



CONNEKT

COUNTRY PAPER ON MACRO-LEVEL DRIVERS

Drivers of radicalisation and violent extremism
in the light of state dynamics in MENA and the Balkans

JORDAN

Barik Mhadeen, Aisha Bint Feisal, Jadranka Štikovac Clark



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



Consortium Members



CONNEKT COUNTRY PAPERS ON MACRO-LEVEL DRIVERS

Published by the European Institute of the Mediterranean

D4.1

COUNTRY PAPERS ON MACRO-LEVEL DRIVERS

Drivers of radicalisation and violent extremism in the light of state dynamics in MENA and the Balkans.

JORDAN

Barik Mhadeen, Generations for Peace

Aisha Bint Feisal, Generations for Peace

Jadranka Štikovac Clark, Generations for Peace

This publication is part of the WP4 of the project, led by the University of Sarajevo (UNSA).

Editor: Damir Kapidžić

Reviewers: Lurdes Vidal and Jordi Moreras

Editorial team: Mariona Rico and Elvira García

Layout: Núria Esparza

ISSN: 978-84-18601-21-7

July 2021

This publication reflects only the views of the author(s); the European Commission and Research Executive Agency are not responsible for any information it contains.

Its contents are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union or the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed).



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW	4
MACRO-LEVEL CONTEXT IN JORDAN	11
DRIVERS	17
CONCLUSION	22
BIBLIOGRAPHY	25



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of CONNEKT is to understand why some people radicalise and others do not. In the context of CONNEKT, it is acknowledged that embracing a radical ideology does not necessarily imply any kind of violence. Resulting from that understanding, the report examines the macro-level drivers of VE in Jordan and aims to identify historical trends and evolution of dynamics regarding the seven pre-identified drivers of violent extremism (VE) at a state level. The report complements the broad mapping of the field as it exists in Jordan presented in the CONNEKT's Country Report on National Approaches to VE in Jordan (Mahdeen, Bint Faisal and Štikovac Clark, 2020).

The theoretical framework that was used for this research project is new institutionalism. New institutionalism identifies the rules, norms, practices and relationships that influence patterns of behaviour in politics and policy-making (Cairney, 2012). Unlike a more traditional view of institutions where the central role is attributed to the state, in new institutionalism this role depends on society (Peters, 2011). It can be used at the macro level for determining relevant political and social dynamics. Therefore, it is a particularly useful framework for this research project, which aims to produce an "x-ray" of relational frameworks, their historical roots and, consequently, the foreseeable scenarios.

3 As for the methodology, the findings of this report were informed through consultations with 25 key stakeholders. The selected respondents broadly represent institutions of state (state level and regional institutions, governments, legislatures; local institutions such as municipal governments; and security institutions), and societal and international institutions (non-governmental organisations [NGOs] and civil society representatives; religious institutions/leaders; academics and researchers; and international institutions/actors such as bilateral donors, United Nations [UN] agencies, etc.). In the next section of this report, these respondents are further categorised to facilitate presentation of research findings. Their insights and opinions were solicited through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and individual Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). FGDs and KIIs were conducted in May/June 2021, and, except for two in-person interviews, all primary data collection was conducted via Zoom, in line with CONNEKT's ethical guidance. Respondents were presented with different sets of introductory and institutional interaction questions, in addition to questions assessing the macro-level drivers of radicalisation. The collected qualitative data was transcribed and analysed via the MAXQDA software, with data protection measures being applied throughout the process.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

UNDERSTANDING VE IN JORDAN TODAY

In 2005, a series of near-synchronised bomb explosions went off at three hotels in the Jordanian capital Amman. Around 60 people were pronounced dead and 115 were injured (BBC News, 2005). Later known as the “Amman Bombings”, the event was a major turning point for Jordan’s fight against VE. Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) claimed responsibility, and all attackers were identified as Iraqi nationals with clear links to the Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi. The attack and its perpetrators (with their link to Al-Zarqawi) did not operate in a vacuum. Contextually, AQI had gained significant momentum in the wake of the 2003 US Invasion in Iraq. Exploring its timeline reveals several relevant state and supra-state dynamics that help understand VE in Jordan today, for traces of such dynamics were clearly touched upon by many actors who were interviewed as part of this research. The persistence of the same violent extremist issues, dynamics and concerns over two decades later potentially underlines two notions: first, questioning the effectiveness of the Jordan state’s VE response and strategy (even though the latter is undeclared), and, second, identifying potential areas for enhanced effectiveness.

Originally founded by Al-Zarqawi in 1999, AQI started bomb attacks a few months after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, and pledged allegiance to Al-Qaeda in 2004. The group is considered the predecessor of the more recent Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Initially known as *Jama’at al-Tawhid wa’al-Jihad* (JTJ), AQI was a major participant in the Iraqi insurgency against the US Invasion of Iraq, before swearing fealty to Al-Qaeda as Al-Qaeda in Iraq (Stanford University, 2021). As such, Jordan’s journey with the fight against VE is neither recent nor linear. AQI represents but one benchmark of many that came before, including the experience with the Arab Mujahdeen in Afghanistan fighting the Soviet Union in a “holy war” (Federation of American Scientists, 1994), and later experiences with groups such as ISIS. Yet, the “Amman Bombings”, carried out by AQI, is considered by this research as a defining moment not only for the long-term macro-level state response it has triggered since then but also for many of its dynamics that are still at play and are key to understanding Jordan’s VE landscape today, nearly two decades later. Three such dynamics must be noted, with the common denominator in all three seemingly being the increased hostility towards the state and its institutions.

First, the group’s founder and ISIS’s godfather, the Jordanian national Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, provides an interesting case study for understanding the drivers of VE in Jordan. Ironically, his profile is similar to that of others who followed in his path, which questions the success and effectiveness of Jordan’s response to preventing/countering violent extremism (P/CVE). Al-Zarqawi’s profile reveals a former criminal background, him being incarcerated in one of Jordan’s biggest correctional facilities with initial charges of sexual assaults and the possession of drugs (Stanford University, 2021). This profile is found in the “newer generation” of radicals in Jordan; data suggests that most of the cases of individual radicals who were studied and examined did not hail from religious backgrounds (Mercy Corps, 2015; Abu Rumman and Shteivi, 2018; US Embassy in Jordan, 2018). Therefore, the ideology might not be as strong a driver of extremism, or, at best, it came

later in the equation governing the radicalisation, after the contextual grievances drove the initial process. A key governmental actor respondent confirmed this, explaining how “ideology is just an umbrella through which the grievances are mainstreamed.”¹

Second, the Amman Bombings event serves as a reference point for comparison on how the patterns of VE have shifted in Jordan over the years. Most notably, a shift was seen in the primary target of VE groups. These bombings were simply an explicit statement about civilians being a key target for VE groups as, at the time, this was in line with AQI’s doctrine that Al-Zarqawi cemented. In contrast, the perpetrators of ISIS’s attacks in Jordan, including the different attacks conducted in Irbid, Karak, Baqa’a, Fuhais and Salt (BBC News, 2016a; BBC News 2016b; Jordan Times, 2016; Sweis, 2016; Foreign and Commonwealth Office, n.d.) have made it clear that their primary target was the state and its security personnel. In the Baqa’a incident (BBC News, 2016b), the attack was carried out by a lone gunman with an automatic weapon killing five people, and in the Karak incident (Jordan Times, 2016) the attackers actively refrained from shooting civilians within their range and instead killed 11 members of different security forces (and still three civilians). The respondents involved in this research have expressed considerable alarm against a reverse pattern in potential future waves of VE in Jordan, whereby civilians and mass casualties could become part of the game (Sweis, 2016).

An additional shift in the patterns was noted in relation to the horizontal spread of VE activities. In the past, those involved in or affiliated with violent extremist organisations (VEOs) were mostly individuals who did not enjoy the support of their families. However, the recent wave of VE activities in Jordan reveals a shift from an individualistic to a family pattern of radicalisation whereby radicalisation of closely-knit family members, cousins and in-laws is noted, which, according to research participants, have made the fight against extremism in Jordan all the more complex, for such close family networks are more difficult to penetrate and trace by the law and security establishments (Abu Rumman and Shteiw, 2018).^{2 3}

Third, both the Amman Bombings and the work of AQI reveal another key dynamic to understanding VE in Jordan: the transnational influence. This influence was captured in the impact of regional instability on Jordan’s internal security. The 2003 US Invasion of Iraq, causing instability and lawlessness in parts of Iraq and creating a breeding ground for groups such as AQI to recruit and exercise combat, was mirrored a decade later by the Syrian conflict which brought ISIS elements in proximity of the Jordanian borders (Khalid bin Al-Walid’s army, for instance) (BBC News, 2016c),⁴ and allowed for some ISIS acolytes to carry out attacks within the Kingdom (BBC News, 2016b). Additionally, the transnational influence meant that Jordan had to take security and military measures outside its own borders to pre-empt potential threats to its internal security. These measures came with a heavy domestic implication, as was seen by the capture and tragic death of Jordanian pilot Muath Al Kasasbeh in one of the

¹ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

² Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 27 May 2021.

³ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁴ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 27 May 2021.

airstrikes Jordan was conducting as part of the international coalition against ISIS (Smith-Spark and Martinez, 2015; The Royal Hashemite Court, 2014).

THE MAIN INSTITUTIONAL STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED IN VE IN JORDAN

As mapped out in the Country Report on National Approaches to Extremism *in Jordan* which focused on country's national structural and contextual approaches and strategies towards radicalisation and VE, main institutional stakeholders in Jordan could be categorised as governmental actors including security actors; non-governmental local actors including local civil society and community-based organisations; and international non-governmental actors including international donors and UN agencies (Mhadeen, Bint Faisal and Štikovac Clark, 2020). Representatives from each category were engaged in FGDs and KIs as part of this project.

Analysis of consultations and discussions revealed existence of historical shifts in the positioning of key institutional actors towards radicalisation and VE but equally, it revealed the fact that within the state's institutions, the view on how to prevent and counter VE differs in line with priorities of different state entities. Similarly, other institutional actors - local institutions, international donors, security actors, and religious leaders - also have their own, at times opposing views and opinions, resulting in a complex and competing picture overall.

Governmental actors

The consultations with a range of governmental actors revealed two key elements in the development of institutions involved in work on prevention of VE.

6

The first element is related to the adoption and then consequent evolution of the PVE strategies, the details of which were provided in the *Country Report on National Approaches to VE in Jordan* published last year (Ibid.). The first strategy was launched by Jordan's National Policy Council in 2014/2015, under the official title of The National Plan to Counter Terrorism (TNPCE). Upon its dissemination in 2016, the strategy was met with criticism based on it being shallow, without clarity on or sufficient depth of the proposed measures considered to be effective in prevention of VE (Al-Sharafat, 2018). A reference to one of the measures listed in the TNPCE was cited during this research, when a respondent recalled how it was recommended that the **Ministry of Awqaf (Religious Endowments) and Islamic Affairs** "creates its website". As noted by the respondent, such a recommendation should have been considered as an internal initiative in the context of a more effective public sector rather than a measure aimed at combating radical thought.⁵ The second PVE strategy was developed in the period 2017-2018 by the P/CVE Unit, which itself was established in November 2015 (Mhadeen, Bint Faisal and Štikovac Clark, 2020). That strategy, however, was not disclosed to the public and is yet to be officially presented and adopted by the government. Moreover, to date, there is no confirmation as to whether it will be revealed publicly and, as some respondents said during this research, it is not known "whether this will happen at all".⁶ ⁷This second PVE strategy is therefore treated as strictly confidential, with only a handful of actors having had an opportunity

⁵ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 31 May 2021.

⁶ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 23 May 2021.

⁷ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 2 June 2021.

to consult it – mainly international non-governmental actors, as reported by the respondents.⁸ The governmental actors included in this research explained that the said strategy was quietly substituted with a National Action Plan (NAP) produced in 2019 but still undergoing changes in light of COVID-19 as well as the evolving nature of VE in Jordan. These officials argued that the NAP is kept “low profile” due to its sensitive nature and to avoid it being readily available to radical individuals and groups the plan tries to counter.⁹ Within these discussions, other local actors expressed their frustration at being “left out” of the discussions about the NAP.¹⁰ ¹¹The **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 the relevance of such projects. The stakeholders noted the lack of communication and coordination on behalf of the Unit, leaving a gap regarding the Unit’s engagement of local actors. In discussion, some countered this criticism by citing the Unit’s “lack of manpower and resourcefulness” as a hindrance to more effective communication with a broad audience of relevant PVE stakeholders in Jordan.¹² Further, during its inception and then in the early years of its operations, the Unit had gone through a number of changes of its leadership but also a frequent transfer of mandate between different ministries, which the previous CONNEKT report on Jordan already elaborated on (Mhadeen, Bint Faisal and Štikovac Clark, 2020).

The second element relates to the government, or rather the security aspects, and is an acknowledgment of the ineffectiveness of a purely security approach, which was adopted by the government to counter radicalisation and VE. Many respondents hailed this acknowledgment as a positive development,¹³ ¹⁴ ¹⁵ ¹⁶ ¹⁷ voicing that an effective PVE strategy should go beyond the focus on security, and actively consider other relevant factors and dimensions that enable radicalisation and VE, such as ideology and grievances.¹⁸ ¹⁹ ²⁰ Several governmental actors elaborated on this development by mentioning the example of the “Dialogue with Takfiri Program” that was introduced in correctional and rehabilitation centres in the Kingdom.²¹ ²² ²³ ²⁴ No public information exists on the programme, but insights of several respondents were shared with the research team to further substantiate the point being made. According to them, the programme was

⁸ Online interview with female representative of a state institution, Amman, 7 June 2021.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 23 May 2021.

¹¹ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

¹² Online interview with female representative of a state institution, Amman, 7 June 2021.

¹³ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

¹⁴ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 6 June 2021.

¹⁵ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 31 May 2021.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 14 June 2021.

¹⁸ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

¹⁹ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 6 June 2021.

²⁰ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 14 June 2021.

²¹ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

²² Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 31 May 2021.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

introduced in 2008/2009 with the aim of opening channels of dialogue with Islamist prisoners serving sentences on charges of extremism. The respondents cited a high success rate of the programme – over 80% – and attributed this success to several factors, namely: the programme participation was completely voluntary; the help of external experts and academics was enlisted to lead these dialogue sessions with prisoners; and the programme was built on a multidisciplinary approach integrating sociology, religious dialogue, and addressing grievances.^{25 26 27 28} No insights were shared on whether the programme, which ended in 2014, is still ongoing in a similar format or if it has been replaced by different type(s) of programme(s). Additionally, relevant respondents noted that the success of this programme was partially attributed to Jordan having looked at and examined different models and experiences from the region and beyond. For example, interviewees reflected on what represents a successful dialogue and rehabilitation programme, agreeing that such a programme needs to shy away from heavily relying on pure economic and financial incentives, such as the case with Saudi Arabia’s *Munasaha* programme (Cigar, 2019), and the heavy-handed Egyptian model of prolonged sentences and harsh security grip and practices over prisoners (El-Said and Harrigan, 2013). Rather, Jordan’s approach was inspired by Singaporean- or Malaysian-like models that adhere to religious dialogue with radicals or to utilising ex-radicals and penitents in deradicalisation efforts.

Local non-governmental actors

The second group of institutional stakeholders was composed of local non-governmental actors, including civil society and **community-based organisations (CBOs)**. Discussions with their representatives revealed three developments described below.

8

First, the shifts in the patterns of radicalisation have pushed local actors to search for and adopt different models of youth engagement. The key development within this context was best captured in how local non-governmental actors seem to be moving away from a vulnerability-based approach, addressing negative push factors towards embracing a resilience-based approach that capitalises on the already existing positive skills and knowledge of young people (UNICEF, 2020). A number of respondents highlighted two specific cases in point: the British Council’s Strengthening Resilience (SR) programme delivered in two phases (British Council, 2020), and Mercy Corps’ use of the “science of resilience” by integrating neuroscience to understand and address the impact that long-term stress has on the emotional brain (Bourke, 2020). Yet, the research interviews clearly showed that the shift towards different models of youth engagement came about as a reaction to the evolving radicalisation scene in Jordan, rather than as a proactive measure aimed at designing and delivering more effective PVE programming. Hence, some concerns were voiced on both the sustainability of such development,^{29 30 31 32} as well as the scope of it reaching a wider base of local actors with fewer resources and capacities.^{33 34}

²⁵ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

²⁶ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 6 June 2021.

²⁷ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 31 May 2021.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

³⁰ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

³¹ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 23 May 2021.

³² Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 2 June 2021.

³³ Online interview with male representative of a non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

³⁴ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 2 June 2021.

Second, local non-governmental actors seemed less inclined to specifically work at or target the so-called “hotspots” of radicalisation in Jordan.^{35 36} This was due to a growing realisation that the extensive targeting of such communities had contributed to a high stigmatisation felt by the local population, and was, therefore, counterproductive to effective P/CVE efforts.^{37 38 39} Instead, local actors started designing interventions that target the general body of young people, with activities that are not exclusive to those most vulnerable or those “at risk”, but are inclusive of those considered not to be “usual suspects” in terms of vulnerability.^{40 41} The shift, in other words, concerned the approach of how the target groups of these programmes are being identified and selected by local actors.

Third, a shift in the terminology being used to refer to the PVE efforts and programming was also noted: local actors seemed to shy away from “labelling” their programmes and interventions as P/CVE-related and were instead adopting notions such as “social cohesion” or “good/active citizenship” (Idris, 2019). To understand why, different lenses must be applied. One relates to a “growing concern of the state” about Jordan’s international image (USAID Jordan, 2016), and argues that whilst VE is a real concern for the state, fears have risen around the disproportionality of its portrayal. In simple terms, from the state’s perspective, the issue is not seen as widespread and excessive as being reflected in the number of PVE programming interventions that exist(ed). On the non-governmental end, another lens helps interpret this shift in relation to donor priorities. Local actors have carried extensive PVE programming in response to donor priorities and interests as well as to the availability of PVE funds, which are characterised as “comfortable”.^{42 43 44} As donor priorities shift, so does the local focus on PVE. Therefore, regardless of what lens is applied, this is an alarming development. It reflects either a manoeuvre against growing concerns of the state, or a donor-driven shift that trickled down to the local design of programmes, as opposed to reflecting a genuine move to adopting a more holistic approach to addressing VE or acknowledging that the drivers of VE are also structural drivers of broader societal and security concerns in the country.

International non-governmental actors

Their institutional developments are similar to those of local non-governmental actors, both in terms of the shift in terminology and the geographical focus of PVE programming. For instance, an international non-governmental actor⁴⁵ noted how they are going “unbranded” about PVE per se, despite having funded several PVE initiatives and programmes. Their focus has shifted from supporting an explicit PVE “branding” of their programmes to instead supporting programming that counters the

³⁵ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

³⁸ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 26 May 2021.

³⁹ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁴⁰ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

⁴¹ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁴² Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 23 May 2021.

⁴³ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 31 May 2021.

⁴⁴ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

⁴⁵ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 23 May 2021.

negative behaviours labelled as “leading towards a destructive VE pathway”, in the realm of both counter-narratives and domestic violence. Said actor attributed this to their acknowledgment of a “shifting VE landscape” in Jordan.

Furthermore, whilst these actors reported no significant change in the focus of their PVE interventions,⁴⁶ they referred to an increased predisposition of reaching out to new groups of beneficiaries against the backdrop of a new vision,^{47 48} which holds that “alternative narratives work” and, hence, people must be granted greater opportunities to see their positive impact. The focus would be on how specific individuals and role models can be supported to make an individual impact within their communities, so this “audio-centric approach engages with specific individuals who wield influence, access, and connectivity to local communities.”⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 2 June 2021.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

MACRO-LEVEL CONTEXT IN JORDAN

Since the Amman Bombings, the state’s response to the evolving VE scene has been double-folded: a mixture of combating the radical ideology and pursuing greater securitisation. As such, the framing and the causality of VE from a macro-level state perspective seems to be heavily anchored upon the ideological drivers—deconstructing and countering radical [Islamic] narrative, with arguably little heed to other contextual, non-ideological factors and grievances.

IDEOLOGICAL BATTLE

The state’s ideological-security response is evident in several initiatives, one of the most remarkable being the **Amman Message**. As detailed in CONNEKT’s Country Report on National Approaches to VE in Jordan, the Amman Message, launched in 2004, sought to present a simple but precise statement for senior Islamic scholars worldwide, declaring “what Islam is and what it is not, and what actions represent it and what actions do not.” A few years later (2008/2009), the **Public Security Department (PSD)** launched the **Dialogue with Takfiri Program**, alluded to earlier in this report. And whilst this low-profile dialogue programme was hailed during this research as evidence of Jordan’s early acknowledgment of the danger of VE and the need to work on rehabilitation and reintegration of those who have been on the VE path, this programme still represents a reflection of the state’s persistent focus on the combination of ideological and security responses to addressing emerging VE concerns.

11

In parallel, religious and ideological efforts continued at the institutional level through the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, referred to earlier in this report. Predominantly, these efforts took the form of working with religious actors, namely imams and female preachers, by offering them different capacity-building workshops and trainings aiming to enhance their religious knowledge and their capacity/competency at addressing religious questions and concerns (Tohamy et al., 2017). Other measures include having a unified Friday sermon for all the mosques in Jordan, whereby the Ministry of Awqaf writes one religious speech for over 7,000 mosques around the Kingdom, distributes it through the specific WhatsApp groups,⁵⁰ obliging the preachers to read it, with the aim of raising the level and quality of the sermon, introducing topics of interest to citizens, and promoting a culture of moderation (Nesan News, 2017).

In the same context, the **Office of HRH Prince Ghazi bin Mohammad** at the Royal Hashemite Court has been extensively involved in the PVE response in Jordan. The Office is looked at as the expert entity that possesses greater flexibility than state-level institutions in regard to dealing with VE issues. Whilst little to no public knowledge exists on this Office’s PVE work and the modalities it follows, several research respondents emphasised the fact that, in its work, the Office follows a heavy religious/ideological approach to dealing with VE, citing Moroccan imams and religious scholars who were brought to Jordan to support the religious dialogue.^{51 52}

⁵⁰ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁵¹ In-person interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 6 June 2021.

⁵² Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 31 May 2021.

Nevertheless, the state's substantial ideological framing and response to VE was, during this research, criticised on the basis of it being "narrow".^{53 54 55} According to relevant respondents, the role of mosques and imams is still short of addressing the radicalisation and VE in a meaningful in-depth way. Preachers are still seen as unable to engage with real-life concerns of citizens, never discussing current and modern topics such as globalisation, digital literacy, active citizenship, and so on.⁵⁶ Additionally, research participants voiced a concern about the current approach failing to address institutional gaps related to the sufficient "supply" of imams, citing that over 2,000 mosques in Jordan operate without an officially appointed imam, and hence are left to be run by imams who had not been fully "recognised" (Tohamy et al., 2017)⁵⁷, raising concerns as to their qualification, knowledge and ability to deliver sermons and run the daily affairs of mosques.

Securitisation

On the security front, the state's security response has been two-fold: legal and operational. Legally, significant amendments have been incorporated in the relevant legal frameworks, such as the State Security Court Law, Counter-Terrorism (CT) Law, Cybersecurity (CS) Law, and the Prints and Publications (PPs) Law (United States Department of State, 2017; Araz, 2020). By virtue of such amendments, a vague and broad definition of what constitutes a terrorist act or show of sympathy has enlarged "the circle of suspicion" to include those who would do something as simple as a "Facebook Like". Further, these amendments enabled the trials under said laws to be referred to the **State Security Court**, which is a military court that should not be prosecuting civilians. Alarming, the impact of such amendments and stricter security policies had been counterproductive, contributing to an increased sense of hostility towards the state (Bondokji and Mhadeen, 2019a).⁵⁸ Operationally, the increased number of CVE actions over the past five to six years testifies to the state's security response level. This is not exclusive of operations levelled against VE groups or their affiliates in Jordan, which are valid and needed from a security perspective, but also the routinely executed raids and/or arrests that are made against potential radicals. These are performed with excessive use of force, selective application of security measures and, with reported constraints on freedoms of expression, have thus been found to likely "reinforce the sense of marginalisation and alienation" among citizens (Bondokji and Mhadeen, 2019b). Both responses bring valid questions around the effectiveness of the state's security approach. One respondent unpacked the apparent lack of "security coordination" between the police and military units, highlighting various regiments and units that work on CVE under different Special Operations titles across the security sector, ranging from **Jordan Armed Forces (JAF)** and specialised unit to the *Public Security Department (PSD) unit* to the specialised and highly trained **General Intelligence Department (GID) unit**, etc.⁵⁹ The multiplicity of security actors have often caused confusion regarding the division of roles and responsibilities and, in some cases, this came with "a high price paid by security actors who had lost notable and highly professional and trained officers" during operations (Schenker,

⁵³ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 24 May 2021.

⁵⁴ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁵⁵ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁵⁶ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 26 May 2021.

⁵⁹ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 27 May 2021.

2016; Jordan Times, 2016; Roya News, 2018)⁶⁰. As VE threats evolve, such CVE/CT lapses have underscored the need to avoid “taking Jordan’s security for granted” (Schenker, 2016; Black, 2016).

No assessment of the effectiveness of Jordan’s security approach to VE is complete without examining rehabilitation and reintegration, and the levels of radicalisation, at correctional facilities. These efforts are an integral part of Jordan’s security approach for they are run and managed exclusively by security actors. And whilst this is a sensitive examination due to the lack of literature and knowledge on this particular issue, the point was still raised by respondents who reiterated the fact that most of those who were found implicit in carrying out attacks affiliated with VE groups were at some point either on the radar of security forces or have in fact served some time in Jordanian correctional facilities.^{61 62 63}

However, this research project has also revealed a greater acknowledgment from all actors of the need to go beyond the mere ideological/security approach in dealing with VE in Jordan.^{64 65 66 67 68 69 70} This is a welcome development as it guides P/CVE efforts in the right direction, and regardless of whether this is coming from a place of concern that security actors cannot and should not shoulder the weight of dealing with VE on their own, or from a place of comfort with the need to develop a more informed view on effective P/CVE efforts by mainstreaming them across different institutions, the development must be capitalised on by both governmental and non-governmental actors.

In the attempt to go beyond the mere ideological/security dimension of VE, this research has revealed a successful recent case study: the establishment of a **Strategic Communications Unit (SCU)**, which played a low-profile but very important consultative role in guiding Jordan’s response to recent emerging VE threats. No public data exists on the work of the SCU but the interviews with two of its members provided some insights into the inner dynamics of the Unit’s work and functions.^{71 72} Established in 2014, the SCU remained active until 2018. It was composed of a small group of experts who hailed from both the private and public sectors and had worked under the direct guidance and supervision of the Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF). The Unit offered significant guidance on the design and delivery of effective alternative narratives aimed at countering that of ISIS, which was at its height in that period, and was also responsible for crisis management and scenario planning. The Unit’s success was attributed to a mix of distinct factors: those related to the structure and organisational capacity of the Unit itself (having a flat structure; the constant capacity-building of SCU members; being allowed significant flexibility in the work that was carried

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

⁶² Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 24 May 2021.

⁶³ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 27 May 2021.

⁶⁴ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

⁶⁵ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 24 May 2021.

⁶⁶ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 6 June 2021.

⁶⁷ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁶⁸ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁶⁹ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 24 May 2021.

⁷⁰ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 24 May 2021.

⁷¹ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 6 June 2021.

⁷² Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 14 June 2021.

out; benefitting from the political and security buy-in of relevant senior officials) or the factors related to the focus on specific areas or content (focusing on alternative, as opposed to counter, narratives; provisioning no more than 10% for the content related to religion or ideology; amplifying the social capital around the high levels of trust in JAF and Jordan’s security apparatus).^{73 74} Their success has shown that such an approach could be the formula for any future P/CVE efforts in Jordan.

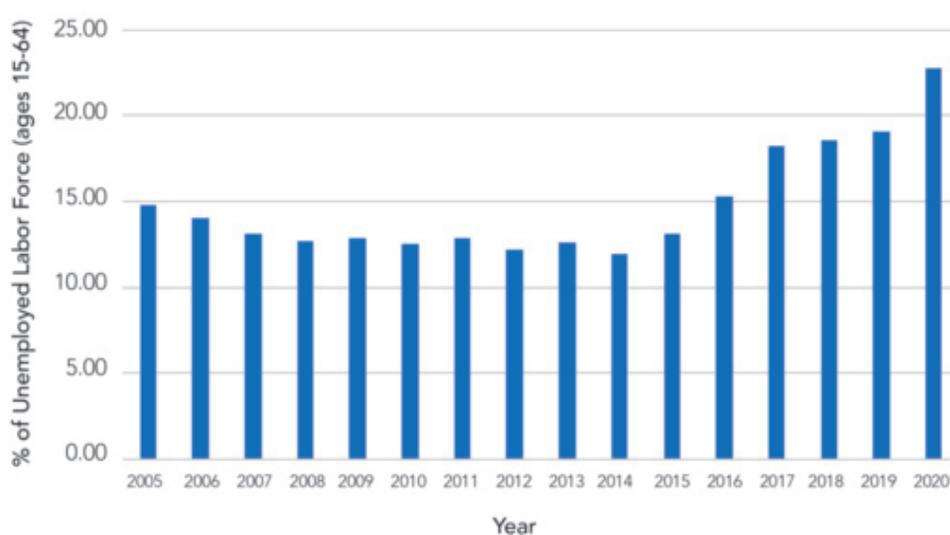
The de facto reality on the ground

Having explored the evolution of Jordan’s official response to VE, understanding the complete scene requires assessing the de facto reality on the ground by asking the question: “what has been happening in parallel to the state’s ideological/security response?”

The contextual grievances influencing radicalisation pathways have deepened. Ample literature now exists on their nature, from socioeconomic drivers to political, personal, psychological and family drivers (Bondokji and Wilkinson, 2017; Sayegh and Bondokji, 2017; Bondokji and Mhadeen, 2019a). A brief review of socioeconomic and political metrics, supported by the figures below, confirms this trajectory. Between 2005 and 2020, unemployment rates have gone up from less than 15% in 2005 to nearly 23% in 2020 (International Labour Organization, 2021; Jordanian Department of Statistics, 2021). A more recent World Bank assessment for unemployment rates in 2021 projected a staggering, unprecedented, 50% unemployment rate (World Bank, 2020). Likewise, poverty rates have gone up, too, from nearly 13% in 2005 to around 16% in 2020 (Jordanian Department of Statistics and World Bank, 2009). In contrast, electoral turnout rates have dwindled from 54% in the 2007 electoral cycle to an all-time low of 29.9% during the most recent 2020 cycle, which reflects the growing political apathy and disengagement from formal political processes, especially amongst youths (Milton-Edwards, 2018; Ma’ayeh and Sweis, 2021; Inter-Parliamentary Union, n.d.).

14

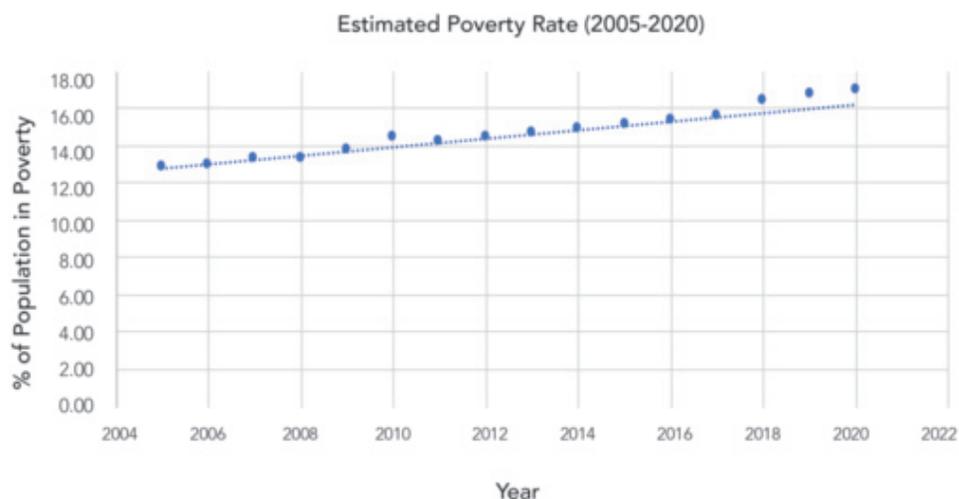
Unemployment Rate in Jordan from 2005-2020



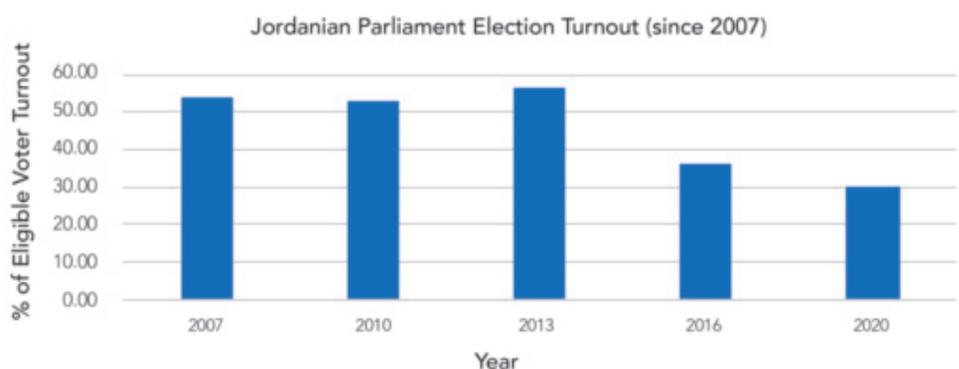
Source: International Labour Organization (2021)

⁷³ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 6 June 2021.

⁷⁴ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 14 June 2021.



Source: Jordanian Department of Statistics and World Bank (2009)



Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union (n.d.)

The existing literature and the findings of this research project point in the same direction regarding the meso-level drivers of VE in Jordan. When asked about drivers of VE at a more local level, local non-governmental actors unequivocally cited a range of contextual grievances: from issues relating to family dynamics/disintegration, domestic violence, youths’ idle time, marginalisation, and lack of social justice to low levels of political participation, and poor access to jobs and educational opportunities (Harper, 2017).^{75 76 77 78} Interestingly, ideology and religion, which have been at the core of the official state response and conceptualisation of VE in Jordan, are seldom mentioned.

Especially important for this research was the discussion about how respondents perceived the state’s ideological/security approach, on the one hand, and the state’s interest in and commitment to addressing the

⁷⁵ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

⁷⁸ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 23 May 2021.

contextual grievances, on the other. At the meso level, the state's attempt to frame and deal with VE in the ideological/religious realm was received negatively. Most respondents viewed it as either further implicating Islam, intentionally or unintentionally, or as a narrow understanding of the local dynamics of VE. The same was noted about the pure security approach: it was seen as a measure that contributes to further shrinking of the space in which meso-level actors operate and deliver PVE programming.^{79 80 81 82} On the other hand, the well-documented low levels of trust in the government and its institutions constitute a statement on how meso-level actors view the government's interest and commitment regarding their contextual grievances (Jordan Strategy Forum, 2018; University of Jordan News, 2021). Another statement is captured in the socioeconomic factual metrics on the country's progress in relation to these grievances, as shown by earlier graphics. The impression given is simply that the government is not paying enough heed to these grievances, nor has it taken serious effective measures to address them.^{83 84 85 86} The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated such grievances and challenged the trust levels in the state (Kebede et al., 2021; UNDP, 2020).

The discrepancy of the state priorities in terms of ideology and security as opposed to the contextual realities in terms of grievances is troubling. It encourages questioning of the relevance of the state's response to actual VE needs and vulnerabilities and explains gaps that must be addressed to ensure effective P/CVE interventions/programming moving forward.

⁷⁹ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁸⁰ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁸¹ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁸² Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁸³ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁸⁴ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁸⁵ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁸⁶ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

DRIVERS

Acknowledging that the literature on the drivers of VE is excessive, this section does not represent another attempt to identify drivers per se. Rather, it highlights the ways in which the changing dynamics of the seven CONNEKT-identified drivers have led to a parallel shift in the institutional response to VE in Jordan. In some instances, this impact is captured in specific institutional measures undertaken to enhance the effectiveness of the corresponding institution in dealing with VE; in others, the impact is captured in the shifting institutional trends at the macro and meso levels. Lastly, the impact has varied, as will be explained, from one driver to the other.

RELIGION

Having established earlier that ideology/religion is integral to Jordan's response to VE, it was fitting to confirm through this research that religion as a driver has significantly impacted institutional responses to VE in Jordan. The impact is captured in both specific institutional measures and the shifting institutional trends.

In terms of specific institutional measures, religion has prompted significant changes to the role of the Ministry of *Awqaf* and Religious Affairs. Most notably, the Ministry established the King Abdullah II Institute to Train, Qualify and Prepare Preachers in 2009, with the goals of building the capacity of religious leaders, setting clear rules and guidelines for preaching, providing practical training for religious actors, as well as enabling scholars and trainees to enhance their knowledge and communication skills (Ministry of *Awqaf* and Religious Affairs, 2009). Additionally, the Ministry launched a nationwide programme to build the capacity of imams and female preachers, given the prominent potential role and influence they have in preventing radicalisation within their local communities (The Royal Institute for Inter-faith Studies, 2012).

This effort was not exclusive to government institutions, as the non-governmental actors also worked on capacity-building of imams and female preachers (Addustour, 2016). Their work was in close cooperation with the Ministry, which signals how this driver has impacted institutional responses and enabled greater cooperation between different governmental and non-governmental actors. Other measures were explored to address the shortage in the "supply" of imams across Jordan referenced earlier: the idea of a "unified mosque" was discussed but never saw the light.⁸⁷

Religion has also contributed to the shift in the evolving pattern of the official VE narrative in Jordan: the prominence of religion as a driver further paved the official narrative around the role of religion and ideology in the fight against VE. It has strengthened the need to institutionally address the pull factors of the radicalisation equation, for VEOs were pushing more rigorously on the use of ideology as an umbrella through which the contextual grievances were mainstreamed.⁸⁸ Additionally, this driver has

⁸⁷ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 14 June 2021.

⁸⁸ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

raised institutional awareness among both governmental and non-governmental actors on the role of mosques and imams/female preachers, sparking a nationwide discussion on how this role should be re-imagined.^{89 90 91}

ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION

Jordan is a developing country with a small economy struggling with increasingly high unemployment rates and public debt that affects most of the population. Several studies highlight the role of economic deprivation as a push factor towards joining VEOs (Speckhard, 2017; Bondokji and Wilkinson, 2017), and the respondents have highlighted this as the most prominent driver affecting the radicalisation process of Jordanians. However, it seems that the impact this driver had was more on the shift in institutional patterns, as opposed to specific institutional measures.

Regarding its impact on institutional responses, this driver “carved” a space for itself in the PVE strategies and national action plans discussed earlier, meaning that said strategies had a clear call for economic empowerment, which in turn have encouraged non-governmental actors to rethink the design of their PVE interventions to ensure that participants are equipped with sustainable employability skill sets.⁹²

Further, it prompted institutions to explore new modalities for youth empowerment given the high rates of youth unemployment. This is captured in the shift from vulnerability-based approaches to those which rely on the resilience of young people, as well as in the shifting geographical focus: the majority of early PVE interventions and institutional responses have taken place in areas that were considered “underprivileged” or “hotspots” for radicalisation.^{93 94 95} Here, it is important to note that the changing perception of non-governmental actors on the localities of their programmes is indicative of the effect this driver has had on institutional responses. The presence of this driver encouraged channelling more resources and funds to underprivileged communities, which have long been outside the governmental radar of development (USAID, 2015). Whilst looking at the standalone impact of this driver might be seen as a welcome positive impact, factoring it in with other drivers reveals a different picture.

TERRITORIAL INEQUALITIES

This research has shown that territorial inequalities within Jordan are a real concern.⁹⁶ Thus, when coupled with the economic deprivation, this driver’s effect is seen in at least two ways.

First, the territorial inequalities meant that certain areas were more targeted with P/CVE programming than others; this also meant that these territories were the ones either suffering the most inequalities

⁸⁹ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 24 May 2021.

⁹⁰ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁹¹ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 31 May 2021.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 31 May 2021.

⁹⁴ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 23 May 2021.

⁹⁵ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

⁹⁶ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

and/or categorised as hotspots for radicalisation. And whilst this targeting bodes well for addressing the question of unequal development and the economic deprivation that follows, it does not necessarily play out as favourably for this driver. Respondents have noted their concern over how the excessive targeting of those territories, which were already lagging economically, was viewed by said communities to be further stigmatising.^{97 98 99} As a result, non-governmental actors at the meso level are shifting their institutional responses to address this increased concern, for its persistence will inevitably be counterproductive to P/CVE efforts.¹⁰⁰

Second, the by-product of this excessive targeting of territorial inequalities has been the mushrooming of local actors directly linked to the abundance of funds that were channelled to P/CVE efforts in these locations. In turn, this has encouraged the creation of numerous local CBOs that “neither had the previous PVE expertise nor the level of sensitivity” needed to deal with such an issue.¹⁰¹ In the characterisation of one of the most trusted CBOs working on PVE, this “horizontal expansion” of local PVE actors in certain communities, where real and deep contextual grievances are at play, has been “negative” to PVE efforts in Jordan.¹⁰² In turn, there was also no proper governmental guidance or supervision over the work of PVE actors mostly because of the absence of a clear, public national action plan/strategy in the first place.^{103 104}

On the institutional level, this became apparent in the shape of re-designed programmes and the terminology shift used to refer to PVE interventions. Applicable to both local and international non-governmental actors, the common impact of this driver seems to be the implementation of “unbranded” PVE programming, especially in hotspot areas. This is problematic not only in how it leads to poor and inaccurate monitoring and evaluation of PVE programmes but also in its contribution to further distorting people’s understanding and confrontation of the issue. Lastly, this might divert attention from the real drivers of VE, given said actors’ reluctance to explicitly deal with the issue or have genuine local conversations about it.

DIGITALISATION

On digitalisation, it is worth noting that no impact has been uncovered in this research, although the overwhelming impact of this driver on Jordan’s institutional response to VE is captured in the other shifting forms of radicalisation in the country. Radicalisation in the Jordanian context has taken new and different shapes beyond the mere act of joining VEOs.¹⁰⁵ These include the horrific mutilation crimes in different localities committed by and involving adolescents, gangs and family members (Naar, 2020; Hussein, 2016a) In all these instances, social media and internet narratives have played a key role in not

⁹⁷ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

⁹⁸ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 23 May 2021.

⁹⁹ Online interview with male and female representatives of a state institution and a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Online interview with female representative of a state institution, Amman, 7 June 2021.

¹⁰⁵ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

only exposing such new forms of radicalisation but also in providing a platform through which videos and photos of such radicalisation patterns are circulated. Here, the digital context did provide an overwhelming channel for manifesting this specific form of VE, triggering an institutional response in the form of an extensive security campaign as a result (Council of Europe, n.d).

One more relevant effect relates to the institutional response regarding Media and Information Literacy (MIL) in Jordan. It is worth noting that in the early years of ISIS's rise, most of the recruitment did not happen online but in person (Mercy Corps, 2015). The growing VE concerns shed light on the major lack in digital literacy in Jordan, which triggered an institutional response that sought to promote digital/MIL literacy and educate the society about the spread of mis/disinformation and "fake news". Studies show that factors such as gender, location and economic status are key variables in the presence of the digital divide (Abu Halka and Shafizan, 2020). The impact of this driver on the institutional response has been positive towards closing this divide but it triggered the issue of false news/misinformation spreading, with little governmental experience in dealing with it. Another consequence was the spread of shocking videos and media links of ISIS atrocities.¹⁰⁶

POLITICAL GRIEVANCES

The impact of political grievances on the institutional responses to VE in Jordan is mostly seen through the specific institutional measures, and not through the shifting institutional patterns. The compounding political grievances pushed meso-level non-governmental actors to launch and fund several youth programmes concerned with building youth's political capacities, encouraging them to engage in official political processes (Ndi.org, 2016; Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung Foundation, n.d). However, none of the said programmes was specifically labelled as a PVE intervention; they were labelled as enhancing young people's political participation and building their capacities. It is not clear whether this was intentional but it is the accurate characterisation of the impact of this driver on specific institutional measures. At the government level, the institutional response has involved increased participation of young people in the formulation of relevant strategies such as the 2019-2023 Youth Strategy, but, again, with no explicit link between this response and P/CVE efforts.¹⁰⁷

CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES

As for this specific driver, no significant or notable impact has been found with the institutional response to VE in Jordan. This is likely attributed to the high resistance that is typically faced by any non-governmental actor who is perceived to be complicit in changing (or attempting to change) the "cultural fabric" of Jordanian society. The issue is simply too sensitive to solicit an institutional response. As for governmental actors, they are seen as too traditional to make such shifts. For instance, despite the notable and frequent criticism of the "suspicious" work of civil society organisations (CSOs) with "foreign funding and agendas" by the parliament (HKJ Today, 2017) consecutive governments did not react beyond being defensive about it.

¹⁰⁶ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

¹⁰⁷ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 31 May 2021.

One exception in this context is the institutional response regarding the potential role of female members (mothers, sisters, wives) in deradicalisation efforts. This specific area of VE seems to have gained prominence over the past few years (UN Women and the Jordanian National Commission for Women, 2016; Abu Rumman, 2021) and could be linked to shifting institutional patterns related to the perception of women more broadly. Still, no strong ties to institutional VE responses exist per se.

TRANSNATIONAL DYNAMICS

As discussed earlier, the impact of this driver on institutional responses to VE has been significant. At the government level, its significance could be seen all throughout the measures and fluid patterns towards the increased securitisation, which have long characterised the state's response to VE. The transnational dynamics have promoted a heavier investment in strengthening the capacity of Jordan's military and security establishments (Jordan Times, 2018), as well as an active engagement with the global coalition against ISIS. This driver impacted the way the institutional security response to VE took shape, whereby military and security operations had to be extended beyond Jordan's own borders to fill the security gaps resulting from the next-door instability in Iraq and Syria.^{108 109 110}

With the non-governmental actors, the impact of transnational dynamics is partially captured in the work with refugees, Syrians specifically, in the aftermath of the Syrian crisis. Its specific impact was the inclusion of Syrians in nearly all programmes that were designed and delivered, mainly in the north of Jordan but also in other regions. An additional impact relates to the use of terminology and the design of programmes whereby institutions tried to respond to a growing concern about both social tension between Jordanians and Syrians and issues relating to social cohesion – hence the shift in terminology from PVE to social cohesion.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

¹⁰⁹ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

¹¹⁰ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 31 May 2021.

¹¹¹ Online interview with male representatives of a state institution and a local-non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

CONCLUSION

The discussed difference between the state's response to VE and the de facto realities at the meso/local levels has led this research project to identify three important gaps, as follows:

First, the gap at the conceptual level of VE in Jordan. Largely, the state seems to conceptualise the threat and its dynamics through an ideological lens. VE is mainly viewed as an issue of misusing and misinterpreting Islam, to be tackled through cementing the real image of Islam, and enhancing the religious and societal discourse on notions of tolerance, acceptance and dialogue. Whilst noble at heart, this lens falls short of accounting for the arguably more pressing driver of VE: contextual grievances.

These contextual grievances form the dominant understanding of VE by non-state actors, be it non-governmental local, regional or meso-level actors, or international ones. For instance, none of the international non-governmental actors interviewed through this research had attributed the appeal of radicalisation, hence the rationale behind programming, to the ideological or religious dimension of VE. Rather, they referred to other issues, such as lack of economic empowerment and/or political participation that mattered.^{112 113}

22

Likewise, local meso-level actors have all cited non-ideological factors like economic wellbeing, individual self-fulfilment needs, social injustice and lack of opportunities far more than ideology.^{114 115 116} Therefore, a re-conceptualisation of VE in Jordan is needed. Different governmental and non-governmental stakeholders should have a thorough conversation about/examination of the phenomenon, to establish common ground starting from which the VE should be first understood and then consequently tackled.

This reconceptualisation is linked to the second gap: the stark absence of an effective coordination mechanism that ties the different state and non-state P/CVE efforts within a common vision. Institutionally, this gap was expressed by non-governmental actors, who cited how very often "there is no communication with and between institutions working on VE"¹¹⁷ and that there is a significant "need to have a direct line of communication between institutions and the government"¹¹⁸ as the efforts in dealing with VE should not only be coordinated but transparent and complementary. A meso-level actor echoed this point, expressing concern that there is "no one to go to"¹¹⁹ if the stakeholders wish

¹¹² Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 23 May 2021.

¹¹³ Online interview with female representative of a state institution, Amman, 2 June 2021.

¹¹⁴ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

¹¹⁵ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 31 May 2021.

¹¹⁶ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

¹¹⁷ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 23 May 2021.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

to present new information, findings, or simply discuss effective ways that could be used for designing better-suited PVE programmes.

Non-governmental stakeholders seem to suggest that the state's strong focus on one dimension of the equation only (ideology/security) meant that it paid little heed to other dimensions, arguing that this resulted in the weak coordination observed in the PVE landscape, in addition to the lack of a clear and officially adopted roadmap for both governmental and non-governmental actors involved in the fight against VE.^{120 121 122 123} It is important to note the lack of coordination that negatively impacts the state's own efforts and initiatives at CVE. One respondent expressed the frequent change in the mandate and management of the P/CVE Unit as a hindrance to its own ability to initiate and strengthen coordination between different actors, which is the Unit's official mandate, a position shared by other respondents.¹²⁴

Lastly, an existing third gap relates to the misplaced focus on religion in the state's response. Respondents argued that fighting religious extremism with religious narrative, or on religious grounds, further implicates(ed) religion. For "moderation is a genuine characteristic of religion, and hence must not be thought of or used as a reaction to extremism."¹²⁵ In the strong words of one of the respondents, "do not fight, do not implicate religion in your fight against extremism; you will instantly lose."¹²⁶ Remarkably, respondents had differing opinions on the validity of using religion in the fight against VE; some thought that the issue was with violent interpretation of religion, while others felt the issue was with the religious texts themselves as they allow wide room for [mis]interpretation.^{127 128} And whilst no conclusive agreement was made, the bottom line was that religion must be used carefully and within the broader context of acknowledging that it is potentially only one dimension of VE, not the dominant one. In the light of this, the work of the SCU further substantiates this point, as its success was attributed to not having had a strong reliance on religion. Alternative national and societal narratives were more effective in turning the dominant outcry in Jordan on how "this is not our war", in reference to Jordan's participation in the global coalition against ISIS, to a consensus on the need to partake and play a role in the coalition as a pre-emptive measure to fighting VE.

In conclusion, it is imperative to note the direct links between the three aforementioned gaps and the shift in the institutional patterns, detailed earlier in the report.

A more informed understanding of VE in Jordan requires acknowledging that the country's fight against radicalisation and VE is neither recent nor linear. The state's official conceptualisation and response to

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 23 May 2021.

¹²² Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

¹²³ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

¹²⁴ Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

¹²⁵ Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 24 May 2021.

¹²⁶ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

¹²⁷ Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

¹²⁸ Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

the phenomena has been largely through an ideological/religious lens. The findings of this report challenge the sustainability of such official framing and causality of VE and call for re-imagining existing P/CVE approaches. The de facto reality on the ground reveals a deepening presence of the contextual grievances influencing radicalisation pathways in the country, which notably worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In terms of gaps, the weak inter-institutional collaboration is the most prominent notion that negatively affects existing P/CVE efforts. Second comes the heavy reliance on religion in countering radical VE ideologies for it seems to be implicating religion further, more so given the fact that there is little role or connection for religion in the radicalisation of individuals in Jordan. Combined, these gaps have contributed to shifting institutional VE patterns.

Lastly, parallels were drawn between the impact of VE drivers and the institutional responses to the phenomenon in the country. The identified parallels underscore the need to look beyond specific spaces or territories, to correctly identify relational frameworks between drivers, interventions and shifting institutional VE patterns.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

Abu Rumman, M. and Shteivi, M. (2018) *Susiyulujiyya al-tatarruf wal-irhab fi al-Urdunn* (The Sociology of Extremism and Terrorism in Jordan). Amman: Center for Strategic Studies.

Cairney, P. (2012) *Understanding Public Policy: Theories and Issues*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. Available in pdf at: <https://1lib.fr/book/3515118/439f3f?id=3515118&secret=439f3f> [Accessed July 2021].

El-Said, H. and Harrigan, J. (2013) *De-radicalising Violent Extremists: Counter-Radicalization and Deradicalization Programmes and their Impact in Muslim Majority States*. London: Routledge.

Peters, B. G. (2011) *Institutional Theory in Political Science: The New Institutionalism*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Abu Halka, M. A. A. and Shafizan, M. (2020) Digital Media Literacy in Jordan: Challenges and Development. *International Journal of Law, Government and Communication* (5)21 pp. 34–44. DOI 10.35631/IJLGC.521004 Available in pdf at: <http://www.ijlgc.com/PDF/IJLGC-2020-21-12-04.pdf> [Accessed July 2021].

Abu Rumman, M. (2021) Jihadist Woman: Role and Position Shift in ISIS. *Journal of Legal, Ethical and Regulatory issues* 24(1) Available in pdf at: <https://www.abacademies.org/articles/jihadist-woman-role-and-position-shift-in-isis.pdf> [Accessed July 2021].

PUBLIC DOCUMENTS

Council of Europe (n.d.) *Cybercrime legislation: Jordan* [online] Available at: https://www.coe.int/en/web/octopus/country-wiki-ap/-/asset_publisher/CmDb7M4RGb4Z/content/jordan/pop_up?_101_INSTANCE_CmDb7M4RGb4Z_viewMode=print&_101_INSTANCE_CmDb7M4RGb4Z_languageId=en_GB [Accessed July 2021].

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (n.d.) *Foreign travel advice – terrorism: Jordan* [online] gov.uk Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/jordan/terrorism> [Accessed July 2021].

Ministry of Awqaf et Religious Affairs (2009) معهد الملك عبدالله الثاني لتأهيل الأئمة والدعاة - وزارة الاوقاف والشؤون والمقدسات الاسلامية [online] Awqaf.gov.jo Available at: https://www.awqaf.gov.jo/AR/Pages/%d9%85%d8%b9%d9%87%d8%af_%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%85%d9%84%d9%83_%d8%b9%d8%a8%d8%af%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%84%d9%87_%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%ab%d8%a7%d9%86%d9%8a_%d9%84%d8%aa%d8%a3%d9%87%d9%8a%d9%84_%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%a3%d8%a6%d9%85%d8%a9_%d9%88%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%af%d8%b9%d8%a7%d8%a9 [Accessed July 2021].

Jordanian Department of Statistics (2021) 24.7% Unemployment Rate during the fourth Quarter of 2020 [online] 9 March. Available at: http://dos.gov.jo/dos_home_e/main/archive/Unemp/2020/Emp_Q4_2020.pdf [Accessed July 2021].

Jordanian Department of Statistics and the World Bank (2009) *Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan - Poverty Update: Main Report* [online] Open Knowledge Repository, November. Available at: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/3136?show=full#:~:text=Using%202006%20as%20the%20base,was%20observed%20in%20Mafrq%20governorate.> [Accessed May 2021].

The Royal Hashemite Court (2014) *Jordan's role in the International Coalition on ISIS* [online] rhc.jo, 9 December. Available at: <https://rhc.jo/en/gallery/video/jordans-role-international-coalition-isis> [Accessed July 2021].

REPORTS

Bondokji, N., Wilkinson, K. and Aghabi, L. (2017) *Trapped Between Destructive Choices: Radicalisation Drivers Affecting Youth in Jordan* [pdf] Amman: WANA Institute, Royal Scientific Society in Amman. Available at: <http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Trapped%20Between%20Destructive%20Choices%20-%20Final%20English.pdf> [Accessed July 2021].

Bondokji, N. and Mhadeen, B. (2019a) *White Paper: Towards More Effective Human Security Approaches in the Context of the Emerging Threat of Violent Radicalisation in Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia* [pdf] Amman: WANA Institute, Royal Scientific Society in Amman. Available at: http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/English%20White%20Paper_0.pdf [Accessed July 2021].

Bondokji, N. and Mhadeen, B. (2019b) *Theory of Change: Towards More Effective Human Security Approaches in the Context of the Emerging Threat of Violent Radicalisation in Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia* [pdf] Amman: WANA Institute, Royal Scientific Society in Amman. Available at: http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Theory%20of%20Change-%20Human%20Security_0.pdf [Accessed July 2021].

Cigar, N. (2019) *Blurring the Line Between Countering Extremism and Countering Dissent: The Case of Saudi Arabia* [pdf] Norwegian Center for Human Rights, University of Oslo. NCH Available at: <https://www.jus.uio.no/smr/english/research/publications/occasional-papers/docs/oc-11-19.pdf> [Accessed July 2021].

Harper, E. (2017) *Examining Psychological Drivers of Radicalisation in Jordan* [pdf] Amman: WANA Institute, Royal Scientific Society in Amman. Available at: <http://wanainstitute.org/en/publication/examining-psychological-drivers-radicalisation-jordan> [Accessed July 2021].

Idris, I. (2019) *Community cohesion projects to prevent violent extremism* [pdf] GSDRC, University of Birmingham, 2 July. K4D helpdesk service. Available at: https://gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/627_Community_Cohesion_Projects_to_Prevent_Violent_Extremism.pdf [Accessed July 2021].

Jordan Strategy Forum (2018) *Social Capital in Jordan: What is the Level of Trust in Our Institutions & Why?* [pdf] Amman: JSF. Available at: <http://jsf.org/sites/default/files/EN%20Social%20Capital%20in%20Jordan.pdf> [Accessed July 2021].

Kebede, T. A. et al. (2021) *Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Enterprises in Jordan* [pdf] International Labour Organization (ILO) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/—arabstates/—ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_749136.pdf [Accessed July 2021].

Ma'ayeh, S. and Sweis, R. (2021) *Jordan's 2020 Parliamentary Election: Settling for the Status Quo* [pdf] Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, February. Available at: <https://www.kas.de/documents/279984/280033/Elections+Article.pdf/4504ba80-43e8-1e18-c5ef-0fd525b30e01?version=1.1&t=1613472770769> [Accessed July 2021].

Mercy Corps (2015) *From Jordan to Jihad: The Lure of Syria's Violent Extremist Groups* [pdf] 28 September. Available at: <https://www.mercycorps.org/research-resources/jordan-jihad-syria-extremist-groups> [Accessed July 2021].

Mhadeen, B., Bint Faisal, A. and Štikovac Clark, J. (2020) Jordan In: eds. Corinne Torrekens and Daphné de le Vigne, *Country Reports on National Approaches to Extremism* [pdf] Barcelona: The European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed). Available at: <https://h2020connekt.eu/publications/jordan-country-report-on-national-approaches-to-extremism/> [Accessed July 2021].

Milton-Edwards, B. (2018) *Marginalized youth: Toward and inclusive Jordan* [pdf] Brookings Doha Center publications, 6 June. Available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/marginalized-youth-toward-an-inclusive-jordan/> [Accessed July 2021].

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2012) *Country Fact Sheet – Jordan* [pdf] OCHA, August. Available at: <https://my.vanderbilt.edu/globalhealth/files/2013/04/Country-Fact-Sheet-Jordan-OCHA.pdf>

Sayegh, N. and Bondokji, N. (2017) *Towards a Unified Human Security and P/CVE Method: Challenges and Changes* [pdf] Amman: WANA Institute, Royal Scientific Society in Amman. Available at: <http://wanainstitute.org/en/publication/towards-unified-human-security-and-pcve-method-jordan-challenges-and-changes> [Accessed July 2021].

Speckhard, A. (2017) *The Jihad in Jordan: Drivers of Radicalization into Violent Extremism in Jordan* [pdf] International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism (ICSVE), 25 March. Available at: <https://www.icsve.org/the-jihad-in-jordan-drivers-of-radicalization-into-violent-extremism-in-jordan/> [Accessed July 2021].

Standford University (2021) *Mapping Militants Organizations. The Islamic State*. Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC), April. Available at: https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/mappingmilitants/profiles/islamic-state#text_block_18356 [Accessed July 2021].

Tohamy, A. et al. (2017) *The Role of the Sub-National Authorities from the Mediterranean Region in Addressing Radicalisation and VE of Young People* [pdf] European Committee of the Regions, 3 August. DOI: 10.2863/241902. Available at: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/9c800196-78c3-11e7-b2f2-01aa75ed71a1/language-en> [Accessed July 2021].

UNICEF (2020) *Preparing Adolescents in Jordan for Productive, Engaged, and Resilient Adulthood* [pdf] Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/media/90691/file/2020-Adolescent-Education-and-Skills-Programming-in-Jordan-Case-Study.pdf> [Accessed July 2021].

UN Woman and the Jordanian National Commission for Women (2016) *Women and Violent Radicalization in Jordan (Technical Report)* [pdf] Al-Hayat Center for Civil Society Development – RASED

and Search for Common Ground, March. Available at: <https://jordan.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/7/un-women-and-jncw—women-and-violent-radicalization-in-jordan> [Accessed July 2021].

United States Agency International Development (2015) *Jordan Country Development Cooperation Strategy 2013-2017* [pdf] USAID Jordan. Available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1883/Amended-Jordan-Country-Development-Strategy-March-2015.pdf> [Accessed July 2021].

United States Agency International Development (2016) *Building economic sustainability through tourism (best) project* [pdf] USAID Jordan. Available at: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TPG2.pdf [Accessed July 2021].

United States Department of State (2017) *Country Reports on Terrorism 2016 – Jordan*. UNHCR, 19 July. Available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5981e43511.html> [Accessed July 2021].

WEBSITES AND ELECTRONIC SOURCES

Addustour.com (2016) جريدة الدستور الاردنية. لانتخابات. [online] Available at: <https://www.addustour.com/articles/19422-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%B7%D8%A9-%D9%8A%D8%A4%D9%83%D8%AF-%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%B8-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B8%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%B3-%D8%A8%D8%A3%D9%87%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA?desktop=1> [Accessed July 2021].

Naar, I. (2020) Teenager’s hand chopped off, eyes gouged in horror crime rocks Jordan’s Zarqa [online] *Alarabiya News*, 15 October. Available at: <https://english.alarabiya.net/News/middle-east/2020/10/15/Teenager-s-hands-chopped-off-eyes-gouged-in-horror-crime-rocks-Jordan-s-Zarqa>

Al-Sharafat, S. (2018) Assessing Jordan’s strategy to combat violent extremism [online] *Fikra Forum*, The Washington Institute, 10 August. Available at: <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/assessing-jordans-national-strategy-combat-violent-extremism> [Accessed July 2021].

Araz, S. (2020) Jordan adopts sweeping cybersecurity legislation [online] *Middle East Institute*, 30 January. Available at: <https://www.mei.edu/publications/jordan-adopts-sweeping-cybersecurity-legislation> [Accessed July 2021].

BBC News (2005) Jordan hotel blasts kill dozens [online] *News.bbc.co.uk*, November 10. Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4423008.stm [Accessed July 2021].

BBC News (2016a) Jordan raid: Eight in Irbid as forces “foil IS plot” [online] *bbc.com Middle East*, 2 March. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-35701841> [Accessed July 2021].

BBC News (2016b) Jordan officers killed in attack at Baqaa camp near Amman [online] *bbc.com Middle East*, 6 June. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36459495> [Accessed July 2021].

BBC News (2016c) الأردنية المسلحة للقوات المشتركة الأركان هيئة رئيس مع حصرية مقابلة [online] *youtube.com*, 30 December. Video available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8YSpBn86Ks> [Accessed July 2021].

Black, I. (2016) Terrorist Attacks and Security Lapses Fuel Fears for Jordan's Stability [online] *The Guardian*, 25 July. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/on-the-middle-east/2016/jul/25/terrorist-attacks-and-security-lapses-fuel-fears-for-jordan-stability> [Accessed July 2021].

British Council (2020) Strengthening Resilience in MENA [online] Available at: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/partner/international-development/news-and-events/march-2018/Strengthening-Resilience-in-MENA> [Accessed July 2021].

Federation of American Scientists (1994) Arab Veterans of Afghanistan War Lead New Islamic Holy War [online] *fas.org* 28, October. Available at: https://fas.org/irp/news/1994/afghan_war_vetrans.html [Accessed July 2021].

HKJ Today (2017) المملكة اليوم. المملكة اليوم. "النواب) يحسم الجدل حول المادة (٣٠٨) الثلاثاء." [online] 30 July. Available at: <https://hkjtoday.com/2017/07/122918> [Accessed July 2021].

Husseini, R. (2016a) Jerash man who gouged wife's eyes charged causing permanent disability [online] *Jordan Times*, 15 November. Available at: <https://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/jerash-man-who-gouged-wifes-eyes-charged-causing-permanent-disability> [Accessed July 2021].

Husseini, R. (2016b) Death Toll in Karak attacks rises to 14, including four terrorists [online] *Jordan Times*, 18 December. Available at: <https://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/death-toll-karak-attacks-rises-14-including-four-terrorists> [Accessed July 2021].

International Labour Organization (2021) Unemployment, total (% of total labour force) (national estimate) – Jordan [online] ILOSTAT database. *Data.worldbank.org*, data retrieved on 15 June. Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.NE.ZS?locations=JO> [Accessed July 2021].

Inter-Parliamentary Union Jordan (n.d.) Majlis Al-Nuwaab (House of Representatives), Historical archive of parliamentary election results [online] Available at: http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2163_arc.htm [Accessed July 2021].

Jordan Times (2016) King attends funeral of fallen officer as Jordanians hail success of anti-terror operation [online] 3 March. Available at: <https://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/king-attends-funeral-fallen-officer-jordanians-hail-success-anti-terror-operation> [Accessed July 2021].

Jordan Times (2018) US endorses \$1.525 billion in aid to Jordan, with additional \$250m [online] 31 March. Available at: <https://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/us-endorses-1525-billion-aid-jordan-additional-250m> [Accessed July 2021].

Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung (n.d.) Foundation Office Jordan: About us [online] *kas.de* Available at : <https://www.kas.de/en/web/jordanien/about-us> [Accessed July 2021].

Ndi.org (2016) Youth political participation in Jordan: A Middle East success history [online] 27 May. Available at: https://www.ndi.org/Youth_Political_Participation_Jordan [Accessed July 2021].

Nesan News (2017) خطبة الجمعة الموحدة في الأردن.. الوزير يدافع والأمنمة يمتعضون [online] 23 April. Available at: <https://nesan.net/?id=78362> [Accessed July 2021].

Roya News (2018) King visits families of martyr Huwaitat, martyr Aqarbeh [online] 13 August. Available at: <https://en.royanews.tv/news/14885/2018-08-13> [Accessed July 2021].

Schenker, D. (2016) Cracks start show in Jordan [online] *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, 13 September. Available at: <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/cracks-start-show-jordan> [Accessed July 2021].

Smith-Spark, L. and Martinez (2015) Who was Jordanian pilot Moath al-Kasasbeh, killed by ISIS? [online] *CNN World*, 4 February. Available at: <https://edition.cnn.com/2015/01/29/middleeast/who-is-jordan-pilot-isis-hostage/index.html> [Accessed July 2021].

Sweis, R. F. (2016) ISIS is said to claim responsibility for deadly attack in Jordan [online] *The New York Times*, Middle East, 20 December. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/20/world/middleeast/jordan-attack-isis-karak.html> [Accessed July 2021].

The Royal Institute for Inter-faith Studies (2012) RIIFS holds a training course for imams and preachers focusing on dialogue and tolerance [online] HRH Prince Al Hassan Bin Talal website. Available at: <http://www.riifs.org/en/NewsPage/RIIFS%20holds%20a%20training%20course%20for%20imams%20and%20preachers%20focusing%20on%20dialogue%20and%20tolerance/58> [Accessed July 2021].

UNDP (2020) 68 Percent of Households across Jordan Report Significant Impact on Livelihoods as a Result of COVID-19: UNDP Survey [online] 21 May. Available at: <https://www.jo.undp.org/content/jordan/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2020/68-percent-of-households-across-jordan-report-significant-impact.html> [Accessed July 2021].

University of Jordan News (2021) 57% of Jordanians do not trust government after 200 days of its formation [online] *ujnews2.ju.edu.jo*, 31 March. Available at: http://ujnews2.ju.edu.jo/en/english/Lists/News/Disp_FormNews1.aspx?ID=6081 [Accessed July 2021].

US Embassy in Jordan (2018) A statement on the terrorist attacks on Salt and Fuheis [online] U.S. Mission Jordan, 12 August. Available at: <https://jo.usembassy.gov/a-statement-on-the-terrorist-attacks-on-salt-and-fuheis/> [Accessed July 2021].

World Bank (2020) Jordan: Overview [online] <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/jordan/overview> [Accessed July 2021].

OTHERS

Documentary "Terror and Hope: The Science of Resilience". Ron Bourke, 2020. <https://www.ronbourkefilms.com/terror-and-hope>

INTERVIEWS

State institutions

Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 24 May 2021.

Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 31 May 2021.

Online interview with female representative of a state institution, Amman, 2 June 2021.

Online interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 6 June 2021.

In-person interview with male representative of a state institution, Amman, 6 June 2021.

Online interview with female representative of a state institution, Amman, 7 June 2021.

Local non-governmental institutions

Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

Online interview with male and female representatives of a state institution and a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 22 May 2021.

Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 24 May 2021.

Online interview with female representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 26 May 2021.

Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 27 May 2021.

Online interview with male representative of a local non-governmental institution, Amman, 14 June 2021.

International non-governmental institutions

Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 20 May 2021.

Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 23 May 2021.

Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 31 May 2021.

Online interview with female representative of an international non-governmental institution, Amman, 2 June 2021.



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