



IN BRIEF



PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM (PVE) FOCUS AREAS

Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

What's the Issue?

Threats from violent extremism that could be conducive to terrorism have increased in recent years and have become more and more inter-linked at a local, regional and global levels.

Structural gender inequalities and systematic discrimination directly contribute to root causes of violent extremism. Yet, in some instances frameworks to counter terrorism (CT) and prevent violent extremism (PVE) may exacerbate gender inequality.

The United Nations' support to prevent violent extremism and counter terrorism must ensure gender mainstreaming, take into account gender and situation analysis, and be gender responsive.

BOX 1

Useful Links

Find out more about UN Women's PVE work in [West and East Africa](#), [Asia and the Pacific](#), the [Middle East](#) and [North Africa](#).

Our Solutions

We believe that gender equality and the empowerment of women within communities, while a right on and of itself, are also imperative for a more peaceful and just society free from violence including violent extremism.

Within the framework of Women, Peace and Security and the United Nations' agenda on sustaining peace, UN Women partners with regional and national stakeholders to strengthen gender responsive policies and processes, and to provide technical advisory services in support of preventing violent extremism programmes. This is achieved through gender mainstreaming, and through promoting women's participation in the security sector decision-making processes and mechanisms, especially in contexts affected by terrorism and in peacebuilding settings.

UN Women also works closely with the United Nations' counter-terrorism architecture to develop gender-sensitive policies and gender-responsive strategies. UN Women is an integral part of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Compact led by the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism, where it chairs the working group on gender-sensitive approaches and convenes 18 UN partners.

[UN Women's strategic plan 2018–2021](#) outlines our continued work in support of preventing violent conflict and violent extremism.



How We Make a Difference

UN Women's main areas of engagement in support of gender-sensitive approaches to preventing violent extremism and UN-led counter terrorism processes include:

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION: UN Women provides technical assistance and guidance for the development of policies to ensure gender-responsive and gender-sensitive approaches to the prevention of violence and prevention of violent extremism. We work with the **United Nations' Counter-Terrorism architecture** to deliver on our mandate commitments, as outlined in [UNSCR 2242](#) and other relevant UN Security Council recommendations. Through its role in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Compact, UN Women supports the integration of women, peace and security priorities into the wider UN counter terrorism agenda and its efforts to support the implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. **UN Women also chairs the working group of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Compact on gender-sensitive approaches to prevent and counter violent extremism** (Gender Working Group), which supports the implementation of Pillar IV of the [UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy](#). Through this role, UN Women contributes to policy development, engages independent civil society organizations and support a coordinated approach to increasing gender mainstreaming within the work of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Compact. In addition, UN Women uses its existing platforms to contribute to objective policy making by sharing lessons identified in country, research and consultations findings.

GENDER AND PVE PROGRAMMES: UN Women supports the implementation of a series of programmes to prevent violent extremism at the global and national levels. All PVE programming is informed by and aligned to the United Nations priority agenda on prevention and sustaining peace (GA resolution 262 and [UNSCR 2282](#)), and it contributes towards achieving Agenda 2030 [SDG5 on gender equality](#), [SDG10 on reducing inequalities](#), [SDG16 on achieving just and inclusive societies](#) and [SDG 17 on partnerships](#). UN Women adopts principled conflict-sensitive approaches integrating people-centred and whole-of-society approaches, as well as approaches in support of increasing women's representation in security sector institutions as part of its institutional capacity building and civil society support. UN Women advocates for a 'whole of government' approach in all its PVE interventions. Globally, UN Women's **Global Programme on gender-sensitive approaches to preventing violent extremism (PVE Global Programme)** runs from 2019-2022 and is implemented at the policy and in-country levels, led by UN

Women country offices. The global project supports national initiatives aimed at improving gender mainstreaming in PVE process, and it provides capacity building support and increases engagement of civil society organizations. It also seeks to increase the participation of women-led grassroots and civil society organizations in inter-governmental platforms debating violent extremism.

GENDER AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM RESEARCH: A common denominator among violent extremist organizations is the targeting of women and strategizing attacks on their bodies and personal integrity. This is in addition to using false narratives of women's empowerment in their propaganda and recruitment efforts. Thereby, it is important that research and studies are strategic, targeted and informed by local and regional dynamics. UN Women invests in [research](#), analysis and measurement of violent extremism and women's rights and security. UN Women, together with partners, deploys all possible efforts to expand knowledge of gender and violent extremism through locally driven research and studies.

BOX 2

PVE Global Programme

UN Women's PVE Global Programme runs between 2019 and 2022, it is led jointly with UN Women country offices and supports the roll-out of national initiatives to improve gender mainstreaming in PVE processes. It also seeks to increase the participation of women-led grassroots and civil society organizations in inter-governmental platforms debating violent extremism. At the national level, the programme helps national and international stakeholders gain a better understanding of local gendered dynamics of violent extremism, as well as the impact of counter-terrorism responses on communities and on women in particular. The project is critical to inform UN-led counter-terrorism policy-making processes as it provides access to diverse women-led civil society perspectives and recommendations. At the country level, the project supports institutional capacity building, advocacy and community-based peace infrastructures in contexts impacted by violent extremism. Best practices resulting from in-country programming help inform further policies and research at a global level.