



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

IGAD CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR PREVENTING AND
COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

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L to R: Captain Liborio Francesco Palombella Commander of the Italian Military Base in Djibouti, ICEPCVE Director Dr Simon Nyambura and IGAD Director of Agriculture and the Environment Division Mohammed Moussa

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NOTE FROM THE IGAD EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Although we can report significant gains in countering violent extremism in the Horn and East Africa, recruitment of young people and radicalization to violent extremism continues. The role of IGAD in addressing this issue is now even more crucial.

I am proud of the achievements that the IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (ICEPCVE) has made in 2019 in this area. Since its inauguration the Centre has worked with state and non-state actors, including local communities to undermine the threat posed by violent extremist organizations. I am especially optimistic that the network of civil society, youth and women, religious leaders and researchers supported by the Centre will contribute significantly to stemming radicalization to violent extremism.

The work of the Centre is contributing to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specifically we are committed to SDG 5 of gender equality to support women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership and decision-making and SDG 10 to promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all.

I am grateful for the generous support of the IGAD Member States and our funding partners who have stood by us in 2019. As we move into 2020, I look forward to supporting the Centre in implementing its 5-year plan and expanding its impact and reach in and beyond the region.

Our community is vibrant and together we will continue our efforts to fight violent extremism in the region.

Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu

IGAD Executive Secretary

**Our community is vibrant together
in the fight against violent
extremism**



NOTE FROM THE CENTRE DIRECTOR

We are placing communities at the centre of the fight against all forms of violent extremism.

I am honoured to present the 2019 IGAD Centre of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (ICEPCVE) Annual Report. This was a year in which we witnessed significant progress in the implementation of our Regional Strategy and growth in advancing regional support to counter violent extremism. The Annual Report is an opportunity for us to pause, reflect, and celebrate our work as we collaborated with partners from Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

2019 kicked off on a high note with the publishing and launch of our research manual, 'Trust-Based, Qualitative Field Methods: A Manual for researchers of Violent Extremism'. The manual is a practical field guide that will enhance the capacity of researchers from the region to undertake research in this dynamic context. This is the first among various knowledge products that the Centre will develop.

Communities at risk of radicalization to violent extremism are at the Centre of all we do. To demonstrate this commitment, we established a network of civil society and youth organizations in 6 countries. We were also on track in other aspects of programme implementation which involved supporting the growth of P/CVE research and equipping partners with strategic communication skills to develop and share alternative and counter narratives against violent extremist ideologies.

We're proud to be working with a wide range of dedicated individuals and organizations regionally and globally. I would like to offer my personal thank you to the Centre staff (*Dream Team*) for their efforts in 2019. I am grateful and appreciative of the support of funding partners, collaborators and friends.

We look forward to a fruitful 2020.

Dr. Simon Nyambura

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Nyambura', on a light-colored background.

Director, ICEPCVE

ACTIVITIES IN 2019

11 April

Induction of Djibouti to the Strong Cities Network

Hosted session to induct Djibouti into this global network of mayors, policymakers and practitioners united in building social cohesion and resilience to counter violent extremism in all its forms.

27-28 May

Joint ICEPCVE-UNCCT planning meeting, Addis Ababa

Held discussions to draw from the collective experiences, comparative cases and good practice from IGAD Member States as well as other regions and parts of the world to provide useful lessons to guide the strengthening of strategic communications to tackle violent extremism ideologies. This was also a planning meeting for a co-design workshop in December 2019.

17-19 June

Intermediate training in strategic communication, Nairobi

18 representatives from CSO and youth organizations in P/CVE are equipped with skills to develop and disseminate infographics and illustrations.

21-23 August

Introductory training in strategic communication, Entebbe

18 representatives from CSO and youth organizations in P/CVE are equipped with skills to develop and disseminate radio narratives.

4-6 December

First Annual Horn and East Africa regional research conference

Researchers from 6 countries contribute to research and analytical inquiry that shapes national and regional policies in preventing and countering violent extremism in the Horn and Eastern Africa Region.

9-10 April

Maritime security workshop, Djibouti

ICEPCVE hosts at least 70 delegates from 17 countries at the first ever workshop on protecting the maritime domain from violent extremist groups in the Horn and Eastern Africa region.

30 April to 1 May

Advanced training in strategic communication, Djibouti

18 representatives from CSO and youth organizations in P/CVE are equipped with skills to develop and disseminate video messages.

12-14 June

2nd P/CVE Research Methodology Workshop, Addis Ababa

18 researchers from 6 countries went through modules on the conceptual, methodological and practical aspects of conducting field research on P/CVE in the Horn and Eastern Africa region.

1-3 July

Voices of Mutual Respect Workshop, Djibouti

25 leaders from different faiths from 7 countries meet to discuss ways to deepen understanding of religious and non religious ideological narratives being used by violent extremist groups to radicalize vulnerable individuals. 7 public announcements with alternative and counter narratives against violent extremism ideologies were developed at the workshop.

18-20 November

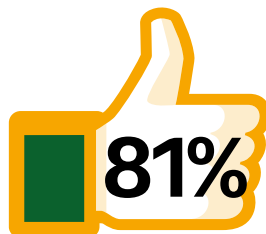
Advanced training in strategic communication, Nairobi

24 leaders of CSO networks mapped by the Centre are equipped with skills to develop and disseminate video messages.

OUR WORK IN 2019



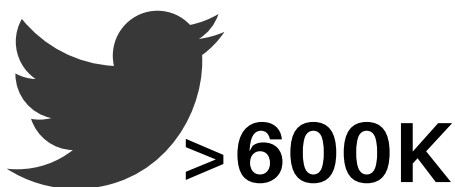
Reference materials to be uploaded on the digital hub



Average approval rating from post-workshop surveys



Video narratives developed



Twitter impressions



Researchers mapped and linked to the Centre



Researchers participated in capacity building sessions



Youth and civil society organizations mapped in the region



Countries represented in activities hosted by the Centre



Reach of our e-newsletter, UKWELI Cable



Languages used to develop P/CVE communication materials (Portuguese, Somali, English, Swahili, Amharic and English)



Radio narratives developed



Public service announcements developed



Illustrations and infographics developed



Faith-based organizations worked with the Centre



Potential number of unique users who could have seen our hashtag #Stories4CVE on our Twitter chat on 21 September

Towards vibrant communities

CIVIL SOCIETY AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Violent extremist organizations are likely to expand where there is conflict and population displacement. This situation is worse in areas where civil society organizations (CSOs) have limited space to function. CSOs with freedom to operate and that have credibility and a community 'licence to operate' can support local community resilience to violent extremism.

Globally the role of CSOs has been brought to the forefront in achieving a comprehensive approach and response to the threat of violent extremism. CSOs are well-placed to build two-way trust and to bridge interests between government and communities and at the same time champion traditional structures in preventing and countering violent extremism. Indeed the United Nations encourages the engagement of non-governmental organizations and CSOs to enhance efforts to implement the UN GlobalCounter-Terrorism Strategy.

It is in this context that the Civil Society and Community Outreach Unit provides a dedicated platform to facilitate focused discussion and collaboration and coordination among national and local actors, civil society, researchers and community leaders involved in preventing and countering violent extremism.

The Unit's priorities include strengthening the capacities of youth, women, civil society, and faith-based organizations because of the critical role they play in their communities in preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE).

We believe that CSOs have access to influence at the grassroots level, thus becoming the real credible voices in supporting communities to build resilience against radicalization to violent extremism.

The objectives of the Civil Society and Community Outreach Unit are to:

- Mobilize a regional CSO and youth network and promote exiting networks within and beyond the IGAD Member States


- Promote education on the nature and risks of violent extremism and provide avenues for peace and security.
- Partner with governments in addressing the drivers of violent extremism and supporting the development of alternative channels for non-violent conflict resolution.
- Have the fully established regional CSO network that is actively engaged in collaboration, learning and knowledge exchange on P/CVE-related issues.

There is often a fragmented approach in P/CVE in the region given the multiplicity of interventions and actors. To address this, ICEPCVE conducted a mapping exercise and began the development of a register of CSOs, youth organizations and researchers working on the various strands of P/CVE in the region.

The networks are now operational in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda. The CSOs and youth organizations networks held elections and elected their leaders. Our plan for 2020 is to build on this momentum and establish a regional CSOs and youth organizations network in order to strengthen the movement towards preventing radicalization to violent extremism.

Promoting interfaith dialogue to enhance community trust, understanding and tolerance is also a focus of the Unit. In July, 25 leaders from different faiths from Mozambique, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia and Djibouti participated in the '*Voices of Mutual Respect*' workshop. The participatory three-day workshop equipped participants with skills in developing country-specific public service announcements (PSAs). 7 PSAs in 6 languages were developed: 4 radio messages (in Portuguese, Somali, English and Swahili), 1 poster in Arabic and 2 television spots (in Amharic and English).

Partnering to build the capacities of youth, women, civil society, and faith-based organizations to prevent and counter violent extremism



“ CSOs are well-placed to build two-way trust and to bridge interests between government and communities ”

Ahmed Hussien from Ethiopia at the advanced training in strategic communication for civil society - November 2019, Nairobi, Kenya

Adding to knowledge on violent extremism

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

The Institute for Economics & Peace's Global Terrorism Index 2019 report indicates that despite a decrease in total deaths due to terrorism, the number of countries affected by terrorism remains high. 71 countries recorded at least one death from terrorism in 2018, the second highest number of countries since 2002.

The continued spread of violent extremism and the advancement of violent extremist organizations is a global threat. Policymakers, practitioners, and academics need to better understand the causes and drivers of violent extremism in order to design effective programmes to prevent and counter it.

ICEPCVE is leading the region in promoting regional academic and research collaborations in P/CVE to facilitate knowledge exchange in violent extremism.

Our Research and Analysis Unit is focused on catalyzing more research to gain a deeper understanding of the localized drivers of violent extremism, and developing new ways to effectively counter it. We are contributing to evidence-based policy and action on P/CVE.

The objectives of the Unit are to:

- Investigate and share knowledge on P/CVE in the region.
- Map out current research being undertaken in the region.
- Conduct research gap analyses and commission research based on the findings.
- Identify areas requiring greater research to gain a deeper understanding of the localized drivers of violent extremism, and develop new ways to effectively counter it.
- Guide and shape regional and national P/CVE policy based on knowledge and analysis.

We do this by building and strengthening local, national and regional capacity to generate and share research knowledge, information and analysis on P/CVE.

Our highlight in 2019 was the publishing and launch of

The Trust-Based, Qualitative Field Methods: A Manual for researchers of Violent Extremism. The manual aims to enhance the capacity of researchers from the IGAD Member States plus Tanzania. The manual is designed to help researchers of violent extremism address research gaps in the region.

In June we hosted a second research methodology workshop (the first was in 2018). The Unit delivered modules on the conceptual, methodological and practical aspects of conducting field research on P/CVE in the Horn and Eastern Africa region to 18 researchers from 6 countries.

In 2019, the Unit finalized a field research project on local drivers of violent extremism in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda. The goal is to identify and analyze local drivers of radicalization and recruitment into violent extremism and recommend new and innovative mechanisms to stem the tide of recruitment and radicalization. We also commissioned research on early warning/early response for CVE in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda and Mozambique. We are working with partners to identify early warning/early response mechanisms with a view to adapting them to P/CVE.

In December ICEPCVE hosted the *First annual Horn and East Africa regional research conference on preventing and countering violent extremism: Deepening scientific understanding of radicalization and violent extremism*. At least 30 researchers came together to exchange ideas and experiences in P/CVE in the region. The forum also discussed ways of channeling findings into policy actions, by governments and international organizations. A book will be published from the conference proceedings and released in April 2020.

Promoting regional academic and research collaborations in P/CVE to facilitate knowledge exchange in violent extremism



“ Gain a deeper understanding of the localized drivers of violent extremism, and developing new ways to effectively counter it. ”

Researchers from Uganda at the research methodology workshop - June 2019, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Best Western PLUS

Equipping teams to develop narratives

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

On one hand, violent extremist organizations are becoming increasingly sophisticated in their use of communication to spread propaganda, recruit, radicalize, raise funds and showcase their acts of terror. On the other hand there is the rise of digital, unstructured, fake news, trust in the internet and low trust in authority. These two settings underpin the role of strategic communication at the Centre.

Understanding and confronting the propaganda messaging of violent extremist groups is needed in order to develop effective alternative and counter narratives against violent extremist ideologies. This is the role of the ICEPCVE's Strategic Communications Unit plays, working with regional partners.

The specific objectives of the Unit are to support the:

- Analysis of communication capacities of training participants.
- Development of communication objectives and key messages.
- Selection of communication audiences
- Production of context-specific communication products.
- Development of dissemination plans.

Complementing the work of IGAD, ICEPCVE collaborates with partners to strengthen the capacity of communities at risk of radicalization to violent extremism. One way of achieving this objective is by developing and implementing training programmes and materials to contribute to the development of messages against the spread of propaganda and fake news.

In 2019, ICEPCVE successfully hosted five communication workshops on training in strategic communications. At least 90 participants from youth, women, faith-based, media and civil society organizations across the IGAD Member States plus Mozambique, Rwanda and Tanzania benefitted from the workshops.

The workshops are designed to be participatory in nature and are designed to train participants in the complete continuum of the production process of radio, infographics, illustrations and video narratives.

Through the training sessions ICEPCVE supported the production of 7 public announcements, 7 radio messages, 6 short videos, 3 infographics and 3 illustration strips in 6 languages. The main objective of the training is skills transfer so that participants can apply the skills gained to develop and disseminate their own messages.

We embarked on the development of a strategic communication training manual for the development and dissemination of alternative and counter narratives. The manual will be used to support non-state actors to generate counter-narratives. Overall, the manual theme promotes democratic values and peace-building, dialogue and negotiation strategies.

In June we launched the Centre's UKWELI Cable e-newsletter to strengthen external communication. The e-newsletter has expanded information sharing and updates to our stakeholders.

At ICEPCVE we value partnerships. Our collaboration with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) delivered strategic communication skills to government officials from the IGAD Member States plus Rwanda and Tanzania in December.

Our priority in 2020 is to strengthen the digital hub for collaboration and knowledge sharing in the youth, civil society and research network.

Equipping partners to develop and disseminate counter and alternative narratives against in violent extremism ideologies

“ Tailoring messages that resonate with communities at risk of radicalization ”



Developing radio messages at the introductory training in strategic communication- August 2019, Entebbe, Uganda

OUR PARTNERS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



IGAD Member States



African Union



Government of Denmark



European Union



Government of Italy



United Nations




United Nations Development Programme



United States Agency for International Development



United States Department of State



The workshop was interesting and insightful. The 'Trust-Based, Qualitative Field Methods' manual is a useful tool.

PARTICIPANT AT RESEARCH WORKSHOP
Addis Ababa, June 2019

After the training I used the skills learnt and worked with my team and we developed a public service announcement in Somali language that had at least 23,000 views on Facebook.

PARTICIPANT AT VOICES OF MUTUAL RESPECT WORKSHOP
Djibouti, July 2019

"...I will mobilize my youth network and community members in joining the prevention of violent extremism through public campaigns, developing more messages and engaging with local communication in releasing them..."

PARTICIPANT AT RADIO TRAINING WORKSHOP
Entebbe, August 2019

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