Alghad Newspaper, 2016).

On a similar note, the country does have an official definition for terrorist acts. The latest amendments on the Countering Terrorism Law of 2014 identified the terrorist act as:

> "Any intentional act/threat thereof, or refraining from it, whatever its motives, purposes, or means, falls in implementation of a criminal or individual project that endangers the safety and security of society, if it would violate public order or cause terror among people or intimidate them, endangering their lives and putting it at risk, or harming the environment, public facilities, private property, international property, or diplomatic missions, or occupying any of them, or seizing them, or endangering national or economic resources, or forcing a legitimate authority, or an international or regional organisation, to take any

action or refrain from it [in this regard], or disrupt the application of the constitution, or laws or regulations." (Alkarama, 2014).

Further, the latest amendments, introduced and passed in April 2014, extended to include four articles of the original law, drafted and approved in 2006. The amendments broadened the abovementioned definition of terrorism to include acts such as "disturbing [Jordan's] relations with a foreign state" which, according to IFEX-The global network defining and promoting free expression (2014) – the formerly known International Freedom of Expression Exchange–, constitutes a threat to freedom of expression in the country. The amendment has further expanded the definition to include other acts such as "any information system or network that facilitates terrorist acts, supports or spreads ideas of a group that undertakes an act of terrorism, or subjects Jordanians or their property to danger of hostile acts or acts of revenge" as well as "forming a gang with the intent to commit thievery or infringe on people or money." (Alkarama, 2014).

Civil society

In spite of having a National Plan on P/CVE in Jordan, along with an official P/CVE Unit under the mandate of the Prime Minister's Office, it is fair to note that fragmentation is still a characteristic of the P/CVE scene in the country. A number of civil society actors work on P/CVE issues, yet their efforts are yielding a modest impact so far, mostly due to either the lack of a broader P/CVE umbrella/strategy or the duplication of efforts. Additionally, interventions seem to be designed for the short and medium term, as opposed to a long-term comprehensive paradigm.

As highlighted by the WANA Institute's White Paper, the limited coordination between different P/CVE actors in Jordan, including civil society actors and local CBOs, remains a significant impediment to having an effective P/CVE approach (Bondokji and Mhadeen, 2019). As a result, a clear silo-working phenomenon began to characterise the P/CVE landscape, impacting not only the short-term ineffective P/CVE interventions in the country, but more alarmingly limiting the positive P/CVE initiatives to a certain geographical bucket or a group of beneficiaries.

The challenge the civil society stakeholders is facing is two-fold. First, there is little to no credible P/CVE evidence and knowledge base, meaning that the interventions are typically designed based on either the donor's understanding of the P/CVE issues and its relevant priorities or those of the stakeholder. Either way, such interventions are not necessarily backed by an informed and objective understanding of the issue. In short, the interventions are largely context-insensitive. Second, the civil society actors share the general challenge of the narrowing civic space, particularly when it comes to the issues of security as they are viewed through a strong state-centric lens.

Religious communities

Mainly, there are two religious communities in Jordan: Muslims and Christians. A number of different organised and institutionalised bodies represent these religious communities, notably:

- For the Muslim community, there is the Ministry of Religious Endowments, the Supreme Judge Department, and the General Fatwa Department (which is a body independent from the Ministry of Religious Endowments);

- For the Christian community, there is the Ecclesiastical Court, and the Jordan Evangelical Council for the Jordanian Christians of the Evangelical Church. Notably, the members of the Christian community in Jordan belong to one of the four major denominational groups: Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant.

It is important to note that the religious pathway is key to Jordan's approach to the P/CVE issues. One case in point is the Amman Message, which started in 2004 as a simple but precise statement issued by HM King Abdullah II of Jordan and senior Islamic scholars. The Message sought to declare "what Islam is and what it is not, and what actions represent it and what actions do not." Its goal was to clarify "to the modern world the true nature of Islam and the nature of true Islam." (The Amman Message, 2020). Thus, the Message is considered an early attempt at combating the radical and extremist thought which uses the religion of Islam to justify its extremists' conduct. In its origin, it was HM King Abdullah II of Jordan who has sent the three key questions to 24 of the most senior religious scholars across the globe representing all branches and schools of Islam, as follows:

1 Who is a Muslim?
2 Is it permissible to declare someone an apostate (takfir)? and
3 Who has the right to undertake issuing fatwas (legal rulings)?

Based on the *fatwas* provided by the scholars, who, amongst others, included the Shaykh of Al-Azhar, Ayatollah Sistani and Sheikh Qaradawi, in July 2005 HM King Abdullah II convened an international Islamic conference of 200 of the world's leading Islamic scholars – *Ulama* – from 50 countries. In Amman, the scholars unanimously issued a ruling on three fundamental issues, which became known as the Three Points of the Amman Message, whereby:

1 "They specifically recognized the validity of all 8 *Mathhabs* (legal schools) of *Sunni, Shi'a* and *Ibadhi Islam*; of traditional Islamic Theology (*Ash'arism*); of Islamic Mysticism (Sufism), and of true *Salafi* thought, and came to a precise definition of who is a Muslim.
2 Based upon this definition they forbade *takfir* (declarations of apostasy) between Muslims.
3 Based upon the *Mathahib* they set forth the subjective and objective preconditions for the issuing of *fatwas*, thereby exposing ignorant and illegitimate edicts in the name of Islam." (The Amman Message, 2020).

As such, it is no wonder that Jordan's National Plan for CVE opens with a religious statement and a reference to Islam to denounce extremist thought, and consequently the acts of extremist organisations. In this regard, it is a common exercise for the Grand Mufti of the Kingdom to regularly showcase and present Jordan's experience with C/PVE at national and international events, citing the Department's efforts in confronting extremist and radical ideas. As is common, the Mufti refers to setting a special law regulating *fatwa* matters in Jordan within clear and specific controls and limitations as a success for the Kingdom in its P/CVE efforts (Roya News TV, 2017).

Similarly, one study notes that the Ministry of Religious Endowments and the General Fatwa Department topped the list of the most active participants contributing to the National Plan for CVE. The steering committee

which drafted the plan consisted of 14 different actors from different ministries and governmental bodies. From a total of 195 procedural proposals put forward as the Plan was being developed and consulted upon, a total of 59 proposals (30% of the total number) were submitted by the Ministry of Endowments and the General Fatwa Department; with 10 proposals out of 59 coming from the Fatwa Department (Al Sharafat and European Centre for Counter-Terrorism and Intelligence Studies Amman, 2019).

A closer look into the religious communities in the Kingdom reveals a variety of ideologies and backgrounds, standing sometimes at an opposing end of the religious spectrum. For instance, the country has different salafi movements, arguably growing in numbers and use of violence; Hamas supporters who adopt a peaceful model of movement; a wide base of Muslim Brotherhood supporters who engage in different socio-economic and political aspects of the country (they are also the largest/oldest political opposition group), as well as a concerning number of Jordanian fighters who were in the ranks of ISIS and *Jabhat Fatah al-Sham* (Al-Nusra Front) and are returning to the country (Counter Extremism Project, 2015).

Methodologies

Stakeholders involved

As noted earlier in the mapping section, a number of relevant actors are involved in the P/CVE field. Still, it is helpful to note that there are three "spaces" whereby the question of VE in Jordan is raised and tackled: the PVE space, the CVE space, and the space in between. Different actors and types of involvement are tied to each of these spaces.

Specifically, it is clear that more actors are within the PVE side of the equation as opposed to CVE, since the latter remains a strict security file that is not quite accessible to those outside security and law enforcement agencies.

The security and law enforcement agencies are the key actors involved within the CVE sphere from both an operational and a judicial point of view, relating to both the methods and modes of applying force, and to the laws and regulations governing the VE scene in the country (through, for instance, the Anti-Terrorism Law).

Interestingly, there are few to no actors in the space between PVE and CVE actors. This leaves an uncharted territory when it comes to the overlapping between these two approaches and their dynamics, meaning that the engagements on both sides of the aisle, P-and-CVE, lack the needed complementarity to address the issue comprehensively and effectively. Therefore, it is desirable for actors, old or new, to come in and bridge this space and break the state of parallelism that exists between the two as it stands.

With respect to the government's involvement, the P/CVE Unit at the Prime Minister's Office is the official government entity that is responsible for coordinating the different P/CVE initiatives and activities in Jordan. The Unit also directs international stakeholders as well as the donors towards the government's priorities as far as P/CVE is concerned to ensure relevance of P/CVE projects. To that end, an official ministerial committee was formed in 2018 to devise a "clear action plan" for the Unit, comprised of the Ministers of Higher Education, Religious Endowments, Education, Youth, and Culture (Jordan Times, 2018).

The role of the Unit, however, remains within the coordination and guidance framework, and it does not initiate or run P/CVE projects of its own. Different observers note that the Unit does not have the proper budgetary

means to play a more proactive role within the P/CVE field in the country, in addition to the constant shifts it witnessed between different ministries, as well as the frequent change of administrations and high turnover of its already small number of employees (Al Sharafat and European Centre for Counter-Terrorism and Intelligence Studies Amman, 2019). Combined, such factors hamper the Unit's full and active engagement with the P/CVE field, making the Unit closer to being one actor against many, as opposed to the regulatory and coordinating role it should have had in overseeing the full field and working towards its betterment. The Unit's involvement is mainly at the macro level.

In parallel, CSOs and semi-governmental bodies are also involved. This ranges from raising awareness and building capacity to contributing to the P/CVE literature and policy environment in the country (mainly in the case of think tanks and research centres). The focus of their involvement comes at the grassroots and micro levels.

Lastly, international non-governmental actors such as the different agencies of the European Union (EU) and UN contribute to national P/CVE efforts. Yet, it is worth noting that their contribution is not necessarily, or explicitly, always labelled as P/CVE. This is attributed to two reasons.

First, VE is part of the broader umbrella of structural issues being addressed, issues such as social cohesion, resilience building or even promotion of good governance. Therefore, the international non-governmental actors prefer an approach in which they are seen addressing these broader issues as opposed to the narrow-focused P/CVE per se. Second, it is widely understood – although there is no official position taken that can confirm this – that the country does not want to find itself associated with VE so starkly. The mushrooming of P/CVE programmes/projects since 2015 certainly fuelled this "quasi-official" disposition. This therefore means that the EU's or UN's contribution should not be seen as putting Jordan on an explicit "addressing VE" path.

Targeted populations

P/CVE initiatives in Jordan have targeted a long list of beneficiaries. From youth in general to vulnerable and at-risk youths, refugees, women, official state employees, military personnel, imams and female preachers, teachers, students at different Jordanian universities, tribal leaders, community leaders, media workers, journalists, and policy-makers, amongst others.

Yet, what is key to note about the target group involved in the P/CVE initiatives is that each stakeholder has worked within its own mandate, and seldom did such initiatives bring a variety of the aforementioned groups all together. To elaborate, the Ministry of Religious Endowments has worked mainly and closely with imams and female preachers, with a partial partnership with CSOs such as Al-Hayat Centre for Civil Society Development (RASED). The Ministry of the Interior has worked mainly and closely with its own staff, including police officers, with the help of the Communal Peace Centre and the Communal Police Division, both of which are divisions of Public Security Department (Ministry of the Interior).

Similarly, the Ministry of Education has worked closely on the aspect that relates to reforming the curriculum via its own body, the Supreme Council of the National Centre for Curriculum Development. Similarly, the Ministry of Local Administration (formerly the Ministry of Municipal Affairs) has worked with municipalities and communal leaders.

By the same token, CBOs and local actors have also targeted similar groups in their P/CVE initiatives, following an almost identical approach to the design and implementation of their programmes, whether through workshops, capacity-building programmes, or holding focus group discussions, resulting in an echo-chamber whereby CBOs were virtually conversing amongst themselves with minimal interaction with relevant policy-makers, or without having a conversation with security and law enforcement agencies controlling the P/CVE aspect of such efforts.

Enforcement mechanisms for the P/CVE initiatives

There are arguably three enforcement mechanisms for the P/CVE initiatives in Jordan.

First, a soft mechanism based on raising awareness and building the capacity of relevant stakeholders. Such a mechanism is delivered by both governmental and non-governmental actors who adopted the training, lecturing and workshop pathways to enforce their P/CVE initiatives. Furthermore, this mechanism relies heavily on civic outreach and communal awareness in the delivery of the programmes, and seeks to provide the beneficiaries with the skills and knowledge necessary to form a societal nucleus that should contribute to changing mindsets and creating a cultural and intellectual environment that enables [young] people to think maturely, distinguish between right and wrong, and adopt facts and documented information. Furthermore, it is dependent on the voluntary compliance of the targeted audience by building their capabilities to examine the information and materials provided to them and influence others, for instance.

Second, a hard mechanism based on the use and application of force, albeit clearly more so in the CVE than the PVE sphere. This mechanism is captured by the number of police raids and operational interventions that were applied to a number of incidents that Jordan has seen over the past few years, extensively since 2016. It is worth mentioning that this mechanism bears a hefty cost for security and law enforcement agencies as they have lost a number of their distinguished officers during such interventions and engagement with radical groups or individuals in the country.

The third mechanism combines hard and soft measures and is found in the legislative dimension of P/CVE efforts. Here, the reference is made towards the amendments of the key laws governing P/CVE matters, such as the Anti-Terrorism Law (latest amendment in 2014) and the Cyber-Security Law (the law was first introduced and passed in 2015). For this purpose, in 2015, the Public Security Directorate (PSD) established a specialised unit under the name of Cyber-Crime Unit (CCU), with a mandate to address all forms of cybercrimes. In 2018, the amendments to include harsher punishments for what the state deems a cybersecurity crime were introduced (Ammar, n.d.).

Available resources

Realistically, the majority of the funding available for P/CVE efforts is offered by the international donors, with a smaller contribution of the Government of Jordan through the existing budgets of the various relevant ministries and agencies. For instance, the official flagship of Jordan's P/CVE efforts, which is captured in the production of the National Action Plan, was funded by the Government of Japan with the support of the UNDP's office in Jordan.

Main objectives of the strategies or initiatives implemented

The ideal goal/objective is to both prevent – by detection and awareness raising – and deter – by the application of force. The debate on where the existing approach falls on the prevent-deter spectrum in Jordan

is not only ongoing but also indecisive (Hazza, Majali and Rumman, 2016). That is, evidence of both does exist but the indicators tilt towards one side over the other, depending on the circumstances. At points, the country was taking a clear prevention approach, whilst at others, especially during the peak of terrorist acts, the weight was much heavier on the deter and counter side. Examples on the former approach include moving the P/CVE Unit to the Ministry of Culture, launching the National Action Plan, and/or introducing a master's programme at the Royal Jordanian National Defence College, with the latter examples including the introduction of harsher sentences or broader and vague definitions of terrorism, as alluded to earlier.

Existence of critical evaluation systems

Impact of the C/PVE on the threat of radicalisation

In a regional research project, the WANA Institute sought to examine the balance between human security, which largely falls within the PVE sphere, and state-centric security policies (SSPs), which are essentially in the CVE sphere, in Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia (Bondokji and Mhadeen, 2019). The findings from Jordan established that:

- "Successful human security programming can prevent violent extremism and go beyond that to address drivers of broader instability in the region. This includes drivers of social conflict, economic strife, challenges hindering representative and inclusive governance, as well as questions related to the social contract in countries of the region.
- SSPs – procedural and legislative matters – can reinforce violent extremism. Excessive use of force, selective application of security measures, and constraints on freedoms of expression together reinforce the sense of marginalisation and alienation among citizens. In turn, this enhances the prospects of radicalisation.
- SSPs also hinder the implementation of human security programmes in various ways including procedural and administrative restrictions on civil society, as well as access to employment opportunities." (Ibid.).

In short, the findings came to emphasise that, if Jordan is to eliminate the prospect of radicalisation, a balanced P/CVE approach is needed—one that does not only tackle the issue from a pure security lens but extends to address the structural issues that are still present in Jordanian society. Without such a comprehensive approach, the existing efforts continue to pose a threat to countering radicalisation efforts as they do not seem to address the contextual grievances and drivers behind extremism. Such grievances include, but are not limited to, development voids that are seen between the centre, Amman, and the peripheries outside the capital. A macro-level analysis of the situation points to a continued sense of social injustice and animosity towards the state in certain areas, which constitutes fertile ground for radicalisation.

SPECIFIC INITIATIVES ADDRESSED TO WOMEN AND YOUTH

In principle, most P/CVE initiatives in Jordan attempt to address women and youths in particular. However, the topic of women and VE remains an under-researched subject in Jordan, while the youth initiatives lack the capacity to leave a significant impact and be sustainable beyond the funding of international donors. As such, donor-fatigue on P/CVE issues stands as a real, but understandable, concern.

Specific initiatives focused on women and youths include, but are not limited to, the following:

- King Abdullah II Fund for Development (KAFD)'s Counter-Extremism Thoughts Project: the project was launched in 2017, with the aim of building youth core teams equipped with essential skills and knowledge to undertake the task of contributing to changing the patterns of thinking, along with creating a cultural and intellectual environment that enables young Jordanians to think reasonably, distinguish between right and wrong, and adopt facts and verified information. The project aspires to build participants' capabilities in fact-checking and the ability to have an influence on others, and targets young Jordanians in all governorates within the age group of 18-35 (males and females). Participants go through four main stages; the first includes three training workshops, while the second stage focuses on broadening participants' intellectual boundaries through dialogue sessions discussing a number of subjects. In the last two stages, participants work to transform what they have learnt into practical projects by implementing voluntary youth initiatives to encounter extremist ideologies on social media.
- The Women, Peace and Security Framework of UN Security Council Resolution 1325: whilst this framework does not target women and radicalisation exclusively but the broader question of enabling women's participation in conflict prevention and peace-keeping, it is nonetheless a fitting framework for women and PVE in the country. To elaborate, the UN Women programme on implementing the Jordanian National Action Plan (JONAP) on UN Security Council resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) follows the Cabinet's approval of Jordan's first National Action Plan in December 2017 and its successful publication and launch in February 2018. As reported by UN Women, the 2018-2021 JONAP for advancing the implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and its subsequent resolutions, was developed to respond to the country's latest security and military challenges.
- The Youth, Peace and Security Framework of UN Security Council Resolution 2250: similar to the 1325 framework, the 2250 framework does not seek to engage exclusively with youth (males and females) and VE per se, but it encourages youth's participation in peace-building efforts by ensuring their active prevention, participation, protection, partnership, and disengagement and reintegration (Youth4Peace, 2015). To this end, this framework could provide a great opportunity to specifically tackle the question of young returnees and their integration into society, which is a highly debated and timely topic in Jordan. Political will and support do exist to support the operationalisation and "Jordanisation" of the resolution, as manifested in the forming and launching of the National Coalition for Youth, Peace, Security 2250 in 2017, which consists of over 15 CSOs and official actors (such as the Ministry of Youth) and has been navigating its way into institutionalising this framework since. The current Secretariat of the National Coalition are Generations For Peace (GFP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).
- Other UN agencies, such as UN Women, which have supported local efforts to shed light on P/CVE from a gender perspective, and discussed "women and violent radicalisation in Jordan" with a number of local actors such as the Al-Hayat Centre for Civil Society Development – RASED and the Jordanian National Commission for Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, 2016). Similarly, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has engaged in prevention of violent extremism through a project focused on youth empowerment, which was part of a larger regional initiative UNESCO was spearheading in Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia.

- The Women and Prevention of Extremism in Jordan initiated in 2016: the project promotes leadership among women and youths in three countries in the Middle East and North Africa, and aims to enhance the capabilities of youths and women and their role in the social and economic field. The project was funded by the EU, and the exploratory and analytical survey was implemented jointly by the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), the Arab Women Association, the Centre for Information and Research, and the Centre of Women Studies at the University of Jordan. The attempt was made to form a better understanding of the concepts and challenges facing women in local communities on the problems of extremism and gender-based violence with the aim of exchanging views, raising their voices and contributing to improving dialogue between civil society and the authorities by uniting ideas and procedures and proposing solutions and recommendations. The project's output explored the relationship between gender-based violence and extremism in Jordan (Information and Research Centre King Hussein Foundation, 2016).

Conclusion

As such, there are a number of issues regarding the state of the art and for the CONNEKT research project in Jordan to consider.

First, there are a number of gaps that the academic/policy literature is yet to cover. These include: the gender dimension of P/CVE in Jordan, the integration and rehabilitation of Jordanian Foreign Fighters and returnees, the resilience factors at the grassroots level, as well as the impact of state-centric security policies and whether they exacerbate or mitigate the risk of radicalisation. In this regard, it is key to note that the policy literature on the issue is still limited and needs to be enhanced, and more national institutions and actors generating local knowledge on the issue need to be supported.

Second, beyond the literature, it is clear from the review above that there are several P/CVE actors and stakeholders in Jordan, however, there is yet to be an officially announced national P/CVE strategy that would regulate the work of said actors and serve as an umbrella to ensure that no efforts are being duplicated.

Third, there is a need to create a national database to document interventions, track policies and measure the impact of the diverse P/CVE efforts.

Lastly, the pure focus on P/CVE efforts ought to be reconceptualised; that is, it needs to address the structural socio-economic drivers not only for the benefit of preventing/countering violent extremism but also to deal with the broader human insecurities impacting individuals. This is based on the realisation that VE is one conduit, amongst many, of channelling individual grievances.

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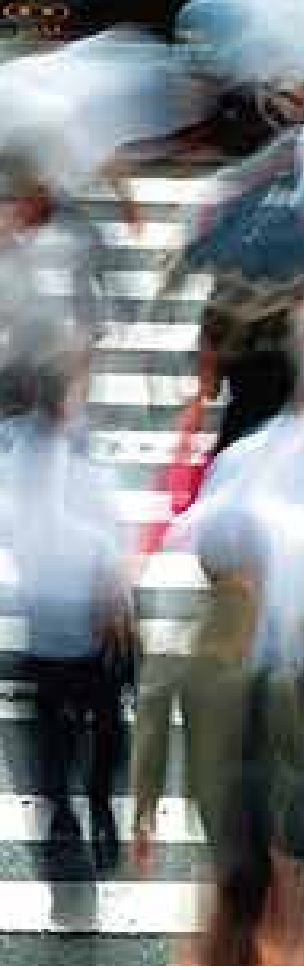
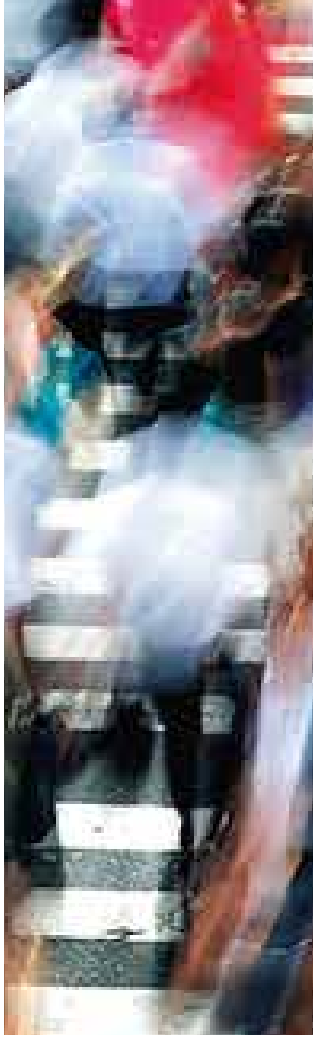


CONNEKT

What drives youth to violent extremism? How can they turn from being “the problem” into “the key” for a solution? By engaging youth in the research, CONNEKT will raise young voices to become stakeholders in the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism.

CONNEKT is a research and action project which analyses seven potential radicalisation factors among youth aged between 12 and 30: religion, digitalisation, economic deprivation, territorial inequalities, transnational dynamics, socio-political demands, and educational, cultural and leisure opportunities and evaluates them on three levels: transnational/state, community and individual.

Its aim is to establish a multi-dimensional map of drivers of extremism among youth in Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Bulgaria, and to identify the interplay between them. Based on the empirical research findings, the project will end up recommending tools and measures for the prevention of violent extremism from a social and community perspective both for the regions of study and the European Union.

Under the coordination of the European Institute of the Mediterranean, (IEMed), the project gathers a multidisciplinary Consortium involving 14 partners from MENA, the EU and the Balkans.

The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, under Grant Agreement no. 870772