



Federal Republic of Somalia

National Strategy and Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism

27 June 2016

First Draft

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجِدِّ لَهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ
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Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is [rightly] guided.

Foreword by the President

*The overwhelming majority of people in Somalia reject violent extremism. Working across government with the active involvement of regional administrations as well civil society, the Federal Government of Somalia has developed a comprehensive Somali-owned and Somali-led **National Strategy and Action Plan for Preventing & Countering Violent Extremism**.*

The Council of Ministers led by the Prime Minister, His Excellency Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, fully support this Strategy and he has appointed Hon Mustafa Duhulow to serve as national CVE Coordinator to ensure all relevant agencies are actively involved and that they work together as a team with our Federal Regions and alongside our civil society and private sector partners.

I would like to thank the leadership of Hon Mustafa Duhulow as CVE Coordinator and Abdirahman Omar Osman (Eng. Yarisow), Senior Advisor to the Federal Government of Somalia, as they have steered the process of developing the National Strategy. I would also like to thank the European Union for its support during the devising of the strategy through Blueprint Somalia. Without their support we would not have been able to produce this very important strategy for Somalia.

It is also essential that we work closely with our international partners. The Secretary-General of the United Nations recently recommended that each Member State develop a national plan of action to prevent violent extremism which sets national priorities for addressing the local drivers of violent extremism. He stressed the importance of developing action plans in a “multidisciplinary manner, to include countering and preventing violent extremism measures, with input from a wide range of government actors such as law enforcement, social service providers and ministries of education, youth and religious affairs, as well as non-governmental actors, including youth, families, women, leaders, be they religious, cultural and educational, civil society organization, the media and the private sector.”¹

This strategy and its Plan of Action take all those recommendations on board. It lays out the collective vision of the Federal Government of Somalia and develops initiatives to better

¹ UN General Assembly, “Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism,” Report of the Secretary-General. UN General Assembly, A/70/674 Available online at: 24 December 2015, para. 44(a), http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/674.

understand and then prevent and counter extremist influences that threaten Somalia's security. It forms an essential and complementary element to the Somali government's efforts to address national security threats within a framework of good governance, human rights, and the rule of law.

We are very encouraged by the progress made in towards the inclusive process that has gone into this strategy and have no doubt that the guidance this document provides will help Somalia to become more resilient and find the lasting peace that we all want and deserve. This is a living document. It will be reviewed and recalibrated regularly to meet and address changing circumstances. I urge you to read it carefully, internalize it, engage with it and share it – and then assist us to implement it.

H.E. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud
President of the Federal Government of Somalia

Foreword by CVE Coordinator

*It is my pleasure and a great privilege to deliver our **National Strategy and Action Plan for Preventing & Countering Violent Extremism**. This document is the result of a rigorous, inclusive process of dialogue and discussion with all the key stakeholders over the last 8 months. We now have a strategy that is fit for purpose and locally owned. It provides a holistic, “whole of society” framework for addressing domestic and international security threats including terrorism. It focuses on countering the ideology and narratives of extremist groups that promote destruction and violence by using all the tools necessary in our cultural context. For example, Somalia is a Muslim country; we want to ensure all religious programs are attuned to the peacefulness of Islam while showing Al-Shabaab’s actions are all against the practices of Islam.*

The National Strategy will also advance the National Defector Programme for former combatants encompassing both low- and high-level defectors. Another area that the strategy will focus on is the on-going reconciliation efforts addressing the root causes for citizens joining terrorist groups. Since Somali society is clan based, Al-Shabaab take advantage of existing grievances within communities (such as marginalized groups, neglected rural areas,). Reconciliation can help communities bolster local resilience against Al-Shabaab and at the same time reinforce Somali traditions, values and cultures.

I am very grateful for the commitment and the leadership of our President, H.E. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and our Prime Minister, H.E. Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, for their consistent support during the development of the National Strategy and their ongoing commitment to support it during the subsequent implementation stage. I cannot thank H.E. Abdirahman Omar Osman (Eng. Yarisow) enough for his tireless effort, dedication and commitment during the process. I would also like to thank H.E. Michele Cervone d’Urso, the EU Ambassador to Somalia and Blueprint Somalia Project for the support provided to us during the process to devise the comprehensive strategy.

In Somalia we have made important gains in disrupting the activities of al-Shabaab militarily with the support of our African Union brothers (AMISOM), displacing the terrorists from most of the regions in South & Central of Somalia. But, while military power is necessary, it is not sufficient on its own to create lasting peace in Somalia. The National Strategy offers a multi-pronged approach that aims to win the hearts and minds of the people so that we will ultimately have a vibrant and inclusive society that can contribute to bringing peace and stability in Somalia.

Hon. Mustafa Duhulow
CVE Coordinator

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Introduction

The **aim** of this strategy is to outline a clear vision for countering (once it is happening) and preventing (before it has happened) violent extremism. This will be based on a better understanding of the process of recruitment and the drivers of violent extremism as well as the development of sufficient capacity to support resilience within communities so they can live and prosper in a more peaceful Somalia. While this document provides guidance that can lead us toward the realisation of that vision, results and impact will depend on a collective effort to implement it.

The **core objectives** are to:

- organize across the government and with other partners
- strengthen research
- build capacity (including our own)
- communicate effectively
- measure progress
- and regularly recalibrate this document to ensure that the implementation is strategic, cohesive, sustainable, and consistently fit for purpose

This strategy is based on important **principles and values** that separate us from those who use violence against us and others. Islam promotes peaceful co-existence and harmony and our faith guides all our efforts. We strongly condemn any extreme form of Islam that twists and distorts our religion as a pretext for hatred and violence. We are also adamant that it is essential to uphold our solemn commitments to the global principles of human rights, civil liberties, the rule of law and all other aspects of good governance at every step of the way as we work to counter and prevent violent extremism.

This strategy is an integral part of our National Security Architecture. The Federal Government of Somalia's comprehensive approach to countering terrorism must "focus on the possible causes of terrorism and the development of remedial strategies." Counter terrorism legislation (currently awaiting approval from the Parliament) reflects a strategic approach that harnesses the relationship between government and the public in a positive and effective way.

The Peace and Security Goals that are articulated in the Somali Compact also underscore the importance of prevention efforts. PSGs 2 and especially 3 focus on a comprehensive process through which fighters in Somalia can disengage in line with international law and human rights, committing to "assist in setting the necessary conditions to reduce the influence of extremism within Somali society."²

The High-Level Partnership Forum has made it clear that it recognizes "the importance of a comprehensive approach to preventing violent extremism in Somalia, beyond military

² The Somali Compact 2013, Federal Government of Somalia, Pagepage 7. Available online at: http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/somalia/documents/press_corner/20130916_the_somali_compact.pdf.

operations and including addressing the root causes of radicalization and pledg[ing] to work together to address these factors.”³

The United Nations has also helped to raise awareness of the need for a more strategic approach to countering and preventing violent extremism. The UN Secretary-General recently released a “Preventing Violent Extremism Plan of Action,” which states that “each Member State should consider developing a national plan of action to prevent violent extremism which sets national priorities for addressing the local drivers of violent extremism.”⁴ This has been reinforced by the Geneva Conference on Preventing Violent Extremism in April 2016 which concluded with a strong endorsement of this recommendation.

Overview of Strategy

All functioning societies require traditional rule of law responses to address the terrorist threat, such as investigation, prosecution, a judiciary and a detention system. However, it is increasingly apparent that these measures alone cannot address the increasingly unpredictable and diffuse nature of violent extremism. Indeed, where Governments rely on traditional kinetic approaches in isolation, they have been found to be counterproductive in marginalised communities where they may be perceived as overly-coercive. This is the *modus operandi* of violent extremist groups to use instability and the threat of extreme violence to provoke a response that they can use to build their own support.

It is in this context that preventing and countering violent extremism requires a strategic approach that can effectively address the enabling environment for violent extremism—challenging structural conditions, addressing grievances (including poverty, competitive control over territory, illiteracy, lack of employment opportunities), as well as countering ideologies that contribute to the violent radicalization and the mobilization of individuals or groups to violence. This requires a better understanding of violent extremism and recruitment in the context of individual, family and intra-community dynamics as well as the political dimensions related to other social constructs, including clans.

This strategy provides guidance in supporting those communities being targeted for recruitment: by providing tools for family, friends, and trusted community leaders to undertake interventions at the individual level; partnering with local civil society organizations in efforts that promote community empowerment through civic participation, skills development, community mediation and dialogue; and working with local civil society organizations to facilitate state-community dialogue to address community grievances.

We conclude this document with a Plan of Action that is focused on practical and well-coordinated implementation of a range of focussed activities with clear priorities that will guide our collective efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism in Somalia.

³ COMMUNIQUE Ministerial High-Level Partnership Forum, Istanbul, 23-24 February 2016, paragraph 15, page 4. Available online at: , para. 15, <http://new-deal.so/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/COMMUNIQUE-.pdf>.

⁴ UN General Assembly, “Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism,” Report of the Secretary-General. UN General Assembly, A/70/674 Available online at: , 24 December 2015, para. 44, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/674.

Terminology

The following terms help to provide common understanding and more clarity about what we aim to prevent and counter in this strategy and its implementation process.

Violent Extremism: The United Nations has recently noted that “Violent extremism is a diverse phenomenon, without clear definition,” but we are guided by our understanding that violent extremism is essentially the beliefs and actions of people who support or use ideologically motivated violence to further social, economic, or political objectives.

Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism is therefore defined for our purposes as: policies and activities that aim to prevent populations from committing or materially supporting ideologically motivated violence against civilians that is justified using ideology. It also includes efforts to counter the message and disrupt and challenge actions, including the use of propaganda, undertaken by violent extremists. Following the guidance in this Strategy, our P/CVE efforts focus on building community resilience by working with government and nongovernment partners.

Terrorism is defined as criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population, or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act.

Radicalisation leading to violence is a process by which a person to an increasing extent accepts the use of violent means, including terrorism, in an attempt to reach a specific political/ideological objective.

Strategic Context

Current Threat Environment⁵

Somalis have suffered a great deal from the effects of violent extremism and we are determined to prevent it from claiming more lives. We are proud of the progress that we have made in recent years against al-Shabaab and we are determined to continue our efforts to defeat them and any others who engage in violent extremism and commit acts of terrorism. It is important that our strategic vision is long-term and that it encourages us to prepare for life in Somalia without al-Shabaab. However, we are also aware that the group has proved both resilient and adaptive. It continues to operate in swaths of the rural areas of southern and central Somalia, especially in the Juba valley, as well as in areas of Puntland and in northern Kenya. It focuses on innocent people, attacking hotels, public spaces and other soft targets and also our international partners who have come to Somalia to help us.

⁵ Our National Threat Assessment provides a more comprehensive overview and assessment of the current and projected security issues for Somalia.

Where we seek to build stability, security and prosperity, Al-Shabaab has a destabilizing effect not only in our country but also in the wider Horn of Africa Region. Attacks on soccer fans in Uganda, diners in a restaurant in Djibouti, shoppers in a mall and students at a university in Kenya, for example, showed that al-Shabaab has the ability to mount a mass casualty terrorist attack on a par with anything that any other affiliate of al-Qaida may do.

There are also concerns that Da'esh (ISIL) might gain a foothold in the region after it mounted a concerted campaign in the second half of 2015 to entice al-Shabaab to switch allegiance from al-Qaida. This has failed to take root (so far) but we must be prepared to continue to adapt our approach to prevent and counter all forms of violent extremism and terrorism to protect our people.

The national and international forces that are fighting al-Shabaab have made significant gains, but more needs to be done to capitalize on the momentum created by successful strikes against the movement's leadership and the territorial gains it has suffered.

In parallel, the development of a more robust Strategic Communications effort to counter the appeal of violent extremism combined with efforts to build the resilience of communities and other efforts to prevent recruitment and radicalization by violent extremists provides the final pillar of the strategy.

The Drivers of Extremism

A growing body of research on violent extremism has led to the identification of two parallel sets of drivers that can contribute to an individual's support for violent extremist agendas and/or participation in extremist groups. The first set is commonly referred to as "push factors." These are structural conditions—underdevelopment, lack of access to education or employment, social marginalization, for example—that in themselves, or most likely in combination with other factors, can fuel grievances that make individuals receptive to violent extremism. These grievances may be felt on behalf of communities with whom individuals share a cultural, ideological, religious, or ethnic bond, even if they are at a physical distance.

The second set of factors identifies so-called "pull factors." These factors are classified as more immediate incentives that make violent extremist ideas or groups appealing—including the attraction of charismatic individuals, powerful strategic communications and compelling messaging, financial or other material benefits, or the social status that some group members feel they achieve as being part of a terrorist or militant group.

There is a wealth of expertise and local insight into these phenomena but there is a need for this to be formalised and for the push and pull factors to be more systematically categorised and analysed. There is also an acute need for a greater quantity of up to date research, field studies and analysis to identify drivers of violent extremism in the Somali context that could provide a clearer evidence base with which to better inform policy and program decision making.

Improving the Evidence Base

It is vital that we build upon and draw from solid research that is specifically focused on the unique challenges related to violent extremism facing our country and our region. Some very useful preliminary data exists. For example, interviews conducted with 88 former al-Shabaab fighters in Mogadishu in September 2014 revealed that economic incentives were an overwhelmingly powerful factor in their decision to join al-Shabaab.⁶ Those interviews revealed that young boys were persuaded to join the group after being given mobile phones and the promise of up to \$50 per month.⁷ We also know that direct recruitment is not the only way al-Shabaab leverages financial incentives. They have also played “on the divide between those in cities and towns, the group gives salaries to elders who stay in rural areas with their clans. It also empowers younger men, especially from minority, or less powerful clans, to better protect their communities and immediate families.”⁸ This is a common pattern in violent extremism globally, where groups will seek to exploit ethnic, tribal and sectarian tensions to build support and further their own objectives.

Strategic Communications

There is also a need for specific research to provide a baseline of current perceptions of extremism and inform proactive strategic communications, especially in the areas of counter-ideological or counter-narrative programming. International good practice demonstrates that often the institutions of government alone is not necessarily the most effective communicator in this regard. It is therefore critical that credible partners are identified who can serve as influencers to those who are most vulnerable to being drawn towards violent extremism. Building the capacity of these key actors, including victims and formers would allow for the development of powerful, resonant narratives that can then be deployed across a range of communications channels including radio, television, the Internet and on mobile platforms. Emphasis on measuring the impact of programming in this area will also be of vital importance to ensure that our work is successful and cost effective.

There is also a need to deliver intensive as well as enduring campaigns to build confidence in the institutions of government and to counter Al Shabaab’s narratives of destruction and violence. This will require time, effort, significant funding and the use of multiple channels to reach Somali and international audiences. Some elements of the campaign might include devising a Somali-language campaign slogan, identifying and exploiting a ‘poster child’ for a campaign against AS to encourage defectors, undermining AS’s sources of credibility (its operational effectiveness, its status and its ‘religious’ credentials) or the design and distribution of print products such as posters, pamphlets, comic books and other campaign materials. The use of social media will also be very important since this is an area of the information environment that the extremists already make extensive use of (Twitter, Facebook and other platforms).

⁶ Anneli Botha and Mahdi Abdile, “Radicalisation and al-Shabaab recruitment in Somalia,” Institute for Security Studies, September 2014, p. 5, <https://www.issafrica.org/uploads/Paper266.pdf>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ International Crisis Group, “Somalia: Al-Shabaab – It will be a Long War,” Africa Briefing N°99, 26 June 2014, p. 14, [http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/horn-of-africa/somalia/b099-somalia-al-shabaab-it-will-be-a-long-war](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/africa/horn-of-africa/somalia/b099-somalia-al-shabaab-it-will-be-a-long-war)

Outreach and engagement will also be vital to the communications component of National Strategy. The youth must be mobilised to target schools, colleges, universities. At the same time, figures of religious authority should be encouraged to issue fatwas against Al-Shabaab. The public perception of the Somali security forces should be enhanced both through deeds and messages and a positive form of Somali patriotism should also be encouraged. Community-based approaches to security should be assisted including 'Neighbourhood Watch', Report Suspicious Activity, messaging streams and be an integral component of community policing efforts.

The Strategic Communications component of the National Strategy will also implement indirect activities to counter the narratives of al-Shabaab such as cultural festivals, reconciliation conferences, demonstrations against Al-Shabaab, national competitions across a range of artistic disciplines (music, poetry, the visual arts) while at the same time denouncing al-Shabaab's twisted and un-natural version of Somali culture. Celebrities and prominent Somalis will be encouraged to act as 'brand ambassadors' for authentic Somali culture.

Since P/CVE is a global phenomenon Somalia's international supporters also have a role to play in the fight against terrorists, mobilising funding for CT and P/CVE communications.

Treatment and Handling of Disengaged Combatants

Helping low risk combatants to reintegrate back into the community while protecting their human rights is a longstanding and important objective of the Federal Government of Somalia and it is an integral part of the National Strategy. The importance of placing this within a Human Rights-compliant context cannot be understated. This is not just a moral and ethical issue. Lessons learned from violent extremism globally clearly demonstrate that the denial of fundamental human rights serves only to encourage wider sympathy and support for violent extremist causes as well as providing a disincentive for combatants to move away from violence. Our National Programme for the Treatment and Handling of Disengaged Combatants in Somalia is achieving tangible results and it is growing with the help of international partners. We now have four facilities that offer shelter, protection and vocational training to former male and female al-Shabaab combatants. This programme helps to provide an opportunity for people to re-enter society as productive, law abiding citizens and it allows us to learn more about radicalisation and recruitment processes. Applying the strategic communications elements of this strategy will ensure that rehabilitated former combatants can inform, and in some cases deliver, credible messages that dissuade others from joining the ranks of violent extremists and terrorists.

Coordination and Assessment

Our Core Constituencies: Working Together

The process for developing this strategy was necessarily inclusive. Over the course of the last eight months, we worked with key stakeholders from the Regional Administrations, local municipalities, the relevant line ministries, and civil society at the community level including youth groups, organizations focused on empowering women, religious leaders,

the diaspora, the private sector, and other partners at the national, regional, and international level.

Meeting of stakeholders to develop our Strategy, including line-ministries and representatives from Regional Administrations, May 2016

Youth

Children and youth are often victims of the scourge of radicalization and violence. Violent extremists are also actively recruiting children, some of whom are barely teenagers, Youth are particularly vulnerable to the lure of groups such as al-Shabaab who offer them a salary, gifts (which can be as simple as a mobile phone), a sense of belonging and a false promise of excitement and glory. The vast majority of our young people abide by the law and have aspirations for better and peaceful lives for themselves, their families and their communities. They are the key to our future. We need to engage and empower our young people and ensure that they have the skills and employment opportunities. We should not only work for young people—we should work with them. We have a duty to unleash the great potential of young people to promote peace, development, justice, and understanding in Somalia. It also important to support opportunities for our youth to learn from their peers, including traditional elders, who play an enduring and essential role in our society by resolving disputes, maintaining peace and setting priorities for communities.

Educators and Students

Education is an essential part of preventing violent extremism. It can play a critical role in helping young people distance themselves from extremism, learn about the peaceful message of Islam that guides us and how to identify and resist the ‘pull factors’ that may draw them towards recruitment. Our focus on education is not only about the content of the curriculum; it is also about fostering relationships between people and their communities in order to ensure a safe, collaborative and constructive environment. The most influential actors include teachers, families, other students, and local community leaders (including the private sector). The engagement of these actors was deemed essential to ensuring the sustainability of efforts and continuity during and after school

hours.

Women

Women are another group in society who often find themselves on the frontlines of violence and terrorism. They have an essential role to play at the heart of our prevention efforts in Somalia since mothers, sisters and daughters are often the bread winners of Somalia and are uniquely positioned in homes and communities to understand changes in the behaviors of children and in their respective locals, and to provide powerful countervailing incentives.⁹ The experiences, perspectives and knowledge of women and girls are critical to developing informed, contextually relevant and sustainable prevention projects.

The Private Sector

The private sector, including local business owners and foreign investors, is an obvious and necessary partner in our efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism. Violent extremism is bad for business. It ruins the market place and the ability of the honest business owner to trade freely. It frightens away customers, disrupts supply chains, blocks the movement of goods and people, thwarts enterprises of all sizes and lowers the return on investment across entire regions. Prosperity can only be built on stability, so investment in countering violent extremism is an investment in the future growth of our country and our people. We need to do more to engage the business community and others in the private sector more actively, not only for the financial resources but also for the innovation, talent, skills and competences that can help us generate legitimate commerce that provides economic opportunity and a prosperous future.

Civil Society

We are fortunate to have vibrant civil society organizations working in rural and urban communities across Somalia. They have been actively engaged in efforts to address the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism and terrorism long before the term *countering violent extremism* was coined. They work at the community level on P/CVE-relevant issues. This includes implementing grassroots development initiatives, providing humanitarian relief, empowering marginalized communities, protecting human rights, improving governance, expanding political participation, empowering youth and women, facilitating inter and intra-religious dialogue, and preventing and resolving violent conflict.

They are a vital partner in efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism. They help to give a voice to marginalized and vulnerable groups, provide a constructive outlet for the redress of grievances and, increasingly, they are working on P/CVE-specific issues such as conducting research on the drivers of violent extremism, developing counter-narratives delivered by credible voices, working with survivors of terrorism and assisting in the rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals who have been radicalized by violent extremists.

⁹ Mans World, Schlaffer and Kropiunnig.

Our Diaspora

It is very encouraging to see so many Somalis returning to our country to help us build a brighter future here, but many continue to reside in other parts of the world. They are important partners in our efforts to counter and prevent violent extremism. It is important to stress that “there is no research showing that the diaspora as such contributes to radicalization, extremism or terrorism. In fact, it is the other way round; the diaspora is an important partner and can help to protect society from radicalization and violent Islamic extremism.”¹⁰ It is therefore essential that we deepen cooperation between Somalis in Somalia and our diaspora abroad as we seek to implement this strategy.

Religious Leaders

Violent extremist groups cynically distort and exploit religious beliefs to legitimize their actions. Faith and community leaders are critical in mentoring vulnerable followers so as to enable them to reject violent ideologies and in providing opportunities for peaceful dialogue and discussion as a means of promoting tolerance, understanding, and reconciliation between communities. Promoting tolerance-based, non-violent interpretations of Islam is essential.

Implementation: Plan of Action

This final section outlines a Plan of Action focused on our priorities for coordination, research, programme implementation, measuring progress, and ensuring the strategy is consistently relevant and meeting its objectives.

Roles and Responsibilities

The development of the strategy has been a collective effort involving line ministries, designated experts from regional administrations, as well as partners at the community level. To implement the strategy we must continue to work together on a common set of objectives to ensure that we have a well-coordinated, joined-up approach. As such, it is vital to have clear roles and responsibilities for different government ministries, departments, agencies, and offices, as well as central, regional, and local governmental actors and nongovernmental organizations, civil society organizations, communities, and the private sector.

The Role of the P/CVE Coordinator: he/she shall take the lead on strategic coordination and implementation, working with the President and the Prime Minister as well as relevant line ministries and our Regional Administrations and local municipalities, civil society, and the private sector. The coordinator will be tasked with providing information, analysis and

¹⁰ Magnus Ranstorp and Peder Hyllengren “Prevention of violent extremism in third countries: Measures to prevent individuals joining armed extremist groups in conflict zones”, Center for Asymmetric Threat Studies (CATS), Swedish National Defence College, 2013. Available online at: <https://www.fhs.se/documents/externwebben/forskning/centrumbildningar/cats/publikationer/prevention%20of%20violent%20extremism%20in%20third%20countries%20.pdf>.

guidance in support of efforts across the government and with our regional and international partners.

The Roles of Line Ministries. CVE is a cross-cutting issue that requires careful coordination across many of our institutions. The process of developing this strategy has benefitted from the active participation of line ministries and so too will they have an important role to play in implementing initiatives to prevent and counter violent extremism.

The Ministry of Women and Human Rights, for example, will bring its enterprise and network of contacts to bear in our efforts to reach out to women at the community level and also ensure that the human rights principles that are articulated at the beginning of this strategy are an integral part of its implementation. The Ministries of Education, Information, Youth and Sports, Religious Affairs, Health, Labour, and others all have their own specific part to play by working with their constituencies to implement the strategy. Furthermore, the Ministries of Justice and Internal Security have an important role to play in helping to ensure that they are coordinating on the P/CVE-relevant elements of their work, such as community policing or reintegration, and that their efforts are in line with the strategic approach articulated in this document. Each ministry also has mandated tasks (as noted by the Prime Minister in the Foreword to this document) related to the National Strategy and its related activities.

The Roles of Regional Administrations as the designated CVE coordinators will be to serve as lead focal point for their regions and work closely with the National P/CVE Coordinator with whom they will regularly share information and ensure that the strategy is implemented on the ground across the entire country. It will be a good practice to use this strategy as a blueprint for their own regions and to ensure that coordination is seamless among all relevant players at that level.

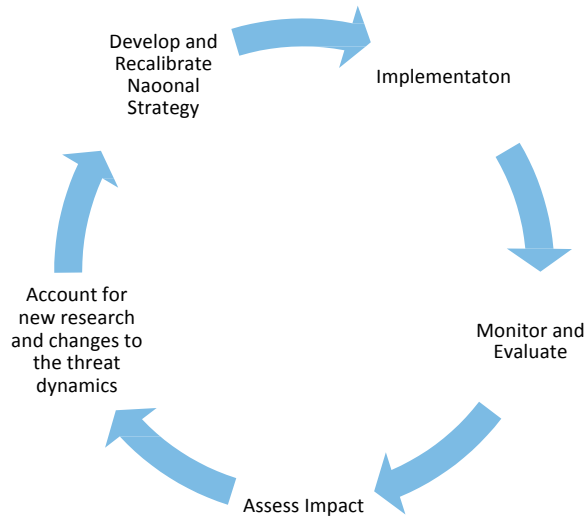
The Role of Non-Governmental Partners. Given the vital role that community groups and other civil society actors have to play in our efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism in Somalia, it is important to engage our non-governmental partners and allow them to contribute while at the same time maintaining their independence and integrity. Developing a co-ordination hub , which is elaborated in more detail below. This hub that will allow for the P/CVE Coordinator and other stakeholders to interact with nongovernmental will help to ensure that our efforts reach communities across the country.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is a crucial element of the National Strategy and its implementation. It is essential to take a proactive and empirical approach to how we are going to measure and demonstrate the impact of our work from the beginning all the way through to the end of any programs or projects undertaken (with each element having its own bespoke approach). We also need to monitor and evaluate to ensure accountability, enhance the effectiveness of future efforts, and make informed decisions about to whom to allocate precious resources.

Recalibration

Violent extremism is not a static phenomenon: neither is our strategic approach to the prevention and countering of it. We need to ensure that our strategy is always fit for purpose so we will continually recalibrate our efforts to address this complex problem. The National Strategy will be regularly updated based on assessments that evaluate our implementation efforts, measure the impact those efforts, account for new findings and data from research and take into consideration any significant changes that have occurred in the threat or information landscape. The recalibration cycle is illustrated below.



Priorities

No government has the capacity, including the necessary financial resources, to address the multiple and often complex issues related to preventing and countering violent extremism all at once. This is especially true in Somalia, where the security situation is improving but remains fragile since government revenues are still insufficient to support the costs of protecting citizens and rebuilding the country. We need to maximize the impact of every expenditure and ensure that we have clear priorities. This section outlines those key priorities.

CVE Implementation Platform (CVE-IP)

The CVE-IP will be overseen by the P/CVE Coordinator and supported by a staff of one deputy, an information officer, two researchers, and three administrative staff. The task of the CVE-IP will be to develop and maintain a hub for coordinating with relevant government stakeholders in line ministries and with the Regional Administrations, civil society, the international community and other relevant stakeholders.

The CVE-IP will work with the Ministry of Information to develop more dynamic strategic communications in support of the National Programme. This will include how we communicate our efforts around this strategy and the National Action Plan. This mechanism will need to be funded for a minimum 12 months and could allow for the

development of CVE Center that would identify and train a more permanent staff structure for managing Somalia’s CVE Strategy implementation and liaising with partners inside Somalia, across the Horn of Africa, and beyond. The CVE-IP would also conduct awareness raising activities and training seminars across the country providing, as necessary, an introduction to the interdependence of security, development, and governance; the multidimensional challenge of countering violent extremism; the different constructs of gender, culture, and religion; and the importance of strong state–society relations and engaged, resilient communities. This is key: not only is increased awareness likely to result in a better understanding of the problems faced at the community level, it could also help to build resilience in communities and increase support for the work of frontline officials and practitioners who implement CVE policies on a daily basis.

Support for Governmental Stakeholders

The process that led to the creation of this strategy needs to be supported in the Regional Administrations. The Presidents of each region should officially appoint a P/CVE Coordinator and resources should be raised and allocated to help them develop their own inclusive P/CVE strategies and accompanying implementation plans. There will be specific local drivers of violent extremism that require specific local responses. Regions are encouraged to use the National Strategy as a blueprint and also ensure that their coordinators regularly interact with the National P/CVE Coordinator to share best practices and lessons learned in an effort to achieve progress across the country.

Line ministries will also need support so that they can play their part in implementing the strategy. They must for example, have the resources to engage with their core constituencies: for example, the Ministry of Women and Human Rights can work with civil society groups who work with women and girls. This partnership will allow for awareness raising and project implementation to take place and furthers the intentions of this strategy to promote governmental and nongovernmental partnerships that can reach communities.

Civil Society Hub

Given the vital role that community groups and other civil society actors have to play in our efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism in Somalia, it is important to engage with our non-governmental partners and allow them to work with each other while maintaining their independence and integrity. There is a need for a platform or a hub for collaboration and coordination between civil society organizations and other community actors that are engaged in preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) in across the country, independent from government. The primary objectives of this proposal are:

- 1) to ensure that civil society is constructively and regularly engaged by the Federal Government and regional administrations as well as donors, and other stakeholders in the design, implementation, and evaluation of P/CVE initiatives; and
- 2) to support the establishment and strengthening of cross-border CSO networks in order to enhance cooperation and deepen regional P/CVE capacities in the IGAD region.

Short-Term Programme Support underwriting CVE project design, implementation and evaluation.

This support will enable us to design and implement a series of pilot projects on preventing/countering violent extremism initiatives at the regional, local, and national level. These should be undertaken in close coordination with relevant line ministries and other partners. Furthermore it is essential to offer contextually tailored and locally resonant responses to the threat of violent extremism. These should be designed to support key constituencies ranging from youth, women, diaspora, religious leaders, and others how can implement project involving and directed at different region health providers al administrations across the country. The projects will be selected through a competitive application process and regional partners will have primary responsibility for developing and implementing the project in consultation with and managed by Blueprint Somalia.

Research is key and a network of analysts with local knowledge and understanding will be required, drawing on macro-level data about global trends as well as local knowledge. This will inform our understanding of the phenomenon of violent extremism, the recruitment process and the most up-to-date and innovative methods of designing, implementing and evaluating rigorous evidence based initiatives. Our research should also feed into and draw from regional and global research networks and link with the work of the Somali Diaspora to generate a more complete understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our communities.

Strategic Communications will also be at the heart of our implementation efforts. A competent team of experts is required to produce daily briefings and ensure that thoughtful messaging is appropriately disseminated in real time by credible messengers. This should utilize a range of platforms that harness a wide spectrum of media, ranging from digital, print, radio, and television as well as the use of more traditional locally generated outreach in schools, mosques and in other community fora.

Program and Project Support. In addition to the priorities listed above there is also the need for wider program support to enable the implementation of the National Strategy and National Action Plan. This programming will be informed and guided by this strategy. It will identify and prevent violent extremism by addressing its structural and ideological drivers, empowering local communities, and building enduring partnerships among governmental and nongovernmental stakeholders that are able to communicate effectively. The following efforts provide an example of some the programming that will need to be supported in the near term.

- **Education programs** that focus on helping young people to be better equipped to resist the pull factors that may draw them towards radicalization and recruitment into violent extremism. These could encourage a deeper understanding of the peaceful message of Islam, enhance their understanding of national history and identity, and also encourage creative and critical thinking.
- **Support for victims and survivors of violent extremism** that amplifies the voices of victims and their stories that expose the brutality and hypocrisy of violent extremist groups and their narratives. Appropriate measures to protect the rights

of victims should be strengthened, and their safety, privacy, and physical and psychological well-being should be ensured.

- **The private sector** should be engaged to invest in programs that aim to prevent and counter violent extremism and support grassroots initiatives and empowerment programs by providing access to networks, communication tools, and financial and other resources. This includes local businesses as well as branches of multinationals that can contribute individually or pool their investments to maximize impact.
- **Youth leadership and training** empowering young people, especially women to actively participate in the social, cultural, and economic development of their communities by addressing some of the drivers and conditions that can fuel support for extremist groups or prompt youth to seek alternative paths that can lead to terrorism. It also important to ensure that skills training is an integral element of this support to promote job opportunities and support civic responsibility.
- **Working with and supporting traditional cultural and religious leaders** to promote locally and contextually relevant counter-narratives, inter- and intra-faith dialogue, and other initiatives against violent extremism.
- **Coordinating international efforts** in support of this Strategy and Action Plan to ensure maximum effect. There is a range of CVE-relevant activity being carried out with the generous support of our international partners. A formalised mapping and coordination mechanism, as an integral part of this action plan, can properly set out the initiatives that are being undertaken, identify where the gaps are. This will also ensure that we avoid duplication and promote complementarity and unity of purpose in our shared objective of reducing the threat of violent extremism.