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Gendered Dimensions of Return, Rehabilitation and Reintegration from Violent Extremism

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Front cover images (clockwise from top): A Bring Back Our Girls campaigner during a protest in Lagos, Nigeria (REUTERS/Akintunde Akinleye - stock.adobe.com); Yazidi woman and children outside her tent in Kanke refugee camp, Iraq (answer5/Shutterstock.com); Young woman practices embroidery in northeast Nigeria © European Union 2018 (Samuel Ochai); German woman at right-wing protest in Berlin, Germany (Paul Velasco/Shutterstock.com); View of war damage from Serekaniye, Syria (fpolat69/Shutterstock.com).

Back cover images (clockwise from top left): Woman holding her face in her hands; Pakistani women shelter under truck after flood (Hira Hashmey/UNDP Photo); Syrian women protest in the refugee camp of Idomeni, at the Greek border (Giannis Papanikos/Shutterstock.com).

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INVISIBLE WOMEN

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2019

While the challenges are profound, the existence of local civil society entities active and willing to support reintegration in communities across affected countries cannot be underestimated. They are key assets and must be recognized and supported as allies in the quest for positive peace and social cohesion.

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FOREWORD

Of the 41,490 foreigners who became affiliated with IS in Iraq and Syria, up to 4,761, or 13%, are women.[1] It is estimated that only 256 of them have since returned to their home countries.[2] Little remains known about the fate of these returning women, and figures on female returnees from other violent extremist groups remain scarce.

Images of women involved with violent extremist movements tend to portray them as either coerced victims, or active perpetrators. In reality, the roles women play in violent extremism transcend this simple binary. They engage in extremist violence in complex ways, including as recruiters, educators, campaigners, financers, brides, logistic arrangers, supporters, or a combination of these. Many may be giving birth and caring for children while involved with these groups. In some cases, they are kidnapped or forced to join violent extremist groups; in other instances, they join voluntarily for reasons similar to those of their male peers. In every context, women are also among the first to raise the alarm about rising violent extremism and mobilize as civil society organizations and community groups to prevent and counter its spread. Their rootedness in community means they have knowledge, trust, access, and long-term commitment to initiate and sustain sensitive rehabilitation and reintegration efforts.

At UNDP, in line with our approach to support development solutions for Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE), we believe the success of reintegration relies not only on the prosecution of culpable returnees, but also on addressing the root causes that drove people to join violent extremist groups in the first place. As called for in the Secretary-General's Plan of Action for PVE, this includes devising efficient gender- and human rights-compliant reintegration strategies.

The global study, Invisible Women: Gendered Dimensions of Return, Reintegration and Rehabilitation, conducted in partnership with the International Civil Society Action Network, responds to a pressing need for action-oriented research that improves our understanding of women's roles in reintegration and rehabilitation processes, and the work of women-led organizations in supporting these processes. The study considers their experiences as critical lessons for the design and implementation of initiatives to prevent violent extremism. In doing so, it makes an important contribution to an expanding evidence base on the reintegration of violent extremists.

In research, the process of inquiry is often as important as the final product. I commend the approach of this study, which prioritizes the voices of women-led civil society, activists and peacebuilders at every stage. A central element of the study's methodology is the modality of the Global Solutions Exchange (GSX), a mechanism supported by UNDP that convenes government representatives with independent civil society organizations working on PVE. Mechanisms such as the GSX are critical for responding to the call for a "whole of society approach" articulated in the Secretary-General's Plan of Action for PVE.

Our commitment to the 2030 agenda, particularly Goal 5 (gender equality) and Goal 16 (inclusive society), and to the pledge of Leaving No One Behind is a commitment to understanding intersectionality, and to bringing to light the needs of those groups previously overlooked by policy and programming. This is what adopting a gender lens in PVE challenges us to do, and what I hope you will take away from the study.

Abdoulaye Mar DIEYE

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Assistant Secretary-General
Assistant Administrator and Director

[1] ICSR (July, 2018), From Daesh to Diaspora: Tracing the Women and Minors of the Islamic State, (available at: https://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Women-in-ISIS-report_20180719_web.pdf).
[2] Ibid.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report shows that women and girls are associated with violent extremism in complex and diverse ways. For disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes to be effective, the counter-terrorism and PVE community must recognize their existence and adapt existing policies and practices to be gender-responsive for both men and women.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As 2019 dawns, the spectre of violent extremism remains at the forefront of the global peace and security discourse and practice. As the number of deaths due to terrorism continues to fall, decreasing by 27 percent from 2016 to 2017, a new set of challenges emerges: that of the disengagement, rehabilitation, and reintegration of men, women, boys and girls associated with violent extremist (VE) groups.[3] Meanwhile, with some 67 countries recording at least one death from terrorism in 2017, terrorism and violent extremism continue to be global issues demanding international coordination, policy and legal approaches.[4]

Often invisible in the eyes of international policy and law are the women and children associated with violent extremist groups. Reports have indicated that in northern Syria, Kurdish authorities are holding some 2,000 foreign women and children who were associated with ISIL.[5] In Northern Nigeria, thousands of women and girls associated with Boko Haram—some who joined voluntarily, others who were among those abducted—are housed in military camps for the displaced, at risk of sexual abuse and stigmatized by the communities from which they originally came.[6] Meanwhile in Kenya, Indonesia, Lebanon, Tunisia, across Western Europe and beyond, men and women affiliated with internationally designated terror organizations or other violent extremist (VE) groups seek to cross international borders as they attempt to return home, in some cases with children in tow.[7]

The joint United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN) publication, Invisible Women: Gendered Dimensions of Return, Reintegration and Rehabilitation, is an effort to map the gaps and challenges pertaining to the reintegration and rehabilitation of women and girls associated with violent extremist groups, and establish a preliminary evidence-base of good practices and approaches. The report and its methodology centralize the experiences of local civil society, in particular women-led civil society organizations (CSOs) who contributed to the report through interviews, dialogues, and case study profiles. The research emphasizes the necessity of integrated, multi-stakeholder approaches that enable state and civil society to work in tandem, based on the comparative advantages of each.

In every context, the research finds, gender dynamics play a critical role. Returning women and girls who are victims of sexual violence face additional stigma from their communities and have distinct psychosocial and health needs. Returning women suffer economic consequences, too: The widows of men who joined the ranks of Daesh in Iraq or Syria have assumed the burden of heading households, needing to earn incomes while singlehandedly caring for their children.[8] The absence of coherent, gender-sensitive policies may carry mortal implications, such as in Iraq, where the foreign widows of former Daesh fighters may face the death penalty regardless of their role in the movements.[9] The status of many children and orphans remains unknown.[10] Research shows that in Nigeria and elsewhere, if women return to their communities and face the lack of opportunity alongside the stigma of being affiliated with violent extremists, the risk of re-radicalization and re-recruitment increases.[11]

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[3] The Institute for Economics and Peace. (2018), Global Terrorism Index 2018: measuring and understanding the impact of terrorism (available at: http://globalterrorismindex.org/).
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ben Hubbard (2018), Wives and Children of ISIS: Warehoused in Syria, Unwanted Back Home (available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/04/world/middleeast/islamic-state-families-syria.html).
[6] UNICEF, 2016, In Nigeria's restive northeast, fate of thousands of abducted women remains unknown (available at: https://news.un.org/en/story/2016/04/526752-nigerias-restive-northeast-fate-thousands-abducted-women-remains-unknown-un and https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/more-1000-children-northeastern-nigeria-abducted-boko-haram-2013).
[7] European Parliament (2018), The Return of Foreign Fighters to EU Soil: Ex-Post Evaluation, (available at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/621811/EPRS_STU(2018)621811_EN.pdf).
[8] Mujahid Abu al-Joud (2018, February 21), "Wives of 'muhajirin': who's your husband?". Open Democracy.
[9] Mina Aldroubi, M. (2018, February 9), "). Iraq sentences Turkish ISIL widow to death Court also issued life imprisonment to 10 women guilty of participating in acts of terror." The National, pp. 1–17.
[10] Trew, B. (2018, September 25). What becomes of the jihadi orphans?. The Independent (available at: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/long_reads/isis-children-orphans-islamic-state-jihadis-mosul-zahour-a8550276.html).
[11] UNICEF, & International Alert. (2016),). "Bad blood": Perceptions of children born of conflict-related sexual violence and women and girls associated with Boko Haram in northeast Nigeria.

The report finds that there is still a lack of coherent national and international policies pertaining to the treatment of those returning from transnational violent extremist and terrorist groups.[12] Where the fate of women and children is concerned, there is an even wider chasm between on-the-ground realities and global policies. For years, women and children have been nearly absent from the literature on foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) as much of the information gathering and scholarship has lacked a gendered analysis.[13] The question of returning women and children brings additional challenges. For instance, determining whether they joined voluntarily or were forced to join, and the extent to which they perpetrated violence or acted as supporters and enablers.

Figure 1: Terminology referring to return, rehabilitation and reintegration varies widely

The absence of coherence in international policy is reflected in the lack of agreed terminology and priorities among the policy, academic and practitioner communities active in the fields of counter-terrorism, countering or preventing violent extremism (PVE) and peacebuilding. For some, the process is primarily legal and judicial and thus is framed as prosecution, sentencing, reintegration and rehabilitation (PRR).[14] For practitioners with experience from past demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) processes, the issues are better framed as disengagement from the group; rehabilitation of the individual, family and community; and reintegration into society. Meanwhile, front-line practitioners often point to the importance of deradicalization from the ideology of the movements as a key component in the process.[15]

The research makes clear that as the policy debates continue in the global arena, in communities across the world, the lives of ordinary people are in the balance. While many states and international entities continue to approach the issue of violent extremism, FTF and reintegration in a gender-blind manner, CSOs, particularly those rooted locally and led by women, have been the first to see and respond to the issues facing women who are associated with VE groups. From Indonesia to Nigeria, Pakistan to the Philippines, at the national and community levels, women-led CSOs are forging new practices and approaches to enable the safe and effective reintegration of women and girls into society. Although cultural and political contexts vary, the initiatives that CSOs have developed have similar holistic approaches tailored to the conditions of the people implicated.

The expertise of women-led CSOs is essential for ensuring national legislation and policies are effective and address the unique needs of women and girls in disengagement, rehabilitation, and reintegration programmes. The importance of their participation in rehabilitation and reintegration processes, and in PVE more broadly, has been reiterated across global policy frameworks. For example, the Madrid Guiding Principles on stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters clearly articulate the importance of working with civil society.[16] The UN Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism and UN Security Council Resolution 2242 also emphasize the need for partnership with women-led CSOs in efforts to prevent violent extremism.[17] However, the report finds that the

[12] Shephard, M. (2018, February), At least two Canadian women are among 800 foreign 'ISIS families' being held in legal limbo by Kurdish forces. The Toronto Star.
[13] Vidino, L. (2014, March). Foreign Fighters: An Overview of Responses in Eleven Countries. Center for Security Studies (CSS) ETH Zurich: 19; The Gendering of Counter-Terrorism. (2011). University of Oslo.
[14] UN Security Council. FACT SHEET: Resolution 2396 (2017) on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (Returnees and Relocators).
[15] Holmes, G., & Shtuni, A. (2010), Returning Foreign Fighters and the Reintegration Imperative. USIP Special Report. Stern, J. (2010). Deradicalization or Disengagement? Future Challenges in National Security and Law, II(4), 20.
[16] S/2015/939 (2015), Madrid Guiding Principles (available at: https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Madrid-Guiding-Principles_EN.pdf).
[17] A/70/674 (2015), Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism: Report of the Secretary-General; S/RES/2242 (2015) (available at: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2242.pdf).

perception among CSOs is that in the majority of cases these principles have not been translated into national policies, laws or practices. Instead of being seen as allies and contributors to the resolution of this complex challenge, CSOs experience a closing of civic space and face heightened financial, reputational and operational risk.[18]

Public attitudes, stigma and fear emerged in the research as central challenges to be considered in reintegration and rehabilitation efforts. In both domestic and international settings, return of women, girls, boys and men associated with VE groups is frequently paired with heightened levels of fear, anger and mistrust from communities. States are grappling with a difficult dilemma: On the one hand, they are responsible for protecting their citizens from the potential risk of violence and seeking justice for the victims of terror, while on the other they must guarantee effective due process and adherence to human rights laws, including the protection of the rights of children. To make matters more complicated, governments and international institutions also have to ensure that members of local communities do not perceive that returnees and those associated with VE groups are receiving preferential treatment or services. In other words, programming for the reintegration of women and children associated with VE groups must be anchored, owned and beneficial to the wider community. Striking the right balance is extraordinarily complex and challenging but must be thoroughly considered in the design of reintegration and rehabilitation processes, law and policies.

The research underscores the need for a holistic, gender-sensitive approach to reintegration and rehabilitation that addresses not only those returning, but also the stigma, threats and vulnerabilities experienced by family and community members associated with violent extremism. The report critically analyses existing policy frameworks and legal processes and presents a preliminary mapping of key elements of a holistic approach to reintegration, including security, public awareness, ideological, psychosocial and economic components.

Figure 2: Individuals returning from association with VE groups have multiple and interrelated needs

Figure 3: Effective national policy for rehabilitation and reintegration should be holistic and engage all sectors of society

[18] Duke Law, Tightening the Purse Strings: What Countering Terrorism Financing Costs Gender Equality and Security (available at: https://law.duke.edu/sites/default/files/humanrights/tighteningpursestrings.pdf)

KEY FINDINGS

1 Most countries do not have consistent policies or laws pertaining to the treatment of returnees associated with terrorist and VE groups. This is particularly true in the case of women, girls and boys associated with such groups. As a result, programmes for their rehabilitation and reintegration are inconsistent, which leaves them prone to abuse by state and community actors and increases their vulnerability to re-radicalization and re-recruitment. Rhetoric demanding harsh punishment for returnees has gained traction, but these demands may contravene rule of law, exacerbate stigma, and serve as a grievance fomenting future cycles of radicalization to violence.

2 Current policies and programming tend to either ignore women and girls associated with VE groups or oversimplify the issues. They frame women and girls in binary terms, either as victims or perpetrators of violence. Yet in most instances, women's and girls' association with VE groups is complex. It can be due to a mix of factors including coercion, co-option, enslavement or kidnapping, or subjugation in their own communities and unfilled aspirations for belonging, purpose, adventure and empowerment. In order to design effective responses for this cohort, we must understand and address the initial drivers, conditions and motivations of their association with VE groups. It is also imperative that state responses do not perpetuate or contribute to further victimization of those who have already experienced profound violence and trauma.

3 In drawing attention to women, it is essential that women and children who have been victims of the violence perpetrated by VE groups are not forgotten. There are widows and female-headed households on all sides. They are often becoming breadwinners for the first time because their husbands and sons are either incarcerated or killed. Enabling them to have independent livelihoods can help them heal from trauma and restore their identities, providing them and their children with the resilience that is essential for preventing re-recruitment. If rehabilitation support is only provided to the families of former fighters, then it can fuel injustice, anger and retribution among women and other community members who were innocent targets but have received no support.

4 Locally rooted women-led CSOs are often the first to be alerted to these issues and are at the front lines of responding to the complex challenges faced by women and girl returnees. They have pioneered effective, holistic response programmes that tackle the mix of issues including the psychosocial, economic and ideological needs. National policies and programming should draw on their expertise. However, due to the lack of policy and legal coherence, the CSOs face profound legal and security risks. They continue to be insufficiently included in national and local planning efforts for PVE.

KEY FINDINGS

5 Lack of transparency about the actions of security actors when engaging with returnees and perceived impunity for abuse by security actors, including sexual violence against women associated with extremist movements, fuel mistrust within communities.

6 The ratio of women to men returning to their countries of origin varies significantly by country. We infer that in many cases women are not returning because they are unable to attain citizenship status and custody of their children who were born during their time in Syria, Iraq or elsewhere.

7 The women and girls who do return face tremendous anger, fear and stigma from communities. This isolates them and inhibits their ability to rehabilitate and reintegrate. It also heightens their vulnerability to re-recruitment into VE groups that co-opt them with offers of support and belonging.

8 Many violent extremist groups have co-opted the message of women's empowerment, in addition to promising better socioeconomic conditions to recruit women and girls. They tap into ideology and identity to offer a sense of purpose, meaning and belonging that vulnerable women and girls are missing in their lives. National and international entities involved in reintegration programming must take these tactics into account when designing PVE programming. Disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration should not be reduced to only material subsistence—it needs to address the "push factors" of misogyny, injustice and deficit in dignity that women experience in their own societies. If these root causes are not addressed, the risk of women being drawn to the messages of VE groups continues.

9 Women and girls lack access to women religious scholars and counsellors who espouse a moderate interpretation of religious teachings. This is an obstacle to the ideological transformation of women and girls. Too often, the women offering guidance are those using social networks to informally promote intolerant and exclusionary messages.

10 To reduce stigma, community exclusion, and the potential of violent backlash against returning women and girls, and to enable their reintegration into their communities and the broader society, it is essential to engage national and local media as well as influential community leaders to deliver balanced messaging that enables dialogue and social cohesion.

INTRODUCTION

The research underscores the need for a holistic, gender-sensitive approach to reintegration and rehabilitation that addresses not only those returning, but also the stigma, threats and vulnerabilities experienced by family and community members associated with violent extremism.

INTRODUCTION

Between 2011 and 2016 over 42,000 foreigners from more than 120 countries joined terrorist organizations abroad, and an estimated 5,600 returned home as of October 2017.[19] While the vast majority of foreign terrorist fighters are men, the rising participation of women is a trend worth noting, while keeping in mind the fact that those joining violent extremist and terrorist groups represent a fraction of a percentage of both men and women.[20]

According to The Soufan Group, the countries with the highest numbers of women joining ISIL include France with 320, Morocco with 285, Kazakhstan with more than 200, Tunisia with 100, and the United Kingdom with more than 100.[21] Returnees include children born to mothers in the midst of war zones. Countless numbers may be born of rape or have been abandoned as the fighters retreated. These children, particularly girls, may have survived sexual abuse, and the boys, as young as nine, may have been subjected to military training. Some are victims of trafficking and coercion, while others were lured by the messages of extremist groups, or their own family members, but are now returning—either leaving groups to physically return to communities or seeking to distance themselves from VE groups within their communities. Many may be disillusioned and afraid. Others may still have ideological, familial or financial ties but be returning because VE groups have been weakened.

Meanwhile, attitudes of fear and mistrust among the public are palpable, with many asking the same questions: Are these returnees radicalized to violence? Will they pose a threat to our society? Who among them has perpetrated violence? What about their victims? Where is justice and accountability? How can there be reintegration programs including socioeconomic benefits for the families of the perpetrators of violence, while the victims' families receive no support?

With these questions troubling governments and communities globally, it is essential to better understand the population of people implicated in violent extremism. While governments have a legitimate interest in protecting their communities against potential risks or threats, this cannot be done at the expense of the human rights of those who are returning. Increased understanding is necessary for informing the policies and programmes that can prevent further violence, mitigate the rise of new splinter groups, and promote social cohesion in societies that are fractured and riven with mistrust.

Given the complexity, this work requires collaboration among the United Nations, regional multilateral organizations, national and local governments, and civil society, because effective rehabilitation and reintegration requires attention and action at the state, community, family, and individual levels across society.[22] Because of individual psychosocial processes, it also requires the sustained and trusted engagement and involvement of local mentors, including educators and religious leaders, families, and other supportive social networks. In this context, locally-rooted CSOs have a crucial contribution to make. They often have unparalleled trust of and access to the affected individuals and communities, and they can also be effective interlocutors with government and security actors.[23]

In recent years, as research and practice on PVE has evolved, the different experiences of women and girls involved in and affected by the phenomenon have come to light. Research shows the current FTF wave has clear differences with previous ones. Studies indicate that it is larger, more global, and more diverse in terms of age, gender and experience in the conflict zones. These differences make the potential challenges associated

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[19] Richart Barrett (2017), Beyond the Caliphate: Foreign Fighters and Returnees. The Soufan Group. (Available at: http://thesoufancenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Beyond-the-Caliphate-Foreign-Fighters-and-the-Threat-of-Returnees-TSC-Report-October-2017-v3.pdf).
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.
[22] A/70/674 (2015), Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism: Report of the Secretary-General.
[23] GSX (2017). "10 Steps to Strengthening Rehabilitation and Reintegration Efforts for Terrorism Offenders, Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters, and Victims of Violent Extremism" (available at: www.gsxpve.org/improving-pve-practice/).

with returnees and relocators significantly bigger, but also more complex.[24] This gendered perspective is especially relevant in the context of reintegration and rehabilitation efforts that the UN and many countries are undertaking, given the flow of individuals returning or defecting from violent extremist groups. UN Security Council Resolution 2242 and the 2015 UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism call for the participation and leadership of women's organizations to devise strategies to counter terrorism and violent extremism.[25]

Meanwhile, gender analysis can reveal nuances of category that reveal the complexity of the issues, such as women who were abducted and forced to join extremist groups. They blur the lines between victim and perpetrator. It can reveal gaps and weaknesses in state security and legal frameworks that unexpectedly create more harm. It also sheds light on the important role of civil society and other community actors who are at the front lines of engaging women and girls, and the complexity that comes with being affiliated with violent extremism.

Gender sensitivity in prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of FTF is also mandated by UN Security Council Resolution 2396, which "… emphasizes that women and children associated with foreign terrorist fighters returning or relocating to and from conflict may have served in many different roles, including as supporters, facilitators, or perpetrators of terrorist acts, and require special focus when developing tailored prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration strategies." The resolution also "stresses the importance of assisting women and children associated with foreign terrorist fighters who may be victims of terrorism, and to do so taking into account gender and age sensitivities."[26]

Purpose and methodology

Situated at the nexus of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) and Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE), this report contributes a gendered analysis of approaches to the disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration of women and girls associated with violent extremism. Drawing on a desk study, key informant interviews and consultations with key policymakers, researchers, practitioners, psychologists, journalists, victims, and former extremists, this report explores the role of the state, civil society, and other important sectors such as the media, education, and economic development. It highlights the gaps in current policies and practice, as well as the solutions that are emerging in part from the experiences and innovations of women-led civil society initiatives and others in addressing the gendered dynamics and impacts of violent extremism and terrorism—from security profiling to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). The report concludes with practical recommendations for policymakers and programming guidance for practitioners.

This report is a product of a joint research initiative conducted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN) in 2017 and 2018. In response to increased civil society engagement, the initiative was undertaken to collate gender-sensitive research on women and girls, their experiences with disengagement, rehabilitation, and reintegration processes and programmes related to violent extremism, and their role as practitioners and peacebuilders in this field.

Given the complex dynamics and diverse expressions of violent extremism, cases and examples were sought from different regions and contexts including Europe and North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, North, West, Central and East Africa, the Middle East, South, Central and Southeast Asia.

The initiative is in line with the UN Security Council's call to "conduct and gather gender-sensitive research and data collection on the drivers of radicalization for women, and the impacts of counter-terrorism strategies on women's human rights and women's organizations" as stated in UNSCR 2242 (2015).[27] While there remains a

[24] UNSC Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) (2018), Current Trends Report.
[25] S/RES/2242 (2015) (available at: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2242.pdf).
[26] S/RES/2396 (2017) on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (available at: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1327675?ln=en).
[27] S/RES/2242 (2015) (available at: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2242.pdf).

great need for attention to the gendered dimensions of men's and boys' radicalization to and role in violent extremist groups and the implications for their disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration, given the resource and time limitations and the current deficit of attention to the return of women and girls associated with violent extremism, this study focuses narrowly on policies and programmes for women and girls and the role that women peacebuilders play as responders.

The research draws on the wealth of knowledge, expertise and real-time understanding of changing ground realities that civil society actors have, including many members of the Women's Alliance for Security Leadership (WASL),[28] as they directly engage women previously affiliated with violent extremist groups. Where available, testimonies from returned women and girls have been included. Building on desk research on the gendered dimensions of disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration in the context of violent extremism, as well as preliminary consultations during its annual Women, Peace and Security Forum in November 2017, UNDP and ICAN conducted a mapping of existing policies and programmes for women and girls associated with violent extremist groups. The mapping was deepened through a survey and key informant interviews with practitioners and experts. Preliminary findings related to good practices, key issues, and gaps in policy were elaborated through focus group discussions and informed by the analysis of participants of a Global Solutions Exchange (GSX) workshop convened by UNDP and ICAN in April 2018.[29]

More than 40 peacebuilders, researchers, and policymakers came together in Oslo, Norway to discuss the gendered aspects of disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration, with a focus on programmes for women and girls associated with violent extremist groups and the policies that affect them. Participants included practitioners from Canada, Indonesia, Kenya, Lebanon, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sweden, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Uganda and the Western Balkans. The workshop was designed to facilitate open and horizontal exchange of analysis, perspectives, and experience among diverse stakeholders from different sectors and geographic contexts. The majority of participants work directly with women and girl returnees with a wide range of profiles, and the family members of returning FTF. To protect contributors' personal security and promote honest exchange, consultations were conducted under Chatham House Rules and any personal or organizational attribution in this report is by specific consent.

These findings were further validated through a number of key events in the first half of 2018, including panels and presentations during the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Conference in Rome, and the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) Regional Meetings in Bali and Madrid. By documenting practitioner expertise and analysing existing research, UNDP and ICAN aim to strengthen the knowledge base on the fate of women and girl returnees, and inform a new generation of policy and programming interventions at the local, regional and global levels with this initiative.

Structure of the report

Because of the complex nature of the challenge, the report lays out a gendered analysis of disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration across the sectors that play an important role in responding to those who return. Following a brief explanation of the terms and concepts used, each chapter of Part I examines the relevant policies and existing initiatives in order to inform guidance for policy and programming. Examples of good practice are further elaborated in the case studies in Part II.

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[28] WASL is an alliance of independent locally rooted women led CSOs specializing in peace, security and PVE research and practice. ICAN spearheads the alliance. For more information see www.icanpeacework.org.

[29] The Global Solutions Exchange (GSX) seeks to build trust and generate sustainable solutions by designing and facilitating dialogues between civil society and government actors on preventing and countering violent extremism. ICAN's approach elevates the perspectives and expertise of independent women civil society actors and integrates gendered analysis to address the gender gap in peace and security policies. For more information see www.gsxpve.org.

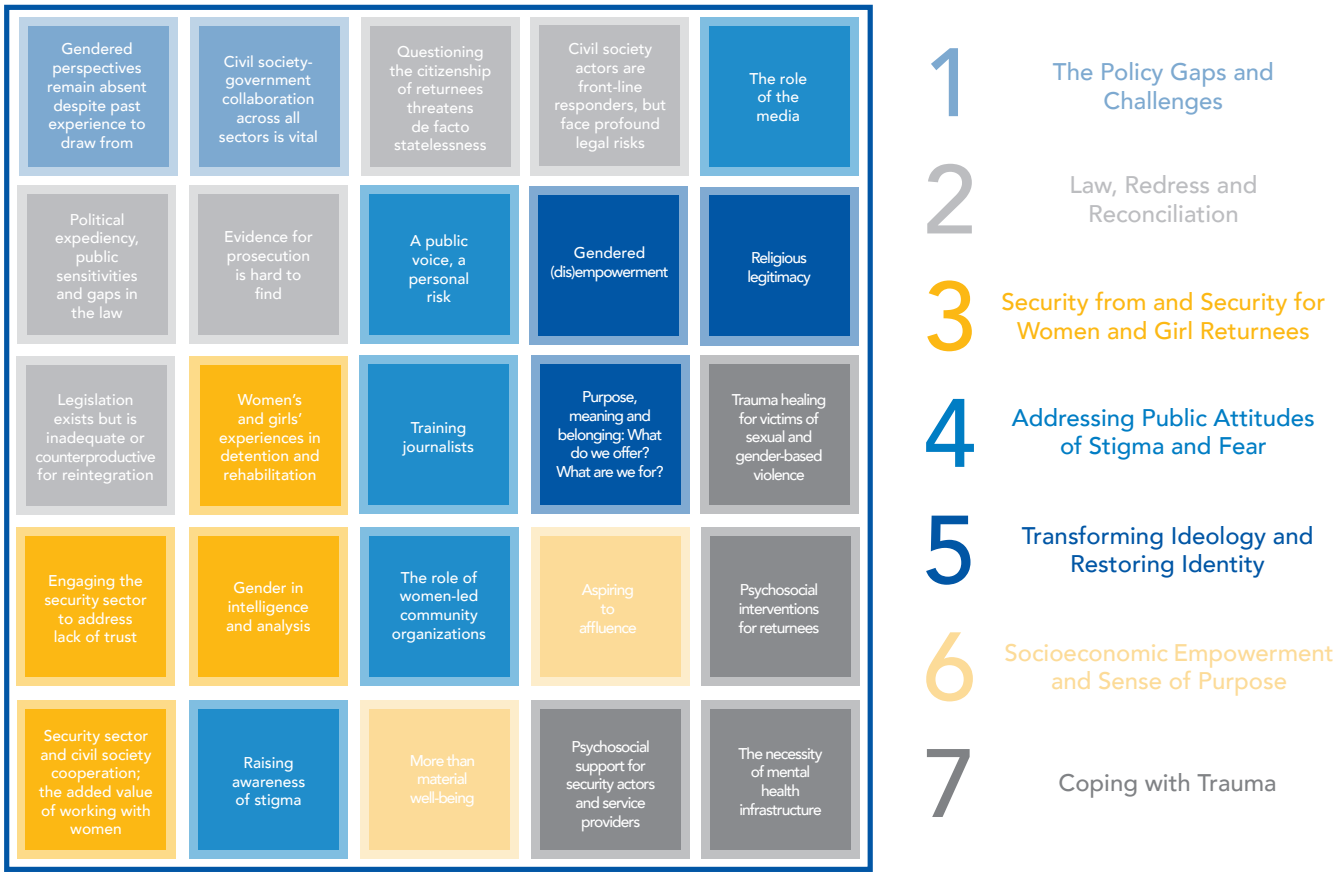

Figure 4. The multisectoral landscape of holistic and gendered disengagement, rehabilitation, and reintegration

- Chapter 1 draws attention to the existing policy frameworks, gaps and challenges related to addressing disarmament, reintegration and rehabilitation of people associated with violent extremist groups, with attention to the gaps related to women and children in particular.
- Chapter 2 on legal processes and issues includes discussions on repatriation, prosecution, sentencing, citizenship rights, restorative justice measures, and access to legal aid for returnees.
- Chapter 3 addresses security issues both from and for returnees. It addresses measures needed to mitigate the risk of recidivism while avoiding further marginalization and potential secondary or re-radicalization. It also touches on the protection needs of returnees from retributional violence and SGBV, and the role of state security actors and civil society organizations in this process.
- Chapter 4 highlights the importance of public awareness and community sensitization, including the role of the media and local leaders to combat retribution, stigma, fear and mistrust, and enable successful reintegration. It also highlights the risks that individuals face when seeking to raise such sensitive issues.
- Chapter 5 focuses on the need for ideological transformation through religious or other forms of counselling and mentoring for those who have been convinced of violent extremist narratives, with attention to the needs of women who often have less opportunities for deepening their religious literacy.
- Chapter 6 addresses the importance of providing socioeconomic support (including access to education, relevant livelihoods skills and job training, employer sensitization and job placement) and enabling economic independence not only as a practical necessity but also as a path to rehabilitation and resilience against the ideologues of violent extremism.
- Chapter 7 draws attention to the need for psychosocial support, such as trauma healing, tools to cope with stigma, and family therapy, for returnees and their families whether they are victims, perpetrators, or both. Given the propensity of sexual violence among women and girls, the need for reproductive health services and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases is noted, as well as the unique dynamics of newly femaleheaded households.

Each of these themes plays out differently for the individual, their family, the receiving community, and the state. By centring our research on the lived experience of people— returnees, communities and civil society actors alike—we offer an approach that is comprehensive yet centres on the common human needs and aspirations. This ensures holistic responses that not only meet the demands of national security, but also those of returnees, victims and society at large, thus preventing further cycles of radicalization and fostering sustainable peace.

Part II of the report comprises seven case studies of existing good practices by women-led civil society organizations in different countries. Each profile addresses several of the themes and areas of intervention identified in Part I. In Part III the key findings and good practices elaborated previously are distilled into programming guidance with specific recommendations and questions to ask when designing, monitoring and evaluating rehabilitation and reintegration programs for women and girls.

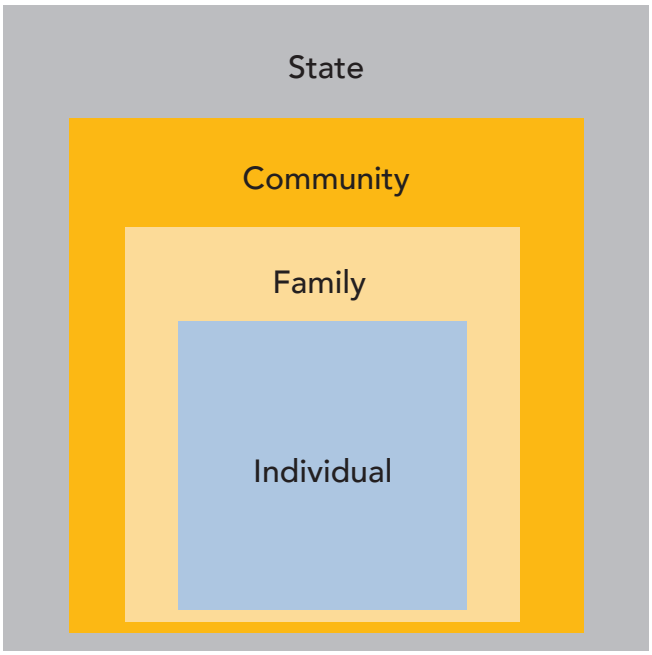

Figure 5. Levels of engagement for effective holistic intervention

Concepts, terms and categories: Who are the women and girls associated with violent extremist groups?

As of July 2018, more than 41,490 people from 80 countries have been identified as affiliated with ISIL in Iraq and Syria.[30] Among these are rising numbers of women, minors, and infants born in conflict zones.[31] Recent data from Syria and Iraq suggests that 10-13 percent of the foreigners who joined ISIL between 2013 and 2018 are women (another 9-12 percent are children).[32]

A documented 20 percent of these men and women have returned home or are in the process of doing so, yet only 256 (or 5 percent) of the women who travelled to Syria and Iraq have been recorded returning.[33] So why aren't women returning? Lack of legal clarity, physical and financial insecurity, and uncertainty about retaining custody of their children and the citizenship status of those born in ISIL-controlled territory—at least 730 have been recorded—are explored in the following sections as among the possible contributing factors.[34]

The rates of return of women and girls are highly variable between countries and regions, owing to a combination of geography, policy, and demographic nuances.[35] In Southeast Asia, up to 59 percent of returnees are women

[30] ICSR (2018), From Daesh to 'Diaspora': Tracing the Women and Minors of Islamic State (available at: https://icsr.info/2018/07/23/from-daesh-to-diaspora-tracing-the-women-and-minors-of-islamic-state/).
[31] UNSC Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), (2018). The Challenge of Returning and Relocating Foreign Terrorist Fighters: Research Perspectives (available at: https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/CTED-Trends-Report-March-2018.pdf).
[32] ICSR (2018), From Daesh to 'Diaspora': Tracing the Women and Minors of Islamic State (available at: https://icsr.info/2018/07/23/from-daesh-to-diaspora-tracing-the-women-and-minors-of-islamic-state/); Nadia Khomani (2018), "Number of women and children who joined Isis 'significantly underestimated' (available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jul/23/number-of-women-and-children-joining-isis-significantly-underestimated).
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Jane Ekayu (2018), Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) / Deradicalisation and Counter-ideology.

and minors, a finding consistent with practitioner reports from Indonesia.[36] In contrast, in countries where numbers are lower, such as in North America and Europe, and where re-entry is more challenging, few women and children have returned while many are left in limbo in conflict zones. Proportions of women and minors returning to South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) amounted to less than 1 percent.[37] However, MENA has some of the largest gaps in available data, which may have skewed this result.

Despite being best practice, government data on returnees is most often not gender- or age-disaggregated, resulting in an opaque picture for security actors and service providers contending with these individuals' needs as well as their potential threat.[38] These figures do not account for local populations who have survived occupation by violent extremist groups, many ending up internally displaced or refugees. The women and girls in these areas are likely affiliated in much higher numbers, when we factor in involuntary participation—whether through abduction or as a survival tactic.

Women and girl returnees come from a diverse range of ages, backgrounds and circumstances. Some are girls, such as the Yazidis who were abducted and sold as sex slaves.[39] Some are the children of terrorist fighters, born during the conflict. Some are children born of rape, others of *bona fide* relationships. Some young women were lured by romance or the opportunity to support a cause, and some wives followed their husbands into conflict zones. There are also women who are independently motivated by a combination of factors that violent extremist groups offer—notably a sense of empowerment and belonging, financial incentives, and space to practice their faith without stigma.

In order to understand the experiences and needs of women and girl returnees, programming must be informed about their contexts, including whether they are from urban or rural areas, married or have children, and their level of education. These specifics impact whether women and girls are accepted or rejected by their families and communities when they return home.[40]

For the purposes of this study, women and girl returnees include those disengaging from extremist groups they had joined both voluntarily and involuntarily, within and outside of their home countries, and across both developed and developing contexts.

Women are also the front-line response and resistance

In addition, it is critical not to overlook those working actively to resist the radicalization and recruitment of the members of their communities. Women civil society actors—peace practitioners, human rights activists, social workers, lawyers, and many others—are filling the gaps in terms of responding to the needs of returnees. These local actors are also raising the alarm about the dire situations and the danger the situation poses if ignored. In doing so, they put themselves at great risk given the lack of clarity in policies and laws in most countries and the risk of being deemed as "associating or providing material support" to members of designated terrorist organizations, even though their support is for deradicalization and rehabilitation efforts.

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[36] Interview with Mira Kusumarini, Executive Director of the Civil Society Against Violent Extremism (C-SAVE) Coalition, Indonesia, GSX workshop, April 26-27, 2018 in Oslo, Norway.
[37] ICSR (2018), From Daesh to 'Diaspora': Tracing the Women and Minors of Islamic State (available at: https://icsr.info/2018/07/23/from-daesh-to-diaspora-tracing-the-women-and-minors-of-islamic-state/).
[38] Ibid.
[39] Susan Hutchinson and Chris Crewther (2018), WPS 2018: Modern slavery and WPS (available at: https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/wps-2018-modern-slavery-wps/).
[40] Remarks by Dr. Mia Bloom, Professor of Communication at Georgia State University, GSX workshop April 26-27, 2018 in Oslo, Norway.

CATEGORIES OF WOMEN AND GIRLS ASSOCIATED WITH VIOLENT EXTREMISM*

Perpetrators: Women and girls who have perpetrated violence on behalf of violent extremist groups. The proportion of terrorist attacks carried out by women is on the rise; a notably high number of Boko Haram suicide bombers are female.

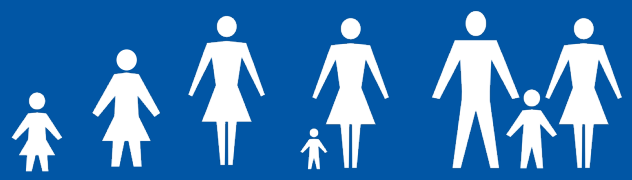
Supporters: Women and girls who voluntarily joined violent extremist groups in a supportive role including as recruiters, financiers, logisticians, wives and mothers to the next generation.

Families: Women and girls who are relatives of members of violent extremist groups, especially foreign terrorist fighters (FTF), whom they may have accompanied willingly or unwillingly to conflict zones, and their children born into violent extremist groups.

Abductees: Women and girls who were forced to join extremist groups by abduction or manipulation, including kidnapped Nigerian girls and enslaved Yazidi women as well as Kenyan girls who have been promised employment only to find themselves instead with Al-Shabaab in Somalia.

** These working definitions were formulated for the purposes of this study based on the experience and analysis of front-line practitioners.*

VARIOUS AGES AND FAMILY STATUSES



VARIOUS MOTIVATIONS

COERCED
CO-OPTED
ABDUCTED
LOVE
OBLIGATION
CONVICTION

VARIOUS GEOGRAPHIES

TRANSNATIONAL
DOMESTIC
ONLINE

VARIOUS LEVELS OF:

EDUCATION
FINANCIAL RESOURCES
RELIGIOSITY

VARIOUS ROLES

SUPPORTERS
FINANCERS
RECRUITERS
FIGHTERS
ENFORCERS
BYSTANDERS

What do we mean by disengagement, rehabilitation, and reintegration?

The definitions and terms used by policymakers, practitioners, and researchers vary significantly across countries and organizations, and sometimes even within them.[41] As with the concept of violent extremism itself, the United Nations uses the terms "disengagement," "rehabilitation," and "reintegration" in the context of terrorism and violent extremism without offering a specific definition.[42] Recent policy developments within the United Nations and other multilateral organizations, particularly with regard to returnees affiliated with listed terrorist organizations, have advanced the framework of screening and prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration (PRR).[43]

However, there are many departures. For example, in the International Organization on Migration (IOM) partnership with the Government of Nigeria, the terms "disassociation" and "reconciliation" have replaced "deradicalization" and "rehabilitation."[44] Past work related to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of fighters

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

The **IDDRS** uses the definitions for DDR from the Secretary-General, Note to the General Assembly, A/C.5/59/31, May 2005. These definitions are standardized across UN agencies:

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) – A process that contributes to security and stability in a post-conflict recovery context by removing weapons from the hands of combatants, taking the combatants out of military structures and helping them to integrate socially and economically into society by finding civilian livelihoods.

Disarmament – The collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population. Disarmament also includes the development of responsible arms management programmes.

Demobilization – The formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups. The first stage of demobilization may extend from the processing of individual combatants in temporary centres to the massing of troops in camps designated for this purpose (cantonment sites, encampments, assembly areas or barracks).

Reintegration – The process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. Reintegration is essentially a social and economic process with an open time-frame, primarily taking place in communities at the local level. It is part of the general development of a country and a national responsibility, and often necessitates long-term external assistance.

The **2009 UN Policy for Post-Conflict Employment and Income Generation** added the following sentences to the IDDRS definition for reintegration, linking it to sustainable peace: "(...) The purpose of reintegration programmes is to contribute to building sustainable peace, the conflict affected people's return to civilian life and improved material and social conditions. Employment and income-generation constitute one of the building blocks in the construction of the edifice not only for integrating or absorbing conflict-affected people but also for long-term peace."

[41] For a discussion of the terms' inconsistent use in academic literature see: Journal for Deradicalization (2017), De-radicalization and Counter-radicalization: Valuable Tools Combating Violent Extremism, or Harmful Methods of Subjugation? (available at: http://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/viewFile/109/91).)

[42] See: S/RES/2242 (2015) (available at: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2242.pdf) and S/RES/2396 (2017) on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (available at: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1327675?ln=en).)

[43] Susan Hutchinson and Chris Crewther (2018), WPS 2018: Modern slavery and WPS (available at: https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/wps-2018-modern-slavery-wps/).

[44] Remarks by Dr. Mia Bloom, Professor of Communication at Georgia State University, GSX workshop April 26-27, 2018 in Oslo, Norway.

associated with armed groups in conflict settings offers useful guidance (see Note on Terminology) but is not fully applicable to characteristics of violent extremism.[45] Furthermore, these concepts do not encompass the full range of dynamics and categories of returnees revealed with the application of a gender lens.

As international policymakers work to reconceptualize DDR for this age of extremism and align it with applicable policy developments (See Annex 1: Policy Mapping), the terms used in this report that reflect the knowledge and experiences of practitioners working directly with returnees, their families, and communities are:

- Disengagement: The process of leaving a violent extremist group—physically and psychologically. Deradicalization is the cognitive part of the process rejecting the ideology of the violent extremist group.
- Rehabilitation: The process of positive transformation and healing from association with violent extremism.
- Reintegration: The process of returnees re-entering and rebuilding their lives in society.

These definitions are also consistent with relevant academic literature that reinforces the reality that these processes are neither linear nor unidirectional, particularly given the experiences of front-line civil society responders.[46] Their experiences are often obscured by a focus on state-led and official processes conducted in prisons, detention centres and other official residential facilities.

Why the need for gender analysis?[47]

Recruitment on the basis of core identities, notably faith and ethnicity, is a shared central feature of contemporary violent extremist groups.[48] Similarly gender identity is also of critical importance. Many of the men who join are searching for a sense of belonging and purpose, for affirmation of their masculinity. They are attracted by the masculine supremacy that characterizes such groups and justifies their subjugation of women as sex slaves or "jihadi brides."[49] It also taps into their need to be "protectors" of their faith and families. For example, groups that claim to represent Islam often promise that their participation and martyrdom secures their families' place in heaven.[50] To enable effective deradicalization, we must understand and address men's roles, motivations and drivers.

Similarly, we must understand women's different experiences. Women within VE groups may have multiple and overlapping roles including as perpetrators, enablers of violence or as ideological and economic supporters, enforcers and recruiters. But many may also be victims or bystanders implicated by virtue of their familial ties to members of the groups. Among those who joined voluntarily or were abducted, some travelled to foreign countries, while others are affiliated with domestic groups. The terminology currently used fails to address the nuances and diversity of women's and girls' associations with VE groups (see box on "A Gendered Language Gap").

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[45] See also Cockayne, J. & O'Neil, S.(2015); UN-DDR in an era of violent extremism. Is it fit for purpose?, United Nations University.
[46] See for example: Ryan Shaffer, Tore Bjørgo and John Horgan (Eds.) (2014), Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement, Terrorism and Political Violence, 26:5, 857-859.
[47] Gender analysis examines the relationships between females and males. It examines their roles, their access to and control of resources and the constraints they face relative to each other. A gender analysis should be integrated into the humanitarian needs assessment and in all sector assessments or situational analyses. (IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action 2006)
[48] See Sanam Naraghi Anderlini (2018), 'Challenging Conventional Wisdom, Transforming Current Practices: A Gendered Lens on PVE', Berghof Foundation, (available at https://www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Handbook/Dialogue_Chapters/dialogue13_violentextremism_naraghi_anderlini_com.pdf).
[49] ICSR (2015), 'Till Martyrdom Do Us Part' Gender and the ISIS Phenomenon (available at: https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Till_Martyrdom_Do_Us_Part_Gender_and_the_ISIS_Phenomenon.pdf).)
[50] Nasra Hassan (2001), An Arsenal of Believers (available at: https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2001/11/19/an-arsenal-of-believers).

A GENDERED LANGUAGE GAP

The shortcomings of current language used to refer to those affiliated with and returning from violent extremist groups is clear when a gendered lens is applied. Existing definitions tend to centre around territorial rather than group affiliation, likely because they are derived from state-led policy initiatives concerned with jurisdiction. However, these are inadequate to accurately analyse this transnational phenomenon, especially when faced with the complex paths of associated women and girls. A civil society perspective highlights the shared dynamics of return whether crossing borders or within communities, and their implications for disengagement, rehabilitation, and reintegration. **For this report, the researchers have used the term returnees for all individuals returning from association with violent extremist groups.**

Returnees usually refers only to those who have crossed international borders to return home, thus obscuring the paths of women and girls who have been left behind as well as domestic patterns of recruitment and disengagement.

Relocators refers to those who leave conflict zones to a third country.[51]

Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) as defined by the UN Security Council are "...individuals who travel to a State other than their State of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning or preparation of, or participation in, terrorist acts or the providing or receiving of terrorist training, including in connection with armed conflict."[52] While this should include women who are front-line fighters, it excludes women and others who play essential supportive roles in VE groups.

To address this gap, there has been recent attention to **Families of FTF**[53]; however, this framing excludes women who are not associated through familial ties but of their own accord and perpetuates gendered stereotypes and inequality by defining women through their association with men.

In confronting such groups, some women community activists are among the first to counter and prevent the spread of violent extremism in their local contexts. They are also often the first to notice and address the issues of women returnees, because they have access and trust within their communities.[54]

To adequately address this variety of experiences and to harness the knowledge that resides in local actors, it is critical to have gendered data and analysis of VE groups and the cohort of returnees. This analysis sheds light on the gaps in existing policies and programming, as well as existing solutions, while helping to anticipate obstacles and emerging needs.

Here again, there is experience to gain from the reintegration of women ex-combatants in past conflict settings (see box on "Reintegration and Women Ex-combatants"), and women associated with gangs.

[51] UNSC Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) (2018), Current Trends Report
[52] S/RES/2178 (2014), para. 6.
[53] See: https://www.thegctf.org/Initiatives/Addressing-Returning-Families-of-Foreign-Terrorist-Fighters
[54] For more details on such groups, please see, Anderlini, S. (2018). 'Unconventional Wisdom', Berghof.

REINTEGRATION AND WOMEN EX-COMBATANTS: DISEMPOWERMENT AND RESILIENCE

In many contexts female ex-combatants and women associated with armed forces and groups (WAAFG) are doubly excluded. On the one hand, their role and contributions to their fighting units or movements go unrecognized. They receive no support or assistance. In Sierra Leone, commanders deliberately excluded women from DDR benefits.[55] Even in South Africa, female ex-combatants were not honoured or recognized like their male counterparts, and many struggled to sustain a livelihood in the aftermath of apartheid.[56]

On the other hand, communities into which women reintegrate are suspicious and exclusionary. Women are perceived as having transgressed social and gender norms by engaging in combat. They are also often accused of sexual promiscuity, thus posing a threat to community morality and dishonouring their families. They can be marginalized. In Nepal, some mothers and other female relatives may act as instigators, pressuring female ex-combatants into marriage, as a means of prompting reintegration and erasing their past "errant" behaviour.[57]

However, the resiliency of many female ex-combatants is also overlooked. While they experience similar anger and trauma to men, women tend to internalize it and control their behaviour. Despite the difficulties of civilian life, they are often more forward-looking. In Liberia, vocational skills training and livelihoods programmes in agriculture and other sectors for female ex-combatants were among the more successful elements of the DDR process. In El Salvador during the 1990s, women combatants' initial retreat into the domestic sphere and "tortilla baking" was reversed in a number of communities. With basic childcare support, they emerged as effective community mobilizers, promoting community development initiatives.[58] Female combatants are often more empowered than their civilian counterparts, and driven to attain better livelihoods. They can be a source of positive influence for their male counterparts. In many cases women gained new skills and education during their time in armed groups.[59] Lack of attention to this group contributes to their marginalization and disempowerment. It is also a loss of potential agents of positive change.[60]

Experience dealing with gangs is also highly relevant to the policy and practice of disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration from violent extremism. In Trinidad and Tobago, a place with both a legacy of gang activity and one of the highest rates of recruitment to join ISIL in Iraq and Syria, the parallels are striking.[61] More than 100 individuals—along with dozens of both willing and unwilling women and children—travelled to Syria from the tiny island nation to fight with ISIL.[62] According to anthropologist Dylan Kerrigan, "Young men, many of them recent converts, were drawn to the caliphate mostly by promises of money and a sense of community – an

[55] Mazurana, D., & Carlson, K. (2004). From combat to community: Women and girls of Sierra Leone. Washington, DC: Hunt Alternatives Fund.
[56] Discussions with former South African female ex-combatants, 2007.
[57] Discussion with former UNICEF Advisor on Child Soldiers, New York, July 2008.
[58] Conaway, C. P., Martínez, S., & Gammage, S. (2004). Adding Value: Women's Contributions to Reintegration and Reconstruction in El Salvador (p. 18). Washington, DC: Hunt Alternatives Fund.
[59] Mazurana, D. (2005, November). Women in Armed Opposition Groups in Africa and the Promotion of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights. In report of a workshop organized in Addis Ababa by Geneva Call and the Program for the Study of International Organization (s) (Vol. 23, p. 26).
[60] Anderlini, S. N. (2007). Women building peace: What they do, why it matters. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
[61] Amandla Thomas-Johnson (2016), Caribbean to 'Caliphate': On the trail of the Trinidadians fighting for the Islamic State (available at: https://www.middleeasteye.net/essays/caribbean-caliphate-trail-trinidadians-fighting-808370626).)
[62] Emma Graham-Harrason and Joshua Surtees (2018), Trinidad's jihadis: how tiny nation became Isis recruiting ground, (available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/02/trinidad-jihadis-isis-tobago-tariq-abdul-haqq).)

appeal similar to that of gangs in an increasingly violent country… '[A gang] provides a family, male role models, social order and it promises access to what many young men might think they want: money, power, women, respect.'"[63]

The Women's Institute for Alternative Development's (WINAD) history of working with women and girl survivors of gangs provides it with relevant experience to rehabilitate and reintegrate families involved with violent extremist groups.[64] "The women and children had no choice in leaving Trinidad and Tobago and were told by their husbands that they were 'leaving for a better cause,'" says Sabrina Mowlah-Baksh, one of WINAD's founders who has been working independently to address this new phenomenon.[65] Mowlah-Baksh understands that the mixed religious communities in Trinidad and Tobago may not readily accept the returning families and she plans to design programming, including capacity-building of local imams and the creation of safe spaces, to facilitate their reintegration.[66]

Around the world, from Lebanon to Nigeria to Indonesia, local women-led CSOs have initiated similar programmes. By bringing a gendered perspective to their work, they are able to identify multiple entry points for engaging returnees and addressing their psychosocial, economic, ideological as well as security conditions. Their experiences are invaluable for effective policy-making.

Women community activists are often the first to notice and address the issues of women returnees because they have access and trust within their communities.

[63] Ibid.
[64] Kimberly Ain-Lin Loh (2017), Articulating the Gendered Impacts of Violence in Trinidad & Tobago Case Study of Sabrina Mowlah-Baksh, Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, University of San Diego.
[65] Interview with Sabrina Mowlah-Baksh, Gender Advocate and Community Activist, 2018.
[66] Ibid.

NOTES

PART I

SECTOR-SPECIFIC ANALYSIS

There is a critical urgency now. If reintegration efforts are not inclusive and holistic, the risk of a resurgence of violent extremism and its impact on development and peace in already fragile contexts cannot be underestimated.

1. The Policy Gaps and Challenges

Efforts to counter violent extremism should rest within a larger international framework of human rights, protecting basic rights to security and safety. Through the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, UN Member States resolved to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, including lack of rule of law and violations of human rights, and ensure that any measures taken to counter terrorism comply with their obligations under international law, including refugee, human rights and international humanitarian law.[67] The 2015 Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (A/70/674, 2015) emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach to countering terrorism, and includes attention to the human rights and gendered dimensions of the issues.[68] In biennial resolutions reviewing the strategy Member States have reaffirmed their commitments and added the importance of gender to this work.

Gendered perspectives remain absent despite past experience to draw from

Yet few countries have comprehensive national policies for rehabilitation and reintegration of returning foreign terrorist fighters (FTF), their families, or other returnees associated with violent extremism. Gendered perspectives remain largely absent from mainstream PVE discussions or policy arenas. Moreover, despite the extensive policies and guidance pertaining to gendered disarmament, including the UN's Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration Standard (IDDRS),[69] there has been limited attention or practice of integrating gender into rehabilitation practices (see Annex 1 for a summary of relevant policies). There are differences between traditional conflict DDR and the PVE context as elaborated in the 2015 United Nations University report on the topic.[70] Nonetheless, past experiences and guidance could offer some lessons for contemporary programming in the PVE context.

The most recent UN Security Council Resolution in the WPS portfolio, UNSCR 2242, while specifically addressing women and violent extremism, is also missing attention to rehabilitation and reintegration.[71] Furthermore, even though the resolution and the WPS agenda more broadly mandate attention to women as perpetrators and prevention actors in violent extremism, despite the attention to families of FTF, and concern about returnees in general, the data and literature on women returning from violent extremist groups remains limited.

Civil society-government collaboration across all sectors is vital

The paucity of attention to the specific conditions of women associated with VE groups is matched by the lack of systematic inclusion of civil society as a critical partner in national PVE efforts. This again impacts women more profoundly as those who are active in PVE and related rehabilitation efforts, are often doing so through civil society organizations.

Good collaborative practices, however, are emerging. For example, the Government of Indonesia is partnering with civil society to develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for stakeholders involved in rehabilitation and reintegration (see Part II, Case 1: C-SAVE, Indonesia). They have incorporated gendered provisions,

[67] A/RES/60/288 (2006), The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (available at: https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/un-global-counter-terrorism-strategy)
[68] A/70/674 (2015), Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism: Report of the Secretary-General
[69] UN Inter-agency Working Group on Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (2014), Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS).
[70] See also Cockayne, J. & O'Neil, S.(2015), UN-DDR in an era of violent extremism. Is it fit for purpose? United Nations University.
[71] S/RES/2242 (2015) (available at: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2242.pdf).

because of the numbers of women, men, boys and girls returning.[72] In addition, in 2018 the Global Solutions Exchange (GSX) collaborative also published practical guidance for policymakers pertaining to disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration issues,[73] with specific attention to the need for:

- Policy coherence within and across countries, given the transnational aspects of VE;
- Alignment of national policies with laws, security and judicial practices;
- Integration of a gendered lens across all sectors to address and mitigate the different experiences of women and men; and
- Attention to the specific needs and circumstances of boys and girls who are affected or implicated in violent extremism and are among the populations entering into disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration; and ensuring alignment with existing international and national policies and laws related to children.

Managing the return of the many individuals who have travelled to conflict zones and the growing number defecting from terrorist groups is a priority for many countries. Effective and sustainable disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes are essential to addressing this challenge and preventing violent extremism.

Women and youth community groups called Tolanas demonstrating for peace in Pakistan

But such programmes require attention and action at the state, community, public discourse, family, and individual levels. These are individual, psychosocial processes that require the sustained engagement and involvement of local communities, families, and other supportive social networks. As such, CSOs have a unique contribution to make, because they often have the trust of and access to the affected individuals and communities in ways that government officials do not. Moreover, because they are of the community they have a vested interest for providing long term support, which is often a challenge for international or even state entities.[74]

Efforts to counter violent extremism should rest within a larger international framework of human rights, protecting basic rights to security and safety.

[72] Interview with Mira Kusumarini, , GSX workshop April 26-27, 2018 in Oslo, Norway.
[73] GSX (2017), "Improving PVE Practice: 10 Steps to Strengthening Rehabilitation and Reintegration Efforts for Terrorism Offenders, Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters, and Victims of Violent Extremism."
[74] Excerpt from GSX (2017) "Improving PVE Practice: 10 Steps to Strengthening Rehabilitation and Reintegration Efforts for Terrorism Offenders, Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters, and Victims of Violent Extremism."

2. Law, Redress and Reconciliation

The lack of policy coherence across countries is matched by discrepancies and gaps in existing national legal frameworks pertaining to the categorization and treatment of returnees and foreign terrorist fighters, particularly women and girls. A key challenge facing many states is how to uphold the human rights of those in need of rehabilitation, while ensuring the security of the receiving communities and respecting the rights of those who were victims of violent extremism.

This lack of legal clarity within and between countries poses profound challenges for policymakers and practitioners. The absence of a gendered approach cutting across laws and justice provisions is also consistent across countries. Nigeria, for example, is grappling with the sheer scale of the problem.[75] Thousands of women and children are in detention centres for the internally displaced and in prisons. It is unclear if they are victims, perpetrators, or forcibly turned into violent actors. Without effective policies, the legislation and procedures to address these women's circumstances is unclear.

These challenges are rooted in and exacerbated by the dominant patriarchal norms of many countries. For example, where women are not recognized as combatants (or former combatants), they are automatically excluded from the reintegration programmes from which men can benefit.[76] They can be at the mercy of the security forces in detention, and face stigma and threats from communities once they are released.

Many women, including the younger ones, have not returned home.[77] The speculation among PVE practitioners is that women do not return if they have borne children abroad but cannot attain the necessary travel documentation for them. Despite human rights requirements of right to nationality and that states not separate children from their families, many associated with violent extremist groups, especially women and children, find themselves in a state of legal limbo particularly if they need to cross borders to return to their home country.[78] This problem is affecting people from at least 40 countries.[79]

Authorities in many countries treat some women and girls affiliated with foreign terrorist organizations and returning from conflict zones such as Syria and Iraq on a case-by-case basis.[80] But these women and girls are often prosecuted and sentenced under legal regimes that are not gender-responsive.

The prosecution and detention of women and girls raises specific issues. For example, there are limited provisions on how to provide for those who are pregnant, nursing or have dependent children. These circumstances must be taken into consideration throughout the process and across contexts, from parole, rehabilitation centres or camps, and in prisons.

Similarly, civil society actors who are working with returnees in their communities also face potential legal risks, as they may be accused of providing material support to terrorists, even though they work to prevent and counter the problem.

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[75] Remarks by Dr. Fatima Akilu, Executive Director Neem Foundation, Nigeria, GSX workshop April 26-27, 2018 in Oslo, Norway.
[76] Mazurana, D. E., McKay, S. A., Carlson, K. C., & Kasper, J. C. (2002). Girls in Fighting Forces and Groups: Their Recruitment, Participation, Demobilization and Reintegration. Journal of Peace Psychology, 8(2), 116–120.
[77] ICSR (2018), From Daesh to 'Diaspora': Tracing the Women and Minors of Islamic State (available at: https://icsr.info/2018/07/23/from-daesh-to-diaspora-tracing-the-women-and-minors-of-islamic-state/).
[78] Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Article 16 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).
[79] Crossland, D. (2018), "100 baby jihadists" pose future threat, warn German intelligence chiefs, The Times, 9–11; Mina Aldroubi. (2018), "Iraq sentences Turkish ISIL widow to death Court also issued life imprisonment to 10 women guilty of participating in acts of terror". The National, pp. 1–17; Shephard, M. (2018), "At least two Canadian women are among 800 foreign 'ISIS families' being held in legal limbo by Kurdish forces," Toronto Star; Premium Times Nigeria. (2018), "800 female IS fighters detained in Syria." Premium Times Nigeria.
[80] Amandla Thomas-Johnson (2018), Legal fears over French plan to put IS suspects on trial in Kurdish courts (available at: https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/legal-france-islamic-state-suspects1601528261).

Among the consultations and research findings, the following emerge as persistent gaps requiring attention across both industrial and developing countries.

Political expediency, public sensitivities and gaps in the law

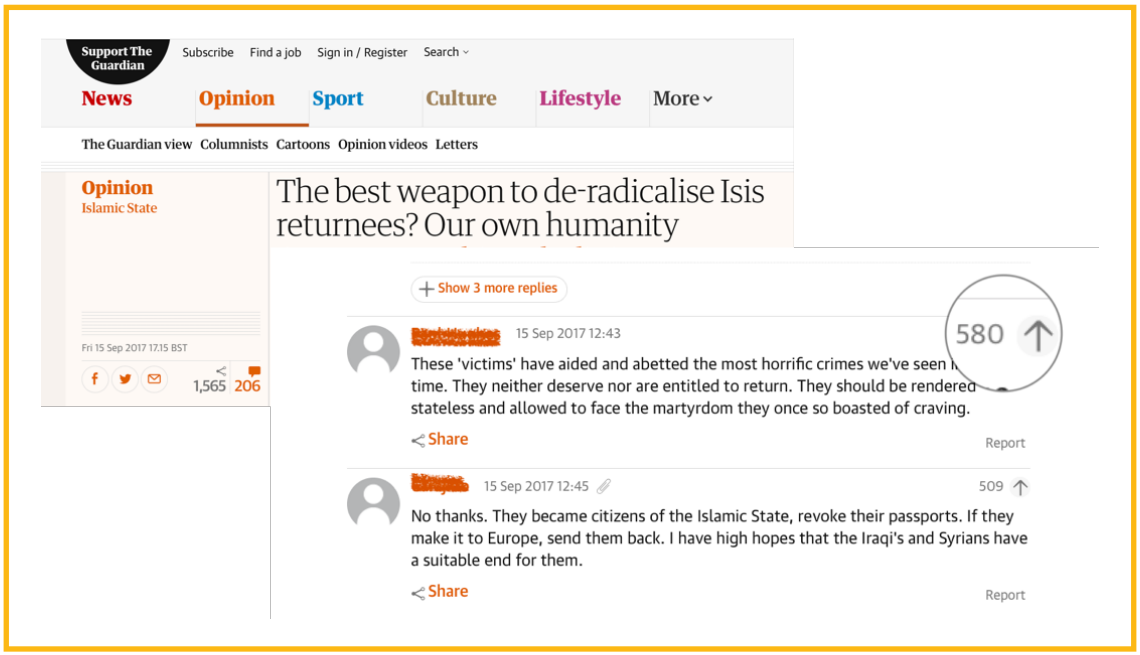

Figure 6. Public comments on an article in The Guardian demonstrate intolerance towards returnees

The world over, political sensitivities and public reactions hamper effective law-making. When the citizens of a country have been captured and tortured abroad by violent extremist groups, it is daunting and even hurtful to expect the public to accept the return of people—be they fighters or their families—affiliated with those groups.

In many cases the law itself is clear: Citizens have a right to return and their citizenship cannot be revoked regardless of their actions abroad.[81] But politically it is more expedient to proclaim that they will not be permitted re-entry, or that they will be killed in the fighting abroad. Where the problem is domestic extremism, governments have initiated programmes, typically run by the military, but they are not embedded in legislation. In Pakistan, for example, government and military-run centres in hard-hit areas aim to deradicalize youth.[82] But there is no comprehensive policy or approach to reintegration and rehabilitation. The approaches that do exist have not addressed the reality of women's involvement in violent extremism. For example, says one locally based practitioner, "Prior to 2011, women could drive through checkpoints without being stopped or checked. They could easily carry weapons through these checkpoints. The state hadn't considered that women were involved as perpetrators or radicals. It took some years to acknowledge this, and position women officers at the checkpoints."[83]

Meanwhile in Nigeria, the absence of effective legislation or comprehensive implementation of existing laws pertaining to returnees is largely because the war against violent extremism is ongoing and it has bifurcated.[84] Nigeria has a significant domestic challenge in Boko Haram. But it also has returned ISIL affiliates.

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[81] UNHCHR (2018). "Right to a Nationality and Statelessness," (available at: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Pages/Nationality.aspx).
[82] Remarks by Mossarat Qadeem, Executive Director of PAIMAN Alumni Trust, Pakistan, GSX workshop April 26-27, 2018 in Oslo, Norway.
[83] Remarks by Mossarat Qadeem, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[84] Remarks by Hamsatu Allamin, Founder and Executive Director of Allàmin Foundation for Peace and Development, Maiduguri, North East, Nigeria, GSX workshop April 26-27, 2018 in Oslo, Norway.

Even within the European Union where there is freedom of movement, the laws pertaining to FTF or their families, particularly women and children, vary from state to state.[85] Meanwhile across other European nations and territories such as Albania and Kosovo,[86] the discrepancy is evident in other ways. Kosovo[87] incarcerates returnees who were presumed to be fighters abroad.[88] Albania has chosen a different approach, clamping down primarily on recruiters and organizers. No women returnees have been arrested in that region so far.[89]

Legislation exists but is inadequate or counterproductive for reintegration

Of course, laws do exist, and many countries are developing or adopting new legislation. For example, Canada passed legislation to enable the arrest of people attempting to leave the country to join terrorist or violent extremist groups.[90] By 2013 Nigeria had adopted legislation pertaining to the financing of terrorism and calling for greater coordination among national security advisor and counter-terror networks.[91] But such laws have not taken account of the gendered difference between women's and men's experiences.

Kenya's lack of a comprehensive legal and security framework to encompass PVE policies for returnees has proven inadvertently harmful to many. In 2015 the government initiated an amnesty programme to encourage youth to quit Al-Shabaab and participate in a government-sponsored disengagement, demobilization and reintegration programme. But the amnesty provisions lacked adequate legal protection such as ensuring confidentiality[92] for those who came forward. One consequence was a spike in revenge killings by Al-Shabaab affiliates against those who had left or "betrayed" the group.[93] The reintegration of Al-Shabaab members is more complex than past programmes with pastoralists or cattle rustlers, noted one report.[94]

The communities themselves may be divided in their reactions to those who leave the groups. In some instances, Al-Shabaab has sympathizers within the community and even the security sector, so those who leave are not safe in their own homes. It is not just the returnees who face such risks. In Kenya's Kwale County, community elders who had supported the programme were also assassinated in 2016.[95]

Evidence for prosecution is hard to find

Prosecution entails evidentiary requirements. Returnees have rights to fair trials and due process of law.[96] But finding evidence of involvement in violent activities in a conflict zones poses tremendous challenges for the justice system.[97] If the evidence is not available, it is difficult to charge people upon their return for terrorist acts committed abroad. A gender analysis reveals even greater complexity, because the culpability of women, girls and boys associated with FTF or domestic violent extremist groups can be more difficult to ascertain.[98]

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[85] Renard, T., & Coolsaet, R. (2018),). Returnees: Who Are They, Why Are They (Not) Coming Back and How Should We Deal With Them? Assessing Policies on Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters in Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands (Vol. 2).
[86] References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of the UNSC resolution 1244 (1999).
[87] References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of the UNSC resolution 1244 (1999).
[88] Remarks by Adrian Shtuni, CEO/Principal Consultant, Shtuni Consulting, LLC, GSX workshop, April 26-27, 2018 in Oslo, Norway.
[89] Remarks by Adrian Shtuni, GSX Oslo workshop, April 2018.
[90] The Law Library of Congress (2014), Treatment of Foreign Fighters in Selected Jurisdictions.
[91] Government of Nigeria (2013), Nigeria Terrorism Prevention Act (Amendment) (available at: https://www.nass.gov.ng/document/download/5951).
[92] Remarks by Sureya Roble, Executive Director, Advocacy for Women in Peace and Security-Africa (AWAPSA), Kenya, GSX workshop April 26-27, 2018 in Oslo, Norway.
[93] Remarks by Sureya Roble, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[94] Pkalya, D. (2016, June 9). Reasons why the amnesty for 'reformed alshabaab returnees is failing security in Kwale (available at: https://standardmedia.co.ke/ureport/story/2000204575/reasons-why-the-amnesty-for-reformed-alshabaab-returnees-is-failing-security-in-kwale).
[95] Ibid.
[96] Practice Relating to Rule 100. Fair Trial Guarantees, ICRC, Customary IHL, https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v2_rul_rule100_sectione and OHCR: Human Rights, Terrorism, and Counter-terrorism, Fact Sheet No. 32.
[97] Alexander, A., & Turkington, R. Treatment of Terrorists: How Does Gender Affect Justice? (available at: https://ctc.usma.edu/treatment-terrorists-gender-affect-justice).
[98] Washington J. & Yosufzai R. (2018, February 23). Questions raised after IS wife secretly returns to Australia.

In Iraq where the families of ISIL fighters are in camps, in some cases local tribal leaders are involved in determining the fate of the women and children. In some communities, the tribal leaders have established a system of categorizing their level of involvement and guilt, to foster some restorative justice and enable the return of women and children into the tribal fold. But the women themselves have no say in their own fate. The transnational cases where dependent women and girls travelled with their husbands, brothers or fathers, pose yet another challenge, as they are designated as families of FTF, and face detention until their cases are addressed.[99]

In other instances, they were young women, some underage (under 18) who joined through their own volition as they embraced the ideology and vision of the groups and sought to become the wives of jihadis—otherwise known as Jihad Al-Nikah.[100] Some women, girls and boys were kidnapped and coerced to participate in the violence, to bring shame and stigma to them and force their separation from their families and communities, much like how the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) operated in Uganda.[101] Some women and girls were kidnapped and sold as sex slaves, as well as those, like some among the Boko Haram, who found a better life within the extremist groups than outside.[102]

These issues can complicate security screening measures that assess the culpability and severity of the crimes committed,[103] and thus the legal processes and rehabilitation programmes available. It raises the question of whether prosecution or other restorative justice mechanisms including rehabilitation and reintegration programmes are most appropriate. Determining the best course of action requires individual assessment of a returnee's motivations for and roles in violent extremism, the threat they may pose, and options for reintegrating them.[104] This calls for a case-by-case assessment including not only sensitivity to the gendered dimensions of each case, but also male and female personnel trained to undertake such assessments including for minors, and deal with both the impact of trauma that individuals may face as well as the threat they may pose. Unfortunately, while this may be possible in countries with relatively few returnees and sufficient resources, it poses tremendous challenges in places with greater flows of returnees, less resources, and poorer infrastructure to support referrals to criminal justice, health, and social welfare systems.

Sentences for returnees, including convicted women and girls, range widely from time-served to death.[105] For those who are sentenced, the charges vary. In addition to the regular criminal code, counter-terrorism laws, and anti-terrorism financing laws, returning women have also been charged with endangerment of children[106] and illegal entry into the country.[107] But women who return to their home country are less likely to face convictions because of the difficulty of gathering sufficient evidence to prove their actions and guilt in a conflict zone abroad.[108] However, they can also face indefinite detention and be vulnerable to violence and sexual abuse by security personnel. In cases such as Kenya and Somalia, where the borders are porous, many of the women and girls may return and disappear into society.[109] Some young women are detained indefinitely without trial or recourse, at the mercy of security and prison guards.

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[99] Key informant interview, Washington, DC, September 2018.
[100] Shagar, (2014),). "No Malaysian 'Comfort Women' with Islamic State," The Star Online.
[101] Amone-P'Olak, K., Jones, P. B., Abbott, R., Meiser-Stedman, R., Ovuga, E., & Croudace, T. J. (2013). Cohort profile: mental health following extreme trauma in a northern Ugandan cohort of War-Affected Youth Study (The WAYS Study). SpringerPlus, 2(1), 300.
[102] BBC News (2017, July 26). Letter from Africa: Freed Boko Haram 'wives' return to captors (available at: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-40704569).
[103] State, I. (2018),). A dozen ISIL widows sentenced to death, life by Iraqi court. Al Jazeera.
[104] ICSR (2018), From Daesh to 'Diaspora': Tracing the Women and Minors of Islamic State (available at: https://icsr.info/2018/07/23/from-daesh-to-diaspora-tracing-the-women-and-minors-of-islamic-state/).
[105] Deutsche Welle (2018); The Local (2018); The National (2018).
[106] Xinhua (2017).
[107] State, I. (2018). A dozen ISIL widows sentenced to death, life by Iraqi court. Al Jazeera.
[108] Alexander, A., & Turkington, R. Treatment of Terrorists: How Does Gender Affect Justice? (available at: https://ctc.usma.edu/treatment-terrorists-gender-affect-justice).
[109] Remarks by Sureya Roble, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.

Questioning the citizenship of returnees threatens de facto statelessness

A gender lens also highlights critical issues related to statelessness, nationality and citizenship laws. Particularly for the men, women and children that crossed international borders, the return home can be hampered if they lack passports or adequate identification. Children born to mothers affiliated with violent extremist groups face particular challenges. For those born in conflict contexts outside of their parents' home countries, establishing their citizenship can be a challenge. Some countries are reportedly performing DNA tests on babies of returning women and girls to prove they have the right to citizenship.[110] In some countries, women face barriers or are unable to pass their nationality on to their children with foreign fathers. Yet, if the father is deceased, incarcerated, or missing and paternity cannot be proven, they may not have an alternative.[111] When their children are unable to travel because of lack of passports and formal identification, the mothers are also not returning. In other cases, it is the mothers who face being left behind as their minor children are repatriated and separated from them.[112] The disparity in the ratio of men versus women returning to their home countries is notable in many settings. It may be directly related to this issue. In Kosovo,[113] of the 133 returnees from Syria, only seven were women.[114]

Countries have also tended to enact laws to strip citizenship of dual or naturalized citizens who are perceived to be associated with violent extremist and terror groups. Despite provisions in international law to prevent statelessness, there has also been discussion of revoking the citizenship of people who do not have a second nationality.[115] The logic for the recipient country is evident. They do not want anyone with a record of violent extremism returning to their home country. Some governments are making the case that if the individuals have a second nationality, they can be sent to that country instead. However, this creates new challenges and tensions. For example, if the country wherein they previously resided revokes their citizenship, it puts the onus on the second country to accept them. But these states may refuse and claim that the individual was radicalized in their country of primary residency. If no state accepts these fighters or those affiliated with them, they may remain at large in communities that have suffered at their hands. Alternatively, the fighters may become mercenaries travelling into other countries to wreak havoc. The women and children associated with them may become victims of human trafficking and sexual slavery.

Finally, the question of extradition of detained foreign terrorist fighters and their families, as well as resolution of the status of local families who collaborated or joined ISIL or other groups, remains unresolved. Many countries' reluctance to take back their own citizens is resulting in a legal limbo for hundreds of people. Across a range of countries, they are languishing in detention centres and camps. Many face abuses from security actors.[116] In Mosul, local CSOs report that the families associated with ISIL are in camps, and they are female-headed households as the men either died or fled. When there are threats, the security forces raid the camps and often the teenage boys bear the brunt of their anger.[117] This treatment combined with the lack of education or productive activities, heightens frustration, making young people vulnerable to radicalization.

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[110] Peachey, P. (2018, February 1). Babies of foreign fighters DNA-tested on return to UK. The National.
[111] Shephard, M. (2018, February). At least two Canadian women are among 800 foreign 'ISIS families' being held in legal limbo by Kurdish forces. The Toronto Star; Peachey, P. (2018, February 1). Babies of foreign fighters DNA-tested on return to UK. The National.
[112] France 24 (2018, October 25). France seeks to repatriate French children from Syria (available at: https://www.france24.com/en/20181025-france-seeks-bring-home-jihadists-children-syria-repatriate-citizens-war?ref=tw).
[113] References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of the UNSC resolution 1244 (1999).
[114] Jakupi, R., & Kelmendi, V. (2017, January). Women in Violent Extremism: Lessons Learned from Kosovo.
[115] Cockayne, J., & O'Neil, S. (2015). UN DDR in an era of violent extremism: Is it fit for purpose. Tokyo: United Nations University; United Nations. (1954). Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons (available at: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/StatelessPersons.aspx).
[116] Searcey, D. (2017, December 8). "They Fled Boko Haram, Only to Be Raped by Nigeria's Security Forces". The New York Times (available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/08/world/africa/boko-haram-nigeria-security-forces-rape.html?smid=fb-share).
[117] Report from Fatima Al-Bahadly, Director of Al-Firdaws Society and of the Iraqi Paradise Society, 2018.

Civil society actors are front-line responders, but face profound legal risks

In many contexts where procedural, financial or capacity limitations prohibit sufficient engagement of government actors in rehabilitation and reintegration, local CSOs are filling the gaps. The community-based women-led organizations, in particular, are often more trusted and thus have better access to the implicated individuals and families. On the one hand governments and the international community recognize the importance of civil society, as evident in the UN's Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism and UNSCR 2242, which specifically highlights the role of women's organizations in PVE.[118] On the other hand, across many countries the lack of legal clarity or coherence between these policies and counter-terrorism laws puts the CSOs and international NGOs engaging with returnees at potential risk.[119] For example, counter-terrorism financing regulations can limit their ability to access funds, while expansive definitions of material support to terror groups could implicate those who are engaged in deradicalization and reintegration work.[120] Too often, under the guise of countering terrorism, governments are using the PVE agenda and counter-terrorism laws to limit public protests and shut down independent NGOs and CSOs that offer human rights and social justice services to marginalized communities.[121]

This range of complex issues is exacerbated by gaps between the world of counter-terrorism practitioners, law enforcement and experts in the realm of reintegration and rehabilitation of returnees within and across national boundaries. As one former senior European government official noted, "All the countries grappling with the national legal framework also have to deal with the transnational phenomenon. There are international frameworks, but we need more unity and discussion across countries and sectors to speak the same language and understand better how legal frameworks are being implemented."[122]

Women learning to notice and address signs of radicalization during a PAIMAN training

If no state claims these fighters or those affiliated with them, they remain at large in communities that have suffered at their hands. Alternatively, the fighters may become mercenaries travelling into other countries to wreak havoc. The women and children associated with them may become victims of human trafficking and sexual slavery.

[118] UN Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism (A/70/674, 2015) and UNSCR 2242 (2015).
[119] Piedmont, D., & Belli, G. (n.d.). Countering Violent Extremism, DDR, Social Capital, and the Women, Peace & Security Agenda.
[120] Huckerby, J., Adamczyk, S., Geuskens, I., Gosewinkel, M., & Malmberg, T. (2017). Tightening the Purse Strings: What Countering Terrorism Financing Costs Gender Equality and Security.
[121] Baydas, L. & Green, S. N., eds. (2018, March). Counterterrorism Measures and Civil Society: Changing the Will, Finding the Way. CSIS Human Rights Initiative.
[122] GSX Oslo Workshop participant remarks, April 2018.

3. Security From and Security For Women and Girl Returnees

The security sector—ranging from the police to intelligence, military and prison services—dominates counter-terrorism and PVE efforts. As the challenge of returnees has come to light, they have remained at the forefront of determining practices, despite the ambiguities in policy or existing laws. While governments are legitimately entitled to act for the protection of the rights of the persons under their jurisdiction, they should also respect the human rights of the returnees, including their rights to life and personal freedom.

Practices have varied across countries. In some instances, transgressions by the sector are due to the tensions that arise between the states' commitments to human rights versus the demands and priorities vis-à-vis national security and the needs of the public, which they are tasked to protect and serve. It has led to cases where countries have violated their own commitments to existing human rights laws and standards in the name of national security.

There has been overreach as state security forces have used heavy-handed approaches against people, resulting in extensive abuse and violence. All stakeholders engaged in PVE face the central challenge of acknowledging the role of poor governance. Bad governance, manifested through corruption at local levels, absent or abusive security sector actors, creates fertile ground for the rise of radicalization and recruitment into non-state groups. This, as noted in UNDP's 2017 Journeys to Extremism report, has been a key driver of further radicalization.[123] While their specific roles and responsibilities may vary, a gendered approach to PVE and reintegration and rehabilitation is essential for all branches of the security sector, and is still largely absent in many cases.

Gender in intelligence and analysis

The absence of gendered information and analysis from intelligence gathering and reports is a key gap within national and global intelligence services. In Kenya, the authorities were unaware of the extent to which young women were being recruited and trafficked into Al-Shabaab.[124] Women in local communities also have knowledge of developments and would be willing to share it, but often do not have the access to the authorities, says Sureya Roble of Advocacy for Women, Peace and Security Africa (AWAPSA), whose local organization is bridging the divisions between the security sector and communities.

The security sector—local police as well as specialized terrorism units—know that much of the recruitment and radicalization occurs deep within communities, and they have no access to it. Roble says that her group initially met with resistance when they reached out and engaged women and other members.

Similarly, there is significant mistrust from community members, particularly women, about reaching out to security actors. The women and girls returning from Somalia or involvement in Al-Shabaab are especially fearful of how they will be treated by the state and their communities. "Some girls are returning with HIV or with children," says Roble. "They relocate because of the stigma they feel in their former communities. Because of the lack of legislation and their fear of the state's reactions, they do not come forward." But she says that whether it is concerning trends in recruitment or return, "If you want to know anything, you have to talk to the women."

Building confidence between communities and the security sector is a concern in many contexts. In one incident in Pakistan, locals sought to warn the police of an impending terror attack, but the tip was not followed up. The

[123] UNDP (2017). Journey to Extremism in Africa (available at: http://journey-to-extremism.undp.org/content/downloads/UNDP-JourneyToExtremism-report-2017-english.pdf).
[124] Remarks by Sureya Roble, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.

attack took place. A Pakistani community PVE practitioner shared, "Building trust between the community and security actors is essential. If the police don't respond, confidence in them recedes."[125]

Around the world, local communities can become caught between the violence of the armed groups and that of the state. In the Philippines, the imposition of martial law and military interventions as in the Marawi case have fuelled greater mistrust between local communities and national state authorities.[126] Under the guise of martial law and national security, civilians have been apprehended, but their families have no knowledge of where their loved ones are held, by which branch of the state. Within communities, at times locals have difficulty discerning rebel groups from government-sponsored fighters. Similarly, in Nigeria, local communities have long stated that alleged violence and corruption by the military have been key factors of recruitment into Boko Haram.

A gendered approach to information-gathering and analysis sheds light on the experiences of local communities with the state, as well as the strategies and tactics that violent extremist groups use to recruit and radicalize both women and men. Since most intelligence has focused on male recruitment, the ways in which women have been targeted and co-opted have often been overlooked in the information gathering and analysis. In the Western Balkans, for example, there is significant variance across countries in the average age of the women who joined ISIL. Those from Kosovo were significantly younger than their counterparts from Albania and elsewhere.[127] "The question is why were these young women travelling?" asks Adrian Shtuni, a PVE analyst specializing in the region.[128]

The answers vary across countries, but in each instance, there is evidence that local recruiters are tapping not only into issues that are prevalent in the local context, but also the specific vulnerabilities of men and women. In Kenya, some young women were promised jobs and education, so they left their homes willingly. They were trafficked into Al-Shabaab.[129] In many settings, recruiters tap into women's and girls' faith but lack of religious literacy to push their ideology. There is also clear indication that women themselves are becoming recruiters. In contexts where women traditionally have no power or voice, their adherence to religion and role as recruiters is empowering. This in itself is a motivation for becoming attracted to the groups. As Mossarat Qadeem of PAIMAN Alumni Trust in Pakistan notes, local mothers have been the first to be recruited, and they are the most effective recruiters of their own sons.[130] Designing effective interventions to prevent them from recruiting youth, and to rehabilitate them into community life with effective economic and social benefits, requires understanding their motivations and the benefits they get from radicalization.

In essence, across the board there is clearly still a paucity of gendered information and analysis. This leaves many gaps in the effective implementation of prevention or countering programmes. It also impacts the efficacy of reintegration efforts. As Shtuni notes, "To do effective reintegration and rehabilitation, we need to understand their motivations."[131]

Women's and girls' experiences in detention and rehabilitation

Since women and girls are typically perceived as low-risk, even if they are integral to the operations of a violent extremist group, most have often fallen below the radar of state authorities, and circumvented detention. But the implications for women and girls caught in the nexus of violent extremism and state security apparatus

[125] Remarks by Mossarat Qadeem, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[126] ICAN (2017, June 2). WASL report from Mindanao amid Marawi Crisis (available at: https://www.icanpeacework.org/2017/06/02/wasl-report-mindanao-amid-marawi-crisis/).
[127] Remarks by Adrian Shtuni, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018; Holmes, G., & Shtuni, A. (2010),). Returning Foreign Fighters and the Reintegration Imperative. USIP Special Report.
[128] Remarks by Adrian Shtuni, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[129] Evewoman. (2018),). How innocent girls are lured into sex slavery by militants through Social Media. Evewoman.
[130] Remarks by Mossarat Qadeem, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[131] Remarks by Adrian Shtuni, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.

are stark. Culturally, they are seen as transgressing societal norms and expectations. Many are often labelled sexually promiscuous. Added to the implicit patriarchal attitudes is the fear and hatred towards the violent extremist groups with whom the women and girls may be affiliated. Even those who were unknowingly trafficked or followed husbands and brothers into violent extremist groups have been subjected to repeated sexual assault in state detention centres once they are captured.[132] In effect, they are doubly "punished" for breaking societal rules and for their affiliation with violent extremist groups. They have little or no recourse for justice or protection, in part because of the lack of policies and laws.

From Europe to Africa, despite the state's oversight and control, prisons and detention centres have been key environments for radicalization, particularly for men. This issue must also be addressed in the case of women. If women and girl returnees are being detained, could they become recruiters within prisons? Additionally, where they are abused in detention centres, what are the risks of further radicalization?

There are lessons to be learned and adapted from past disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes where women were among the fighters and members of armed groups. In many instances, women feared and were subjected to sexual assault in the camps.[133] For this reason, it is best practice in DDR to segregate women and men, particularly in terms of shelter and accessibility of sanitation facilities. But this also causes challenges for those who come in as families, or women who have teenage boys. Moreover, the separation of the women can result in their exclusion from reintegration programmes, when facilities and resources are limited. This is true in Somalia, for example, where there is no dedicated government facility devoted to the care and rehabilitation of women and girls who have returned from Al-Shabaab.[134]

A woman police officer addresses an AWAPSA community dialogue session in Kenya

Security sector and civil society cooperation; the added value of working with women

Precisely because of the limits of state security interactions with communities, local civil society organizations become pivotal actors, to bridge the divide and find issues of mutual concern around which to build trust and communication. The experiences range from cooperation in community policing to working in prisons and accompanying state-run reintegration processes. In many of the cases, gender dynamics have led to unexpected but positive outcomes resulting from the interaction of women-led CSOs engaging with male-dominated security structures.

[132] Searcey, D. (2017, December 8). "They Fled Boko Haram, Only to Be Raped by Nigeria's Security Forces." The New York Times (available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/08/world/africa/boko-haram-nigeria-security-forces-rape.html?smid=fb-share).
[133] Amnesty International (2008). Liberia: A flawed process discriminates against women and girls (available at: https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AFR34/004/2008/en/).
[134] Interview with Somali woman civil society actor, March 2018.

- ***Community police engagement:*** As noted above, local security actors are often present in the community, but a lack of trust means limited interactions and information sharing. But as Sureya Roble of Kenya's AWAPSA emphasizes, to be effective in the community in addressing violent extremism, "working with police, public administration, the national centre for countering terrorism, and national intelligence had to be prioritized to bring cohesion among stakeholders. Connections to police help to inform us of new cases, but some women do not want to say whether they are widows or keep holding out hope, most of them want to hold out hope that their husbands will come back."[135] Initial outreach to the security sector was difficult in part because of the sensitive nature of the issues, and the police's own need for training. A key lesson drawn from the AWAPSA experience was that the police themselves are new to the issues and do not know everything. AWAPSA trained them on signs and symptoms of radicalization that surprised police officers. The police are also wary as they do not know if returnees are still a risk or genuinely seeking reintegration. With an unclear policy and legal framework, it is essential to have safe spaces and trust. AWPSA also created a new programme called the Police Canteen. Since they cannot leave the stations, the women go to the canteens to drink tea and discuss concerns.

  As AWAPSA was able to demonstrate the importance of their gendered work and knowledge—notably with regard to the scale of women and girl returnees from Al-Shabaab—it has become a trusted interlocuter for all stakeholders. "You need to work under the assumption that people only change their behaviour if they're treated like human beings and if it's good for them, and they are about to find issues of commonality. If you make things less appetizing, there might be a reduction, but there also has to be a positive incentive," says Roble.[136]

  Others such as Women Against Violent Extremism (WAVE) work with traumatized women who lost husbands and sons to Al-Shabaab, providing them with counselling support. The police and the families need civil society's participation as interlocuter. In some instances, the police learn of new cases but the families are often in denial of the death or disappearance of their relatives.

- ***Working with violent extremists in prisons:*** In Lebanon, Rescue Me, a CSO led by two social workers, has led cutting-edge research and engagement in prisons among former ISIL fighters. The founders first approached the Ministry of Justice seeking permission to conduct research in prisons with a view to better understanding the motivations of the fighters. They were granted permission on condition that their study's findings would be shared.

  "Building trust was the most important factor," recalls Yammout. The prisoners tested the social workers to determine if they were representing the intelligence services. Once the trust was established—a slow two-year process—many welcomed the chance to talk and share their experiences. Over a nine-year period, the social workers have documented more than 200 cases in a prison bloc housing some 680 extremist fighters from various militias. The relationships that enabled them to reach out to prisoners' families, gaining insight into the different reactions of their wives, mothers, sisters and daughters in terms of their involvement with the violent extremist groups. Being a non-governmental entity was crucial to their ability to gain the trust, says Yammout.[137]

[135] Key informant interview, ICAN Annual forum, Sri Lanka, November 2017.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Remarks by Nancy Yammout, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.

Similarly, the tactics and approaches used were key to opening the dialogue. For example, any talk of religious affiliation or ideology was too sensitive. Instead the two women drew on techniques of social work to tap into humanitarian aspects including the prisoners' needs and emotions. Gender dynamics were also critical to their ability to reach and engage the prisoners. As men, the prisoners were more willing to speak openly to women about their childhood traumas or other experiences and fears.

- ***Reintegrating women into the community, CSO support to social workers:*** Indonesia was one of the first countries to reclaim its citizens who had travelled to Iraq and Syria to join ISIL.[138] By 2017 over 400 people were repatriated.[139] Among them a reported 74 percent were women and children.[140] While some were sent to detention centres, the majority were put into rehabilitation centres run by the Ministry of Social Affairs. But similar to other countries, personnel in Social Affairs or other government bodies had limited experience in addressing this population. Civil Society Against Violent Extremism (C-SAVE), a coalition led by Mira Kusumarini, plays a central role in assisting ministry staff to better understand the phenomenon of violent extremism. In doing so, they aim to manage the returnees better, and prevent future recruitment. C-SAVE has worked with the police and a range of national and 20 local government entities to develop cross-sectoral Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), including legislation to improve practices. For example, in assessing the women's experiences of deportation and return, they discovered sexual abuse by police during transit. Ensuring safe passage and protection is essential not only for the individuals involved, but also to avoid fuelling anger and further radicalization.

  They are also seeking to better understand the level of women's involvement in violent extremist groups. In some instances, men forced their wives and children to travel to Syria. These returnees face community stigma and fear when they come back home, but they are not ideologically radicalized, so re-entry can be smoother. Kusumarini works with communities and local authorities to widen acceptance of the returnees and provide services such as skills training to enable them to reintegrate. But as with former DDR programmes, there is a fine balance to strike: In communities where many people may have needs, providing opportunities to returnees alone can cause backlash, so a key goal has been to ensure that training and other services are also available to all community members.

  One unexpected challenge was that many of the women returnees were strong adherents to their groups' ideology, and effective communicators—so much so that the social workers interacting with them were at times attracted to their messages and religious discourse, and vulnerable to becoming sympathizers. As the May 2018 family suicide attack on a church in East Java revealed, the risks of community reintegration remain high. In its aftermath, many noted that men are often imprisoned and targeted with deradicalization programmes, but it is also important to tailor such programmes for women and children.[141] It is anticipated that more women will face legal proceedings, but the need for restorative justice and rehabilitation centres also remains.

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[138] Shephard, M. (2018). "At least two Canadian women are among 800 foreign 'ISIS families' being held in legal limbo by Kurdish forces." The Toronto Star.
[139] Richart Barrett (2017), Beyond the Caliphate: Foreign Fighters and Returnees (available at: http://thesoufancenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Beyond-the-Caliphate-Foreign-Fighters-and-the-Threat-of-Returnees-TSC-Report-October-2017-v3.pdf).[140] Comments by Mira Kusumarini, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[141] NPR (2018), Family Suicide Attacks: Indonesia Must Deradicalize Mothers And Kids Too (available at: https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2018/05/24/613383263/family-suicide-attacks-indonesia-must-deradicalize-mothers-and-kids-too).)

Engaging the security sector to address lack of trust

There is little doubt that a gendered lens is necessary for PVE efforts, including reintegration and rehabilitation. It is also evident that partnerships with CSOs are essential. But the challenges are clear, particularly given the complexity and fast-changing nature of the issues. This is compounded by long-term structural and cultural obstacles, notably:

- The security sector can be defensive about the existence of key problems, notably issues related to police brutality, specifically sexual violence. This lack of transparency about the actions of security actors and perceived impunity is a critical source of mistrust within communities and can fuel radicalization.

- The reluctance of government agencies, particularly security actors, to share information with civil society poses a significant challenge to understanding the returnee phenomenon and thus the design of effective rehabilitation and reintegration programmes. Sharing of information and development of research protocols, in combination with relevant safety training, should be undertaken as a collaboration between civil society and the security sector.

- Misunderstanding and mistrust persist between sectors, so defining and developing parameters for collaboration can be a slow process, hampered by lack of political will, and factors such as high turnover in some institutions. A key strategy is to demonstrate the added value of collaboration, particularly in terms of the contributions and services that CSOs bring, and to establish relationships of trust with communities that demonstrate shared humanity and concerns. Cultural activities can be an effective way of deepening community-based policing.

- Individuals who are active or associated with sensitive security issues, notably working with returning fighters, or challenging corruption, extremism, violence and other endemic problems that implicate powerful stakeholders, are often at high risk, and have limited means of expressing their concerns.

Young Iraqi women and men discuss ways to contribute to society other than joining armed groups

Ultimately, we need a mutual understanding of security needs and priorities. Too often, the state or even international actors determine security priorities, allocating resources and even providing the training. But they are removed from the reality of citizens' daily lives and their security concerns. Initiatives that can build confidence between the police and local communities, particularly among the most stigmatized and marginalized sectors, can be key ways of preventing and countering the cycle of violent extremism.

> *If you want to know anything, you have to talk to the women.*

4. Addressing Public Attitudes of Stigma and Fear

As noted above, for sustainable reintegration and rehabilitation, the receiving communities must have systems in place to accept the returnees, while addressing the fears, anger and concerns of their existing members. Sensitization and awareness-raising sessions regarding the particular experiences of women and girl returnees, including the abuse they may have suffered at the hands of armed group or security forces, need to be designed with care, to help reduce stigmatization and generate more support for victims.[142] In addition, states have specific obligations from the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) to eradicate negative stereotypes about women.[143]

Yet given that many of the women and girl returnees may harbour sympathies for the groups or their own male relatives who were members of such groups, the reweaving of social fabric and community trust can be fraught. From Europe to Asia, the anger among locals who have been victims of terror attacks, or inadvertently profiled and targeted by security actors because of their ethnic or religious identity, cannot be underestimated. If left unaddressed it can metastasize into different forms of extremism. Successful programmes have greater impact and greater legitimacy when they are developed by communities and informed by a local understanding of social norms, community relationships, and cultural traditions.[144]

Raising awareness of stigma

A key challenge facing women and girls is the stigma and shame that community members and their close and extended families may feel towards them. For women as for men, cultural norms typically dictate behaviour that is valued, and that which is denigrated. But there are key differences. Historically and across the world, men returning from war or conflict are seen as heroes or feared and respected for their ability to perpetrate violence.

Women, on the other hand, particularly in more traditional cultures, are often accused of transgressing social norms. The implication is invariably tied to sexuality and presumed promiscuity. Since they are perceived as belonging to the father or male clan leader, even if they were abducted or coerced and victims of violence, they are labelled as bringing shame and dishonour to their families. It is also tied to notions of masculinity. The sexual violation of women is seen as an attack on that masculinity, because men were unable to fulfil their roles as protectors.

Those who have been subject to sexual abuse may be further abused as families or communities stigmatize or blame them for bringing dishonour to their name. It can lead to so-called honour killings. In the case of the Boko Haram women who have returned with their children, some are accused of producing children of "bad blood", as if the ideology and practices of violent extremism could be biologically inherited.[145] So victims and their children are stigmatized and further marginalized.[146]

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[142] UN Inter-agency Working Group on Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (2006), IDDRS: Women, Gender and DDR (available at: http://www.unddr.org/iddrs.aspx).
[143] Ibid.
[144] Holmer, G. & Shtuni, A. (2010). Returning Foreign Fighters and the Reintegration Imperative. USIP
[145] UNICEF, & International Alert. (2016), "Bad blood": Perceptions of children born of conflict-related sexual violence and women and girls associated with Boko Haram in northeast Nigeria.
[146] Amnesty International (2008). Liberia: A flawed process discriminates against women and girls (available at: https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AFR34/004/2008/en/).

Communities and families may mistrust the returnees, fearing that they will perpetrate violence in their community. They may also be angry because having a relative as a member of a violent extremist group implies guilt by association for other family members. These issues take time to resolve and require holistic interventions. Along with the returnees themselves, families, community leaders, local authorities and service providers, and the media have their roles to play.

The role of women-led community organizations

It takes time to rebuild trust between community members, those reintegrated, and security actors. Community-based organizations (CBOs) make this possible. Lessons from DDR programming show that both male community leaders and women's organizations can play a vital role. As noted above, women-led CSOs in receiving communities are well placed to design and distribute information related to rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.[147]

Engaging community leaders to involve former girl combatants in social activities has also been successful in strengthening relationships and changing the way family and friends view the girls.[148] In Iraq, Yazidi community leaders embraced the returning girls, modelling acceptance, dispelling stigma from the sexual violence they survived, and protecting them from honour killings.[149] They have worked to provide the girls with health care and counselling, including arranging for some to go to Germany to receive specialized treatment.[150]

C-SAVE, a coalition of CBOs in Indonesia, conducts public education programming to sensitize communities to the issues and combat stigma against returnees, especially women and children.[151] This approach was shown to work in Liberia, where some Child Welfare Committees also practice mediation with children, families and communities if needed.[152] Children of returning women and girls face specific challenges in school, including stigmatization for being born of sexual violence or affiliated with violent extremism through their parentage. Educators and school administrators should be prepared to understand, support and manage these children in the classroom in ways that contribute to long-term rehabilitation and reintegration of the individual, community and society.[153]

The role of the media

From social media and global satellite television stations to national newspapers and local community radio, the media plays a critical role in informing and shaping the public's perceptions and attitudes towards those who are radicalized and the phenomenon of violent extremism. The media is also the arena in which extremist groups have excelled and proven themselves adept at conveying their messages to recruit and radicalize followers, both men and women. Reintegration and rehabilitation programmes also require a strong media and communications component. While freedom of expression should be respected, states also have duties to combat hate speech and incitation to violence or to violating human rights.[154]

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[147] O'Neil, J. (2015), Engaging Women in Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration: Insights for Colombia.
[148] Molyneux, T. (2018), It is time to end the child soldier stereotype. IRIN News.
[149] CNN (2015), Fleeing ISIS tyranny: Agony of the Yazidis (available at: https://www.cnn.com/2015/09/28/middleeast/iraq-yazidis-agony/index.html).
[150] Ibid.
[151] Interview with Mira Kusumarini, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[152] ILO (2007), Red Shoes: Experiences of girl-combatants in Liberia (available at: http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Publications/WCMS_116435/lang--en/index.htm).
[153] UNICEF, & International Alert. (2016). "Bad blood": Perceptions of children born of conflict-related sexual violence and women and girls associated with Boko Haram in northeast Nigeria. (available at: https://www.international-alert.org/publications/bad-blood).
[154] CERD (1965), International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, Article 4(a) and ICCPR (1966), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 20(2).

But invariably the media's involvement is akin to a double-edged sword. Responsible and objective journalism could be a means of mitigating fears, reducing the stigma and providing a shared platform for dialogue and public discussion of the complexities and nuances of experiences pertaining to violent extremism. It can be a means of generating public understanding and perhaps good-will and support for victims. It can help amplify the voices of human rights defenders who may challenge heavy-handed state security apparatus or point to deep structural drivers of radicalization such as corruption and criminality. Yet across Asia, Africa, Europe and beyond, mainstream media outlets rarely engage in such nuanced debates. More often than not, the tabloid and popular press are part of the problem, with their sensationalized coverage of events. Women peacebuilders have noted, "Media is either sensationalizing violent extremists or portraying people as passive victims. They rarely air the actions or perspectives of women or youth who are doing peace work on the ground."[155]

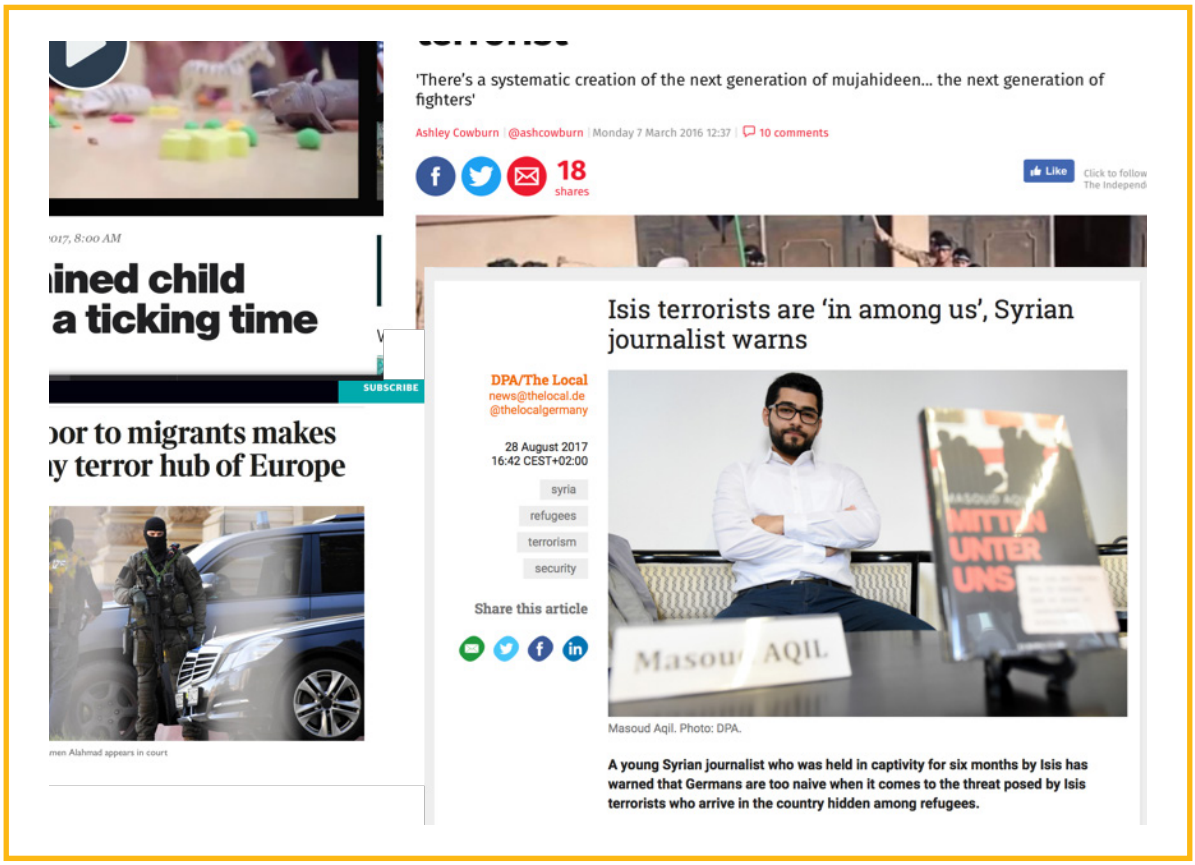

Figure 7. Headlines about returnees from major news outlets in four different countries.[156]

Even a cursory review of media discourse from around the world reveals the extent to which outlets can stoke fear and anxiety about returnees (See Figure 8). In some instances, media reports characterize children, even babies, as a threat because of fears about their present or future indoctrination.[157] Yet for years the evidence has shown that sensational media coverage of terrorism in fact invites further violence.[158]

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[155] Summary remarks by Sanam Naraghi Anderlini, ICAN What the Women Say Forum, November 2017, Rabat, Morocco.
[156] Clockwise from top left: https://www.cbsnews.com/news/isis-trained-child-soldiers-cbsn-on-assignment/; https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/over-31000-women-are-currently-pregnant-within-the-so-called-islamic-state-new-report-reveals-a6916756.html; https://www.thelocal.de/20170828/isis-terrorists-are-in-among-us-syrian-journalist-warns; https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/open-door-to-migrants-makes-germany-terror-hub-of-europe-2x02xl72f.
[157] UNICEF, & International Alert. (2016),). "Bad blood": Perceptions of children born of conflict-related sexual violence and women and girls associated with Boko Haram in northeast Nigeria (available at: https://www.international-alert.org/publications/bad-blood).
[158] The Atlantic (2017), 'Terrorism Is Aimed at the People Watching' (available at: https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/05/terrorism-is-aimed-at-the-people-watching/527724/).

The challenge for policymakers and practitioners is therefore how to use this essential tool for raising public awareness and expanding spaces for broader discourse to air fears, allay concerns and foster wider community support for rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives. Responsible journalism can facilitate an informed and balanced public debate about the issue of returnees, that takes into consideration the complexities of their experiences. It could also be a means of highlighting the profound harm and risks of stigmatization that women in particular may endure. There are experiences to draw from and adapt.

Examples from other contexts can help. Mexico has profoundly high levels of violence against women. Femicide claims an average of seven women's lives every day.[159] The Women's Observatory collective uses the media to draw public attention to the country's epidemic of femicide. As Rodolfo Dominguez of the Observatory notes, "By being in the media, [the group] increases political pressure" to demand greater security and justice from the state and generate public concern.[160] "It is also a way of constructing collective memory, trying to remember the women as people who had a vision for their life and whose life was ended," noted Dominguez.[161]

It is also an essential platform for challenging the ideology that continues to drive violent radicalization. In Libya for example, Shahrazad Maghrabi, co-founder of the Libyan Women's Forum (LWF) has been working with the media to bring Islamic scholars and women community leaders together to discuss religious narratives that challenge extremist views. "Our work enforces the role of women in building peace and social cohesion. We counter the violent extremist discourse with balanced religious discourse. We chose this because Libyan society is being influenced by religion and religious leaders through media. We can use their own tools to counter it. No matter how many workshops we do, or how much we talk about it, we can't reach out to everyone. We found the media to be a key tool, through three platforms: radio, local newspapers, TV. On the TV we have debates with women present, and we invite local leaders (MPs, political, different capacities) to discuss and talk about social cohesion, peacebuilding and women's roles in it. It spreads clear messages that the Quran text is peaceful."[162]

In Tunisia, scholar and media commentator Amel Grami uses her weekly column to raise awareness of critical issues related to radicalization as well as the role of women.[163] Youth leader Ahlem Nasraoui noted the media's importance for spreading information and as a tool for learning and countering the messages of violent extremist groups. She notes, "In order to counter the many channels violent extremist groups have, we have to use the same channels—our own TV, videos, social media, channels. We created a mini-series featuring people's lives: "My Life in 60 Seconds"—not just featuring people who are successful but also jumping into a taxi and interviewing the driver about why he is proud to be Tunisian."[164]

In Algeria, where the public space for discourse is limited, civil society actors work with creative media to ensure that memory is not lost. "In 2017, we asked for writing about Islamist violence," noted one human rights defender.[165] "We also worked with victims who wrote theatre plays about their experience. We do this with the help of professionals, including with painters who draw people's experiences, and we work on getting these works out to the wider public and support researchers in the field."[166]

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[159] Reuters (2017), Seven each day: Mexican women murders on the rise amid drug wars (available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mexico-women/seven-each-day-mexican-women-murders-on-the-rise-amid-drug-wars-idUSKBN1E92JN).
[160] Remarks at ICAN Forum in Rabat, Morocco, November 2017.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Remarks at ICAN Forum in Rabat, Morocco, November 2017.
[163] Remarks by Dr. Amel Grami, Professor of Gender Studies and Islamic Studies at the University of Manouba, Tunisia, GSX workshop April 26-27, 2018 in Oslo, Norway.
[164] Remarks at ICAN Forum in Rabat, Morocco, November 2017.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Ibid.

A public voice, a personal risk

Yet even if media coverage is balanced, public fear and anger cannot be underestimated. As evident from social media experiences, threats of violence and death are not uncommon against individuals who dare to propose moderate solutions or question the efficacy of hard security approaches. Media exposure can also be dangerous for the returnees and human rights activists themselves, as they may become targets of revenge or hate-fuelled attacks. In Libya, LWF established two radio programmes including "Libyan Women of the Day on Politics" that were hosted by women. One had to stop because of threats from militias. In Algeria the Reconciliation Charter erases the experiences of victims. If activists write a press release about these events, they can be detained or fined.[167] In Pakistan, activists face threats from state and non-state actors when their work and its impact is acknowledged in the public and media spaces. In Mexico, politicians co-opt the narratives of the activists but do little to support their cause, so the media has to devise alternative strategies to sustain the pressure for political and legislative change.

Training journalists

From Afghanistan to Tunisia, Maldives to Mexico, local peace and rights organizations such as the members of the Women's Alliance for Security Leadership (WASL) are also actively involved in training journalists. The trainings range from sensitizing them to issues of violent extremism, gender analysis and gender-responsiveness, and engaging them as allies so they use their platform to amplify the issues.

From Europe to Asia, the anger among locals who have been victims of terror attacks, or inadvertently profiled and targeted by security actors because of their ethnic or religious identity, cannot be underestimated.

[167] Amnesty International (2007), Algeria Briefing to the Human Rights Committee (available at: http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4705e9782.pdf).

Women and children affected by Boko Haram in northeast Nigeria

5. Transforming Ideology and Restoring Identity

Violent extremists target both hearts and minds, and weave ideology into their discourse, tailored to each audience. There are multiple frameworks for understanding the role of ideology in violent extremism, and its related role in disengagement and/or deradicalization. The use and perversion of religious ideology or ethnic supremacy to justify violence is often prevalent. But the effectiveness of violent extremists' radicalization tactics often rests on their ability to tailor and construct a mix of religious and political ideologies with economic and social issues that are of relevance to each potential recruit.

Therefore, many disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes also focus on ideological change. While prevention policymakers are averse to intervening in people's beliefs, due to valid concerns over freedom of conscience and expression, when it comes to deradicalization there is an understanding of the need for "initiatives that strengthen critical thinking, dialogue and acceptance of diversity and that challenge the legitimacy of violence as a means of pursuing ideological or political objectives."[168]

Without holistic, individualized, and gendered assessment of returnees, these programmes will be ineffective as they may overestimate the role of ideological motivations and neglect structural, material and other psychological drivers. In Nigeria, for example, Neem Foundation tested a comprehensive risk assessment tool with 1,500 children returned from Boko Haram and found that identity, not ideology, poses the most significant challenge.[169]

Individuals associated with violent extremist groups are motivated by diverse factors; women and girls are no different. While women and girls have largely been framed as victims or associates without agency, experience shows that those women who are genuinely convinced of the ideological narratives and goals of violent extremist groups can often be more resistant to "de-radicalization" or ideological transformation than men.[170] For example, in Indonesia where returnees are required to sign a pledge that they recognize the Indonesian state and will respect its laws, the women who are ideologically hardened and refuse to acknowledge secular authorities have been more reluctant to sign than men with similar views.[171] This finding echoes across regions, as practitioners from Tunisia and Nigeria relate parallel experiences.[172]

Women learn religious interpretations and alternative narratives that support peace

Ultimately holistic programmes that draw not only on religion, but also identity, purpose, culture and history, and integrate meaningful and dignified livelihoods opportunities, are much more effective than those that treat ideological beliefs as divorced from the rest of the individual's circumstances.

[168] UNODC. (2017). Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups: The Role of the Justice System. Vienna: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.
[169] Dr. Fatima Akilu, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[170] Interview with Mira Kusumarini, April 2018.
[171] Interview with Mira Kusumarini, April 2018.
[172] GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.

Gendered (dis)empowerment

Gender plays a role in the marginalization, disempowerment and frustration that often contribute to individuals' vulnerability to violent extremist recruitment. For women and girls, gender inequality factors into this, in some cases causing them to join as an alternate path to empowerment and an escape from the gendered norms of their family, community or society.

Violence against women is another factor in the recruitment of women and girls in both developing contexts like Nigeria and developed contexts such as Muslim minority communities in Europe and North America. However, as Hamsatu Allamin remarked, "Until societies face the realities of gender-based violence and inequalities, they will remain a compounding factor in driving the radicalization of women and girls."[173]

"Until societies face the realities of gender-based violence and inequalities, they will remain a compounding factor in driving the radicalization of women and girls."

Violent extremist groups, despite their misogyny across the board, offer women and girls forms of power and privilege unavailable in their own lives. Promising utopia, recruiters tap into the pain and hopes of individuals with thwarted aspirations in a world where unattainable dreams are evident to them thanks to modern communications technologies, exacerbating perceptions of very real inequalities and discrimination. Explaining these inequalities through a prism of ideology, recruiters use religion, identity, culture, and politics to weave a narrative that disassociates vulnerable individuals from their communities and society, and presents the violent extremist group as a viable alternative and a community that offers respect, belonging and purpose, as well as economic opportunities in some cases. Lack of religious literacy, often disproportionate among women and girls, compounds their vulnerability to ideological narratives of violent extremist groups. In some cases, the promise is a complete illusion, in others—such as the wives of commanders in Boko Haram and the women who served as morality police under ISIL—the power, recognition, and comfort enjoyed by some women and girls associated with violent extremists is very real. They often miss this power upon their return, especially when, as Hamsatu Allamin shared, "No one is finding a better society when they come back."[174]

The struggle faced by women and girl returnees is compounded as they are stigmatized for presumed perpetration of violence. Yet they need to tell their stories and share the negative impacts on them in order to heal and to inform society. Reflecting on the experiences in Uganda with the Lord's Resistence Army (LRA), Gladys Canogura noted that until the women and girls are recognized as human beings in society, they will not be able to rehabilitate themselves and reintegrate into the communities.[175]

Combating stigma is part of the work CSOs are doing to lay the groundwork for effective reintegration in receiving communities (see Chapter 4 on Community). Women's organizations' strategies include forming networks of returnees to speak for themselves. In Uganda, for example, KIWEPI has supported women and girl returnees to demand rights as former combatants and victims of forced recruitment as children and victims of sexual violence.[176] In Nigeria, the Allamin Foundation has established two victim-led networks in the northeast, one of the families of victims of terrorist attacks and one of the mothers of victims of enforced disappearance. Yet even with such support, solidarity, and advocacy, many women and girl returnees cannot openly talk about their experiences. The trauma of sexual violence is profound and complex as survivors can feel shame and humiliation as well as guilt for having survived while others did not. As a result, ideological rehabilitation must be coupled with psychosocial services (See chapter 7 on Coping with Trauma).

[173] Interview with Hamsatu Allamin, April 2018.
[174] Ibid.
[175] Interview with Gladys Canogura, Executive Director of the Kitgum Women's Peace Initiative (KIWEPI) in Uganda, April 2018 in Oslo, Norway.
[176] Ibid.

Purpose, meaning and belonging: What do we offer? What are we for?

The ideological narratives of recruiters for violent extremist groups, religious leaders and laypeople alike, are emotionally charged and appeal to the very human pursuit of meaning in one's life. Whether centred around political, spiritual, or personal issues, these ideologies target the individual on the emotional level. In interviews with 900 women in Pakistan, 40 percent remarked how compelling a certain extremist preacher was, convinced that the researchers would understand if only they came and listened.[177] This "quest for significance" as Dr. Mia Bloom referred to it, can be very potent.[178] The question for prevention strategies is what kinds of interventions and social dynamics can influence individuals to take pro-social pathways when enraged by injustices or if feeling a lack of purpose. Or, as Dr. Fatima Akilu has asked, "What can replace what these radicalized women had when they were part of an extremist group?"[179]

Women peacebuilders in Iraq engage the military to address security issues from a gender perspective

Research has found that pro-social involvement is especially effective as a reintegration method. Those who have sought out "voluntary, sustained, and ongoing helpfulness" over a sustained period prove less likely to reoffend. Pro-social activities and skills help instil a "higher purpose" that individuals often sought by joining a violent extremist group in the first place.[180] Here again local civil society organizations are often pioneering targeted programmes. For example, in Pakistan, PAIMAN has fostered a community-based peace architecture comprised of volunteer peace groups or TOLANAs of formerly radicalized or vulnerable youth and women, working in consort with local authorities, traditional leaders, and police.[181] In southern Iraq, Al Firdaws Society demobilizes children and youth from militias through engaging them in painting churches, repairing school buildings, entertaining children in the hospital, and giving blood, as a better way to serve their community and affect positive change.[182] Working with returnees to embrace and normalize pro-social behaviours such as community service, volunteerism, and non-violent activism, civil society actors are able to channel the anger and desire for change that drives many to join violent extremist groups in the first place.

> *"What can replace what these radicalized women had when they were part of an extremist group?"*

[177] Remarks of Mossarat Qadeem, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[178] See the works of Maria Stephan such as: Maria Stephan (2016), Defeating ISIS Through Civil Resistance? (available at: https://www.usip.org/blog/2016/07/defeating-isis-through-civil-resistance) and Maria Stephan (2009), Civilian Jihad: Nonviolent Struggle, Democratization, and Governance in the Middle East (available at: https://www.palgrave.com/us/book/9780230621404).
[179] Niguidula, G. (2017), Women and De-Radicalization. Georgetown Security Studies Review.
[180] USIP (2017), Deradicalizing, Rehabilitating, and Reintegrating Violent Extremists (available at: https://www.usip.org/publications/2017/11/deradicalizing-rehabilitating-and-reintegrating-violent-extremists).)
[181] Remarks by Mossarat Qadeem, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[182] Interview with Fatima Al-Bahadly, 2018.

Religious legitimacy

States and international organizations are often not the best actors to convey alternative narratives or programming aimed at transforming ideologies, as they likely lack the religious or political legitimacy in the eyes of returnees, including in countries where religious and state authority are bound together.[183] This is also true for women and girls who have been forcibly recruited, abducted and or lived under occupation and may see the government as having failed to protect and rescue them.[184] Moreover, even if the state's religious education is legitimate, there is no one-size-fits all approach in tackling returnees. For example, in Malaysia, rehabilitation programming is exclusively in the hands of the government, which engages primarily in religious education, but some participants were not adherents to extremist ideology; rather, they were motivated by other reasons.[185]

Practitioners in Indonesia found that sending preachers to work with returnees can be counter-productive unless the individuals are ready to open up, as the violent extremist group has touched people on a very personal level. Many CSOs lack the internal capacity to tackle extremist religious ideologies. Often, they don't have existing working relationships with religious institutions that could provide religious mentoring and education. However, religious organizations and institutions responding to violent extremism, including returnees, often lack capacity to address and thus neglect the many other interrelated non-ideological factors of disengagement and rehabilitation. Partnerships across these sectors that leverage complementary skills and resources are key to effective programming, but love and emotional support are as critical as religious re-education for effective ideological rehabilitation. There is also an urgent need to prepare female religious counsellors to address the needs of women and girls that poses yet another challenge, especially in societies with enforced gender segregation where religious authority and learning rests largely with male leaders.

Youth in Pakistan celebrate their cultural heritage and promote peace

[183] Cockayne, J., & O'neil, S. (2015), UN DDR in an Era of Violent Extremism: Is It Fit for Purpose?
[184] Interview with Gladys Canogura, GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[185] Consultation with Malaysian researcher, 2018.

6. Socioeconomic Empowerment and Sense of Purpose

Socioeconomic factors such as poverty, inequality, unemployment, and underemployment can be conditions conducive to violent extremism, and when compounded or triggered by other factors, increase vulnerability to radicalization.[186] The economic disempowerment of women, can contribute to the motivations of women and girls joining violent extremist groups in search of dignity and purpose. For women and girls disassociating from violent extremist groups, education or training in life and job skills is a critical component of full rehabilitation and reintegration in society. But to be effective, the often hidden obstacles to women's access to skill trainings, education or jobs must be addressed. They can include conflicting domestic and caretaking obligations, inability to pay school fees, and insecurity at and on the way to training centres and schools, including fear of sexual harassment and assault.[187] Female-headed households have different needs, because women are usually responsible for taking care of children. If providing livelihood skills, job training or other support that engages the woman in working away from home, disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration practitioners must consider the impact of and on childcare responsibilities. In Pakistan, PAIMAN Alumni Trust addresses these barriers by undertaking market studies to determine the gaps in skills and services, then provides trainings for women in skills that are both economically viable and culturally acceptable, and which, if necessary they can undertake from home. States have obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the rights to an adequate standard of living, to work, to social protection and to education.[188]

Aspiring to affluence

Men shelter from the sun in northeast Nigeria

In some contexts, the relative affluence of life with violent extremist groups compared to their lives back in their communities (or in camps) can be a persistent pull factor for returned women and girls, especially those who were married to fighters in higher ranks, even among abductees. Effective socioeconomic rehabilitation and reintegration is vital to addressing this dynamic.

Yet there are significant challenges. Reintegration programming that confers relative affluence on participants can exacerbate tensions between them and communities.[189] Services provided to those associated with VE groups, should be matched for those who were their victims, including their communities, otherwise perceptions of injustice and rewarding violence can be perpetuated.[190] This is a challenge in many societies struggling with economic crises, austerity and shrinking of public services and social welfare.[191]

[186] Piedmont, D., & Belli, G. (n.d.). Countering Violent Extremism, DDR, Social Capital, and the Women, Peace & Security Agenda (available at: www.extremelytogether-theguide.org/pdf/kaf_extremism_EN_WEB.pdf).
[187] Amnesty International (2008), Liberia: A flawed process discriminates against women and girls (available at: https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AFR34/004/2008/en/).
[188] OHCHR (2015), Human Rights, Terrorism and Counter-terrorism Fact Sheet No. 32. (available at: http://www.refworld.org/docid/48733ebc2.html).
[189] Holmes, G., & Shtuni, A. (2010), Returning Foreign Fighters and the Reintegration Imperative. USIP Special Report (available at: https://www.usip.org/publications/2017/03/returning-foreign-fighters-and-reintegration-imperative).
[190] Cockayne, J., & O'neil, S. (2015), UN DDR in an Era of Violent Extremism: Is It Fit for Purpose?
[191] Naraghi Anderlini, Sanam & Holmes, Melinda. (2017), From the Ground Up: The Nexus of Economic Policy, Gender and Violent Extremism.

In Nigeria, civil society actors have found that women returnees with husbands have better financial stability, confidence, and support, while those without husbands are often forced to beg.[192] But many of the women returnees associated with VE groups are heads of household for the first time. Without a source of income, their vulnerability increases, and the risks facing their boys and girls heighten. In Iraq for example, local CSOs fear the rise of new VE groups if the teenage boys of Daesh widows (or abandoned wives) are not reintegrated effectively. Similarly, there is higher risk of forced marriages for young girls, thus perpetuating the cycle of violence and exploitation.

More than material well-being

Young women attend a training on peace and security in Iraq

Livelihood support can be a very strategic tool for rehabilitation, according to Mira Kusumarini from Indonesia. In conservative societies, such as the Pashtun areas of Pakistan, it can be difficult to get women out of the house to teach them. PAIMAN Alumni Trust overcame this by negotiating with the community elders and male relatives of women, building trust with them before talking to the women. As noted above, when women finally came out of their houses, PAIMAN taught them livelihoods skills while educating them about their rights, Islam, and their role in society. Women make products using basic skills such as samosa making, fabric printing and dyeing, embroidery, quilting, and sewing bags, and their sons or other male relatives are included by taking the products out to sell. Men appreciate the extra income for their families and view the women working as positive, even in this conservative society. In such contexts, giving the women the opportunity to work from home makes it possible for them to gain confidence through both knowledge and earning income. With the confidence to raise their voices and knowledge about violent extremism and the signs of radicalization, women for the first time see they have a role in peace and security.

Socioeconomic interventions can also contribute to trauma healing and psychosocial rehabilitation. Through working in groups to learn and establish enterprises, women learn cooperation and sharing, which helps them to overcome mistrust and develop positive social behaviours. In fact, finding a "livelihood is one of the most important dimensions of rehabilitation," according to Dr. Fatima Akilu.[193]

> *"[L]ivelihood is one of the most important dimensions of rehabilitation"*

PAIMAN raises awareness and trains women in livelihood skills in parallel

[192] Focus group discussion in New York, March 2018.
[193] GSX Oslo Workshop, April 2018.

7. Coping with Trauma

Experiencing violent extremism, whether as victims, perpetrators, supporters, or bystanders, results in significant trauma. Women and girls in particular face physical and psychological effects from sexual violence and other gendered aspects of their experience such as unwanted pregnancy and motherhood. If left untreated, trauma can impact families and communities and be carried through future generations, even leading to future violence.[194]

As discussed above, women and girls experience shame and stigma based on their association with violent extremist groups, breaking traditional gender norms, and experiences of sexual violence. These histories deter them from reintegrating and accessing needed services.[195] This can be a significant barrier to reintegration and requires a holistic approach of working with families, communities and the broader society to bring about attitudinal and cultural change.[196]

For example, 90 women and girls from Borno state in Nigeria could not go home because the local community members were against their return, due to concerns about whether they still held beliefs consistent with the ideology of Boko Haram.[197] Peace educator and community leader Hamsatu Allamin, founder of the Allamin Foundation, conducted intra-community dialogue in schools and a radio programme with positive messaging to foster reintegration.

The psychological health of security actors, civil society practitioners, and other caregivers is also critical. In Indonesia, the organization Civil Society Against Violent Extremism (C-SAVE) collaborated with the Ministry of Social Welfare to develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) to guide the rehabilitation, and reintegration of returnees from violent extremist groups.[198] As C-SAVE staff trained social workers from the ministry, they observed how the social workers enjoyed religious discussions with clients, thereby becoming vulnerable to the ideology of returnees and jeopardizing their own psychological health and objectivity.[199]

The human right to health includes the right to the highest possible standard of physical and mental health, and therefore equal access to adequate health services, including mental health, is critical.[200] Yet, few legal and policy frameworks provide a mental health framework and psychological support for returnees. In some places psychological support and therapy is provided within a formal system, usually prison-based, which means that women and children affiliated with terrorist offenders may be overlooked. In other places community approaches incorporate psychological counselling.

Psychosocial interventions for returnees

Psychosocial and counselling interventions can be used with individuals, families, and groups. In addition, some programmes can work for both individuals and groups. Rescue Me in Lebanon pioneered work in prisons with returnees of different nationalities.[201] They applied aggression replacement therapy (ART) that frequently benefits aggressive youth in group settings to develop pro-social skills and emotional self-control. They also developed the "Houses of Healing" method specifically for incarcerated persons and drew upon art therapy to

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[194] Speckhard, A., & Shajkovci, A. (2017), Drivers of Radicalization and Violent Extremism in Kosovo: Women's Roles in Supporting, Preventing & Fighting Violent Extremism (available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316100318_Drivers_of_Radicalization_and_Violent_Extremism_in_Kosovo_Women's_Roles_in_Supporting_Preventing_Fighting_Violent_Extremism).
[195] Amnesty International (2008), Liberia: A flawed process discriminates against women and girls (available at: https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AFR34/004/2008/en/).
[196] Specht I., (2007), Red Shoes: Experiences of girl-combatants in Liberia, International Labour Organization (available at: http://www.ilo.org/employment/Whatwedo/Publications/WCMS_116435/lang--en/index.htm).
[197] Remarks by Hamsatu Allamin, Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[198] Interview with Mira Kusumarini, April 2018.
[199] Remarks by Mira Kusumarini, Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[200] OHCHR International Standards (available at: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Business/Pages/internationalStandards.aspx).
[201] Remarks by Nancy Yammout, Rescue Me, Oslo Workshop, April 2018.

provide a mechanism of expression when traditional "talk therapy" may not be useful. Rescue Me also observed that family therapy is most critical to support family members and address relationship concerns between returnees and their families.

- ART focuses on social skills and aggression control. The programme consists of 30 lessons covering three major topics: behavioural skills, anger control skills, and moral reasoning, values and thoughts. The process and sequencing are critical as it is important to address the feelings of anger underlying the motivation to join extremist groups, before moving to reintegration. Developed by Arthur Goldstein and Barry Glick for aggressive and violent adolescents, ART proved effective in reducing recidivism and aggression while increasing pro-social behaviour.[202] It has been used throughout the US as well as Germany, Sweden, Poland, the United Kingdom, Australia, Denmark, Russia and Canada to combat youth violence.[203] ART is a multidimensional psycho-educational intervention designed to promote pro-social behaviour in chronically aggressive and violent adolescents using techniques to develop social skills, emotional control, and moral reasoning. Whereas ISIL promotes one option for people to express their anger and identity, ART and other therapeutic interventions expand the range of options to include journalism, drawing, photography, and sports. For example, when using ART with youth at risk Rescue Me sometimes provides referrals for them to train as professional athletes.

- Art therapy is relevant for many people, especially those who are not ready to talk, by allowing them to start working to express themselves through art. Art therapy can promote self-esteem, self-awareness, emotional resilience, and insight, while also enhancing social skills and one's ability to resolve conflicts and distress.

- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) originated in the 1960s with Aaron Beck who theorized that our thinking influences our attitudes, feelings, and behaviour.[204] Applied across a variety of mental health and psychosocial problems, the literature indicates efficacy with adult and juvenile offender populations.[205]

- Family Functional Therapy is used with those who have family members either in the prison or visiting regularly. For example, as a pilot initiative Rescue Me has provided four women who are family members of returned fighters with psychosocial support, usually working with wives or mothers of the inmates. In some cases, they are afraid to approach the man and hug him, wondering if he is still the same. They also question whether they are ready to forgive him and are concerned about whether he is ready to forgive himself.

- The Houses of Healing method is a ground-breaking approach to prisoner healing and rehabilitation. "Houses of Healing deals directly with the root causes of crime, violence, and addiction and offers a practical approach to emotional growth that speaks specifically to the challenges facing incarcerated men and women."[206] The method creates a constructive challenge between the inmate and the inmate's self, family and the warden.[207]

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[202] Barry Glick (2003), Programming for Violent Youthful Offenders in Corrections Using Aggression Replacement Training and Creating a Behavior Management System. Journal of Community Correcting, and Matthew Curie et al. (2009), Aggression Replacement Training in Australia: Youth Justice Pilot Study. Psychiatry, Psychology, and Law, Vol 6, No 3.
[203] Fitzroy Greene (2004), "ART Program Aimed at Aggressive Youth" (available at: https://www.crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=254).
[204] Barry Glick (2003), Programming for Violent Youthful Offenders in Corrections Using Aggression Replacement Training and Creating a Behavior Management System. Journal of Community Correcting.
[205] Matthew Curie et al. (2009), Aggression Replacement Training in Australia: Youth Justice Pilot Study. Psychiatry, Psychology, and Law, Vol 6, No 3.
[206] Interview with Nancy Yammout, Co-founder and President of Rescue Me Association for Rehabilitation of Detainees, Lebanon, GSX workshop April 26-27, 2018 in Oslo, Norway.
[207] Robin Casarjian (1995), Houses of Healing: A Prisoner's Guide to Inner Power and Freedom.

Trauma healing for victims of sexual and gender-based violence

Trauma from sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) requires specialized treatment. First, it requires abiding by the guiding principles of SGBV treatment: safety, confidentiality, respect, and non-discrimination. Safety involves prioritizing the safety of the survivor, while confidentiality ensures protecting the survivor and their information, and obtaining informed consent for all interventions. Respecting the choices, desires, and rights of the survivor is essential. Upholding the principles of non-discrimination, which ensures the survivor receives equal and fair treatment regardless of identity, is also critical. While following these principles, care for any survivor depends on the specific nature of the SGBV, the level of risk and contextual circumstances. For example, it is essential to consider the unique circumstances of a survivor's identity such as age, gender, sexual orientation, and ability. In Uganda, girl survivors of the LRA have needed non-verbal forms of expression like drawing, music, dance, and plays to begin to express themselves.[208]

Finally, a holistic approach is often beneficial, providing access not just to trauma healing, but also to justice, health care, housing, and livelihoods. Kitgum Women's Peace Initiative (KIWEPI) provided livelihoods programmes, educational sponsorships, and land dispute mediation to their beneficiaries. In another example, in Iraq, the brother of a Yazidi woman brought her to a local organization for counselling after she escaped from ISIS where she experienced torture and rape. In addition to counselling to address suicidal ideation and trauma symptoms with a psychiatrist, she also needed a referral to a medical doctor for treatment of epilepsy, a lifelong condition exacerbated by her ISIS captivity.[209]

Psychosocial support for security actors and service providers

Security actors and humanitarian and service providers often witness poverty and violence, and struggle to find the balance between meeting the demands of their work while caring for their own well-being. Vicarious trauma triggers the same reactions in the provider as the one facing the critical incident. The impact of such work can be physical, emotional, and social, affecting health and relationships. It can also result in burnout, the exhaustion and alienation from cumulative stress. Therefore, psychosocial support is crucial for security and service providers. In addition to personal self-care practices, organizations can provide support through regular retreat and debriefing meetings, a comfortable work space, work breaks and balanced workload, supervision, and support from managers and co-workers. For example, at Neem Foundation in Nigeria, the staff hold a weekly debriefing meeting to discuss and reflect on their work, thereby alleviating some of the stress.[210] Field-based staff also regularly take a week off to provide a break and an opportunity for self-care.[211]

The necessity of mental health infrastructure

Effective programming to treat trauma often requires government and community infrastructure, financial resources, and human capacity to provide services. But in many contexts—particularly those affected by violent extremism and conflict—where the need for such care is most dire, the mental health infrastructure is woefully inadequate, lacking the necessary resources or skilled personnel to provide even basic services.

Singing in a choir helps women returnees in Uganda heal from trauma

[208] Remarks by Gladys Canogura, Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[209] Case from ICAN's MHPSS programme which provides peer-to-peer training in trauma counseling through the WASL network.
[210] Remarks by Dr. Fatima Akilu, Oslo Workshop, April 2018.
[211] Ibid.

Lack of public awareness or scepticism regarding mental health care is an additional barrier. Cultures and societies in which mental health issues have typically been hidden or addressed within the confines of the family can be tremendously reluctant about seeking assistance from external sources. This is particularly compounded for issues related to sexual violence for women and men. For example, women may not know how to formally report sexual violence and do not trust the police or other authorities.[212] Where the police or state authorities are the perpetrators of violence, women have the added fear of retribution.

Young Iraqis discussing peace and security issues

While donors want to ensure strong humanitarian responses and programmes that provide rehabilitation and reintegration services, neither the work involved, nor the time required to develop capacity is quick or easy. It takes time for returnees to change their thinking and heal from the trauma and emotions they experienced. Therefore, programmes providing trauma counselling should function based not on timelines but on indicators of progress. Ministries, organizations, and communities need to collaborate to develop reasonable indicators of change over generous time periods.

At the same time, some are exploring indigenous practices for coping with trauma. For instance, in Turkey, Kareemat implements a programme where Syrian women gather in a safe space for coffee and conversation.[213] This approach draws upon the traditional practices of Syrian women visiting each other and taking coffee. Kareemat uses the opportunity to share psycho-educational information and support women discussing SGBV or other sensitive topics.

Community-level mental health infrastructure is important for sustainability, especially given the way violent extremism erodes social networks. Many women and girls do not return to their own communities. They are isolated and without support networks upon reintegration, which poses particular challenges to psychological health. In Nigeria, Hamsatu Allamin is a trusted maternal figure for youth returning from Boko Haram. Recognizing her kinship with them, she says, "I look at what happened to the boys in my society. Nobody else was doing anything, so I said, this is a period where someone has to engage with them. This mad circle of violence has to be stopped."[214] She offers emotional and economic support and connects returnees with schools, communities to live, and other social networks.

Members of a women's peace group or TOLANA in Pakistan

[W]here the need for such care is most dire, the mental health infrastructure is woefully inadequate, lacking the necessary resources or skilled personnel to provide even basic services.

[212] UNICEF, & International Alert. (2016), "Bad blood": Perceptions of children born of conflict-related sexual violence and women and girls associated with Boko Haram in northeast Nigeria.
[213] Interview with Najlaa Sheekh, Kareemat Association, 2018.
[214] Interview with Hamsatu Allamin, 2018.

8. Concluding Observations

The report shows that women and girls are associated with violent extremism in complex and diverse ways. For disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes to be effective, the counter-terrorism and PVE community across sectors and countries, must recognize their existence and adapt existing policies and practices to be gender-responsive for both men and women.

There is much nuance and some confusion around the status of these returnees, particularly as many are both victims and perpetrators. Moreover, the overall rate of documented return of women is significantly lower than men, making research on the topic more difficult. Additionally, while there is growing attention to the challenge of foreign terrorist fighters and their families, less is known about those affiliated individuals who remain in their home country or returned unnoticed. Here again, women and girls are of particular note, as in many contexts they are active in domestic settings or through family ties, and thus unnoticed.

The fear, anger and mistrust in communities towards those affiliated with VE groups cannot be underestimated. Similarly, to avoid a backlash or inadvertent harm, it is essential that victims of violent extremism, especially women and their children, are not excluded from reintegration and rehabilitation support programmes. There is a need for clear policies on community and public engagement and transparency. As such media engagement is crucial.

In many contexts the socioeconomic infrastructure, governance and local community security provisions needed for prevention are also necessary for effective rehabilitation and reintegration. Much of it is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, there is a critical urgency now. If reintegration efforts are not inclusive and holistic, the risk of a resurgence of violent extremism and its impact on development and peace in already fragile contexts cannot be underestimated.

While the challenges are profound, the existence of local civil society entities active and willing to support reintegration in communities across affected countries cannot be underestimated. They are key assets and must be recognized and supported as allies in the quest for positive peace and social cohesion.

PART II

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

As the policy debates continue in the global arena, in communities across the world, the lives of ordinary people are in the balance. CSOs, particularly those rooted locally and led by women, have been the first to see and respond to the issues facing women who are associated with violent extremist groups.

As mentioned earlier, the research overwhelmingly finds that a holistic multisectoral approach is essential for successful disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration. This section profiles cases of good practice that integrate three or more of the critical themes and areas of intervention in this report. Women-led CSOs innovated this series of evolving practices in direct response to the gap in programming for women and girl returnees:

- In Indonesia, a coalition of CSOs is institutionalizing gendered rehabilitation practices through civil society-government collaboration;
- In Kenya, women's organizations are building trust between local women in the community and police as a resource for prevention and reintegration;
- In northeast Nigeria, women community leaders are combating stigma and radicalization through disseminating Islamic peace education in schools and on the local radio;
- In Pakistan, a CBO has been able to stop women sewing suicide belts and engage them instead in sowing sustainable peace;
- In Uganda, a rehabilitation centre run by a women's organization has helped women and girls heal from trauma and reclaim their dignity through economic independence;
- In Lebanon, social workers are developing models for deradicalization through psychosocial therapy in prisons; and,
- In Nigeria, psychologists are helping returnees to find a new sense of purpose through psychosocial therapy.

Cases	The Policy Gaps & Challenges	Law, Redress and Reconciliation	Security for and Security from Women and Girl Returnees	Addressing Public Attitudes of Stigma and Fear	Transforming Ideology & Restoring Identity	Socio-economic Empowerment & Sense of Purpose	Coping with Trauma
C-SAVE, Indonesia	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
AWAPSA, Kenya	X		X	X	X		
Allamin, Nigeria		X	X	X	X		
PAIMAN, Pakistan			X	X	X	X	
KIWEPI, Uganda	X	X		X		X	X
Rescue Me, Lebanon			X			X	X
Neem, Nigeria	X		X		X		X

Case 1: Institutionalizing Gendered Rehabilitation through Civil Society-Government Collaboration

Country	Indonesia	Thematic Areas
Organization	Civil Society Against Violent Extremism (C-SAVE)	Policy, Law, Security, Community, Ideology, Socioeconomics, Psychology
Programme	The Development of a Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programme for Women and Girls from Violent Extremist Groups	

Summary

In 2017, the Indonesian Civil Society Against Violent Extremism (C-SAVE) coalition started working in collaboration with the Government of Indonesia on a legal framework for returnees from violent extremist groups. They continue to work on a presidential decree to establish clear laws regarding the process for returnees, including those who have been deported back to Indonesia from conflict zones or third countries such as Turkey. In addition, they have developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) with the Ministry of Social Welfare (MOSW), National Counter-Terrorism Bureau (BNPT), police, and local civil society organizations (CSOs) for the rehabilitation and reintegration of returnees, the vast majority of whom are women and children. The scope of the SOPs includes identifying different actors, their roles in the referral process, and specific implementation for the treatment of women and children. C-SAVE provides training to the ministry and others on all aspects of the SOPs.

Context

Since May 2018, at least 49 Indonesians, including 12 civilians, 7 police officers and 30 terrorists, have died in back-to-back attacks by ISIS supporters or government anti-terrorism operations, in some cases with entire families as perpetrators.[215] Extremist groups active in Indonesia include Jemaah Islamiyah, once affiliated with Al Qaeda; Jamaah Ansharut Daulah; and other smaller groups (up to 30) who have pledged allegiance to ISIS ideology.[216] Between 300 and 700 Indonesians have travelled to Iraq and Syria. Approximately 45 percent are suspected to be women and children.[217]

Historically, women have played many roles during the conflicts in Maluku and Poso from 1998 to 2002. They provided ammunition, homemade explosives, and logistical supplies. Since that time, they have engaged in religious proselytizing, education, recruitment and charitable activities. Some women have followed their husbands to Iraq and Syria, succumbed to the religious ideology, and sought social justice and more equal status with men.[218]

[215] Sidney Jones (2018), "How ISIS Has Changed Terrorism in Indonesia," The New York Times, (available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/22/opinion/isis-terrorism-indonesia-women.html).
[216] Ibid.
[217] Liow, Joseph Chinyong (2016), ISIS reaches Indonesia: the terrorist group's prospects in Southeast Asia (available at: https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/isis-reaches-indonesia-the-terrorist-groups-prospects-in-southeast-asia/) and, Zam, Yusa (2018), Will IS-linked Indonesian and Malaysian women detained by Kurdish rebels return home? (available at: https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/indepth/2018/4/25/is-linked-indonesian-and-malaysian-women-detained-by-kurds).
[218] Rahmah, Unaesah (2016), The Role of Women of the Islamic State in the Dynamics of Terrorism in Indonesia (available at: http://www.mei.edu/content/map/role-women-islamic-state-dynamics-terrorism-indonesia).

In Indonesia, over 250 fighters have returned to the country (from Iraq, Syria and Turkey). Of these, 74 percent are women and children (30 percent – 40 percent women).[219] Due to the lack of a national framework or protocol, C-SAVE worked with parliament, the police, and a special task force on terrorist fighters to revise existing articles to protect human rights for foreign fighters.

When returnees are deported from other countries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is notified, and if police have ample evidence against foreign fighters, those individuals are arrested and sent to detention centres. Most returnees are sent to rehabilitation centres operated by the MOSW. Once the new law is passed, there will be a greater likelihood of women moving through a legal process; however, C-SAVE would like to create a centre specifically for the rehabilitation of women, and advocate that they not be radicalized further in prison but rather experience rehabilitation and reintegration into the community.

OBJECTIVES	STAKEHOLDERS	
■ To develop a national policy on the reintegration of foreign fighters and their families, ■ To develop and support the implementation of SOPs for the rehabilitation and reintegration of returnees.	■ C-SAVE and other local CSOs ■ MOSW ■ BNPT ■ Police ■ Office of the President ■ Ministry of Foreign Affairs	■ Ministry of Home Affairs ■ Provincial, District and Municipal Government ■ National Commission on Violence Against Women ■ National Commission on Child Protection

Strategy and Implementation

Given MOSW's limited experience with this population, C-SAVE developed SOPs in collaboration with the MOSW, BNPT, police, other ministries and CSOs. With local government taking the lead in reintegration, the SOPs provide clarity of roles, establish a referral and communication network, and connect different levels of government. C-SAVE has worked with more than 20 local governments and is working on a presidential decree to enhance the legal framework. The form of the legal framework will depend on the results of an ongoing academic paper that is part of the legal drafting process.

Part One of the SOPs consists of identifying the roles of different stakeholders while Part Two contains implementing guidelines including specifically for women and children. The SOPs offer guidance for the rehabilitation of youth to help ministry staff understand the issue of extremism, how best to treat returnees and others at risk, and prevent future recruitment. C-SAVE provides training to ministry staff to deepen their understanding of these issues. The SOPs also include safety and security protocols for social workers in government and CSOs, as they are exposed to different types of risks including recruitment, verbal threats to their lives from the unhappy returnees or their families and attempted sexual abuse from various actors during the transportation of returnees to their homes.

Participants in a workshop convened by C-SAVE in Indonesia

[219] Kusumarini, Mira. GSX Oslo workshop, April 2018.

"What our family feels when you become a companion to us… [is] your dedication and sincerity, while assisting us and helping us with our difficulties and finding the solution. The most memorable to my family is the service link provided for the education and therapy [for our children], and also help us in the health condition of me and my family… [T]he difference was clearly felt before and after you came to us. I hope that C-SAVE and Empatiku remain [steadfast] in protecting the human rights and security of their clients so that our reintegration process to the community is easier, smooth, as soon as possible. Likewise, hopefully over time our traumas can gradually disappear."

– C-SAVE program participant

In addition to psychological and emotional rehabilitation, it is important that returnees have the resources, education, social skills, and physical health to live within local communities. When thinking of livelihood support, it is critical to examine returnees' sources of income as well as how they spend it, to ensure they have no financial connection to extremist groups. With regard to health care, radical groups emphasize the reproductive role of women to encourage the continuation of the group by raising the next generation. Women associated with these groups reject family planning services and vaccines for their children as they are indoctrinated to be suspicious of government health interventions. C-SAVE attempts to resolve the problem at the community level through developing early detection and treatment led by local women.

C-SAVE works with communities and local authorities to increase support for the returnees through alternative social reintegration programme activities.

ACTIVITIES FOR ADULT BENEFICIARIES:

- Education in the form of vocational training
- Psychological counselling for individuals and families
- Religious discussion
- Community education and dialogue
- Relations with village government and employers

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILD BENEFICIARIES:

- Child counselling
- Parent education
- Discussion of peace literacy
- Education to sensitize their school or community

Many returnees face stigma and fear rejection from their families upon reintegration because of the perception of radicalization. The mothers who left Indonesia at the order of men to go to Syria have the easiest re-entry because they don't embrace any ideology, but they still face stigma upon reintegration because of this perception. C-SAVE creates integrated programmes such as cooking classes for both returnees and community members, which create a venue for them to mingle and break the stigma. Strong community capacity is integral to the long-term security and well-being of all its members, as they can provide support to returnees if the motivation to return to violent extremist groups develops again.

The media can also play a supportive role. For instance, some returnees want to use the media to prevent others from joining violent extremist groups; however, thus far, the media has focused more on addressing stigma. Media outlets can share the perspective and experience of returnees and give community members an opportunity to ask questions. However, the returnees need to feel comfortable with and prepared for this experience.

Progress and Results

- 216 deportees or returnees engaged in the rehabilitation and reintegration programme.
- 9 ministries or national institutions and 8 municipal or district governments engaged.
- 47 government social workers and CSO staff received training in countering violent extremism and facilitating rehabilitation and reintegration.
- 20 CSOs are engaged in the rehabilitation and reintegration programme.
- Rehabilitation and Reintegration SOP and technical guidelines are available.
- Safety and security protocols are available.

Lessons Learned and Challenges

- The most radical returnees are reluctant to engage in the programme and those who do engage still retain their ideology and hold dreams of returning to Syria. The biggest challenge remains reunification with family members and reintegrating returnees into society.
- Social workers are mainly women, providing services, in this case, primarily to women returnees. Some social workers experience the phenomenon of enjoying religious discussions with their clients and may be vulnerable to recruitment themselves.

Sustainability and Potential Application

Developing the legal framework of the rehabilitation and reintegration (RR) SOP will ensure the system becomes sustainable. This year, C-SAVE in partnership with the MOSW will bring the SOP to the local level by piloting the programme in three provinces and three districts/cities. The RR SOP is already applied to ex-terrorist inmates, a new group who face the same problem, by one of the District Social Offices. C-SAVE believes that the RR SOP is a living document as over time we will learn more new things; therefore, adjustments are necessary.

C-SAVE helps bring together government and civil society actors to address issue of returning women and girls

Case 2: Trust Between Community Women and Police as a Resource for Prevention and Reintegration

Country	Kenya	Thematic Areas
Organization	Advocacy for Women in Peace and Security Africa (AWAPSA)	Policy, Security, Community, Ideology
Programme	Strengthening Women and Girls' Resilience Against Violent Extremism	

Summary

Advocacy for Women in Peace and Security Africa (AWAPSA) bridges the relationship between returnees and the local police, fostering trust that is critical for effective reintegration and prevention of further radicalization or recruitment to violent extremism. AWAPSA works with women and youth affected by violent extremist groups by offering support groups, assistance with education and livelihoods development, and training on the signs of radicalization. More than 100 women and girl returnees have been assisted by AWAPSA through mentorship and help with relocation, returning to school, and starting businesses. Through their police canteen programme, they build trust between women community members and the police, and facilitate an exchange of information, so they can better prevent violent extremism.

Context

Al-Shabaab, which emerged from the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) in 2007, was among the most active terrorist groups in the world in 2014, according to preliminary data from START's Global Terrorism Database (GTD). Since 2007, Al-Shabaab has carried out more than 1,700 terrorist attacks, killing more than 4,000 and wounding more than 4,000. The number of attacks attributed to Al-Shabaab has increased rapidly from less than 10 in 2007 to more than 800 in 2014.

While the number of casualties caused by Al-Shabaab increased at an even greater rate, the lethality of the group's attacks (2.4 deaths per attack, on average) has actually declined by 11 percent in recent years.[220] As Al-Shabaab's activity increased in Somalia, the group also expanded its activity into Kenya in response to Kenyan forces intervening in Somalia. In 2014, Al-Shabaab carried out more than 80 attacks in Kenya, more than double the number of attacks (37) that it carried out there in 2013. These attacks primarily occurred in Mandera (19 attacks), Nairobi (9 attacks), Mombasa (9 attacks), Garissa (7 attacks), and Wajir (5 attacks).

Mombasa County has been a hotbed of extremist violence over the years. Home to many Somali immigrants, it has long been prone to insecurity. In Mombasa, youth join Al-Shabaab looking for role models as well as jobs and further education. While there are no estimates of how many women and girls have joined Al-Shabaab, the Kenya Community Support Centre reports that over 10,000 youth from the Kenyan coast region have been recruited.[221] In 2015, Kenya observed women joining Al-Shabaab, and "Halima" was arrested in Machakos on

[220] START (2017), Annex of Statistical Information: Country Reports on Terrorism 2016 (available at: https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/272485.pdf).)
[221] Wanyonyi, Diana (2018), "Escape from Al-Shabaab: 'I was turned into a sex slave.'"Deutsche Welle.

3 April. Police claimed she recruited two other Kenyan women, Maryam Said Aboud and Khadija Abdulkadir Abubakar, together with medical student Ummul Khayr Sadir Abdalla from Zanzibar.

Detectives allege that Khadija, Maryam and the Zanzibari were recruited through the internet after meeting in an online forum managed by a Kenyan fugitive in Somalia. They were lured by a Syrian woman with the promise of being married off to ISIS fighters in Somalia and eventually ending up in Syria, which they hoped to reach through Turkey after flying from Mogadishu.

Police officers and AWAPSA spoke to the recruits, who were duped into believing that they will lead a good life. Relatives are often not forthcoming with information to help with investigations until they realize that their kin could be in danger.

For example, three young women were arrested in Elwak on the Somali border, while two other young women, also suspected of travelling to Somalia, disappeared. During the same month, two other young Kenyan women, students, confessed to their families that they had gone to Syria to join ISIS. Following partners and husbands to Somalia is a leading motivator for many women. Others are trafficked to Somalia, lured by the promise of work, educational scholarships, or even marriage, and instead find themselves held captive by Al-Shabaab.

Once with the group, women perform various roles including supporting operations, gathering intelligence, facilitating financial transactions, and recruiting new members. Women returnees report exploitation and abuse, and have physical and psychological scars. Women left behind by their male family members are often left with no livelihood and become more vulnerable to early and forced marriage and violent extremist recruitment. There has also been an increase in women's participation in violent extremism in Kenya, as extremist groups in Kwale, Kilifi, Mombasa, and Lamu counties are all actively recruiting them. Religion is often used as a recruitment tool, and women's lack of knowledge about Islam leaves them vulnerable. A needs assessment conducted by AWAPSA indicates that women serve as brokers, connecting recruiters to potential recruits. The secretive recruitment targets widows and desperate women during wedding ceremonies and burial occasions as well as at selected salons and marketplaces. The groups increasingly use women as suicide bombers, including during the attack on the central police station in Mombasa in September 2016.

If and when women and girls return to Kenya, they are afraid of their communities and the police. In fact, many have been arrested and remain in jail, even for speaking on the phone with friends in Syria or Somalia. Security forces view all returnees as criminals. Kenya's National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism, which was launched in 2016, addresses disengagement, rehabilitation, and reintegration, and advocates for increasing government capacity in these areas. While the strategy identifies psychosocial support, reconciliation of families, skills building, and community engagement to reduce stigma, it fails to incorporate a gender perspective and thus neglects challenges and needs specific to women and girls.

The National Counter-Terrorism Centre (NCTC) maintains full control over the implementation of the National Strategy, and despite a significant gap between its capacity and the goals stated in the strategy, the NCTC exerts tight control over which CSOs can work on the topic and what programming they can do. Last year, the government wanted to grant amnesty for some youths returning from Al-Shabaab; however, due to the lack of a legal framework, there was mistrust and uncertainty over what would happen. The youths disappeared.[227]

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[222] Advocacy for Women in Peace and Security (AWAPSA).
[223] SDE (2016), Terror: How jihadist group ISIS agents are recruiting gullible youths (available at: www.sde.co.ke/thenairobian/article/2000163081/terror-how-jihadist-group-isis-agents-are-recruiting-gullible-youths).
[224] Advocacy for Women in Peace and Security (AWAPSA)
[225] The East African (2018), "Somalia: Al-Shabaab - Inside the Ranks of Women Fighters," (available at: http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/ea/Al-Shabaab-women-fighters-/4552908-4285476-irtk4iz/index.html).
[226] Remarks by Sureya Roble, GSX Oslo workshop, April 2018.
[227] Ibid.

Established in 2016, AWAPSA is a national organization with almost four million members that aims to empower women politically, economically, and socially, and advocate for women in leadership positions so that they can work on crucial issues like security. In order to incorporate civil society and women's perspectives into policies at the national level, AWAPSA works with the authorities, particularly the NCTC, which is the coordinating body for all CVE work in the country. In addition to supporting the creation of country-level strategies on CVE, AWAPSA is part of a coalition developing a Women's CVE Charter as a supplement to the National Strategy, integrating missing gendered dimensions and practical guidance for implementation.

OBJECTIVES

- Build trust and rapport between communities, the police, and other security actors
- Rehabilitate and reintegrate returnees from violent extremist groups, especially women and girls

PRIMARY STAKEHOLDERS

- AWAPSA
- Community leaders
- University students
- Survivors of terrorism
- Women leaders
- HAKI Africa
- Human Rights Agenda
- Coast Education Centre (COEC)
- Moving the Goal Posts (MTG), a Kenyan sport for development organization

SECONDARY STAKEHOLDERS

- Sisters without Borders (SwB)/Maendeleo Ye Wanawake Organization
- Local police
- National Counter-Terrorism Center (NCTC)
- Anti-Terror Police Unit
- Ministry of Gender
- National Gender and Equality Commission

Strategy and Implementation

Since 2016, AWAPSA has worked with more than 100 women and girl returnees, some of whom need to relocate because they cannot return home due to community stigma. For instance, if they have children or HIV, the stigma is compounded. Through referrals from partners and word of mouth, and informed by its public support desk, AWAPSA is able to reach families in need of this support. AWAPSA engages the affected families and individuals through its own presence in the community and professional resource persons who offer psychosocial support.

AWAPSA assists them with returning to school or opening their own businesses and convenes them in small groups for mutual support. These informal peer support counselling groups for returnees, including women, help prevent a return to extremist groups. Before initiating mentorships, AWAPSA designed a curriculum highlighting key issues, with the women's participation. The Ministry of Gender has a microfinancing component, which provides seed money and technical support to groups of 40 women. As a result, AWAPSA is able to refer girl returnees to vocational training to finish their education. AWAPSA also collaborates with some private sector entities to provide financial assistance to the returnees. The socioeconomic support is critical to their recovery.

AWAPSA brings together women from the community with police to engage in direct dialogue

AWAPSA has learned that unstable homes with missing father figures is a driving force for youth to join extremist groups. High poverty levels among the Mombasa coastal communities is also a contributing factor, along with the marginalization of the region by the government. In response, AWAPSA has hosted community forums for youth in university and launched a mentorship programme to provide additional support that also bridges religious differences between Christians and Muslims. Women receive training on psychosocial support skills and are then able to offer peer counselling. They conduct trainings on countering the religious narrative of violent extremist groups, which also promotes critical thinking skills.

AWAPSA holds dialogues with women to sensitize them to the issue of violent extremism, focusing on its impact; the important role of women in preventing and countering violent extremism; and the true, non-violent meaning of jihad. They also developed the "Walking with the Police Forums" to build trust between women and local officers, who have often victimized women and created a lot of fear. In these forums, the police go into the community to meet with local people to discuss the issues affecting that particular area and find ways of addressing the challenges they face. The sessions are moderated by an expert and cover topics including the effects of violent extremism, the role of women in preventing and countering violent extremism, and the importance of psychosocial support. This has laid the groundwork for AWAPSA's reintegration programming by encouraging the returnees to disclose their experiences and inspiring them to becoming living examples for those who have faced similar difficulties.

Women and men can assume leadership roles and create a community policy to ensure safety. It also promotes an opportunity for early warning and response to incidents of violence and recruitment. In addition, AWAPSA has developed a relationship with the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit (ATPU), which considers them a knowledgeable resource. ATPU comes to them to gather information from women religious leaders, who provide counselling to women who have experienced trauma as a result of joining extremist groups.

Progress and Results

- 268 women and girl returnees shared their stories with police by meeting twice a month at the police station. The dialogues revealed important information on recruitment efforts, messaging, channels of communication, and transformation signs, and can be used for early warning and counter rhetoric efforts. For example, they explained how they were lured by the promise of a job and identified the emerging ideology of Jihad al Nikah.
- Other police stations have approached them for training to implement similar programmes.
- 40 women and 10 men have benefited from the peer mentoring sessions.
- 30 youth have initiated businesses and received tenders from the county government.

Lessons Learned and Challenges

- Establishing MOUs between the police and the community members enhances data sharing and prevention planning.
- It is critical to cooperate with law enforcement and find a balanced amount of criticism, as too much will negatively impact the relationship.
- Both women and the police lack religious knowledge, which is important for counter-narratives.

Sustainability and Potential Application

The rehabilitation and reintegration work that AWAPSA undertakes is embedded within existing multifaceted programmes to address violent extremism and promote peace and resilience, which engage diverse stakeholders at the community and national levels. Therefore, the organization is able to identify, build trust with, and meet the needs of returnees while also facilitating an enabling environment in the community through relationships with law enforcement, community leaders, women scholars, and other key stakeholders.

This case demonstrates the importance of civil society-led initiatives due to their greater accessibility and flexibility, thus filling a critical gap that responds to both security and humanitarian needs of society. However, such initiatives face an incredibly challenging and precarious operational environment that often leaves women practitioners and other civil society actors at risk of legal prosecution for their engagement of returnees potentially affiliated with terrorism. This ambiguity is a threat but also provides a space for responding to otherwise unaddressed needs in a timely and efficient manner that bypasses bureaucracy.

Sureya Roble (left), AWAPSA, with Halima Mohamed of the Coast Education Centre (COEC)

Case 3: Combating Stigma and Radicalization through Islamic Peace Education

Country	Nigeria	Thematic Areas
Organization	Allamin Foundation for Peace and Development	Law
Programme	Engaging Young Women Who Were Wives and Ex Combatants of the JAS Insurgency in MMC and Jere Local Government Area Communities of Borno State	Community, Ideology, Socioeconomics

Summary

Allamin Foundation for Peace and Development provides support to women and girl returnees and works with community leaders to reduce stigma and reintegrate them into society. Through its work, Allamin has developed a holistic community-based reintegration module, combining it with realignment of social norms in communities where Boko Haram has heavily recruited. They have also initiated two women's groups, seeking accountability and justice for victims of enforced disappearance and survivors of mass atrocities. One is led by victims and the other by relatives of Boko Haram members. Following extensive interviews with women and girl returnees in the internally displaced persons (IDP) camps of Borno State, Allamin is now working to transform the ideologies of women and girls who have returned from Boko Haram through emotional support, religious mentorship, skills training, and community sensitization. Through the local radio and religious leaders, Allamin works to counter the prevailing stigma against these girls, calling upon communities to "take back their daughters."

Context

Over the past eight years, the violent extremist group Boko Haram—whose name translates as "Western education is forbidden"—has conducted hundreds of deadly terrorist attacks, frequently using children, and increasingly women, to target mosques, schools, markets and churches in northern Nigeria.[228] Eighty-three children were used as suicide bombers alone in 2017.[229] Boko Haram has also kidnapped more than 1,000 children in Nigeria since 2013, including the 110 Dapchi schoolgirls this year.[230] During the colonial era, missionaries in Nigeria introduced Western education in regions where Islam was not present, creating a perception that such education was not for religious people. This misperception underpins Boko Haram's ideology.[231] However, poor governance, corruption, patrimonial policies, marginalization, and exclusion of communities, particularly women and girls, have all motivated people to join Boko Haram.

[228] ICAN (2018), How Hamsatu Allamin Changed Boko Haram to Boko Halal in Nigeria (available at: http://www.icanpeacework.org/2018/01/08/hamsatu-allamin-nigeria/).
[229] Al Jazeera (2017), UNICEF: Boko Haram use of child bombers soars (available at: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/08/unicef-boko-haram-child-bombers-soars-170822160541719.html).
[230] CNN (2018), UNICEF: Boko Haram has kidnapped more than 1000 children in Nigeria (available at: https://www.cnn.com/2018/04/13/africa/boko-haram-children-abduction-intl/index.html).
[231] ICAN (2018), How Hamsatu Allamin Changed Boko Haram to Boko Halal in Nigeria (available at: http://www.icanpeacework.org/2018/01/08/hamsatu-allamin-nigeria/).

The government of Nigeria initially responded to Boko Haram with a Joint Task Force (JTF) of all security agencies, led by the military.[232] The military mismanaged the situation with gross human rights violations, such as arresting all youth and burning homes in the name of counter-terrorism operations. Since Boko Haram exists within local communities, this behaviour increased recruitment for Boko Haram to take revenge.[233] When the military intervenes, they usually arrest the men and their wives and families are not informed of their whereabouts.

Allamin Foundation for Peace and Development is a not-for-profit, non-political, non-religious and non-governmental peacebuilding organization, founded in response to the pervasive illiteracy level, widespread abject poverty, and long period of neglect suffered in the northeast region of Nigeria. These factors led to emergence of the Boko Haram insurgency in Borno, from where it spread across to northern Nigeria to extend throughout the Sahel, resulting in a humanitarian and social crisis to which local actors did not have the capacity to respond. Allamin Foundation aims to significantly reduce the entrenched culture of silence in society and empower stakeholders to take responsibility for managing their conflict and grievances in a non-violent manner. Through its field research, Allamin has identified four categories of women and girl returnees:

- Those who joined Boko Haram because of the ideology and became commanders
- Those who married men with the ideology
- Those abducted by Boko Haram
- Those who are children under the age of 19 and became child soldiers.

Women and girls who have been associated with Boko Haram through marriage or as child soldiers have returned due to experiences of violence and injustice within the group. Between the ages of 12 and 35 years, often married and either pregnant or with young children, these girls have no homes to return to. Some who are still girls, but considered women by society, have reportedly abandoned their children to find a way to survive. Boko Haram kidnapped girls as a strategy for breeding future jihadis.[234] This knowledge has created fear and stigma that poses a challenge to community acceptance upon their return. Maiduguri has three IDP camps where women—when screened and released by the military—finally settle to continue their lives. As women return to their communities, community members do not know whether the women have truly disengaged from Boko Haram and therefore do not trust them. As they do not know the level of their amount or type of involvement in the group, they treat the women with suspicion, stigmatize them and their children, and exclude them.

OBJECTIVES	STAKEHOLDERS	
■ Deradicalization, reintegration and rehabilitation of ex-wives, ex-fighters and those associated with them in Borno State ■ Reducing stigma against women and girl returnees in local communities through intra-community dialogue.	■ Allamin Foundation for Peace and Development ■ Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN) ■ HERWA Community Development Association ■ Jam'atu Nasril Islam (JNI)	■ Islamic scholars ■ Skilled persons and tradespeople ■ Ministry of Women's Affairs ■ State Emergency Management Authority (IDP camp coordinator)

[232] Ibid.
[233] Ibid.
[234] Allamin, Hamsatu at GSX Oslo workshop, April 2018.

Strategy and Implementation

The rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives of Allamin Foundation, built on years of work in a context of ongoing war and conflict, are conducted by Mrs. Hamsatu Allamin in partnership with several organizations, notably the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN), HERWA Community Development Association, and Jam'atu Nasril Islam (JNI). By organizing dialogues with multiple stakeholders—both state and non-state actors including service providers, CSOs, and security agencies—they have built trusting relationships with communities affected by Boko Haram to help them heal from their trauma and prepare themselves to welcome returnees back into their community.

Allamin uses intra-community dialogue to foster reintegration of returnees and dialogue within schools to support the return of children from communities where violent extremist groups had heavily recruited. They also support the economic empowerment of women by training them in skills and income-generating activities, promoting the culture of saving, and identifying trades or small businesses of their choice for which they are given small seed grants. This makes them self-reliant and encourages them to promote their children's education.

Allamin has worked with Islamic scholars to develop counter-narratives to address the religious ideology underlying extremism, weaving together human rights principles and conflict resolution and peacebuilding skills with Islamic teachings to transform the societal attitude of "Boko Haram" into "Boko Halal". Utilizing local radio, Allamin shares religious messages, including Qur'anic verses and Hadith (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad); good practices from other conflict-affected areas; and relevant research findings to help the community understand that abducted girls returning from violent extremist groups are not at fault. It is necessary to win their hearts and minds so as to interrupt the circle of violent thinking and indoctrination of their children and the young people who live with them.

Hamsatu Allamin, founder of Allamin Foundation

In the Borno state of northeast Nigeria, Allamin has formed networks of women in response to the number who have returned to their communities after being rescued from occupied territories, or from the Sambisa Forests. The women return for many reasons: to see family members, whom they claim to have missed; because of marital discord and violence from husbands and co-wives; to escape the increasing unhappiness with violence in the Boko Haram camps, noting hypocrisy, injustice, and concerns about safety; or to avoid being forced to carry out suicide attacks, which women with Boko Haram must undertake if they have been widowed twice. Others who have returned said they did not choose to disassociate themselves but circumstances such as heavy rain or getting lost in the course of an operation forced them to surrender to soldiers. Notably, none of the women return as a result of changed ideology.

Another group consists of women who have experienced separation and arbitrary arrest by the Nigerian military, with missing husbands, fathers or sons, who are now at risk of radicalization because of the frustration of losing their loved ones. Some of these women were arrested and detained along with their children for as long as three years. Allamin has advocated for these women to be released or handed over to the police for investigation as

Young women reading in northeast Nigeria

they have grave concerns of human rights violations in these centres. However, the police are not perceived as trustworthy since the military and vigilantes have played a more prominent role in protecting communities from Boko Haram. Working with women Islamic scholars, Allamin strives to create a safe space for them within both the IDP camps and receiving communities where they are discriminated against due to their connection with Boko Haram.

Along with other human rights defenders and organizations, Allamin has contributed to interviewing 1,600 women who have formed the Knasar (Knifar) Movement of women separated from their husbands. They said they are not Boko Haram and seek accountability and justice for their losses. Allamin is helping organize them to raise their collective voice. Women and young girls with this profile spanned a wide spectrum in their attitude towards their former groups. Many are actively seeking and planning ways to rejoin, especially given what they have gone through while in military detention, and finding society worse than when they left it. Thus, the need to engage them in deradicalization and rehabilitation cannot be overemphasized.

Based on this research, Allamin is developing a deradicalization, rehabilitation and reintegration initiative that seeks to instil positive behaviours in young women who are ex-wives and ex-combatants through life, social, and economic skills-building. Three social groups of 10 women each are being formed, and a safe space was created for them to meet and interact with each other. This enables them to reflect on their past, share experiences and gain access to services like psychosocial and trauma healing support. Through dialogue with women Islamic scholars, they are introduced to newly developed and accepted norms to change their psyche through religious messaging, based on an understanding of their perception and indoctrination. After identifying what skills they have or want to learn, Allamin facilitates training and mentorship by skilled persons in order to build economic independence, which is vital for resilience and re-engagement.

Progress and Results

- Emergence of more women with this profile, who come forth on their own to reveal their identity and seek to be included in these life-changing initiatives

Lessons Learned and Challenges

- Focused engagement with women returnees can actually influence their thinking and result in them realizing their mistakes in joining or marrying into the group.
- Almost all the beneficiaries talked about the desire for peace in their wishes for the future; engaging with them rekindled their hopes and they are eager to cooperate to contribute to making it happen.
- Every individual wants to be given attention and be listened to no matter how violent their disposition.
- Despondency and hopelessness about effecting any change in society is now giving way to real hope, as they are excited by being remembered and considered worthy by a portion of society.
- Civil society actors engaging returnees risk being branded as sympathizers of Boko Haram by the authorities.
- The empowerment women and girls enjoyed in the extremist camps, combined with the disempowering nature of their circumstances now, will likely generate re-radicalization if not handled quickly.
- The sense of hopelessness and desire to return to Boko Haram was striking in many.

Sustainability and Potential Application

The results of this initiative will be used to design a live phone-in radio programme to reach the wider society. The programme will address stigma and other issues related to returning women and girls. Due to the challenges of access and security risks, such an intervention is rare. The findings and outcomes of this initiative will be published in various forms and made available to those working in different contexts for comparative study and reference.

Hamsatu Allamin speaks during a workshop

Case 4: From Sewing Suicide Belts to Sowing Sustainable Peace

Country	Pakistan	Thematic Areas
Organization	PAIMAN Alumni Trust	Security
Programme	Building Sustainable Peace by Engaging Women and Youth TOLANAs in Charsadda district in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province	Community, Ideology, Socioeconomics

Summary

Established in 2004, PAIMAN works to counter violent extremism by engaging with youth and women. They utilize religious counternarratives, literature, drama, and vocational training to dissuade people from joining violent extremist groups and rehabilitate vulnerable and radicalized youth. Local women and youth who have completed PAIMAN's positive transformation programme form volunteer peace groups they call "Tolanas," a word which means "together" in Pashto. Tolanas work with each other and local police and religious leaders to understand local drivers of violent extremism, provide early warning of potential violence, and intervene to promote social cohesion and non-violent conflict resolution. By promoting the culture of volunteerism, TOLANAs provide young people with a sense of purpose and recognition from the community for their service. PAIMAN also raises awareness of women's important potential role in prevention through training, publishing, policy advocacy, and production of media content. In 2014, PAIMAN developed a television series portraying stories of radicalization to educate a wider audience about the warning signs.

Context

Since 2015, Pakistan has witnessed a rise in women's participation in jihadi groups such as Al-Qaeda in the Indian subcontinent (AQIS) and ISIS; one women's wing of AQIS has trained more than 500 women and girl suicide bombers.[238] Before 2015, women were already active members of extremist groups such as Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). In addition to functioning as suicide bombers, women have played integral roles in fundraising and "domestic radicalization," by indoctrinating their children and other women with extremist ideology.[239] As recently as 2011, women could easily carry weapons through checkpoints because their roles in extremist groups were not considered. Women are often confined to the home but are susceptible to radicalization and play an integral role in supporting violent extremist groups, for example by raising money or recruiting others.[240]

Neither the National Internal Security Policy nor the 20-point National Action Plan (NAP) for Countering Terrorism adopted in 2014 by the Government of Pakistan addresses the issue of rehabilitation or reintegration of members of violent extremist groups.[241] On the contrary, the first point of the NAP calls for the execution of

[233] The Diplomat (2017), Pakistan's Women Jihadis: Understanding the nexus between women and terrorism in Pakistan (available at: https://thediplomat.com/2017/04/pakistans-women-jihadis/).
[239] Ibid.
[240] Jadoon, Amira and Mahmood, Sara (2017), Militant Rivalries Extend to Female Recruitment in Pakistan (available at: https://ctc.usma.edu/ctc-perspectives-militant-rivalries-extend-to-female-recruitment-in-pakistan/).
[241] The Mackenzie Institute (2016), Counter Terrorism Policy Measures: A Critical Analysis of Pakistan's National Action Plan (available at: http://mackenzieinstitute.com/counter-terrorism-policy-measures-a-critical-analysis-of-pakistans-national-action-plan/).

convicted terrorists and resulted in a lifting of the moratorium on the death penalty. The NAP does not specify actions required by different government ministries and agencies at various levels, nor does it address the role of other stakeholders such as local civil society, especially women and youth, in building resilience to violent extremism at the grassroots level.

The Pakistani military operates prison-based rehabilitation programmes and has established a number of outside centres. In some cases, the administration of these centres is later handed over to CSOs. Shrinking space for civil society presents a serious challenge to all independent CSOs, but especially to those working on peace and security issues, who are often accused of operating in support of a western agenda. Overcoming this perception requires sustained presence and trust-building efforts with both communities and local police. For example, PAIMAN reports an experience of an NGO communicating vital information about a potential attack to a local police station. The police did not take action due to the lack of trust.[242] As a result, another terrorist attack occurred that might have been prevented.

Mossarat Qadeem at the United Nations

Some reasons for joining violent extremist groups are individual: Youth feel excluded and neglected within both their families and communities. Many are vulnerable to finding a sense of purpose with extremist groups. PAIMAN finds that poverty, illiteracy, foreign intervention, power and money are the driving forces for people to join violent extremist groups, as opposed to religion.[243] The majority of women, however, support extremist groups due to the religious belief that they are contributing to jihad and will be rewarded in the afterlife.

OBJECTIVES	STAKEHOLDERS
■ To provide alternative ideologies to those of violent extremist groups still embedded in religious and cultural tradition ■ To promote economic empowerment of women ■ To foster communal social cohesion and citizenship.	■ Women ■ Youth at risk ■ PAIMAN Alumni Trust ■ Local police

Programme Strategy and Implementation

Since 2008 PAIMAN has worked in Charsadda, a conservative and remote area of Pakistan, to prevent extremism. They started by working with youth to prevent their recruitment by extremist groups and supported their leadership to develop community dialogues. PAIMAN also promotes the sociopolitical and economic empowerment of women, who are great influencers in their communities.

To reach the women, they first need to engage men and tribal elders. Since women cannot leave the home alone and are often reluctant to speak openly of their experiences, PAIMAN speaks with them in groups and provides a platform to hear their stories and learn about their challenges. Accompanied by local women with whom they've worked previously, known as TOLANA peace groups, they take the necessary time to build relationships and gain trust. Building trust in these communities is a gigantic task as NGOs are considered foreign agents. Having a person who already has credibility and recognition in the community lead the work creates an entry point, making the task a little easier.

[242] Remarks by Mossarat Qadeem, GSX Oslo workshop, April 2018.
[243] ICAN Partner Mossarat Qadeem (Pakistan) Interviewed on BBC Woman's Hour, (available at: http://www.icanpeacework.org/2013/09/04/ican-partner-mossarat-qadeem-pakistan-interviewed-on-bbc-womans-hour/).

As they learned more, the groups discovered that these women supported violent extremist groups, which their sons had joined. Indeed, some of the women sewed suicide belts and jackets for their sons and other members of violent extremist groups, which was a source of economic support. In addition, women often don't have significant knowledge of the Qur'an and cannot read Arabic, so extremist groups use gender-specific ideology to recruit women by discussing women's roles and introducing the concept of "female jihad." Raising money or pursuing other activities for extremist groups gives women a sense of purpose.

"What I have learned from PAIMAN's training about women's rights in Islam, the multiple forms of jihad that I can carry out not to harm others and the harmful impact of violent extremism, I will impart to my three daughters so they are not influenced by any propaganda… or extremists' narratives in their lives."

– Gulzar Begum of Rajjar village in Cahrasadda

Therefore, PAIMAN uses the Qur'an and cultural context to provide counter-perspectives to this ideology and discusses the concept of jihad. For example, they translate specific Qur'anic verses into local languages and provide the larger context to help women understand them differently. However, religion has long been perceived as the world of men, so PAIMAN has used the socio-cultural aspect of "Do No Harm", which is inherent in the code of Pashtunwali (the traditional set of ethics governing the Pashtun). More recently, PAIMAN has drawn upon Pukhtoon literature (e.g. poetry), replete with information and stories of peace, to create new indigenous counter-narratives. By building their critical thinking skills, the women change their thinking and have the tools to persuade others. The fear of losing their sons was also a motivating factor for change. The women started to engage with their sons to bring about an attitudinal transformation and become more productive citizens.

In addition, PAIMAN provides women with an alternative source of livelihood with basic skills training: samosa-making, fabric dyeing, embroidery, quilting, hand printing, and bag-making. The women can produce these products at home, for their sons and male relatives to sell. Simultaneously, PAIMAN teaches the women about their rights, their role, and Islam, as well as about violent extremism, so they learn the signs of radicalization and are better prepared to intervene.

Youth TOLANA members

"As a semi-literate woman, I never thought I will be able to carry out social work or influence the thinking of other women in my community. Thanks to PAIMAN for giving me the knowledge and the skill to educate other women about early signs of violent extremism and its negative impact, and to have dialogue with my community elders and youth on the same. I understand the power of knowledge and skill now…"

– PAIMAN programme participant, Pakistan

PAIMAN developed a training manual for women's roles and community engagement in PVE, effective leadership, media communication skills, and dissemination of alternative narratives and advocacy. They also developed a guidebook demonstrating four livelihood skills: stitching, tie dye, making samosa patties, and cosmetology. For just $2000 USD a month, PAIMAN can engage, educate and provide livelihood skills for over 60 women, who support and influence their families and communities.[244]

TOLANAs work with traditional leaders to maintain local peace

PAIMAN positively engages youth and community members to help them understand their problems, feel a sense of responsibility for their communities, and foster a sense of belonging and social cohesion. PAIMAN teaches people to respect each other even if they disagree, without feeling unsafe and disrespected. Through community interaction and dialogue about the problems, they ensure people feel included and their voices are heard. By emphasizing shared values and common goals, they help build a sense of solidarity. They have also asked imams to provide counselling to those returning from violent extremist groups and worked with communities to decrease the stigma and assume ownership of their transformation.

In March 2014, PAIMAN started a drama series with different cases to reach out to the people. In response, they received phone calls from mothers who experienced what they watched at home but did not know it as a process of radicalization. PAIMAN also produced a booklet about how women can communicate with their sons if they observe signs of radicalization.

Progress and Results

- Twenty women converted and joined mothers' TOLANAs (volunteer peace groups) where they promised not to engage in any fundraising, recruitment, or other activity that would support violent extremist groups.
- 60 percent of women stopped sewing suicide belts and pursued other livelihoods; more than 40 percent were convinced after just one encounter.
- Local women teaching in madrassas have approached PAIMAN and asked to use their peace education material.
- PAIMAN works with about 400 young men and boys to move away from violent ideologies.

[244] ICAN (2018), Mossarat Qadeem and Tolana Mothers: Cutting off Extremists' Resources—One Thread at a Time, (available at: http://www.icanpeacework.org/2018/01/25/mossarat-qadeem-tolana-mothers-cutting-off-extremists-resources-one-thread-time/).

Lessons Learned and Challenges

- Working with youth to broaden their sense of respect and connection with other ethnic and sectarian groups, and to Pakistan as a whole, is important for positive transformation.
- Community scepticism that former violent extremist group members have changed is a challenge to their rehabilitation.

Sustainability and Potential Application

By including women and youth in their approach to positive transformation (deradicalization), PAIMAN closed the loop and facilitated the emergence of a sustainable, authentic community peace architecture. Working together, these women and youth groups have now been able to prevent attacks in their communities through an early warning and response system, because of trust built both between groups in the community and with local police.

Women TOLANA members

Case 5: Healing from Trauma and Reclaiming Dignity through Economic Independence

Country	Uganda	Thematic Areas
Organization	Kitgum Women's Peace Initiative (KIWEPI)	Policy, Law, Community, Socioeconomics, Psychology
Programme	Women's Access to Justice	

Summary

Between 2004 and 2015, in the aftermath of Uganda's civil war with the extremist Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), the Kitgum Women's Peace Initiative (KIWEPI) has received more than 600 young women and girls returning from the bush who have suffered from various types of trauma as both victims and perpetrators of violence. KIWEPI provides rehabilitation services including medical treatment, psychosocial therapy, mentoring, vocational and life skills training, and accompaniment throughout the process of reintegration in society. KIWEPI works with community leaders to sensitize them to the needs of women and girl returnees and address their stigmatization. KIWEPI advocated for these women and girl's legal rights and their access to justice by mediating land dispute cases, facilitating community dialogues, and establishing village savings and loan associations to promote livelihoods for women and men. This experience has enabled KIWEPI to assist the Government of Uganda to integrate a gender-responsive lens in the National Peace and Recovery Framework.

Context

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), led by Joseph Kony, has waged war against the Government of Uganda since 1987.[245] Designated a terrorist organization by the United States government, the LRA has perpetrated brutal violence including rape, maiming, and killing, against Ugandan civilians, and abducted at least 20,000 children to use as soldiers, sex slaves, and domestic servants.[246] Kony, a self-described prophet bent on ruling Uganda according to the Ten Commandments, instructed his followers to kidnap children as young as eight years old and brainwash them into killing their neighbours.[247] Girls and boys were often abducted on their way to school or from their homes after witnessing the murder of their parents. They were then brainwashed in the bush and would be killed or tortured if they tried to escape. Women and girls played different roles within the LRA, carrying food, caring for children, and serving as wives and even commanders. Nearly two million people were displaced due to the conflict.[248] When the LRA was driven out of northern Uganda, they were pushed to neighbouring countries and remain active in the Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, and Sudan, where it's reported that nearly 5,000 people who were abducted or joined the group have returned since 2000.[249]

[245] Christopher R. Day (2017): "Survival Mode": Rebel Resilience and the Lord's Resistance Army, Terrorism and Political Violence (available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2017.1300580).
[246] Human Rights Watch (2003), Stolen Children: Abduction and Recruitment in Northern Uganda, Vol.15, No. 7 (A).
[247] Lidman, Melanie (2017), "Heart of forgiveness: Ugandan women once child soldiers now lead peace." Global Sisters Report.
[248] Hayden, Sally (2018), "Returning LRA hostages face new ordeal over land conflicts in rural Uganda" (available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-uganda-war-landrights/returning-lra-hostages-face-new-ordeal-over-land-conflicts-in-rural-uganda-idUSKBN1I417E).
[249] LRA Crisis Tracker. Accessed June 22, 2018 (available at: https://crisistracker.org/dashboard).

There were few policies in place at the time to inform responses to those returning from the LRA, especially women and children. When children appeared in the camps and were received at reception centres, humanitarian staff didn't know where to refer them. In some cases, commanders from the LRA tried to identify them and bring them back to the bush, posing a security challenge to camp administrators and highlighting the need for agreement on policies for their protection. Problems, such as police using intimidation rather than investigative tactics when interacting with communities, abounded.

Gladys Canogura, KIWEPI, during participatory workshop convened for this research

Women were not recognized as ex-combatants due to prevailing gender stereotypes and taking on multiple roles within the group, a fact that continues to yield confusion about how to deal with returning women and girls. The lack of programmes left them without compensation, support services, trauma counselling, or other rehabilitation. Those with children from LRA fighters faced the burden of how to care for them while facing stigma and questions about their paternity. In Uganda's social structure, a child's clan affiliation is determined by his or her father. With paternity unknown, mothers point children to their grandfathers, breeding confusion: "How can that one be my father as he is your father?," they ask.[250] Gladys Canogura, Executive Director of the Kitgum Women's Peace Initiative (KIWEPI), fears that failure to address the identity crisis stemming from children not knowing their roots makes society susceptible to further conflict. Today more than 1,000 children remain missing, and while the ongoing search can provide closure for some through reunification, for others it is through burial of their loved ones, as mass graves are now being unearthed during development projects. Grieving parents remain in communities now receiving former LRA members, compounding the challenge of reintegration. Many of these issues stem from the fact that the initial National Peace and Recovery Framework, developed by the Office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Gender, was not gender-responsive.

The Kitgum Women's Peace Initiative (KIWEPI) is an independent women-led civil society organization established in 1999 to advocate for peace, reconciliation, rehabilitation and reintegration of formerly abducted women and girls. KIWEPI was initiated to foster a peaceful and informed society that is engaged in sustainable development. In 2008, KIWEPI joined a task force steered by Isis-Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange (Isis-WICCE), an international organization headquartered in Uganda. KIWEPI and other CSOs mobilized to review the National Peace and Recovery Framework and related documents and identify gender gaps and became part of the working committees together with staff in the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Gender, and other women-led organizations. They were charged with integrating this perspective and ensuring the participation of women and girls in the country's demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) programmes.

Gladys Canogura (right), KIWEPI, conducts trauma counseling workshop with Dr. Helen Liebling

[250] Remarks by Gladys Canogura, GSX Workshop, April 2018 in Oslo, Norway.

The task force advocated to include indicators for monitoring implementation of the Framework, including on livelihoods, peacebuilding, psychosocial services, education, water and sanitation, and health and hygiene. This work helped to shape the guidelines: All the health centres and hospitals had solar panels constructed to provide light for women during deliveries, and pregnant mothers got "Mama Kits" with mosquito nets. Health infrastructure received attention, was staffed and relatively well-stocked with equipment and medications. Community access to health centres was improved through referrals. In the agricultural sector, women were included in the leadership of various farmers' groups to supervise and monitor allocation of livestock, seedlings, seeds, fertilizers and equipment. Women were also included equally in procurement processes, so they could participate in contracted work and evaluations.

While it may not be obvious to everyone, maternal care and equal access to business contracts are both highly relevant to the effective rehabilitation and reintegration of women and girls who have suffered from sexual violence and have become heads of households as a result of the war. Uganda's National Peace and Recovery Framework and subsequent efforts to gender its implementation highlight the multidimensional nature of this work.

Gladys Canogura (right) receives EU human rights award

OBJECTIVES

- Educate the community on peacebuilding and conflict resolution and provide comprehensive psychosocial support and trauma management for the healing of war-affected women and girls, and their children.
- Increase women's capacity to participate in income-generating activities to increase their household income for sustainable livelihoods and economic empowerment.
- Educate and engage women in the process of reviving positive cultural practices in Acholi in order to integrate their children born in captivity.

STAKEHOLDERS

- Women and girl returnees including child mothers, orphans and other vulnerable children
- KIWEPI
- Isis-WICCE
- Coalition for Action on 1325 (CoACT)
- CEWIGO, Uganda Women Network, Peoples' Voice for Peace, Teso Women Peace Activist, KICWA, CPA, Luwero Women Development Association
- Coventry University
- Amnesty International
- St. Joseph Hospital, Kitgum Government Hospital, and Mulago National Referrals Hospital and Mutabika National Referrals
- Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
- Private foundations
- Community leaders including Ker Kalkwaro Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative
- Businesspeople and associations including the Lorado market vendors, Kitgum Business Forum, and Kitgum Chamber of Commerce
- Gulu University, Makerere University, St. Bakihta Girls Secondary, Y.Y.Okot Memorial College, Kitgum Comprehensive College, Kitgum Town College, Kitgum Boys Primary School, Kitgum Girls Primary School, and Akado Primary School

Programme Strategy and Implementation

KIWEPI focuses on the rehabilitation and reintegration of women and girls from the ages of 16 to 23 years old returning from the LRA, both those caught and disarmed by government forces and those who voluntarily surrendered. Working across four districts in northern Uganda (Kitgum, Lamwo, Pader, and Agago), KIWEPI's programming is comprehensive, including:

- Peacebuilding and economic empowerment for sustainable livelihoods;
- Psychosocial support and trauma management for formerly abducted girls and women survivors of gender-based violence, and documentation of their experiences;
- Social protection, legal services and parenting skills-building;
- Life skills and vocational trainings for formerly abducted women and girls, including child mothers;
- Advocacy for gender equality, human rights, democracy, good governance and social accountability, including the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and 1820.

Many women and girls returned because their commander had died from AIDS or they were pregnant or had children. When they first started to appear, the girls were initially unable to talk due to trauma.

"I cried several times alone in the wilderness and in my bedroom without sharing with anyone my pain, sentiments, and feelings of the experiences I had underwent. It was not easy to tell anybody what I was going through, it was difficult to open up with people and friends especially on sexual abuses and offences, the situation was too shameful."

– Formerly abducted child mother, KIWEPI-KITGUM

KIWEPI gave them time and activities to engage their minds and reduce symptoms like nightmares. Sometimes KIWEPI would invite a religious leader to pray for them and assist with spiritual rehabilitation, religious counselling, and spiritual healing designed to foster hope, build confidence and help manage trauma. The women and girls believe that, by taking their suffering and pain to the cross, the church can contribute to the healing of their traumatic wounds.

They also introduced vocational skills training but observed that many girls still could not communicate with each other. With time, individual counselling, sharing experiences of other people affected by conflict in other countries, and building interpersonal skills and communication, they started to disclose their traumatic experiences. In order to cope with their emotions and the trauma of being abducted, the girls began acting in plays, playing music, and dancing. Those who had reached primary school level three and beyond were able to further express their feelings through drawing.

KIWEPI also provides training in advocacy and communication skills and encourages women and girls to advocate for compensation from the Government of Uganda. Access to justice remains a challenge for many women, so KIWEPI sends advocates to court when returnees choose to engage the legal process. KIWEPI has also advocated with religious and cultural leaders to mediate such disputes due to the role of customary laws in these conflicts.

"[Counselling] has made me more merciful, my nightmares are fewer and I am now able to forgive compared to when I was in the bush."[251]

– Alice, a KIWEPI programme participant

KIWEPI also works with women to form cooperatives, known as village savings loan associations, to foster returnees' economic independence. The groups provide a safe gathering space for women, where they can share sensitive information, such as resources for survivors of gender-based violence. These livelihood programmes reflect 70 percent female and 30 percent male participation to respond to the economic vulnerability of both genders while also promoting women's voices. The women are now engaged in small-scale businesses, such as marketing of produce and tailoring, and are able to pay for school supplies and uniforms for their children in primary school.

In addition to the rehabilitation and preparation of returning women and girls for re-entering society, the reintegration process requires engaging the receiving community. In Uganda, communities shunned the returnees because their presence is "a reminder of the things they did and people they killed, a reminder of impossible loss."[252] Women returning to husbands face an additional challenge when they have gynaecological problems stemming from sexual violence, children from another father, or have contracted HIV. Child mothers and girls caring for younger siblings require additional support such as educational sponsorship for children born in captivity and health support for the removal of bomb fragments and bullets from their bodies. KIWEPI engages community leaders and family members to facilitate the acceptance of returning women and girls, using music, dance, and drama to sensitize communities to the experiences and needs of returnees and educate the public about stigma and the harm it causes. Dialogues establish the status of the returnees and foster engagement with the community. KIWEPI follows up after a few months to observe how they have reintegrated into their communities.

Progress and Results

- KIWEPI has worked with legal aides to settle five land dispute cases for returnees.
- More than 150 women are running small-scale businesses and are now self-reliant and economically independent.
- Educational sponsorship has been provided for at least 50 children born in captivity.
- At least six girls have completed some form of higher education: one is a laboratory technician now volunteering with Gulu Referrals Hospital, two are doing social work, one has joined the security forces, and two are still seeking employment.
- Many returnees have been rehabilitated to the point that they were able to get married. At least 20 have supportive husbands.
- Local leaders have been mobilized to combat stigma. They are trying to sensitize the community and enforce laws protecting returnees' human rights, as well as implement the Violence Act, enacted in 2010, and CEDAW.

[251] The Star (2012), Female child soldiers with the Lord's Resistance Army struggle to return to normal, (available at: https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2012/05/19/female_child_soldiers_with_the_lords_resistance_army_struggle_to_return_to_normal.html).
[252] Lidman, Melanie (2017), "Heart of forgiveness: Ugandan women once child soldiers now lead peace" (available at: https://www.globalsistersreport.org/news/equality/heart-forgiveness-ugandan-women-once-child-soldiers-now-lead-peace-51061).
Pham, P. et al. (2007), When the War Ends: A Population-Based Survey on Attitudes about Peace, Justice, and Social Reconstruction in Northern Uganda (available at: https://hhi.harvard.edu/publications/when-war-ends-population-based-survey-attitudes-about-peace-justice-and-social).

Lessons Learned and Challenges

- When the girls need to interact with authorities or military officials, KIWEPI asks the authorities to leave their uniforms and guns behind, as the presence of weapons and uniforms can trigger a traumatic response.

- Despite their rehabilitation and reintegration work, some of the returnees' marriages are not working well.

- Including men in programmes targeted for women can be effective if structured well to preserve women's leadership and security. This engagement mobilizes men to act as change agents and encourage fellow men to allow women's participation in leadership and decision-making processes.

- Stigma is more prevalent in certain locations where alcohol consumption is very high, KIWEPI has learned through regular home visits, community dialogues, and talk show programmes.

- Structural inequalities such as lack of access to justice and land inhibit successful rehabilitation and reintegration.

- Returnees are vulnerable to drug addiction as a coping mechanism to deal with trauma and ongoing stigma. In response, KIWEPI supported the Kitgum District Local Government to formulate policies aimed at reducing alcohol, drug and substance abuse.

Sustainability and Potential Application

By sharing their experience and expertise through the task force on the National Peace and Reconciliation Framework, KIWEPI is supporting systemic change at the national level. The experience of Ugandan women and girls who returned from LRA is instructive for policymakers and practitioners dealing with current conflict contexts where violent extremist groups are primary actors. For example, returnees from Boko Haram, many of whom were also abducted, face strikingly similar challenges upon their return. The complexity of such contexts, where armed conflict and peace processes intersect imperfectly with counter-terrorism measures and efforts to prevent violent extremism, remains a challenge to formal DDR processes.

The members of this choir are returnees for whom singing is a part of their rehabilitation

Case 6: Deradicalization through Psychosocial Therapy in Prisons

Country	Lebanon	Thematic Areas
Organization	Rescue Me	Security, Socioeconomics, Psychology
Programme	I Know What to Tell My Brother	

Summary

Rescue Me, located in Beirut, Lebanon, is a non-profit organization with a vision of a society with safer homes, schools and communities. Founded by Nancy and Maya Yammout in 2011, Rescue Me's mission is to undertake crime prevention through social development for a more advanced and connected community, and to improve quality of life for all by providing educational workshops in schools, prisons and community centres. Rescue Me believes strongly that being aware of risk factors early can significantly reduce levels of crime and violence later in life. A team of professional social workers, Rescue Me has led ground-breaking research in Lebanese prisons with violent criminals and members of violent extremist groups, including ISIL, Jabhat al-Nusra, Fatah al-Islam, and Al Quds Brigade, and their families. The work was conducted in Roumieh and Barabar el Khazen prisons, in the Hay el Gharbi neighbourhood of Beirut, and in the towns of Bar Elies and Majdal Anjar in Bekaa Governorate to better understand the underlying reasons for radicalization and design and deliver deradicalization and rehabilitation programming anchored in psychosocial therapy. Seventy inmates—61 men and 9 women—participated in this programme over a period of nine years. Rescue Me's interventions combine psychosocial support, specifically art therapy and aggression replacement therapy (ART), to rehabilitate those who are radicalized and prepare them for reintegration into the community.

Context

Lebanon has long been subject to violent extremism by militant groups, but in 2007 attacks by Fatah al-Islam marked the presence of Al-Qaeda-linked terrorist groups in the country.[253] Recent years have seen the rise of extremists affiliated with ISIS, with more than 900 Lebanese citizens travelling to Syria as foreign fighters.[254] However, this number does not include Hezbollah fighters involved in Syria's civil war, estimated to number between 7,000 and 9,000 as of 2015.[255] Given Lebanon's porous borders, it is difficult to get accurate figures, especially for returnees who are scared to reveal themselves for fear of going to prison. Among these returnees are certainly family members of fighters, but the numbers of associated women and children are unknown. They have performed diverse roles in the violence and conflict including supporting, recruiting, financing, and training fighters.

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[253] The Saban Center at the Brookings Institution (2007), Al-Qaeda's Terrorist Threat to UNIFIL (available at: https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/20070608saab_ranstorp.pdf).)
[254] According to The Soufan Group there were 900 there in 2015, more recent reports do not include numbers for Lebanon. See:
The Soufan Group (2015), Foreign Fighters: An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq (available at: http://soufangroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/TSG_ForeignFightersUpdate_FINAL3.pdf)
The Soufan Group (2017), Beyond the Caliphate: Foreign Fighters and Returnees (available at: http://thesoufancenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Beyond-the-Caliphate-Foreign-Fighters-and-the-Threat-of-Returnees-TSC-Report-October-2017-v3.pdf).
[255] Counter-Extremism Project (2018), Lebanon: Extremism & Counter-Extremism (available at: https://www.counterextremism.com/countries/lebanon).)

Lebanon is also home to two million Syrians fleeing war, adding to the existing 450,000 Palestinian refugees that already comprise 10 percent of Lebanon's population.[256] The influx has strained society in ways that exacerbate vulnerability to the call of radical groups. Many displaced Syrians and children of unregistered marriages lack identity papers, making them de facto stateless people and preventing them from accessing education and employment. ISIL provided passports, money, and independence. "I have become a human being," one former fighter reportedly remarked in an interview.[257]

With everything else it is faced with, Lebanon is now at the front lines of tackling the complexity of returnees from ISIS and other violent extremist groups. Currently, there is no comprehensive strategy for dealing with returning violent extremists. Lebanon's 2017 National Strategy for Preventing Violent Extremism was drafted through a broad, whole-of-government process that failed to engage CSOs.[258] The strategy identifies specific policies and activities related to the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners or returnees in at least four of its nine pillars: Pillar 1 on Dialogue and Conflict Prevention, Pillar 3 on Justice, Human Rights, and the Rule of Law, Pillar 5 on Gender Equality and Empowering Women, and Pillar 7 on Economic Development and Job Creation. The Ministry of Justice is responsible for implementing most of these recommendations, including taking over the prison administration from the Ministry of the Interior, with several specific mandates falling to the Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the Ministry of Public Health. None of the recommendations specifically address the rehabilitation and reintegration of women affiliated with violent extremist groups, though the strategy does advocate exploring the establishment of a rehabilitation centre for minor girls.

The Ministry of Defense leads existing efforts with a highly militarized approach focused on securing the border. Inmates in Roumieh Prison claim that sentencing depends on a returning fighter's sectarian affiliation, saying that most Sunni Muslim returnees—assumed to be affiliated with ISIS—go directly to prison, while Shia who have fought alongside Hezbollah and the Syrian Defense Forces are usually not detained or prosecuted. The returnees outside prison, who have managed to return and remain free, are usually smarter and more dangerous. There is little knowledge of or attention to this problem by Lebanese authorities, and NGOs are not permitted contact with these individuals.

Roumieh Prison has two specific blocks for Sunni and Salafist extremists that house 1,130 men. If someone is reported missing and then returns, and the Internal Security Forces (ISF) know indirectly that they have travelled to fight with ISIL, they can be detained on suspicion for five to six years, without a trial or conviction. In one case, a man detained for eight years was later proven innocent. The prison includes inmates with all levels of education and economic status, from workers, to educated professionals, to people with fancy cars. A prison staff of 30 oversees each block. Inmates often face years of incarceration without access to legal, psychosocial, or other support services. The men are held together for long periods of time without adequate programmes in place and with limited capacity for oversight. These conditions mean that even under state supervision, recruitment and radicalization continues in prisons.

Women extremist detainees are held in the general population of Barabar el Khazen Prison. Their sentences range between 1½ and 3 years, a relatively short time attributed to Lebanese cultural norms against women staying in prison for long. The group of 22 has now dwindled to 5, with most released and two traded to violent extremist groups in exchange for captured security personnel. It is not clear if there are more newly arrived women returnees; while prisoners sometimes share this information with Rescue Me, it is against the Lebanese constitution for an NGO to help. A small percentage of these women were directly involved as snipers or in mine action, while others provided logistical support for operations and financing, and acted as "draggers" to recruit others.

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[256] UNRWA (2018), "Where We Work: Lebanon" (available at: https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon).)
[257] Interview with Nancy Yammout, Rescue Me, 2018.
[258] Presidency of the Council of Minister (2017), "National Strategy for Preventing Violent Extremism." Republic of Lebanon.

A larger cohort of women associated with violent extremist groups are relatives of the male prisoners living all around the country, including areas far from the prison such as Beqaa in the east and Saida in the south. This population is roughly 55 percent Syrians, 30 percent Palestinians, 5 percent other, and 10 percent Lebanese, with some family members still in Syria or living in IDP camps. Most women family members visit and maintain contact with their male relatives, providing emotional, financial, and other support, including pursuing their legal cases. Some women refuse communication or contact with their relatives who are prisoners. However, most visit weekly or every other week, bringing food, clothes and other necessities. With visitation only allowed thrice a week, this results in a crowded scene as thousands of families try to talk through 20 phones to prisoners on the other side of a glass barrier at the same time. Children sometimes visit but require special permission if they are under 12 years old; many inmates have not been able to hug their children for years.

The Ministry of Social Affairs does not support these families but connects them to NGOs to receive support in the form of food or mediation. Early marriage is on the rise among this population as they face increasing economic pressure. Prisoners are not allowed to receive any money; however, some continue to receive funds—likely from violent extremist groups—through their relatives, putting the whole family at risk. The government does not consider the role that the families of detained violent extremists may have played, nor the continued risk they may pose. While phones are widely surveilled, there is no other form of intervention by the state with the families.

OBJECTIVES	STAKEHOLDERS
■ Improving crime prevention ■ Reducing risks of future crime and victimization by community awareness and education ■ Reducing the level of problem behaviours (e.g. antisocial behaviour, aggression, gang involvement) ■ Rehabilitation for prisoners and families inside and outside prison ■ Improving the justice system by drafting laws that will reduce crime rates	■ Ministry of Justice ■ Prison administration ■ Rescue Me ■ Internal Security Forces (ISF) ■ Interpol ■ Artichoke Studios (art therapist) ■ Global Steps (socioeconomic) ■ Ministry of Social Affairs (in process)

Strategy and Implementation

In 2011, Rescue Me approached Lebanon's Internal Security Forces (ISF) to request permission to conduct research among inmates from violent extremist groups. Recognizing the value of a social work approach, the ISF granted permission on condition that Rescue Me shared its findings with the ministry. Once inside, the first inmate they met was a student of Osama Bin Laden. After one month of work, they obtained permission to interview other inmates from their "Emir", a wealthy man nicknamed Abu al Waleed who was elected by the prisoners affiliated with Al Qaida as their representative.

Over a period of two years, Rescue Me built trust with those in prison who were fearful of information being shared with security actors like the police, and initially provided false information. The team—consisting of Nancy Yammout, a specialist in forensic social work, Maya Yammout, a profiler, and Yousra Itani, a mosaic artist trained by Rescue Me to provide art therapy—goes to the prison together every week except during holidays, Ramadan, or in the case of riots, which they usually know of in advance of the ISF. Their advisor and collaborator Dr. Raymond Hamden, a forensic clinical psychologist, visits a couple of times per year.

Nancy Yammout, Rescue Me, speaks during ICAN's annual women, peace and security forum

Since the inmates are Islamists and the team doesn't want to provoke them, they wear hijab and dress in calm colours. In addition, they conceal their sectarian identities and avoid religious discussions because that would shut down the conversation. Instead, they focus on a humanistic approach to develop trust, breaking the ice with simple questions such as, "How are you today?". "The first thing prisoners usually remark on is that we don't smell like cigarette smoke and coffee, as the guards do, and we don't talk to them about religion and politics," says Nancy Yammout.

Prisoners lower their guard in the short term while discussing politics, but this does not build trust that can be the foundation of a long-term relationship. By starting another way, by the sixth or seventh session they end up talking about their ideology without noticing. With time, the inmates started to disclose information about their recruitment process. Many highlight their childhood and youth experiences as part of their pathway to violent extremism, stating that extremists filled the hole left in their lives by their absent fathers. They also explain where and how recruitment takes place, notably through family and friends, social media, and centres operating near mosques and gaining access to potential recruits through offers of religious education.

Rescue Me initiated engagement with male prisoners first and through them has explored the depths of gender dynamics in the violent extremist groups, particularly the diverse roles and responses of women as active participants, bystanders, and victims. Rescue Me groups prisoners into four categories—psychopathic, ethno-geographic political, ethno-geographic religious, and retributional—and tailors interventions accordingly to help initiate their deradicalization and rehabilitation.[259] In many cases, individual assessments point to absentee parents or abusive parental figures as a key driving factor for many of those joining violent extremist groups. Rescue Me developed a treatment programme integrating art therapy, ART, Functional Family Therapy, and the House of Healing method.

After interviewing the 70 prisoners affiliated with violent extremism, Rescue Me shared what it learned in the media to foster public awareness of these issues. Before presenting the information on television, they informed the prisoners that they would talk about their cases and asked them what they would like them to say to society. They shared the prisoners' perspectives on their path to violent extremism and details of what they had and hadn't done. This information was incredibly valuable to people and was made possible due to the solid trust Rescue Me has built with these individuals.

Rescue Me also developed some of their stories into counter-messaging tools in two short videos, shared through a Facebook campaign. One focuses on the problems they had with their fathers, in which the men

Nancy and Maya Yammout at the American Academy of Forensic Sciences

[259] Drawing on the works of: Dr. Raymond Hamden (2008), Psychology of Terrorists: 4 types (available at: https://www.all-about-psychology.com/support-files/psychology-of-terrorists.pdf).

spoke about the kind of relationships they wish they had had. The second illustrates their turning points by asking them what they would say if they had a chance to write a letter to their younger selves. The videos are subtitled in English.

Rescue Me works in communities with both victims and those associated with terrorism, as well as youth at risk. Their centre is located inside Beirut near Sabra and Shatila, in an area where youth are particularly vulnerable, near three mosques known to be recruitment sites. The neighbourhood is one that even the police do not enter. In addition to psychosocial support, they facilitate projects to address socioeconomic and structural issues that contribute to marginalization and create risk factors for radicalization. For example, to address the de facto statelessness of displaced Syrians without identity documents, Rescue Me helps them to get their Syrian passports. People are afraid to go back to Syria not only because of the war but also because the men may be forcibly conscripted. While a lengthy and difficult process, it is possible to obtain the documents through the Syrian embassy in Lebanon.

After release, these prisoners usually go through depression and struggle with the stigma of being labelled a terrorist by society. Rescue Me's psychosocial support programme addresses this issue through activities on labelling, and forgiveness of self and others. Currently, Maya Yammout gathers ex-prisoners for group therapy in a café, giving them sweets to produce endorphins and helping them not feel alone. This contact is permitted as long as they don't carry any letters to their family members still in prison, which is forbidden.

They have monitored some ex-prisoners closely after their release. One, who had been a boxer, had a very supportive family but no friends after his release. After three months, Rescue Me encouraged him to go back to the gym and talk to his trainer. He started boxing again and, fuelled by all the anger he had to work out, he won a championship. After six months he has one friend and says it's all he needs.

Progress and Results

- Rescue Me concludes that fractured family relationships are often the primary root cause of motivation to join violent extremist groups. In the absence of strong, loving parental figures, and in most cases a male role model, other actors can step in to promulgate a different ideology. Many of the prisoners were neglected and even subject to sexual abuse as children. They feel their mothers didn't defend them and while they may have been there physically, were not emotionally available. In many cases, they felt Rescue Me's team were the first women who had ever really listened to them.

- Rescue Me found ART an effective treatment because it addresses anger that functions to translate grievances into motivation to join ISIL.

- Among adolescents taking part in Rescue Me's community-based intervention, there was a statistically significant reduction in felony recidivism, improved social skills, and a reduction in problem behaviour.[260]

- Using a Cognitive Behavioural Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) the study found significantly lower scores of self-reported PTSD, depressive symptoms and psychosocial dysfunction than the comparison group.[261]

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[260] NIJ (2012), Program Profile: Aggression Replacement Training® (available at: https://www.crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=254).)
[261] Ibid.

- Family Functional Therapies are also helpful to promote family involvement and support. In Rescue Me's family-based prevention and intervention programme for at-risk youth ages 11 to 18, the treatment group had lower recidivism rates, and when the programme was delivered by therapists who adhered carefully to the treatment model, the results were even more significant. The programme had a positive effect on youth by reducing risky behaviour, increasing strengths, and improving functioning across key life domains.[262]

- 223 men are registered for a new programme in Roumieh Prison pending funding.

- Eight women, the five remaining detainees and three of their best friends who are at risk, are registered for a new programme Rescue Me is developing specifically for women. The programme will address seven main themes:

  1. Defining Anger
  2. Becoming Aware of the Triggers
  3. My Anger vs. Others' Anger
  4. Accepting Others
  5. Labelling
  6. Forgiveness
  7. Positive Reminder for The Future

Lessons Learned and Challenges

- ART was not useful for refugees between the ages of 8 and 14 from ISIL-controlled territories. Rescue Me believes ART didn't work with this age group because the incredible suffering the children experienced meant that their anger and aggression could not be controlled. They had success using a Cognitive Behavioural Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS), which aims to reduce children's symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and depression caused by exposure to violence.

- ART is also not useful with psychopaths, because they cannot sit in a group for very long. One-to-one therapy is preferred in such cases.

- Rescue Me reports that some former prisoners contact them for support after being released.

- Rescue Me cannot discuss any of their research with those outside of the Ministry of Justice and ISF, as it could jeopardize their security.

- There are opportunities to engage women returnees to combat violent extremism by deterring others from joining such groups. The women want to talk, and with the proper intervention their experiences can be channelled into counter-narrative messages.

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[262] Ibid.

- Staff debriefing is vital to protect their own well-being. Rescue Me supports their staff meeting with professional psychologists weekly for 1-2 hours. The prison team is supervised by a neuropsychologist, and a clinical psychologist is available to the rest of the team. The counselling helps them to cope with the cases they see.

- Due to political changes, funding from the US for the next phase of the prison-based rehabilitation programme for men has been held up. Rescue Me is not the only one—reportedly, 148 NGOs in Lebanon are at risk of closing for this reason. This has underlined the importance of a diverse pool of funders.

- Rescue Me needs a dedicated place to conduct its work with families of inmates and those who have been released. Meeting in a café is not sustainable as they should be able to inform the government of their location. The ex-prisoners cannot come to Rescue Me's centre in Beirut because it is far for many of them and it would not be good to expose them to the problems in that area. Rescue Me has found the ideal location where people can come from all over Lebanon, which it will secure pending sustainable funding.

Sustainability and Potential Application

Rescue Me's strategy and programming demonstrates a clear response to the need for tailored psychosocial rehabilitation programming that takes gender dynamics into consideration. Their work is a case of women peace practitioners effectively engaging both men and women violent extremist offenders in the prison context. Furthermore, the programme exemplifies how research can inform interventions for rehabilitation and reintegration in practice. Key ingredients of the programme's success, which can be applied to other contexts, include:

- Professional expertise in psychosocial approaches

- Context-specific knowledge of the issues and social dynamics

- Access to prisons and prisoners

- Ability and time to build trust with diverse stakeholders

Lebanon's National Strategy of Preventing Violent Extremism includes several provisions that if implemented would help sustain Rescue Me's programming and enable scaling it up. These include provisions for engaging civil society including social workers, addressing prison conditions, and supporting women's participation in efforts to prevent violent extremism.

In many cases, the inmates felt the Rescue Me team were the first women who had ever really listened to them.

Case 7: Finding a New Sense of Purpose through Psychosocial Therapy

Country	Nigeria	Thematic Areas
Organization	Neem Foundation	Policy, Security, Ideology
Programme	The Yellow Ribbon Initiative	Psychology

Summary

The Neem Foundation has worked for the last seven years on understanding the driving forces of radicalization and what motivates people to join Boko Haram and other extremist groups. With specialties in psychological and mental health services, the team developed a deep understanding of violent extremism. They help former fighters with the process of deradicalization. They now collaborate with the government of Borno State to offer a holistic programme of psychological counselling, faith-based services, vocational training, education, sports, and food to former members of violent extremist groups.

Context

Boko Haram has terrorized Nigeria for the last two decades and sent thousands of Nigerians, accused of affiliation with this group, to prison. Boko Haram has killed more than 20,000 people, abducted thousands, and displaced over two million people in the North East and thousands more across the country. In this humanitarian crisis, children have been separated from caregivers, and their education and livelihoods disrupted. Women have played many roles within Boko Haram, including as fighters, wives, and mothers. When they return from Boko Haram, they often become heads of households, with little socioeconomic or societal support. These women and girls have experienced extreme trauma and report facing sexual violence, rejection, stigma and immense poverty. After being part of Boko Haram and bearing children, they are rejected by community members. Any service provision that focuses on the special needs of women and girls is currently mainly provided on a very ad hoc basis by CSOs.

In 2013, the government of Nigeria passed an Anti-Terrorism Bill to stop terrorist financing and started coordinating counter-terrorism networks. They established a federal Counter-Terrorism Office under the Office of the National Security Adviser to address terrorism; however, they didn't acknowledge women or children as specific categories. They do not have a systematic categorization or robust mechanisms for collecting intelligence on terrorist suspects. Thousands are detained on suspicion of terrorism, but many are released when they come to trial because of lack of legal evidence. The Federal Ministry of Justice is currently evaluating various models for the release and reintegration of terrorist suspects—as there is currently no system of probation or parole, most will either face jail time or be released directly into communities. The government does run a small deradicalization programme for about 85 former terrorists who have surrendered to authorities.

While women have many different pathways to and experiences of terrorism, there has only been one state-backed programme for them in Nigeria. Unfortunately, the programme was ended in 2017 without proper assessment of risk or community-based tracking mechanisms. Some women have found themselves in IDP camps and with no legal framework; thousands remain in prisons or detention centres.

Nigeria passed a national health bill in 2014, which integrated mental health for the first time. Federal medical centres have few psychiatrists or psychologists, and in general the lack of practitioners limits services. However, in 2014 there was a recognition of the need for mental health services for serving members of the armed forces, especially in conflict zones. The military developed a mental health policy and created three centres which provide trauma counselling. Additionally, Neem Foundation is working with several federal agencies including the Ministries of Interior and Health and the National Primary Care Development Agency, as well as the Nigerian Psychological Association, to develop a framework for mental health response in emergencies.

OBJECTIVES	STAKEHOLDERS
■ Provide psychological and rehabilitative services for those returning from violent extremist groups as well as victims of violence ■ Build capacity of other CSOs to provide psychosocial support ■ Collaborate with the government in scaling mental health services and fostering reintegration of women and girls from violent extremist groups ■ Develop basic competencies and standards in mental health service provision ■ Provide training for first responders in emergencies	■ Neem Foundation ■ Ministry of Health ■ Ministry of Interior ■ Ministry of Justice

Strategy and Implementation

Neem Foundation works in geographic regions beyond the reach of international NGOs, trains and builds the capacity of local CSOs, and collaborates with the government regarding policies which affect their work. Since 2012, they have developed expertise in deradicalization, providing psychological services to those who suffer from depression, anxiety, and trauma, including those involved with violent extremist groups, and last year they established a specialized children's trauma service to provide counselling to children under the age of 14. Their training centre enables a wider reach to others and there they have developed curricula on lay counselling, child mental health and trauma, psychological first aid, psychological assessment techniques and other topics relevant to the local context on the ground.

The "Counselling on Wheels" programme is a community-based service that addresses the trauma needs of communities displaced by the insurgency. Neem provides comprehensive psychological services for up to 1,250 beneficiaries a month. Signs of trauma, including PTSD, are quite common, and the Neem Foundation has learned that more tailored approaches are required for survivors of gender-based violence. Returnees also need to process what their experiences mean for their identity, and how they can forgive themselves for past actions, in order to determine how they best reintegrate and relate with other community members.

The Neem Foundation conducted research in 20 communities affected by Boko Haram, from which they developed an index of radicalization. In Nigeria, they understand that people join extremist groups for a variety of reasons. The factors of ideology, identity, economics, lack of belonging, and sense of purpose can all influence one's motivation. Many women and girls join Boko Haram for power, status, and economic reasons.

Neem Foundation runs a rehabilitation programme for 1,500 young people who were associated with armed groups. They are assessed on a number of risk factors that include identity, ideology, psychology, economic and social factors, problem behaviours, and community ties. Neem Foundation has developed a comprehensive programme providing work skills training, psychological counselling, faith-based intervention, food, and health care to returning members of violent extremist groups. The partnership with the government has facilitated

Sports can be a method of rehabilitation and reintegration

access to the military who can hand over returnees to civil society programmes. The Neem Foundation collaborated closely with imams to understand the religious factors that contribute to radicalization. Through their work with members of violent extremist groups, they discovered that those with knowledge of the Qur'an would use select interpretations to further their recruitment goals. Young people with limited religious understanding, critical thinking skills, and education were particularly vulnerable to recruitment. For this reason, the Neem Foundation developed an educational curriculum to foster the imagination and dreams of youth that strengthens the educational system.

Working in 20 at-risk communities in three states, the Neem Foundation has developed mechanisms to identify signs of early radicalization. Through monthly training workshops, they share the signs of radicalization with community members. As a result, community management teams, consisting of representatives from the security sector, traditional and government institutions, faith leaders, and youth and women's groups, have formed. They communicate with each other regularly regarding unusual behaviour within the community. In this way, they can function as an early warning system. The Neem Foundation works with community leaders to sensitize them to the needs of women and girl returnees in particular, to enhance social cohesion and security.

Participants of a Neem Foundation rehabilitation and reintegration program

Lessons Learned and Challenges

- More specific therapy is required for survivors of gender-based violence
- Secondary trauma is prevalent, thus support for front line staff should be factored into programme planning
- Livelihoods are an integral part of rehabilitation
- Reintegration programmes must address the root causes of violent extremism; this would include engagement on an ideological front, religious engagement, teaching of critical thinking, values, inclusion and peace studies, sports, trauma counselling and livelihood support

Sustainability and Potential Application

Partnership with the government and military assists CSOs to scale up their work, which they would not be able to do independently.

Children gathered for an activity in northeast Nigeria

PART III

PROGRAMMING GUIDANCE

If reintegration efforts are not inclusive and holistic, the risk of a resurgence of violent extremism and its impact on development and peace in already fragile contexts cannot be underestimated.

PROGRAMMING GUIDANCE

Figure 8: The seven elements of a holistic and gendered approach to disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration.

This research finds that a holistic multisectoral approach is essential for successful disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for women and girls associated with violent extremism. This is demonstrated by the approaches of women peacebuilders who are on the front lines of responding to the gendered dimensions of return. Each of the examples of good practice profiled in Part II of this report address several of the critical themes and areas of intervention identified and elaborated in Part I. Policymakers and practitioners can ensure disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration programming is holistic by:

- Assessing the relevance of and designing interventions that target all applicable sectors including: policy, legal, justice, security, media, religion, education, economic, health (medical, psychological, and emotional);
- Engaging on all levels: individual, family, community, and society; and,
- Identifying and collaborating with diverse stakeholders: civil society organizations, government agencies, security actors, religious and traditional leaders, businesses, journalists, etc.

1. The Policy Gaps and Challenges

Recommendations	Guiding Questions
1.1 Take a Holistic Approach Widen the focus of disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration efforts beyond the individual terrorism offender to include all those affected by violent extremism, including children who were kidnapped by violent extremists or conceived in captivity, female abductees, internally displaced persons, and vigilante groups that fight violent extremists.	» Do the existing policy and programming efforts recognize and address women and men's different experiences? » Does the state have procedures for dealing with women and girls (and boys) associated with violent extremists, to assess their engagement in violence and to ensure that victims are not further abused or subject to violations such as sexual assault?
1.2 Conduct Gender Analysis Conduct gendered reviews and analyses of policy and practice across all relevant sectors, recognizing that women and men, boys and girls may face different circumstances and have different needs in the processes of return and reintegration.	
1.3 Consider Lessons Learned Ensure that initiatives draw on the best practices and lessons learned from the failures of previous relevant initiatives, including disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs, and rehabilitation programs developed for general prisoners and gang members. ■ Include a literature and best practices review in the program design or inception phase. ■ Conduct a mapping of past and existing initiatives in the program context.	
1.4 Coordinate with women-led organizations and other non-governmental stakeholders Design and implement programmes in coordination with a wide range of governmental and nongovernmental stakeholders, and articulate clear roles and responsibilities for each stakeholder group. Women-led organizations are key partners based on their topical knowledge and local access. ■ Consult UN and local partners to identify women's organizations active in your country setting. ■ Involve women CSOs from the outset based on their comparative strengths. ■ Enable safe interactions between CSOs and security actors. ■ Build trust through regular round tables among national/local governments, CSOs, youth organizations, religious institutions, traditional leaders, and communities.	» Does the State have sufficient numbers of women who can conduct assessments, verification and registration of women and girls associated with violent extremists? » Where are the women-led organizations already active in the area of DR&R, and what are opportunities for coordination ?

2. Law, Redress and Reconciliation

Recommendations	Guiding Questions
2.1 Establish legal frameworks Ensure that coherent, transparent legal frameworks and guidelines are in place.	» How do national laws governing returning violent extremists account for gender differences, including recognizing the diverse roles of associated women and girls? » What responsibility does the state have to repatriate and bring to justice its citizens who may have perpetrated crimes abroad? » Does possessing dual nationality allow for revocation of a returnee's citizenship?
2.2 Evaluate current legal approaches Assess how courts, prisons, and other state institutions are currently addressing issues of the returnees, particularly with regard to the treatment of women and children.	» How is citizenship passed to a child when the conferring parent is missing or deceased? » In cases of international marriage, are women and men equally eligible to pass their citizenship to their child? » How can a child born outside of the parents' country be conferred citizenship?
2.3 Articulate clear policies for returnees Articulate a clear policy, including zero tolerance for sexual abuse and other misconduct, regarding the treatment of returnees and those associated with them (e.g. family members) with a gendered/child-appropriate approach.	» How can a child's identity and right to citizenship be established without valid documents? » What evidence informs prosecution and determines sentencing? » What are the range of sentences for those convicted? » Are there restorative justice mechanisms which complement or serve as alternatives to the criminal justice system?
2.4 Ensure legal clarity on returnee status Ensure legal clarity on the status of returnees and those associated with them, and implement human rights-compliant monitoring frameworks and support services.	» Have amnesty and other transitional justice mechanisms been discussed or implemented? » What legal aid support programs exist for returnees, and women and girls specifically?
2.5 Broaden legal space for civil society Provide CSOs with the legal protections and policy guidance to engage in rehabilitation and reintegration interventions.	» How do counter-terrorism laws affect CSO's ability to receive funding and respond to the needs of returnees, especially women and girls, and receiving communities? » Do these laws disproportionally affect women's organizations, youth associations or other civic groups?

3. Security for and from Women and Girl Returnees

Recommendations	Guiding Questions
3.1 Implement guidelines for security actors Develop, implement, and monitor stringent guidelines for the front-line security actors (including border guards and correctional officers) in their treatment of returnees and their families. Promote adherence to human rights protections and accountability for violations as essential for effective PVE efforts, as abuse by security actors can be a catalyst for radicalization.	» What is the security process for returnees, especially women and girls? Are they placed in detention centers, camps, or directly reintegrated into local communities? » Are returnees held separately by gender and age within prisons, detention rehabilitation centers? » If not detained, or held in separate facilities, do women and girls have equal access to services, resources and rehabilitation and reintegration programming? » If held in the same facilities, how are women and girls protected from violence by male inmates? » Are their women security officers and staff working in detention and rehabilitation centers, and other points of contact with women and girl returnees?
3.2 Develop gender-responsive Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) Support collaborative development, implementation and monitoring of gendered Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for all actors involved in the disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration process, including zero tolerance for sexual and other forms of violence.	» What policies, trainings, and protection mechanisms exist to prevent abuse of detainees by security actors, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)? » Do detained women and girls have access to justice in cases of abuse and human rights violations? » How can the public access information about their relatives who are in custody of security agencies or are missing? » What policies exist to ensure the human rights compliance of security actors?
3.3 Build relationships between civil society and security actors Develop information sharing and joint research protocols, in combination with relevant safety training, between civil society and the security sector.	» What is the relationship between the police and local communities? » What programs exist to build trust and transparency between security actors, the public, and returnees? » What mechanisms exist to identify the security needs of local communities? » How is information shared between security actors and civil society?

4. Addressing Public Attitudes of Stigma and Fear

Recommendations	Guiding Questions
4.1 Build public engagement and dialogue mechanisms Initiate public dialogue through the media and education sectors, including on religious and other relevant ideologies. Because the issues are sensitive, there is a need for responsible public engagement on the rationale for policies and approaches being developed. **4.2 Strengthen balanced reporting** Engage the media directly to encourage balanced reporting so that public fear, anger, and potential violence are not fueled through inaccurate reporting. **4.3 Encourage CSO-led media campaigns** Encourage CSO-led media campaigns to engage religious scholars to convey accurate non-violent narratives and to debunk violent ones. **4.4 Address rehabilitation and reintegration/PVE issues in the education system** Develop teacher training and support mechanisms and curricula to address rehabilitation and reintegration and broader PVE issues in schools. **4.5 Engage local communities in stigma reduction** Engage local communities including the CSOs already active in PVE, and work with these CSOs to determine the most relevant means of socializing local communities to the need to reintegrate successfully and reduce the stigma of those associated with and affected by violent extremism, in particular women and girls. ■ Consult with all community sectors to determine the specific challenges they face and solutions they offer for addressing reintegration, as well as to identify their needs and ensure that no inadvertent harm is done by state and international actors. ■ Encourage male community leaders to be role models and engage in public discussions about accepting returning women and girls—particularly survivors of rape or sex trafficking—which can help reduce the stigma they face and foster their acceptance within the community at large. ■ Ensure direct engagement with and support for the families of those who are detained, incarcerated, or participating in a disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration program, to provide their family members with support and facilitate their eventual successful reintegration.	» What are the attitudes and behavior of receiving communities and the public towards returnees, and women and girls in particular? » How does media coverage treat the issue of returnees and issues related to perpetrators and others associated with violent extremism? » Does media analysis and portrayal of the issue vary with gender and age of returnees? » Does coverage balance between perpetual one-off "extraordinary" success stories, and those of injustice and struggles of the "ordinary" that bear results, so that people are inspired to become agents of their own future? » Are innovative media formats being used to convey these complex issues and promote peace, rights, and pluralism? » Are artists and other cultural producers engaged as messengers? » What training materials and resources are available to practitioners and the media? » What are the cultural, religious, and social norms regarding treatment of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)? » What attitudes and positions do community leaders—men and women—hold regarding returning women and girls? » Which community leaders have a media platform to speak about these issues? Do they address gendered dimensions? » Which media formats and messages reach whom? Is this information disaggregated by gender, age, socioeconomic status, etc.? » What indicators are used by practitioners and the media to measure stigma and public attitudes towards reintegration?

5. Transforming Ideology and Restoring Identity

Recommendations	Guiding Questions
5.1 Implement PVE programming that restores identity and belonging Encourage programming to help women and girl returnees rediscover different and positive aspects of their identity. Facilitate opportunities for women and girl returnees to pursue pro-social activities and discover alternative ways to fulfill their sense of purpose. ■ Ensure elements that target identity, aspirations and belonging are part of PVE programming, avoiding a simplistic focus on socioeconomic methods. ■ Embed alternative narratives (of peace, tolerance, respect for pluralism) in PVE programming to guide interventions and communication strategies. ■ Support spiritual identity as a much bigger universe than any individual's affiliations with a particular religious persuasion. **5.2 Uplift women mentors and role models** Highlight and engage women role models and mentors with diverse beliefs and roles in society. **5.3 Engage female religious authorities** Engage women religious scholars and counselors to provide education and mentoring of women and girl returnees when necessary.	» What factors contributed to the radicalization of or reasons for women and girls joining violent extremist groups? » How are these drivers gendered? » How does gender does play a role in marginalization, disempowerment and frustration that may have contributed to women and girls' vulnerability to violent extremist recruitment? » What do returning women and girls need to feel a sense of belonging and purpose in their lives? » How are women religious leaders and other women mentors engaged in rehabilitation and reintegration interventions? » How can programming involve socioeconomic status, trauma, or sense of belonging and purpose to facilitate ideological transformation? » What do rehabilitation and reintegration practitioners use as indicators to measure the progress of ideological disengagement?

6. Socioeconomic Empowerment and Sense of Purpose

Recommendations	Guiding Questions
6.1 Implement sustainable development solutions Initiate sustainable economic and employment development, including by working with the private sector, to determine critical needs and potentials for new sectoral development and vocational training for men and women. This should include, where appropriate, offering remedial education programs and schools to enable those returnees who require it to enter the education system. **6.2 Initiate multi-stakeholder reintegration programs** Engage all stakeholders, including employers, educators, and communities, to facilitate successful reintegration through programs to enhance access to education, job placement, and entrepreneurship. **6.3 Ensure context-sensitivity of livelihood programs** Tailor livelihoods programs to the context and individual interests. ■ Take into consideration the average income and affluence of the receiving community and seek to provide comparable services and support, to avoid fostering resentment. ■ Avoid gendered or cultural assumptions about what kind of work women (and men) can or should do. ■ Conduct labor market assessments to inform job training and skills development. **6.4 Address workplace stigma** Assess and address attitudes about returnees with attention to hiring and workplace safety, including to prevent discrimination that could run counter to rehabilitation.	» Do socioeconomic support and livelihoods initiatives for the general population, including education and training programs, exclude returning women and girls? » Does economic disempowerment of women, including hiring and workplace discrimination, contribute to the motivations of women and girls to join violent extremist groups? » Are returning women and girls heads of household and/or breadwinners for their families? » What subjects, skills, and professions are returning women and girls interested in pursuing? » What economic and livelihood opportunities are there for women and girls in receiving communities? » What is the average level of affluence of women and girls in the community? » Do existing rehabilitation and reintegration programs include women and girls in socioeconomic support and livelihoods interventions? » How do programs account for gendered obstacles (i.e. conflicting domestic and caretaking obligations, inability to pay school fees, and insecurity at and on the way to schools including sexual harassment and assault)? » How do public attitudes about returnees shape the views and behavior of potential employers and co-workers with regard to fair hiring and workplace safety, including to prevent discrimination that could run counter to rehabilitation? » Are educators and school administrators trained to understand, support and manage the children of returnees who face stigma in the classroom, in ways that contribute to long term reintegration? » Do socioeconomic interventions foster self-dignity, meaning and sense of purpose for returning women and girls?

7. Coping with Trauma

Recommendations	Guiding Questions
7.1 Provide comprehensive, confidential psychosocial support Address the full range of returnees' experience through psychosocial support, which may include symptoms of trauma, coping with difficult family relationships, dealing with community stigma, past abuse by security actors, and caring for children affected by violent extremism. Ensure safe space for, access to and confidentiality in psychosocial therapy.	» What mental health and psychosocial services (MHPSS) exist within the community, including referral mechanisms, and do returning women and girls have access? » Do MHPSS providers have capacity and standard operating procedures (SOPs) to ensure gender-responsive intervention, including in addressing trauma from sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)? » Do MHPSS providers have knowledge and understanding of the local context and the situation of returning women and girls?
7.2 Build on local practices and customs Build upon healthy traditional and indigenous practices to create stronger mechanisms for psychosocial support.	» Have MHPSS interventions been tailored to the context by considering healthy indigenous practices for trauma healing? » How are returning women and girls informed of the MHPSS services available to them?
7.3 Engage psychosocial service providers in case work Engage trusted service providers with relevant expertise and knowledge of the context and of the nature of returnees' cases.	» How is privacy and confidentiality guaranteed for returning women and girls seeking treatment? » Do front-line responders, including civil society, humanitarian, and security actors, have access to MHPSS care? » What MHPSS services and public education have been provided to communities with regard to addressing stigma against and fears about returning women and girls?
7.4 Connect psychosocial support to reproductive health and socioeconomic support Integrate reproductive health and family planning, as well as vocational training, with psychosocial support to enable recovery and overall health.	» What do rehabilitation and reintegration practitioners and MHPSS providers use as indicators to measure progress of healing from trauma and mental health in general?

NOTES

ANNEX 1: POLICY MAPPING

Policy Name	Description and Relevance	Gender Analysis
Fifth and Sixth Reviews of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2016, 2018) and original Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2006)	GA resolution reinforcing the need for a global approach outlined in the Plan of Action, recognizing the importance of preventing extremism. It is a living document reviewed every two years.	The Fifth Review includes a paragraph on the role of women in countering terrorism, urging Member States to include gender analysis in their programmes, consider the impact of CT programmes on women's human rights defenders and women's organizations, and seek greater consultations with women and women's organizations when developing CT strategies (Para. 12). The Sixth Review adds a call for gender-sensitivity in prosecution, reintegration and rehabilitation strategies.
The Global Counterterrorism Forum's Good Practices on Addressing the Challenge of Returning Families of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) (2018)	Non-binding guidelines for good practices in accordance with the circumstances and domestic legal standards of each state, as well as applicable international legal obligations. Topics include Detection, Identification, and Intake of Returning Families; Individually Tailored Interventions; Criminal Justice Responses to Enable Criminal Accountability of Returnees; Responses for Returning Children; Responses for Returning Women; and Role of Families and Communities.	In part developed to address the gender gap in the Hague–Marrakech Memorandum, these good practices briefly touch on gender in some sections. For instance, they recommend that individual tailored approaches include gender dynamics, addressing the needs of each family member, and that law enforcement training should focus on interactions with women, and protection against SGBV in detention. The guidelines do include a section on responses for returning women with recommended practices on criminal justice procedures, gender-informed responses for rehabilitation and reintegration programming, and recognizing the unique role of women as local community influencers and family leaders in local programming.
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Guidance to States on Human Rights-Compliant Responses to the Threat Posed by Foreign Fighters (2018)	Guidance based on applicable international human rights, refugee, and humanitarian law for the implementation of UNSCR 2178 and 2396, including attention to prevention and remedy for those whose rights have been violated.	The guidance includes a section on "Women involved in foreign fighter activities" with a gender analysis of women returnees culminating in five guidance points that broadly align with this report's recommendations: ■ Integrate gender and rights-based analysis and consult with women's organizations when designing programmes. ■ Train all security sector actors in gender-sensitivity and recruit more women into security agencies. ■ Protect women from secondary victimization and ensure detention facilities comply with international standards. ■ Implement tailored and gender-sensitive rehabilitation and reintegration programmes targeting women returnees. ■ Ensure accountability for sexual and gender-based crimes committed by foreign fighters, and ensure redress and support for the victims.

Policy Name	Description and Relevance	Gender Analysis
UNDP, UN Women, UNODC and OHCHR, A Practitioner's Toolkit on Women's Access to Justice Programming (2018)	Toolkit with practical guidance on addressing the specific barriers women face in obtaining justice as victims, claimants, witnesses and offenders.	The toolkit offers programming considerations for different types of justice sector policies, including rehabilitation and reintegration measures to avoid recidivism (pp. 283 – 284). The toolkit recommends that reintegration should be a process that begins from the point of sentencing and addresses the root causes of women's offences, through counselling for SGBV survivors, substance abuse programmes and educational and vocational training (p. 284). A strategy to implement pre- and post-release reintegration programmes that address women's specific needs must involve cooperation between prison authorities, the State and non-State service providers (p. 284).
United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015) and Resolution 2419 (2018) on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Independent YPS Progress Study, with recommendations for effective responses at all levels	Security Council Resolutions that outline the threats faced by youth (18-29 years old), including extremism in the areas of participation, prevention, protection, partnerships, and disarmament and reintegration.	UNSCR 2250 draws a link between gender and reintegration, encouraging those involved in planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the needs of youth affected by armed conflict, including in "evidence-based and gender-sensitive youth employment opportunities" (Para. 17 (a)). Aside from a mention of SGBV and a recalling of WPS resolutions, UNSCR 2419 only references the role of gender inequalities in the preamble.
United Nations Security Council Resolution 2396 (2017) on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) and Security Council Resolution 2178 (2014) The Madrid Guiding Principles (2015) produced by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) as a practical tool for the implementation of UNSCR 2178	UNSC resolutions on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) obliging all states to criminalize FTF-related activities and take steps to improve detection, stop FTF travel and share CT information.	UNSCR 2178 does not include comprehensive mention of the roles of women and gender. However, the Madrid Guiding Principles include references to women's vulnerability as returnees and the importance of their inclusion as responders and peacebuilders, as and call for attention to gender-related crimes and gender-sensitive risk indicators. UNSCR 2396 is stronger on these points, emphasizing the importance of gender-sensitivity in developing strategies for assessing signs of radicalization, countering terrorist narratives in the prison system, and conducting research on trafficking in persons (Paras. 38, 40). Emphasizing the different roles women associated with FTF may have played, the resolution stresses the important of assisting women who may have been victims of terrorism, "taking into account gender and age sensitivities" (Para. 31). The resolution also calls for the leadership and participation of women "in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of (…) strategies for addressing returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters and their families" (Para. 39).
United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Extremist Groups (2017)	The UNODC Handbook aims to provide coherent and consistent guidance to national authorities on the treatment of children recruited and exploited by terrorist and violent extremist groups, with emphasis on the role of the justice system.	The handbook includes a chapter that specifically discusses the challenges related to the reintegration of girls, including their potential exposure to violence, consequences of violence and stigma associated with their reintegration into communities (p. 109). Aside from this chapter, information on the gender dimensions of violent extremism and the need for gender-sensitivity in approaches is present throughout.

Policy Name	Description and Relevance	Gender Analysis
New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (2016) and UNHCR Guide to International Refugee Protection and Building State Asylum Systems (2017)	General Assembly resolution expressing state commitments to protect refugees, including by addressing the root causes of armed conflict, extremism, and violence. The resolution outlines the basic rights of refugees in line with international refugee and human rights law (including education, health needs, humanitarian assistance). The UNHCR guide provides a comprehensive overview of international refugee law and guidelines for building asylum systems.	While the resolution is focused on refugees, it discusses rehabilitation, reconstruction and reconciliation more broadly and calls for the inclusion of women in these processes (Para. 12).
Human Rights Council Resolution 30/15 on human rights and preventing and countering extremism (2015) and UNHRC report on best practices and lessons learned on how protecting and promoting human rights contribute to preventing and countering violent extremism (2016)	HRC resolution which calls on states to promote human rights in their PVE efforts and use a whole-of-society approach to develop strategies that respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including through community-oriented law enforcement efforts.	The UNHRC resolution references women when discussing the need for a whole-of-society approach to preventing and countering violent extremism, involving "women, religious, cultural, education and local leaders" (Para. 5). The UNHRC report includes analysis of the gendered impact of counter-terrorism programming and policies, highlighting the danger of emphasizing women's CT engagement in ways that reinforce gender stereotypes or instrumentalize women.
Plan of Action to Prevent Extremism: Report of the Secretary General and Recommendations (2015)	Outline of a comprehensive global approach by the international community to implement security-based counter terrorism measures and take preventative steps to address the underlying drivers of extremism.	The Plan of Action explicitly ties gender sensitivity to R&R efforts. It calls for "disengagement, rehabilitation and counselling programmes for persons engaged in violent extremism which are gender-sensitive and include programmes for children to facilitate their reintegration into society" (Para. 50 (g)). The Plan also stresses the need for more attention to devising efficient gender- and human rights-compliant reintegration strategies (Para. 29).
United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2000) and Res. 1889 (2009), 2122 (2013), and 2242 (2015). UN Women summary of all women, peace and security resolutions	The body of women, peace and security (WPS) resolutions affirms the role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and post-conflict reconstruction.	UNSCR 2242 specifically discusses WPS and extremism and calls on Member States to ensure the participation and leadership of women and women's organizations in developing strategies to counter violent extremism. Interestingly, however, UNSCR 2242 does not specifically discuss rehabilitation and reintegration. Instead, it calls more generally for the participation and leadership of women and women's organizations in designing CT strategies, and the needs for CT and CVE projects to address gender dimensions (Para. 13).

Policy Name	Description and Relevance	Gender Analysis
United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2015)	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or "Agenda 2030" adopted in 2015, developed to succeed the Millennium Development Goals. They are comprised of 17 goals and 169 targets.	While migration is mentioned implicitly and explicitly in several SDG targets and indicators (e.g. those on trafficking, planned and well-managed migration policies, safe working environments for migrant workers), rehabilitation and reintegration are not specifically referenced. R&R are typically associated with Goal 16, on peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice and accountable institutions. However, the objectives of a holistic reintegration process would align with several of the goals, including Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth, Goal 4 on quality education, and Goal 10 on reduced inequalities. Several targets and indicators of Goal 5 on gender equality may also apply to R&R, including the adoption of sound policies and enforceable legislation for the empowerment of women and girls, reforms to give women equal access to resources (such as land), and the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls.
UNESCO report on Countering Online Hate Speech (2015)	A global overview of the dynamics characterizing hate speech online and some of the measures that have been adopted to counteract and mitigate it, highlighting good practices that have emerged at the local and global levels.	The UNESCO report fills several of the gaps of the Rabat Plan of Action, in particular the discussion of gender-based hate speech in the context of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which it posits is not covered in-depth in international law and in the cases where it is – CEDAW, UNHRC – does not extend to practical actions.
The Global Counterterrorism Forum's Hague – Marrakech Memorandum on Good Practices for a More Effective Response to the FTF Phenomenon (2014)	The Hague-Marrakech Memorandum includes 19 good practices for to promote information sharing, comprehensive integrated approaches, and capacity-building among Member States.	The Hague-Marrakech Memorandum does not address gendered dimensions of the FTF phenomenon, nor does it acknowledge the women and girls associated with violent extremist groups. The Memorandum recognizes the positive role women can play when engaged in counter-narrative initiatives.
Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence (2012) and Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the expert workshops on the prohibition of incitement to national, racial or religious hatred (2013)	The Rabat Plan of Action reflects the conclusions of a series of workshops discussing the implementation of specific human rights standards, namely the protection of freedom of expression, freedom of religion and belief, and prohibition of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, incitement to hatred and related intolerance.	The Plan of Action, which discusses the difficulty of applying the prohibition of incitement to national, racial or religious hatred while respecting freedom of oppression, only briefly touches on gender concerns when stating, "States should promote intercultural understanding, including on gender sensitivity" (p. 13). Gender is not mentioned in relation to the roles of media and civil society. The Plan of Action does not mention R&R specifically but many of its recommendations are applicable to this area, in particular the underscoring of the collective responsibility of the state, media and society to combat negative stereotypes and discrimination, the fostering of social dialogue, the inclusion of human rights values in education and the strengthening of human rights mechanisms. For women and girls, who tend to be more susceptible to stigma during and following R&R processes, the role of the state, media and CSOs in encouraging dialogue and reducing discrimination is essential.

Policy Name	Description and Relevance	Gender Analysis
United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders, also called "the Bangkok Rules" (A/RES/65/229) (2010)	Set of UN guidelines, adopted by GA resolution, concerned with the treatment and rights of women affected by the criminal justice system. The rules were adopted in response to a gap in international standards on addressing the specific needs of women prisoners and offenders.	The Bangkok Rules refer to "social reintegration" throughout and repeatedly emphasize the need for reintegration programmes that take into account the gender-specific needs of women (Rule 46, 47, 63, 67). They call, for instance, for capacity-building for staff in women's prisons to address the special social reintegration requirements of women prisoners, including the management of safe and rehabilitative facilities (Rule 29). The Bangkok Rules recognize and discuss in depth the particular support requirements of women during reintegration and release processes (Rules 45-47, p. 40). For instance, women may face particular stigma, higher risk of renewed drug or alcohol abuse, and potential loss of parental rights. The rules call for "targeted continuum-of-care" in the community following the release of women prisoners (Rules 45-47, p. 40). This continuum-of-care would require the cooperation of outside agencies and services with sufficient resources.
International Labour Organization (ILO) Guidelines on Socioeconomic Reintegration of Ex-Combatants (2009)	ILO guidelines offering practical approaches to sustainable socioeconomic reintegration of combatants. The guidelines are intended for ex-combatants within DDR processes, but also for the reintegration of other populations (e.g. refugees, IDPs, returnees).	The guidelines include discussion of "women associated with fighting forces," including as combatants, supporters and dependents. They touch on the different needs and challenges of women in DDR processes, identifying the principal difference between men and women ex-combatants as "inability to benefit from demobilization and reintegration due to obligations to look after children and family" (p. 74). The guidelines propose specific steps for the reintegration of women associated with fighting forces, including gendered conflict analysis, measures to ensure equal access to programmes and resources, and strengthening of women's organizations. Overall, the guidelines provide a framework for gender-responsive reintegration, although classifying women as a "specific needs group" rather than mainstreaming gender considerations throughout may be counterproductive.
United Nations Policy for Post-Conflict Employment Creation Income Generation and Reintegration (2009)	UN policy and guidance for post-conflict employment promotion and reintegration that focuses on three programmatic tracks: 1) Stabilizing income generation; 2) Local economic recovery; 3) Sustainable employment creation. Each track, respectively, focuses on stabilization, reintegration and long-term employment.	The policy references the needs of women throughout and includes an annex on "the gendered challenges of post-conflict employment", which discusses gender-sensitive considerations for each of the programmatic tracks. For instance, the policy posits that for the second track (local economic recovery), a focus on households is required rather than an emphasis on individual gains, in order to better support women's needs (p. 44). However, discussion of women and girl ex-combatants and perpetrators, and their reintegration needs, is limited in the policy. It focuses on women as family members to ex-combatants, community members and the role of women's groups.

Policy Name	Description and Relevance	Gender Analysis
United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820 (2008), Resolution 1888 (2009) on sexual violence in conflict	UNSCR 1820 and 1888, two women, peace and security resolutions, set out of a mandate for addressing sexual violence in conflict.	Both UNSCR 1820 and UNSCR 1888 reference sexual violence against women and girls as it pertains to DDR processes. UNSCR 1820 calls for the development of effective mechanisms to provide protection from violence "in all disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration processes," including through consultation with women and women-led organizations (para. 10). UNSCR urges the inclusion of sexual violence issues in DDR and SSR arrangements (para. 17).
International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (1999) UNODC and IMF Model-Legislation on Money-Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (2005) and Model Provisions for Common Law Legal Systems on Money-Laundering, Terrorist Financing, Preventive Measures and the Proceeds of Crime (2009)	Legislation on money-laundering and terrorist financing, including measures for detection, investigation, prosecution and extradition.	The convention, model-legislation and model provisions are gender-blind and do not discuss gender concerns in detection, prosecution and extradition efforts, nor the impact of suppressing terrorist financing on women's organizations or women human rights defenders. In fact, the structure of the legislation may negatively impact women's organizations, human rights defenders, and civil society. The UNODC and IMF Model-Legislation for instance, states that "[The Minister, competent authority] may prescribe regulations to ensure that non-profit organizations are not misused for the purpose of the financing of terrorism" (Art. 2.3., p. 21). Similarly, the Model Provisions call on States to consider oversight and regulation for "entities that can be abused for the financing of terrorism with particular attention to non-profits."
UNAIDS International Guidelines on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights (2006 Consolidated Version)	Guidelines for the protection of human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS, to assist states in translating international human rights norms into practical observance.	The guidelines set important standards for the protection of human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS, and more broadly on public health. The application of these issues to reintegration and rehabilitation processes is not specifically mentioned in the guidelines, although they state that states should reform criminal laws and correctional systems "… to ensure that they are consistent with international human rights obligations and are not misused in the context of HIV or targeted against vulnerable groups" (p. 17). Guidelines on privacy and confidentiality, anti-discrimination laws to protect vulnerable groups, measures to reduce stigma, and the provision of medical and legal support may also apply to health dimensions of R&R programming (p. 17-19). The guidelines dedicate a section to the need to enact anti-discrimination and protective laws to reduce human rights violations against women and ensure equality (p. 35).

Policy Name	Description and Relevance	Gender Analysis
Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) (2004)	The integrated DDR standards (IDDRS) forms a set of policies, guidelines and procedures for UN-supported DDR programmes in a peacekeeping context drafted by the 15 members of the Inter-Agency Working Group on DDR.	The IDDRS includes gender, gender-sensitivity as one of its guiding principles and has a separate module on Women, Gender and DDR (Module 5.10). The module on reintegration calls for programmes to be "designed, implemented and evaluated in a gender-sensitive manner", calling attention to the unique needs of women and girls in DDR processes (p. 6). The IDDRS stresses the importance of gender-sensitive planning, gender analyses, collaboration with women's organizations, gender-sensitive M&E and gathering gender-sensitive data at all stages of DDR programming. The underlying argument for these steps is that gender-responsive DDR programmes will ultimately be more efficient.
Treaties on extradition, such as the multilateral EU Framework Decision on the European arrest warrant and surrender procedures between Member States (2002) and the bilateral Extradition Treaty between the USA and the UK (2004)	Extradition treaties that establish a legal framework for surrender procedures between Member States, and bilaterally between USA and UK.	The two extradition treaties considered in this analysis do not include specific gender-responsive provisions. The EU Framework decision uses the phrase "he or she" throughout, while the UK-USA treaty uses "the person". The EU Framework Decision acts on the principle of non-discrimination, providing that the surrender of a person may be refused if the arrest warrant was issued for the purpose of prosecuting or punishing a person based on "the grounds of his or her sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, nationality, language, political opinions or sexual orientation" (Art. 12).
United Nations Principles for the Protection of Persons with Mental Illness and the Improvement of Mental Health Care (1991)	The principles form a set of non-legally binding basic standards that mental health systems should meet, and rights for those diagnosed with mental health disorders.	The principles grant patients the right to receive health and social case appropriate to their health needs, be protected from harm, treated with respect for their privacy, freedom of religion and communication, and "as far as possible" be treated and cared for in the community in which they live (Principles 7, 8, 12). These standards, in particular those touching on community and culture, rights in mental health facilities, and standards of care provide an important framework for reintegration and rehabilitation of those with psychosocial issues. They do not make reference to gender, however, and do not discuss women's unique psychosocial needs. Principle 13(d) touches specifically on reintegration of patients in mental health facilities, stating facilities should offer "…appropriate vocational rehabilitation measures to promote reintegration in the community", including vocational training.

Policy Name	Description and Relevance	Gender Analysis
International humanitarian law as outlined in the Geneva and Hague Conventions (1949, 1960, and 1977)	International humanitarian law that aims to limit the effects of armed conflict. Of particular interest to this analysis are the clauses related to repatriation and to sexual violence in conflict.	International humanitarian law as expressed in the Third Geneva Convention (1949) relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War includes the clause: "Women shall be treated with all the regard due to their sex and shall in all cases benefit by treatment as favourable as that granted to men" (Art. 14). Commentary made in 1960 clarifies that women prisoners shall be treated equal to male prisoners, except in cases of "weakness," "honour and modesty," and "pregnancy and childbirth". Mothers with infants, for example, would be granted early repatriation and/or be repatriated with their children. The 1977 Additional Protocol to the Geneva Convention was the first to explicitly prohibit rape, providing that women "shall be protected in particular against rape, forced prostitution and any other form of indecent assault" (Article 76(1)).
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)	Instruments of international human rights law.	As all states are bound to international human rights law, R&R processes must respect human rights and take human rights-based approaches. For instance, deradicalization and R&R processes must respect individual freedom of thought, speech and religion, as well as protect the right to trial and legal aid for those detained. R&R programmes need to ensure the prevention of reprisal and discrimination against, or stigmatization of those who participate. Connections between the justice system and R&R programmes are essential to investigate human rights abuses committed against women and girls. R&R programmes must also guarantee the rights elaborated in the ICESCR, including the right to work, to education, and to participation in cultural life. These are just a few examples of how international human rights law applies to the R&R of women and girls.

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