PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM: INTEGRATING GENDER PERSPECTIVES (GLOBAL, JORDAN AND PAKISTAN)

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UN WOMEN

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I. ACRONYMS

ACTED	Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development
ARDD	Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development
AWO	Arab Women Organisation
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CTED	Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
DRC	Dispute Resolution Council
EGM	Experts Group Meeting
EC	European Council
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
FATA	Federally Administrated Tribal Areas
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GFP	Generations for Peace
ICCT	International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISIL	The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JNCW	The Jordanian National Commission on Women
JONAP	Jordanian National Action Plan
KII	Key Informant Interviews
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
NACE	Networking Arab Civic Education
NACTA	National Counter Terrorism Authority
NAP	National Action Plan
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OHCHR	Office of the Higher Commissioner for Human Rights
PSD	Public Security Directorate
PVE	Preventing Violent Extremism
ToT	Training of Trainers
UN	United Nations
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOCT	United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UNGCTS	United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy
UNGCTC	United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Compact
GWG	Gender Working Group
UNSCR 1325	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security
UNSCR 2242	United Nations Security Council Resolution 2242 on women, peace, and security
VE	Violent Extremism
VEO	Violent Extremist Organizations
WANA Institute	West Asia-North Africa Institute
WPS	Women, Peace, and Security

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project 'Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE): Integrating Gender Perspectives (Global, Jordan, and Pakistan)' supports the promotion of women's rights through the integration of gender perspectives in efforts to prevent violent extremism at all levels. This support is through increase participation of women in security and prevention of violent extremism discourse in different platforms and relevant mechanisms. In addition to expanding the knowledge base on gender and violent extremism by conducting localized research and systematic awareness-raising activities, inclusion of women-led grassroots and civil society organizations (CSOs) in various inter-governmental processes aiming to prevent violent extremism.

Starting in February 2019, the project operated at the global, national, and community levels. At the global level, the project supports increased women's participation in counter-terrorism platforms, and to support gender mainstreaming in UN relevant policies informed by the knowledge generated in country. At the national level, the project is piloted was in Pakistan and Jordan in support of national partners ensure gender mainstreaming in repective PVE efforts corresponding to the national contexts.

Despite the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic the project has succeeded to deliver on its intended outputs and activities. This was due to the rapid adjustments made to the work plans and the flexibility of partners to the project. Another major challenge encountered was the political sensitivity related to engagement in security issues and those related to violent extremism and terrorism. This for example has hindered efforts to support national institutions and strengthen gender mainstreaming as part of institutional building. However, thanks to the knowledge generated at the local level, and the systematic engagement with national institutions,

increased momentum has been achieved. at the conclusion of the project respective national institutions mandated with the prevention of violent extremism explicitly recognize the interlinkages between gender and violent extremism and have expressed willingness to collarborate to increasegender mainstreaming in different areas of their work. This important milestone was only possible because of delieverables achieved under output 1 on local research that has been carried out in a participatory approach and resulted in recommendations endorsed by national actors.

The progress with national institutions has also been coupled with gains at the local level through engagement with civil society and communities. As a result of activities delievered in partnership with local communities, women, girls and the broader community there has been an open discourse at the local level on violence in general, gender power dynamics, systemic vulnerabilities and its linkages to violent extremism. This was a result of capacity building activities, workshops, dialogues and awareness-raising sessions.

The project was also successful in aggregating lessons learnt and best practices to better inform future projects on gender and prevention of violent extremism as detailed in the body of the report.

UN Women is intending to capitalize on the gains achieved during the project to develop, plan and implement a second phase. This is especially relevant given the advocacy and groundwork accomplished in terms of assessments, strengthening rapport with communities and national institutions, and gaining a better understanding of local dynamics through this project. It is therefore critical to leverage the capacities and political momentum currently in place in support of a gender-responsive and gender transformative PVE process at all levels.

III. PURPOSE AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS: A GENERAL ANALYSIS OF GENDER WITHIN TERRORISM AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM FRAMEWORKS

The global trend of securitized responses to violent extremism and militarized approaches continued to take priority over development and resilience approaches. In particular, the interlinkages and relevance of gender equality, women's rights, to efforts of prevention of violent extremism remain largely undefined given the scarcity of evidence. This situation has made it difficult for gender practitioners to make a compelling case for security actors to ensure that policies and programmatic interventions are gender senstivie and do contribute to promoting gender equality, and/or to proactively address negative practices that may harm women's rights or reinforce discriminatory practices.

Women's right to participate in security and PVE decision-making platforms and their contributions to sustaining peace remains largely underfunded and limited. Women also remain overwhelmingly underrepresented in security platforms, whether at the international, regional and/or national levels. The situation has continued during the COVID-19 pandemic as attested by statements and recommendations made by independent and women-led CSOs[1] from contexts impacted by terrorism.

PVE strategies often assume a narrow focus on the role of women as either victims and/or peacemakers who can help prevent 'violent extremism', without recognizing women's agency as political agents as well as the power dynamics which are all relevant aspects of violent extremism (feminist perspectives). For example, PVE Strategies usually lack the inclusion of the role of women as political agents and fail to recognize the power relations between men and women in a given context that usually dictate their different roles in violent extremism. This has led to limited attention to addressing structural inequalities and barriers that directly contribute to exacerbating vulnerabilities.

Meanwhile, shrinking space for civil society organizations continued to challenge gender equality and women's empowerment efforts worldwide. The proliferation of counter-terrorism frameworks at all levels continues to harm civic space and limit the work of women-led civil society organizations[2]. In some contexts, human rights activists are labelled as sympathizers of terrorist groups. It must be noted that CSOs operating in areas directly affected by violent extremism are reported to be under strict surveillance and scrutiny of security agencies.

UN Women at the HQ level engaged with the Member States during the intergovernmental process preceding the 7th review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy to highlight the challenges faced by civil society and women human rights defenders. UN Women also worked to develop internal policies to increase its safeguards when engaging in PVE programming seeking to promote women's rights in the context of PVE and CT[3].

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1 Global digital consultation on the gendered dimensions of violent extremism organized by UN Women on behalf of the Gender working group of the UNGCTC
2 Impact of measures to address terrorism and violent extremism on civic space and the rights of civil society actors and human rights defenders, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, available at: https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G19/057/59/PDF/G1905759.pdf?OpenElement
3 See UN Women policy brief on its engagement in CT and PVE

In Pakistan, the national P/CVE guidelines, which were developed in the aftermath of the December 2014 terrorist attack at the Army public school in Peshawar[4], allocated roles and responsibilities for a wide range of national and sub-national authorities and non-governmental actors. This program creates an elaborate, "bottom-up," multi-stakeholder consultative process that involved more than 300 representatives from different levels of government and parts of society in the country. Implementation challenges remain, as well as the lack of clear division of labour and resources between the federal and provincial governments compounded by shifting institutional and cultural preferences. Another sticking point has been the preference in some provinces for developing their P/CVE plans that better reflect local concerns and priorities; this is exacerbated by the fact that the severity of the threat of violent extremism varies significantly from province to province, limiting the effectiveness of a one-size-fits-all national plan[5]. The degree of interference from relevant departments in each province also varies. In Sindh, a "No Objection" permit is not a requirement whereas operations (even for delivery of basic services) in KP are subject to scrutiny by security organizations functional at all levels[6]. The status of civil society in Pakistan is graded as repressed by the global civil society alliance (CIVICUS)[7]. There have also been arrests made against civil society members under the anti-terrorism act.[8]

In Pakistan, a gender-sensitive and responsive approach to security and preventing violent extremism is sorely lacking. This is manifested at various levels including compensation schemes for women victims of extremism, policy-making, and institutional barriers to women's participation. While women are increasingly active in policymaking and the state bureaucracy, this is less so the case in the security sphere. Women face institutional barriers – ranging from negative attitudes to limitations of their full participation in security institutions such as the police[9].

In Jordan, the status of civil society is graded as obstructed by CIVICUS[10]. In their analytical report for Jordan in 2010, several references to anti-terrorism laws including laws related to hate speech were regarded as harming the freedom of civil society.[11] In 2020 and under the pretext of the COVID 19 pandemic, several measures were issued that were criticized by civil society related to financing and freedom of expression. These procedures were denounced by civil society as restricting the work of civil society by impacting independent financing and lack of definitions.[12]

In Jordan, women still face significant challenges and a lack of participation in decision-making platforms, especially over PVE policies and strategies. For example, the PVE national action plan, under the PVE Unit at the Prime Minister's office was never publicly presented and women groups were not able to provide contributions. This perception of the lack of women's participation was backed by statements made during the consultations with women's groups organized by UN Women from 2019 to 2021 resulting in the Study in Jordan conducted under activity 1.1 and finalized in December 2021 (ANNEX 23).

Apart from the infringement of CSOs ' rights and freedoms, the curbing of CSOs plays into the hands of violent extremist groups. It does so by increasing mistrust between local authorities and CSOs. The shrinking space for CSO activities limits their contribution and support of basic services to their immediate communities.

During the implementation period of the project, the world experienced major events, including the advent of the COVID19 pandemic in and the takeover of the Taliban in Afghanistan. These events have reportedly emboldened violent extremist groups.[13] Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs) are reported to adjust their business models to the 'new normal' created by the pandemic, especially through the high use of modern communications technologies. For example, ISIL

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4   See https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-asia-35103616

5   https://www.lawfareblog.com/connecting-dots-strengthening-national-local-collaboration-addressing-violent-extremism

6   Experience of UN Women implementing a project in Merged Districts, KP required clearance from authorities to operate through an implementing partner.

7   Available at: https://monitor.civicus.org/country/pakistan/

8   https://www.civicus.org/index.php/component/tags/tag/pakistan

9   See Annex 10, Study Report on Women's role in PVE and Building Social Cohesion

10 Available at: https://monitor.civicus.org/country/jordan/

11 Available at: https://www.civicus.org/downloads/CSI/Jordan.pdf

12 Available at: https://monitor.civicus.org/updates/2020/05/21/covid-19-pretext-muzzle-media/

13 See: point 20, https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/CTED-Paper%E2%80%93-The-impact-of-the-COVID-19-pandemic-on-counter-terrorism-and-countering-violent-extremism.pdf

increased its online activities and talked about COVID-19 in its mobilization starting Feb 2020 and before national governments declared emergency sanitary measures[14].

In Pakistan, while the Federal Government imposed a lockdown starting on 17 March 2020 till the end of Sept 2020, UN Women shifted its implementation focus to essential online meetings focusing on women's protection measures during COVID-19. In August 2021, Afghanistan, which shares its longest border with Pakistan, saw the collapse of the Afghan government and the takeover of the Taliban that set into motion a humanitarian crisis in the country. The takeover created ripple effects in Pakistan,[15] galvanizing violent groups who wished to emulate the Taliban's victory and resulting in a mass exodus of refugees to Pakistan. This development further compounded an already complex situation along Pakistan's border with Afghanistan which is marked by ethnic and religious fault lines and a severe lack of socio-economic development.

Jordan remains among the region's countries most impacted by the Syrian crisis. Women and girls, who constitute half of the refugee population in Jordan, carry the double burden of gender discrimination and refugee status. This reality has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has increased poverty rates by 18 per cent among Syrian refugees living in Jordan.[16]

The 7th review of the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy that was passed in July 2021 for the first time has mentioned the relevance of the women, peace and security agenda within the context of violent extremism and counter-terrorism; the new resolution also encouraged the Member States to engage with civil society in the implementation of the Strategy; an important recognition was also made for the role of women and the risk of instrumentalization. This recognition in global policy is yet to be reflected in relevant national strategies as well as programmatic prioritization and resources allocations. Hence it remains critical to continue advocacy and research to build evidence on the relevance of gender equality to issues related to peace and security including in the prevention of violent extremism.

It is therefore important to continue systematic advocacy on the responsibility of governments in protecting freedoms and rights and to foster tolerant, pluralistic, just and inclusive societies. Support is also required to ensure that counter-terrorism frameworks are targeted, clearly defined, and do not infringe on women's rights and the work of independent civil society and women-led organizations.

UN Women, like all development and humanitarian partners, has suspended most of its activities during 2020 saving for efforts to provide humanitarian interventions and activities that were appropriate and possible to conduct virtually. The project resumed its activities with revised modalities in 2021.

At the global level, measures to combat the pandemic resulted in the delay of globally led activities namely, 1.1., 1.5, and 3.8. This is because of the travel restrictions impacting support to increased participation in CT platforms, as well as international and local travel necessary to conduct localized research. As such, all three outputs were deferred to 2021 with adjusted scope and modality. In 2021, all delayed activities were delivered virtually and included the knowledge galvanized through the project deliverables in Pakistan and Jordan.

In Pakistan, UN Women limited activities from March to September 2020 to online events (mainly involving partners in Islamabad). Activities planned to be carried out at the community level only resumed by end of September 2020. During the period, UN Women continued to coordinate with government and CSO partners to finalize the required paperwork. Following the takeover of the Taliban over Afghanistan in August 2021, UN Women undertook a rapid 'Scoping Study to Build Social Cohesion between Afghan Refugees and Host Communities in Pakistan'[17]. This is to get an updated situational analysis on the impacts of the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan on Pakistan's border communities concerning VE (Violent Extremism), access and protection challenges for women, identify key areas in Balochistan and KP hosting new Afghan migrant communities. The scoping study recommends key actions to prevent violent extremism and build social cohesion, mitigate protection issues and identify entry points for

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14 Al Shabab sets up corona virus treatment center in Somalia, see Aljazeera at https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/6/14/al-shabab-sets-up-coronavirus-treatment-centre-in-somalia

15 See https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2022/02/11/pakistans-ambivalent-approach-toward-a-resurgent-tehrik-e-taliban-pakistan/

16 Jordan Fact Sheet, UNHCR, April 2021, p.1. https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/86109

17 See Annex 25

UN Women interventions. The scoping study was completed on January 31, 2022 (ANNEX 25).

In Jordan, the project activities were not suspended during the entire duration of the pandemic. Due to the effective reprogramming and sufficient infrastructure in Jordan, the project was able to fully apply digital tools and methods for implementation. From 2020 up to mid-2021, all relevant meetings and workshops were conducted online including by UN Women's Implementing Partner Generations for Peace (GFP). A rapid assessment of the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on vulnerable Syrian refugee and Jordanian women was conducted by UN Women Jordan in April 2020 the findings informed revised work plans. The government imposed rules and measures were lifted by the end of 2021 when the programme resumed implementation of physical activities mostly in the field.

It is against this background that UN Women in close consultations with the EU and partners in the country have revised the work plan of the project which was approved on 30 June 2020. The revised work plan (ANNEX 14) was aimed to strengthen the response and relevance of the project by refocusing some of its outputs based on the changing needs at the local level. This is mainly by including an assessment of the impact of the COVID 19 situation in Pakistan programming areas, and by delaying implementation of the global level activities to 2021.

The revised work plan was effectively delivered by the end of the project, in particular, the changes to the work plan applied due to the pandemic included the following changes:

a. Revision of the implementation timelines at all levels.
b. Globally led activities of 2020 were deferred to 2021, outputs 1.1. 1.5, and 3.8.
c. Additional activities related to the COVID19 situation were integrated within existing outputs in both Jordan and Pakistan.
d. In Jordan, a budget relocation was calculated and agreed upon within the relevant contract obligation impacting activities 2.3 and 3.7. The budget relocation was to strengthen the work with youth in response to COVID-19 pandemic.

IV. PROJECT COORDINATION AND KEY PARTNERSHIPS

The first global steering committee of the project was convened on 19th March 2020, and the second was organized on 19th April 2021. Both steering committee meetings were attended by the EU- Brussels, EU regional representatives, UN Women HQ, UN Women Pakistan, and UN Women Jordan. During the meeting, updates were presented, and decisions related to revised activities due to the pandemic were thoroughly discussed and agreed.

The project steering committee meetings were essential for the continuation of the strategic and programmatic partnership between the EU and UN Women, this is by tabling issues and agreeing on response measures. This model has permitted open communication and increased ownership of the implementation processes at all levels by all partners. The meetings also provided an opportunity for strategic discussions related to the overall contribution of the project to the UN Counter-Terrorism (CT) agenda and its support to the Member States in implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

Globally, UN Women continues to lead on gender mainstreaming in CT and PVE at the HQ level, where it is the main partner of UNOCT and CTED in developing and implementing gender-responsive approaches in the UN CT agenda. UN Women chairs the UN Global Compact working group on gender, in this role UN Women support knowledge sharing for objective policy development through the presentation and dissemination of best practices developed through the project's activities implemented globally and in the country.

UN Women in Pakistan has an established partnership with the UN Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE)/

Countering Terrorism (CT) Task Force chaired by the Resident Coordinator Office (RCO) and UNDP. Most importantly, UN Women were able to increase its rapport with the relevant national actors including the National Counter Terrorism Authority of Pakistan in Islamabad where discussions and formal communication have been initiated to prepare and sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU is expected to be concluded by Q3 of 2022. This is important progress, given the limited baseline on the ability to work with national mandate holders.

In Jordan, UN Women is a member of the UN PVE task force and participates in the bi-monthly coordination meetings together with UNESCO, UNDP, and other UN agencies. The UN Task Force developed a strategic framework for a coherent UN approach to PVE in Jordan. In addition, UN Women partners with UNDP in convening an expert group meeting on PVE.[18] Following the endorsement of its mapping report carried out under output 1.2 in Jordan in Sept 2021.

UN Women's national research on gender drivers of PVE was completed in partnership with the PVE Unit under Prime Ministry and the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW). This joint work has increased the credibility of findings and permitted strengthened rapport with the PVE unit.

The increase of national ownership and positive momentum to engage in gender issues and violent extremism is welcome progress given the limited momentum on the part of the national mandate holders side. This progress is attributed to the work done under this project including the research under outcome 1 in both Pakistan and Jordan. Where the substantive knowledge and support provided through the project presented an added value to increasing gender mainstreaming in PVE efforts to national partners.

At all levels, UN Women partnered with civil society, including on efforts to increase their capacity in security sector discussions and PVE. This in addition to supporting increased CSOs participation in relevant global and national relevant platforms where UN Women leveraged its partnerships to promote engagement of civil society organizations at all levels. for example, the project under output 3.8. has facilitated women-led CSOs' participation in the first regional conference on CT and PVE organized by the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism, where the member states, the African Union and Specialized UN entities were participants. Under the same output, the project supported the participation of Pamian from Pakistan and ARDD from Jordan in a global event held virtually where they presented strong papers on the national context and tabled recommendations for the UN, UN Women, EU and national governments.

In Pakistan, UN Women partnered with civil society to implement activities at the national and local levels including in support of dialogues for policy making, capacity building, and skills training. In Jordan, UN Women partnered with Generations for Peace (GFP), NOVACT, and the Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD). All three organizations are leading programs on PVE and social cohesion in Jordan.

During the implementation of the project, UN Women at all levels continue to coordinate closely with the EU delegations in the country and at the regional levels. All updates and substantive discussions are communicated timely through UN Women HQ to the EU in Brussels. In 2021, an evaluation of the project was conducted under outcome 1, which recognized the continued improvement of coordination and two-way communication at all levels and between UN Women and the EU.

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18 Details included in the progress report for year 1.

V. INTERLINKAGES AND COMPLEMENTARITY BETWEEN GLOBAL AND IN-COUNTRY LEVEL INTERVENTIONS

There are clear interlinkages between the outputs at each level with the objective to deliver on the outcome of this project which is to achieve effective gender mainstreaming in the prevention of violent extremism.

As such, the knowledge emanating from the global level (UN HQ) in terms of policies, guidelines, quality assurance and risk mitigation directives directly informs the project activities implemented in pilot countries in Pakistan and Jordan. This is a critical aspect that ensures that all activities are within the framework of UN guidance and human rights standards, especially given the high-risk nature of prevention of violent extremism programming.

In addition, international human rights obligations discussed at the global level aid the advocacy at the country level against shrinking civic space and risks facing women human rights defenders.

On the other hand, in-country activities including localized research, outcomes of direct consultations with communities and women impacted by acts of violent extremism, and direct support to local authorities and the national government provide a wealth of experience and knowledge that feeds into the policy-making processes at the global level. This is especially that global policies are required to be harmonized at the regional and national levels, hence global policies must be relevant and tackle challenges identified locally. As such it is imperative for in-country experience to inform HQ led policy-making processes, and for policies to inform in-country implementation.

Strategically, UN Women continues to lead on gender mainstreaming in CT and PVE at the HQ level and is the main partner of UNOCT and CTED in developing and implementing gender transformative approaches in the UN CT agenda. This positioning of UN Women in HQ actively operationalizes the "loop" between global and in-country substantive remit and delivery for sustainable results on gender mainstreaming in PVE. Therefore, this project is designed in a comprehensive manner linking global level outputs to in-country outputs to achieve the overall outcome.

Furthermore, global events on counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism avail an opportunity to strengthen south-south and triangular cooperation between actors including partner national governments, and independent civil society organizations to engage in constructive dialogue on counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism. This project also advocate and support increased women's participation and representation as political actors and as equal citizens in counterterrorism and the prevention of violent extremism discussions at all levels. Thereby , deliverables under 3.8 in 2019 and 2021 supporting women's participation in relevant platforms meet the objective of strengthening south-south collaboration.

Finally, the knowledge and best practices emerging from implementation in Jordan and Pakistan, as well as the comparative study commissioned by the global level in Mozambique will feed directly into the discussion of the community of practice on counter-terrorism, and women, peace and security of the UN system. Knowledge sharing has also been delivered through output 1.5. to UN Women community of practice through the implementation of output 1.5 on cross-regional and knowledge exchange that took place in April 2021 (ANNEX 21).

VI. PROGRAMMATIC OUTPUTS AND DELIVERABLES

During the project reporting period, progress has been achieved in implementing all the outputs despite the delays experienced because of the pandemic. The implementation of outputs is elaborated below:

Output 1. Expand and deepen a data-driven evidence base on the drivers of violent extremism and its gendered impact

Activity 1.1

Collaborate with national-led PVE stakeholders and key research institutes to produce and disseminate new research on gendered drivers and dynamics of violent extremism and its specific impact on women and girls and the role women can play in the prevention of violent extremism

On Track	◯	Delayed	◯
Ahead of plan	◯	Delivered	✕

This activity is implemented at the global and the country level. A total of three main studies conducted in Pakistan, Jordan, and Mozambique are the deliverables against this activity. All three studies (see ANNEXES 18, 19, 25 and 26) include important annexes like the mapping report of Jordan, a knowledge product in Pakistan.

a) Research in Pakistan:

UN Women in Pakistan carried out national research titled 'Resilience, Community Security and Social Cohesion through Effective Women's Leadership', including a Knowledge Product, **(see ANNEX 18 and 19)** to gain a better understanding of contextual trends of gender aspects of prevention of violence, and to identify factors threatening community security[19] as well as the impact on the rights of women and girls. The research

employed mixed methods research in the form of both primary data collection (Individual Surveys, Focus Group Discussions, Key Informant Interviews) and secondary research to identify factors undermining community security and social cohesion and their effects on women's voices and representation. The survey, FGDs, and KIIs were conducted with women at the community level, policy-makers, and experts in both rural and urban areas of all four provinces of Pakistan mainly Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, and Quetta. The women respondents in FGDs and surveys were mainly from lower-middle-class and working-class backgrounds. A total of 8 focus group discussions were held across each provincial capital. Two sessions were held in each city separately for urban and rural participants. The FGDs included a total of 71 women from urban and rural areas with a focus on women from marginalized ethnic, linguistic, religious, sectarian, and socio-economic backgrounds to fully capture the impact of the breakdown in social cohesion on women across Pakistan.

The research explored vulnerabilities of women and gendered drivers that contribute to security threats and fragmentations of social cohesion which intensifies the impact of violence and security threats.

The FGDs included ten women from the urban area and six women from the rural area of Karachi. The FGD discussant women put forward women's perspectives from areas that have suffered from a breakdown in social cohesion due to ethnic, sectarian, linguistic, and religious tensions. Ten women from urban areas of Lahore and nine women from rural areas of Lahore explained the impact of religious tensions on women and how it varies from urban to rural setup. While in Peshawar ten women from urban areas and ten from rural areas delineated the impact of militancy and violent extremist narratives on women's lives in the region. To capture perspectives in Balochistan, ten women from urban areas and six women from rural areas explained how migration, breakdown in social cohesion, and ethnic and sectarian tensions have impacted women's lives.

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19 Community security threats includes threats presented by violent extremism

Key Informant Interviews included interviews with thirty participants that were conducted with key stakeholders from the security sector, serving and retired police officers, bureaucrats, academics, members of the civil society, politicians

Research showed how patriarchal social structures condition women's involvement in situations of escalating conflict and decreasing social cohesion. The everyday exclusion of women from public life is perpetuated due to patriarchal social structures and associated norms of domesticity. Moreover, a range of actors and factors – from family members to state functionaries and policies – work to perpetuate such patriarchal norms and the everyday exclusions that women face (often spilling over into overt violence).

As such, women narrate different kinds of violence that they encounter in everyday life. Repeatedly, the attitudes of men to a range of issues are pinpointed as the animating factor behind this everyday violence. Inside the household, this can be due to issues of reproductive labour, such as food, the upbringing of children, and everyday household decisions.

The findings from this extensive research were disseminated through a national dialogue (outlined in output 1.4) and contributed to the greater understanding of local dynamics between gender and violent extremism, sustain advocacy efforts at all levels, and provide an evidence base for future programming for UN Women.

In August 2021, Afghanistan which shares its longest border with Pakistan saw the collapse of the Afghan government and the takeover of the Taliban that set into motion a humanitarian crisis in the country. The takeover created ripple effects in Pakistan – galvanizing violent groups who wished to emulate the Taliban's victory and resulting in a mass exodus of refugees to Pakistan. This development further compounded an already complex situation along Pakistan's border with Afghanistan which is marked by ethnic and religious fault lines and a severe lack of socio-economic development.

Given the changing dynamics, UN Women Pakistan under this activity commissioned a rapid study **'Scoping Study to Build Social Cohesion between Afghan Refugees and Host Communities in Pakistan' (Annex 25)**

to conduct a situational analysis on the impacts of the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan on Pakistan's border communities. The study also identified identify key areas in Balochistan and KP hosting new Afghan migrant communities and recommended key actions to prevent violent extremism and build social cohesion, mitigate protection issues and identify entry points for UN Women interventions. The scoping study was completed on January 31, 2022.

The scoping study analysed the social, economic, and security situation challenges faced by Afghan refugees and noted that the current state of displacement is increasing their disempowerment and marginalization, which could have complex and deleterious impacts on levels of conflict and associated trends in violent extremism. Evidence on VE trends in Pakistan and Afghanistan suggests that women play a diverse and complex role in both radicalization and de-radicalization trends in the region[20].

Extreme economic disempowerment of women and high levels of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) has been noted in several studies[21] as key social drivers which led women to support the participation of sons and family males in violent action. There is also notable evidence that domestic and gender-based violence pushed young women directly to seek empowerment, protection and mobility through aligning with organized extremist movements. The scoping study and interviews with new migrant women suggested that they are facing increased levels of economic and social stresses including a lack of appropriate shelters due to the displacement. The respondents also suggested increased incidents of girl child marriages among new migrants where marriage is used to cement family networks among refugee and host communities. These conditions are increasing mental stress and a sense of disempowerment among women and girls. The new Afghan migrants including women and girls are currently existing in legal limbo and are extremely vulnerable to the recruitment activities of non-state extremist actors, which have a presence within most of the refugee-hosting areas. Extreme vulnerabilities faced by migrant women and girls constrain the traditional peace-building role that women play and legitimize the actions and activities of violent non-state actors in the environment around the vulnerable displaced new migrants.

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20 UN Women Report "Gap Analysis of Security Protocols Through a Gender Lens," See Chapter 6. P.
21 Ibid.

b) Research in Jordan:

In **Jordan**, UN Women completed a first mapping study report (ANNEX 3) with key findings and recommendations on the gendered drivers and dynamics of violent extremism in consultations with various national stakeholders.

The discussions around the key findings of the mapping report informed the drafting of the first national research proposal on a gendered analysis of the drivers and dynamics of violent extremism and social cohesion in Jordan. The research was completed in January 2022 (ANNEX 23). The results of the research significantly contributed to greater evidence through the first national research on gender drivers of PVE, which was completed in partnership with the PVE Unit under the Prime Ministry and the JNCW. This was the first research, which contributed to understanding how these dynamics can be linked to prevention, and hence lead to social cohesion.

The research examines the different roles that women in Jordan can play in preventing violent extremism, hence creating significant national data that could be used to better inform policies and strategies on PVE, WPS, upcoming National Action Plans and ensure that gender is mainstreamed throughout.

The study was presented to the PVE Unit, which accepted it in its entirety. Building on the findings, the national partner suggested to hold consultations with women's groups to explore opportunities to enhance the engagement of women and CSOs in designing programmes and policies around gender-sensitive PVE efforts. Accordingly, UN Women is planning to support follow up consultations with women's groups, especially from the South part of the country, and to build on the results of the study in drafting the JONAP II. While the national research was conducted under the current project, however, it is also aligned with the broader JONAP framework.

The report revealed the key findings across three thematic areas: (1) Women's perception, role, and reality in Jordan, (2) Violent extremism in Jordan, and (3) Preventing violent extremism in Jordan. More specifically, the research explored several subtopics including, but not limited, to the following: legal, policy, and social environment, women's political and civic engagement, gender-based violence, the influence of structural and individual factors on one's inclination to violence, recruitment, the role of women in VE and PVE and others.

In general, the research revealed that several structural factors contribute to the use of violence. The use of violence is mainly justified if one's interests are threatened, whereas using violence in the name of religion, for political/social causes, or for solving problems are factors that are less likely to lead to violence.

In addition to that, when it comes to governance as a factor, access to basic services and trust in government institutions were considered to be factors that can lead to the use of violence depending on the level of satisfaction. On this level, it is important to note that while both men and women might share this tendency, men have a much higher inclination towards violence.

Similarly, on a socio-cultural level, the research reveals that the perception of diverse communal experiences, relations, and connections, along with the factors indicating a socially cohesive community is correlated with the use of violence. The more diverse the community is and the higher the sense of belonging, justice, and fairness of its members, the less likely they are to resort to violence. For men and women who negatively perceived the above-mentioned factor, and even though some women shared the same sentiment, men were more likely to resort to violence in comparison to women.

On another note, the research examined women's agency, which proved to be limited based on the collected data. With an agency rendered as secondary in the household and much less influential in society, women's ability to positively influence their society and contribute to peacebuilding and social cohesion is perceived as restricted. Moreover, access to privileges and rights is "selective" for women, influencing their role when it comes to political and civic participation. This is further amplified by what women face in society including gender-based violence and discrimination as a result of the rigid gender norms and traditions present.

Yet, even with these structural factors, women are still less inclined to resort to violence. This could be a key entry point for PVE programming, where women's role as political agents advocating for peace in the society, community and at the household levels, could be leveraged. Enhanced with support of men's engagement and their support and solidarity to women's agenda and women's issues. This can be done by tackling the aforementioned challenges and strengthening women's agency and contribution to society. As such, multi-dimensional and multi-stakeholder programming following a whole of society approach is imperative to strengthen the role of women, their voice and participation in public life.

Finally, the report provides a set of possible recommendations to be taken into consideration when adopting future PVE programming, strategies, policies, and initiatives. The findings of this research highlight key to exploring recommendations to better engage women in PVE programming. The recommendations focus on four levels: (1) National/legal framework, (2) Institutional level, (3) Societal/communal dynamics, and (4) Individual/household dynamics. It is important to note that the research team ensured that the recommendations presented are from a gender-lens, to promote the key role of women in PVE.

c) Research commissioned globally[22]:

At the global level, UNWOMEN commissioned a comparative study on gender and violent extremism (ANNEX 26) taking into account the findings in Pakistan and Jordan, and comparing them to a third context. The third context selected for the comparative study was Cabo Delgado in northern Mozambique. The reason for the selection is that the context of Mozambique presents a new frontier for the expansion of violent extremist groups and presents a new case study for comparison between the findings in Asia from Pakistan and the MENA region from Jordan. The comparative study is meant to assess the commonalities and trends across the different contexts as well as to determine different aspects related to gender and violent extremism if any. The findings of the study provided an in-depth feminist analysis of the multi-factors of push and pull factors in each context, identified commonalities and tested the hypothesis linked gender equality to security. . The findings of the comparative study will directly feed into expanding the knowledge base of the UN system and community of practice more broadly. More specifically, the recommendations are directed to stakeholders including the UN system in general and to UN Women in specific to ensure effective gender mainstreaming in PVE support.

The comparative study highlighted the structural realities such as patriarchy, the prevalence of extremist ideologies, political violence, lack of economic opportunities, governance deficits and violation of human rights that affect women in a variety of ways in the three different contexts. The study also elaborated on common push and pull factors that contribute to their unique vulnerability to extremist ideas; the

impacts extremism has on women and their agency and recommended measures to address identified issues. Furthermore, the study proposes an interlinked approach to address gender and violent extremism through a holistic perspective and a focused look at priority themes/target groups. The study called for having a better understanding of the distinctions between "drivers" and "root causes" when developing short, mid and long term WPS - C/PVE programming. From a gender perspective, most of the patterns identified tend to be related to the common influence of the patriarchal societal structures (gender norms, systemic gender-based violence and intersectionality – multiple inequalities and discriminations), as an intrinsic part of the dynamics that violent extremism poses in each context analysed.

The comparative study has led to the identification of a multiplicity of potential gendered drivers of violent extremism such drivers are categorized as push and pull factors. This push and pull factors may affect individuals (women and men, girls and boys, and gender non-conforming people) and local communities, in diverse forms, intensities and context specificities. Each driver's level of impact may range from individual/personal, household, and community levels to national and global levels. The categorization of micro, meso, macro and "multiple crisis" dynamics (instead of on individual, societal and national levels) aims to stress that the dynamics potentially affected by the drivers of VE are under influence of unequal power relations.

The push factors note that gender norms, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and intersectionality (multiple inequalities and discriminations) as cross-cutting factors, are at the core of the conditions conducive to violent extremism. The following key areas were identified, for potential support from the UN's different mandates, to address push factors of violent extremism:

- Lack of socioeconomic opportunities (i.e. employment), lack of access to (and control of) financial resources/income, lack of access to basic services, lack of access to land and lack of access to education, information, awareness (noted the need to better defining "awareness" and the role of "education");
- Marginalization, exclusion (including gender inequalities in access to mechanisms of decision making), Intersectionality (multiple and intersected

inequalities and discriminations), vulnerability(es), injustice(s), multidimensional poverty as well as structural gender inequalities, toxic masculinity/misogyny;

- Deficit of governance and democratization and lack of trust in government institutions; gender norms; violations of human rights/women's human rights and the rule of law; lack of access to justice/legal assistance;
- Grievances stemming from prolonged and unresolved conflicts; structural sexual and gender-based violence (domestic and/or public spheres);
- Multiple crises/emergencies, political-economic model and geopolitical interests; criminal networks/organized crime (including trafficking in persons/of woman and girls).

In terms of pull factors, the research underlines that while the conditions conducive to violent extremism may affect entire populations, only a small percentage of individuals carry out acts of violence and people (women and girls disproportionately impacted) get pulled into violent movements through manipulation and socialization processes, often facilitated by personal, emotional or psychological factors, by a combination of rational and emotional factors, which are 'gendered' (experienced differently by men and women, because of gender norms). Through beliefs, behaviours and belonging, within a complex combination of motivations and human agency (also influenced by gender inequalities), the pull factors play key roles in exploiting conditions and transforming ideas and grievances into violent action. From a gender perspective, the following key areas were identified, for potential support from the UN's different mandates, to address pull factors of violent extremism:

- Individual/personal backgrounds and motivations, women's agency-victimization dynamics and multiple vulnerabilities influencing recruitment (through persuasion, coercion, kidnapping, "materialistic" interests, use of force and/or "voluntarily"). Further reflection is required on the role of women in VEOs, questioning the presence of an enabling environment for women's informed decisions (given the role that unequal power relations play within "individual choices").
- Collective grievances (pattern of lack of trust and women's grievances related to systemic gender-based violence) and "victimization" (suffering and emotional reactions which can be exploited by violent extremists);

- Distortion and misuse of beliefs, political ideologies and ethnic and cultural differences as well as the influence of patriarchal/gender normative discourses.
- Influence (as mediums to propagate narratives not themselves as drivers of violent extremism) of social networks (online and off-line), community leadership, kinship/tribal/ethnolinguistic group, identity politics, household/familial structures, workplace.

The study then presented proposed detailed measures of how to engage in a gender-responsive manner to address conditions conducive to terrorism and violent extremism, mainly linking response to Agenda 2030 and mid to long term responses. The study also focused on recommendations directly linked to the UN Women mandate, and within its remit in supporting the fulfilment of WPS commitments. Below are summarized recommended measures:

General recommended measures:

a. PVE support must be linked to inclusive and sustainable development efforts and programming.
b. Support must include education (formal/informal), awareness and dissemination of information.
c. Support to acknowledge and seek to support addressing multidimensional poverty embedded in multiple crises, as interlinked drivers to VE.
d. PVE programming must create more structured frameworks with social cohesion supported by national and UN programming.
e. Support must include mid to long terms actions to tackle gender root causes of VE.

Recommendations related to UN Women's mandate:

a. WPS/PVE programming must seek to reinforce three main practical commitments related to PVE gender mainstreaming: (1) Integration of gender equality in interventions in general; (2) Targeting specific groups or issues through special interventions; and (3) Dialogue with partners on gender-sensitive issues and aspects.
b. WPS/PVE strategies to respond to the gendered drivers of VE must consider the historical multiple inequalities and discriminations (intersectionality) as root causes to VE.
c. Sexual harassment, as a human rights violation and as a type of corruption (driver of VE related to poor governance) must be addressed.

d. Interventions must address gender-based violence as both a driver to and impact from violent extremism.

e. PVE projects must include psychosocial approaches to C/PVE, including capacity building in terms of psychological first aid/ psychosocial support to VE survivors.

f. Projects must ensure women' leadership involvement in C/PVE, including in key decision-making for a.

g. Strengthen gender mainstreaming in youth C/PVE interventions.

h. Interlinkages between the WPS and C/PVE agendas and SDGs/ national development strategies must be outlined in the outset.

i. Strategies and interventions must reinforce qualitative indicators in gender sensitive P/CVE M&E.

All research under this activity will be shared with the community of practice at the global level. This is through UN Women's engagement in the UN global counter-terrorism compact, and through the community of practice, meetings are organized virtually and in person.

Activity 1.2

Mapping of current programmes at the global and national level to identify the existing strategies within the field of PVE[23]

On Track	◯	Delayed	◯
Ahead of plan	◯	Delivered	✕

During the reporting period, the mapping has been concluded in Jordan **(ANNEX3)**. The key tasks include mapping national initiatives and conducting consultations with stakeholders. This activity is strongly linked to activity 1.1. above and will inform the research outline in **Jordan**.

Related to this activity UN Women in partnership with UNDP organized a first joint Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on gender and PVE in December 2019 (see narrative report of year 1).

The meeting also provided an opportunity to get a broader understanding of existing efforts by UN partners on PVE, which also contributed to the mapping report. The meeting was informed by the experience of UN Women and UNDP on mainstreaming gender and PVE into policy and research and strengthening the engagement of women's civil society organizations in PVE efforts. The meeting also provided a platform to understand existing efforts and to explore future opportunities and partnerships with women and women-led organizations in PVE efforts. It was attended by 30 representatives of academia, civil society organizations, women's community-based organizations, grassroots groups and national government partners (PSD and the PVE unit) who participated in the expert group meeting.

Follow-up action points included the agreement to continue the discussions on gender-responsive research and data on violent extremism, policy development, and gender mainstreaming in the PVE national action plan. The meeting outcomes will feed into the research and policy dialogue on mainstreaming gender and addressing women's specific needs in existing PVE efforts, strategies, and programs.

In July 2020, the mapping report was validated through a presentation with the expert group in partnership with JNCW. The outcomes of the validation discussion have fed into the final draft of the mapping report. Some of the key recommendations included the need for more evidence of political and socio-economic factors that contributes to women's participation as actors, supporters, and victims of violent extremism. PVE policies should incorporate women's perspectives and assert that representation of women in conflict prevention is important, as political actors, with responsibilities in all phases of peace and security, including the prevention of violence. It is also vital to engage women's groups and civil society during the drafting and implementation of PVE policies and programs to have more people-centred, gender-responsive and human rights-based approaches incorporated.

In September 2020, the final draft report was also presented to the PVE Unit under the Prime Ministry of Jordan (See ANNEX 3). The Unit was provided with the key recommendations to integrate gender aspects into the PVE policies based on gender analysis of women's

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23 This activity is only budgeted to take place in Jordan according to the project's work plan.
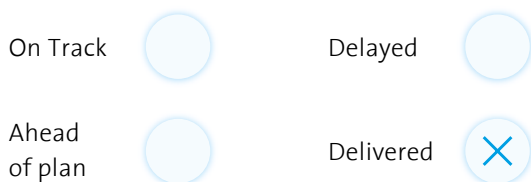
participation in political, economic, and social spheres, to meet the needs of all citizens, women, and men. The PVE Unit agreed that further national research is needed on the gendered dimensions of PVE and committed to providing full support to endorse and conduct this research at the national level. This update is particularly important, as this is the first engagement of the global project) with the PVE unit and is expected to open more avenues of partnership for capacity building in the future.

In addition, a gender and PVE mapping study was presented and discussed with the PSD FPD in November 2020. The FPD acknowledged that some of the findings of the report provided the significant inputs to feed the GBV Communications and Outreach Strategy of the FPD in line with their policy decision on restructuring, which came out in July 2020.

The mapping report also to a greater extent informed the first national research on gender drivers of PVE, which was completed in partnership with the PVE Unit under the Prime Ministry and the JNCW in January 2022.

Activity 1.3

Engage in sixteen Community Dialogues at the district level to assess information on perceptions of extremism (PAKISTAN)

On Track ( )   Delayed ( )

Ahead of plan ( )   Delivered (✕)

The purpose of the community dialogues under this activity was to encourage the face-to-face exchange of information among communities to foster mutual understanding of the gendered dynamics of extremism and to enable participants to openly express their ideas and perspectives. These dialogues are meant as a process to enhance awareness-raising, sensitization, and collaborative problem solving to address specific issues that could give rise to extremist ideologies. This is also to further reflect and discuss the role of women both in the domestic and public sphere to address these divisions. These dialogues included diverse ethnic, religious and community groups that encouraged participants to exchange viewpoints on social cohesion. In total **18 community dialogues** were organized under this output.

UN Women, in partnership with PAIMAN, conducted **six community dialogues**, engaging 84 people (49 female, 35 male), and **six district-level seminars** engaging 266 people (144 female, 122 male). The participants included but were not limited to government officials, community activists, teachers and health workers, house makers and students. The discussions provided an opportunity for the local women to openly express their views regarding perceptions of VE, the effects of VE on women and how women can play an effective role to PVE.

In addition to this, UN Women Pakistan engaged 25 female diverse community faith leaders in Karachi - Sindh to advocate to promote peace and tolerance in their communities. This dialogue took place on 3-4 January 2022 **(ANNEX 27)**.

The focus on faith leaders was because they often shape popular knowledge about different religions and sects. Through sermons and congregations, they influence public opinion and perceptions further informing the discourse on inter-faith harmony to the ready audience available to them. While religious/community leaders' influence is long-established, it is important to ensure that they have a common understanding of peace in society. In some cases, there is a risk presented by faith leaders where they lack in-depth knowledge about comparative religions. In such cases, some faith leaders' teachings may lead to discrimination against religious minorities and sects. Combined with little to no interaction with the 'other', these notions become deeply rooted and they end up propagating narratives that create distrust, establish negative stereotypes, and breed intolerance based on religion and sectarianism in the society.

Women faith leaders, especially, have a distinctive influence on family and in societal social structures. They are uniquely positioned to address narratives encouraging violent political expression and to promote peaceful co-existence.

Based on the concepts they had learned during their engagement, these community faith leaders held four community engagement sessions in Karachi engaging 105 community women. These sessions paved the way to establish a sense of sisterhood amongst diverse female faith leaders by eliminating differences of race, colour, caste and religion and increased their engagement within communities to propagate messages of peace **(ANNEX 28)**.

Figure 1: Community faith leaders during the two-day awareness session held from 3-4 January 2022. Credits: Mujtaba Rathore.

Figure 2: Community dialogues held in Karachi led by female faith leaders in Karachi. Credit: Mujtaba Rathore.

Activity 1.4

Organize two national dialogues on the gender impacts of violent extremism highlighting areas needed for further research and data collection, to feed into good practices for the UN, EU and other stakeholders working in this area (PAKISTAN)

On Track	◯	Delayed	◯
Ahead of plan	◯	Delivered	✕

In Pakistan, the two national dialogues on the gender impacts of violent extremism were conducted in August 25 2021 and October 23 2021. The dialogues engaged a total of 114 people (51 male, 63 female) and included government officials, development practitioners, women CSOs and PVE experts. The objective of the national dialogues was to enhance the understanding of gender aspects in the prevention of violent extremism but also to localize the dialogue between key stakeholders and to advance greater inclusion of women in PVE processes. The first national dialogue entitled "Building Social Cohesion Through Effective Women's Leadership" was conducted in Islamabad and disseminated key findings of the research entitled **"Resilience, Community Security and Social Cohesion through Effective Women's Leadership" (ANNEX 18)** through a panel of experts. The discussion highlighted that the presence of women as community leaders is critical to create a balanced and all-encompassing approach to counter violent extremism and inculcate community cohesion. It noted the lack of awareness and understanding amongst women on their rights, including their civil and political rights. This lack of awareness compromises their ability to assume leadership roles and to engage in public discourse. More than just lack of awareness amongst women, there is a need to engage men and community stakeholders to provide opportunities and encourage women to participate in such roles. The National Commission on the Status for Women is one such entity that has an outreach and can devise a process to work with women and men at the grassroots level systematically, and to reach out to those residing in districts located in the peripheries of Pakistan.

The discussion also shed light on the fact that there are no action plans in place focusing on the role of women and that leverages their role in countering or neutralizing violence and conflicts. More so, the participation

of women in designing, formulating, or implementing peacebuilding programs remains dismal, and the ways in which women are affected by conflict and violence stays largely unrecognized in the government's narrative.

The discussion also stressed that the national security and internal security conceptual framework must include gender equality and women's empowerment as a critical theme and focus area so that the violence against women is neither legitimized nor accepted as a norm by the extremists and terrorist organisations. The absence of state policies that accommodate women as partners in development and security gives license to extremists to impose their world view and define the status of women in Pakistan. The concept of human security and national security are incomplete without participation of women as active members of the society. Hence, there is a need for study on gender dimensions in National Security policies and counter terrorism action plan including CVE initiatives in the country so that appropriate interventions are made for gender mainstreaming **(ANNEX 29)**. Other suggestions included the need to capacitate existing government personnel on gendered dynamics of violent extremism, formation of technical groups to inform security policies and advocating to include more women from the civil service into the security apparatus.

The second national dialogue was held in Karachi, Sindh and titled "National Dialogue on Building Social Cohesion in Pakistan: Challenges, Lessons Learned and Way Forward". The dialogue, conducted in the form of a panel discussion, specifically engaged local civil society organizations to discuss effective approaches in supporting and building social cohesion. A total of 47 people attended the dialogue, which included 31 female and 15 male.

Dr. Feriha Peracha, psychologist who worked for Pakistan's deradicalization program, highlighted lack of critical analytical skills as one of the key drivers of extremism in youth. Youth are unable to assess and evaluate sources of information and their credibility. This inability stems from both lack of quality education at an institutional level and also lack of exposure to different ideas, philosophies, or religions. The discussion also highlighted the relevance of religious scholars and preachers in Pakistan, because they are influential in communities and are also in a position to dismantle and propagate ideas that build tolerance and peaceful co-existence. In particular, the discussion suggested that a thorough mechanism must be crafted to select

a group of women scholars or preachers in different localities, so that they are able to engage vulnerable girls and women in communities **(ANNEX 30)**.

Figure 1: Panellists at the Second National Dialogue held on 23 October 2021. Credit: UN Women Pakistan

Figure 2: Mr. Sheharyar Khan, Lead Research and Executive Director National Dialogue Forum, presenting the key objectives and findings of the report. Credit: UN Women Pakistan

Activity 1.5.1

Cross regional learning exchanges organized to share experiences and lessons learnt between both countries for the relevant stakeholders (GLOBAL)

On Track ◯ Delayed ◯

Ahead of plan ◯ Delivered ⊗

The cross-regional workshop was held virtually over two days in April 2021, an expert was recruited to develop the workshop programme in thorough consultations with country and regional offices to ensure that the content and substance directly speak to the demand for technical support in UN Women's different policies and programmes engagement around the world. The workshop was attended by 53 practitioners (48 female and 5 male) representing 34 UN Women country programmes.

During the workshop, contributions from Pakistan and Jordan implementing the current project have informed the discussion in terms of experiences, lessons identified and best practices[24]. Most importantly, participants were interested in Jordan and Pakistan country office experience in identifying entry points, building political momentum with national actors, and ways to approach challenges in a dynamic context.

It is important to note that the workshop took place in the context of the forthcoming review of the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy, with UN Women's embedded presence in global security architecture, the workshop presented an opportunity to review UN Women's engagement with CT and PVE at all levels.

Before the workshop, a series of interviews with UN Women practitioners were conducted remotely to assess the priorities and knowledge gaps identified by practitioners at all levels (HQ, regional and in the country). These interviews directly informed the content and presentations during the two-day workshop, which also included several working group discussions.

Priority issues discussed during the workshop included a) prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration, b)

gender-responsive PVE programming, c) challenges related to UN Women PVE programming, and d) UN Women's comparative advantage in supporting gender-responsive CT and PVE policy development and programmes.

The outcome of the workshop is an analytical report **(ANNEX 21)** discussing the elements of the workshop and set forth recommendations to assist UN Women in better focusing its contribution and engagement in PVE as follows:

- First, to enhance knowledge-sharing and evidence-gathering within UN Women and beyond. This will help UN women advocate for its role at the global, regional and national levels in PVE.
- Second, to establish agreed parameters of UN Women's participation concerning core principles, terminology and framing of PVE. This will assist UN Women to demonstrate relevance, and impact and establish core explanations of the gendered nature of VE and PVE.
- Third, to promote risk-aware decision-making processes in the country and regional offices concerning PVE. This is to mitigate concerns regarding securitization, and instrumentalization of women's rights and to respond to the complexities of fragile, conflict and post-conflict settings.

Activity 1.5.2

Project Review (GLOBAL)

On Track ◯ Delayed ◯

Ahead of plan ◯ Delivered ⊗

The project review was commissioned in May 2021 to permit the expert sufficient time to conduct thorough interviews and analysis to adequately assess the delivery of the project, its relevance and impact. The project review was conducted remotely, and interviews with practitioners, national partners and donors were conducted from May to Dec 2021.

The review assessed the implementation of the project and its global and country-specific activities, identified lessons and provided actionable recommendations

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24 See detailed lessons learned in page section VIII of this report.

which can inform the development of a potential second phase of the project, building on momentum stemming from its results thus far. The project review is informed by a desk review of key project documents and relevant reports and interviews with 31 key informants.

The review found the project to be an important and relevant first step in operationalizing the global normative developments calling for the integration of gender perspectives in preventing violent extremism.

This is in part due to the lack of a common methodological and rights-based approach to undertaking this work. UN Women is considered the most relevant UN entity to lead on gender-responsive PVE programming but is encouraged to carve out an even greater space within the counter-terrorism/ PVE architecture both globally and within countries to ensure all aspects of counter-terrorism and preventing violent extremism uphold and protect women's rights.

Demand for gender expertise in this area is growing considering the increasing number of contexts around the world that are impacted by violent extremism and the requests for additional support from local women's organizations who are working on these issues at the community level but excluded from PVE and CT decision making processes and existing opportunities to play a key role. At the country level, UN Women's added value in this policy area is in its dedicated gender expertise, extensive networks of women's organizations and understanding of local gender dynamics which enable it to navigate this sensitive policy area and provide a bridge between decision-makers and local women's organizations. Key informants who participated in the global civil society consultations ahead of the seventh review of the UN's Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy praised UN Women for facilitating these important discussions and elevating women's concerns and calls surrounding gender-responsive PVE efforts.

The project's emphasis on producing localized knowledge products and research, as well as its ability to start raising community-level awareness of women's role in PVE and building social cohesion, were identified as being particularly effective and laying the groundwork for future interventions. A key challenge, especially in the early stages of the project, was establishing relationships of trust with government authorities working at national and sub-national levels on PVE. However, throughout the project, UN Women offices in Jordan and Pakistan have successfully strengthened their engagement and access with key PVE stakeholders in both

countries while also navigating the context-specific sensitivities around working on PVE.

While initial coordination challenges at the start of the project have been resolved, EU representatives recommended clearer linkages be established between UN Women offices at headquarters, in Jordan and in Pakistan to strengthen the overall efficiency of the project and enable the identification of lessons learnt and common challenges across the three implementing offices. Implementing partners in Jordan and Pakistan welcomed the collaborative relationships they had with UN Women and its flexibility to move programming online at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. While some planned activities had to be delayed due to covid-19 related restrictions, UN Women and its implementing partners pivoted to undertake impact assessments on how the pandemic was exacerbating local drivers of violent extremism.

Despite the short amount of time that has elapsed since the project started and the long-term nature of PVE work, key informants interviewed pointed to the local community engagement and awareness-raising in both countries as already starting to have a tangible impact. It is too early to ascertain how these activities contribute to long-term attitudinal change which is needed to prevent violent extremism and radicalization, however, the project in both pilot countries is showing signs of changing perceptions as it relates to the role of women in building social cohesion. These are important first steps that can be built upon and expanded across other provinces in the two countries.

UN Women advised that while the local knowledge will remain, its ability to convene local consultations and to engage strategically with relevant government authorities would be reduced without sustained funding. It is already in discussions with the EU and other donors to expand the project to other provinces in Jordan and Pakistan, as well as to other countries and regions affected by violent extremism. Local implementing partners emphasized the importance of sustainable and multi-year funding considering how complex an issue PVE is and the nature of the work to change attitudes takes time.

The project review identified six key lessons:

1. The need to invest in a longer inception phase alongside local implementing partners to undertake context-specific analysis and a needs assessment

to better ascertain what activities are feasible to implement and where.

2. The importance of working alongside local partners with an extensive understanding of local contexts.

3. Building effective relationships of trust with government authorities, particularly with those responsible for national security, takes time and requires a deliberately careful and strategic approach.

4. As well as engaging with key government stakeholders, UN Women also has an important role to play in providing guidance and coordination on rights-based gender-responsive PVE programming to other UN entities and in raising awareness among donors of the need to support such efforts.

5. Working towards a more cohesive approach to PVE programming across UN Women offices will strengthen UN Women's ability to promote gender-responsive PVE programming across different contexts.

6. The importance of maintaining a broader focus on prevention, peacebuilding and building community social cohesion.

Drawing on the key informant interviews and analysis undertaken during the desk review, the review makes the following recommendations to consider in future phases of UN Women's Preventing Violent Extremism: Integrating Gender Perspectives Project:

- Allowing for more in-depth in-country consultations during the inception phase and then ensuring more institutionalized coordination across UN Women implementing offices.

- Across the two pilot countries, UN Women should expand its evidence-based community engagement, while simultaneously strengthening its outreach to key national and provincial authorities.

- Enhancing cross-regional engagement and the sharing of lessons learnt.

- Strengthening internal information sharing and solutions-based guidance within UN Women offices

- Expanding UN Women's expertise, including through developing strategic partnerships with other UN entities, to enable it to provide substantive guidance across all areas of the UN Compact.

- Commissioning further regional and global research on the gendered drivers of violent extremism as well as the adverse effects of CT/PVE laws on women

- Donors including the EU increasing their support for gender-responsive PVE programming at the country level and building UN Women's expertise and technical capacity at global, regional and country levels.

For more details on the project, review sees the full report in **ANNEX 22**.

Output 2: Enhance the capacities of national and local authorities to understand and effectively respond to the gendered dynamics underpinning violent extremism

Activity 2.1

Conduct gender analysis of national and regional counter-terrorism laws and strategies (PAKISTAN)

On Track	◯	Delayed	◯
Ahead of plan	◯	Delivered	✕

UN Women in partnership with an expert consultant completed a robust analysis report titled "Gap Analysis of Pakistan's Security Protocols Through a Gender Lens" (ANNEX 31) to assess to what measure gender dimensions are included in Pakistan's counter-terrorism and PVE national frameworks. Adopting a dual-lens of PVE and Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS) the report specifically analysed Pakistan's National Internal Security Policy 2018, National Action Plan 2014, National Counter Extremism Policy Guidelines 2018, Anti-Terrorism Act 1997 and its amendments in 2014 and National Counter Extremism Policy Guidelines.

The report noted that Pakistan's earlier policies and laws do not acknowledge that there is any gender inequality in Pakistan and consequently, they are completely silent on gendered based PVE issues as well as the critical issue of protection of women in a conflicted environment. However, subsequent policy documents have been more inclusive by acknowledging the role of women and gender minorities in counter-extremism and counter-terrorism. For instance, the National Counter Extremism Policy Guidelines explicitly recognize that women are among the worst victims of terrorism and, therefore should have an appropriate role—as stakeholders—in its successful elimination. It also acknowledges that women can be sympathizers and the perpetrators of violent extremist forces. In other words, it brings to the fore the fact that a gendered lens is necessary to develop a holistic PVE strategy. However, they fall short on 'mainstreaming gender', how such strategies should be implemented and lack clarity

on how to bridge developmental gaps which prevent meaningful inclusion and representation of women at the policy level as well as local level protection and safeguard institutions. A sustainable approach to PVE mandates that policymakers recognize the diverse and complex agency of women, i.e., laws and policies should not just focus on protecting women from violence but should also encourage and facilitate women to proactively counter violent extremism.

The report also undertook a comparative profile of three Muslim majority countries: Indonesia, Jordan and Bangladesh and how their National Action Plans incorporate women's engagement in preventing violent extremism to provide pathways for countries like Pakistan to integrate principles of UNSCR 1325 and WPS agenda into its national security frameworks. The matrix developed points to key components of an effective WPS plan that integrates PVE: grounding it in the historical and cultural context of the country, a log framework that outlines a detailed implementation plan with indicators, interventions and institutional responsibilities, involvement of civil society organization and a coordinating body/mechanism as well as a clear source of funding mechanism.

The analysis report concluded that both Bangladesh and Indonesian National Action Plans to provide best practices that could facilitate discussions in the context of Pakistan with national stakeholders to further integrate WPS principles into its existing Internal Security Frameworks as relevant.

Importantly the analysis report noted that Pakistan's current security frameworks and its National Disaster Management Policies/frameworks reference all four essential pillars of the WPS Agenda without creating any obvious linkages with the International Resolutions. (see full analysis report in ANNEX 31)

Activity 2.2

Provide a gender expert to the PMU of the P/CVE Unit formally in the Ministry of Culture but currently under the auspices of the Office of His Royal Highness to mainstream gender in PVE/CVE activities, policies, capacity building initiatives, and programmes (JORDAN)

On Track ⬤   Delayed ⬤

Ahead
of plan ⬤   Delivered ⬤

Policy-related and institutional building activities in Jordan faced delays in implementation given the political environment and the high turnover of the leadership of the PVE unit. As such, and since the start of the project in Feb 2019 access to and engagement with the PVE Unit has been a challenge and has impacted the delivery of the output. In addition, the approved national action plan for the prevention of violent extremism has not been shared publicly nor with the UN.
In September 2020, the mapping report and p
olicy recommendations under output 1.2. has been presented to the PVE Unit. This interaction has increased rapport between UN Women and the PVE unit and reflected the mutual interest in cooperating to achieve common strategic priorities including increased gender mainstreaming in PVE work.

Followed with the meeting in December 2020, PVE Unit agreed that further research is needed on the gendered dimensions of PVE and committed to providing full support to endorse and conduct the research at the national level planned under 1.1. The PVE Unit agreed to be a member of the Reference Group for the national research on a gendered analysis of the drivers and dynamics of violent extremism and social cohesion in Jordan.

The first national research final results and recommendations were presented to the PVE Unit and it was fully endorsed for the wider exchange with other national partners to feed the policy, capacity building initiatives and programme implementation around PVE and CVE. This is a remarkable improvement and is expected to open more avenues of partnership with the PVE Unit including the implementation of the PVE NAP. The research will inform policy and programme on WPS/PVE going forward and engender policies and strategies in this area in close partnership with the PVE Unit. The research findings were also included in the drafting process of JONAP Phase II for 2022-2025, which has a dedicated objective on PVE, specifically concerning Schools, media, religious and community leaders, and young men and women to promote gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence, discrimination, and violent extremism. The JONAP II costed framework is being finalized and will be endorsed by the Cabinet of Ministers in early 2022.

Activity 2.3

Develop and implement a capacity-building strategy on gender and PVE targeting the P/CVE Unit (JORDAN)

On Track ( )   Delayed ( )

Ahead of plan ( )   Delivered ( )

This activity is related to activity 2.2. above, and was not fully implemented given the political context elaborated above. UN Women utilized the knowledge and evidence generated through the mapping report and national research to develop and conduct a capacity building program for community police at the Public Security Directorate of Jordan on gender aspects of PVE and community security. The capacity building programme included 58 community police officers (20 female and 38 male) with improved knowledge and skills around gender dimensions of PVE and gender-responsive community police strategies. As such, this activity 2.3 has been partially implemented.

Given the political landscape, it was challenging to fully implement activity 2.3 specifically the stand-alone capacity building strategy on gender and PVE for the PVE unit. However, the engagement with the PVE unit continued to progress during the project where it has demonstrated ownership reflected in its membership as part of the Reference Group of the national research (output 1) as well as their approval and endorsement of resulting recommendations without reservations.

On the other hand, and during the measures imposed due to the pandemic UN Women identified the need to expand support targeting youth given the increased reported activity of violent extremist groups.

This is especially with regard to Jordanian and refugee youth at the community level to increase social cohesion and strengthen PVE support. Following discussion and approval with EU focal points in the region and Brussels, UN Women reallocated funds from activity 2.3 to activity 3.7 within 25% of a threshold of the original budget.

Activity 2.4

Advocacy campaign developed based on results of the research, disseminating key gender and PVE messaging and delivered through traditional and non-traditional media (JORDAN)

On Track ( )   Delayed ( )

Ahead of plan ( )   Delivered (✕)

UN Women in partnership with Generations for Peace (GFP) launched the "Youth Initiatives for Jordan's National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (JONAP)" campaign in July 2019. The campaign aimed to prevent violent extremism by raising awareness and implementing local advocacy initiatives at the community level among youth on women, peace, security, human rights, gender equality, and non-violence. This initiative was implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth, the staff of both ministries were also beneficiaries of this activity.

GFP with support from UN Women drafted the Youth Advocacy Strategy focused on how to communicate the key messages around 1325, 2250, PVE and tolerance to different target groups including youth, families, schools and the community at large. The Strategy outlined outreach methods, target groups, and required communications outputs – such as individual stories, campaigns, media coverage, radio interviews, and videos to raise awareness of the JONAP in 1325, promoting social cohesion and preventing violent extremism. The Strategy aimed to guide the programme and activities (including both programmatic and communications activities). UN Women's mapping report findings were used to identify the key messages and target audience and align the youth advocacy efforts with the findings of the study. The activities of the Strategy promoted a community culture that recognizes the gender needs, the importance of gender equality and the role of women (including young women) in peace and security in line with JONAP and its pillar three on PVE.

GFP supported the implementation of the strategy in close engagement with the youth groups and trained volunteers. The strategy was launched in late March 2021 with online training on advocacy where the cross-cutting topics of gender, WPS and PVE were mainstreamed in all training content. As a result of the roll-out of the youth advocacy strategy, and its related training, the selected 180 young leaders (20 from each governorate - 50% female) designed and implemented 9 youth-led advocacy initiatives in 9 different centres under the Ministry of Youth. These trainings directly respond to the needs identified in each centre at the beginning of the programme. Topics covered during the events were early marriage and depriving girls of their right to education, the role of women in peace and security, and the importance of women's economic empowerment. The communication youth-led advocacy initiatives including radio programmes, and community outreach you-led campaigns reached 270 community members (50% female) from the family members and peers of the volunteers.

The social media content and video has been published as a part of the youth advocacy campaign[25] including disseminating the key advocacy messages, initiatives and results achieved conducted throughout the programme implementation and the role of youth in localizing the WPS agenda.

The initiative directly supports the implementation of and builds on the linkages between, UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, and UNSCR 2250 on Youth Peace and Security.

As a part of the Advocacy Strategy, 36 volunteers from 9 governorates increased knowledge on community needs assessment and Advocacy for peace. This was followed by 72 Advocacy For Peace sessions in the 9 Ministry of Youth centres. 61% (64% female and 50% males) of the participants increased their levels of knowledge on Advocacy For Peace.

Figure 3. Safe space created in Altaybah-center – Karak, to facilitate the meetings and dialogues with women and girls in the community. Credit: GFP, 2021
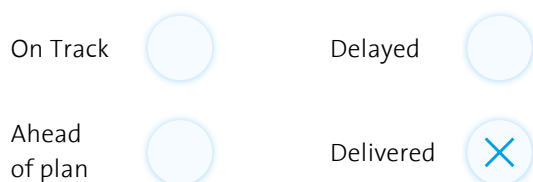

Figure 4. Girls participate community based advocacy training in Maan, 2021. Photo Credit: Generations For Peace

25 https://twitter.com/unwomenjordan/status/1509116979646455808;
    https://www.facebook.com/1476931329185795/posts/3068884399990472/

Activity 2.5

Organize consultations with women's civil society organizations and networks in the development of national action plans on counterterrorism and women, peace and security (PAKISTAN)

On Track	◯	Delayed	◯
Ahead of plan	◯	Delivered	✕

UN Women Pakistan conducted consultations with women's civil society organizations and networks contributing to the development of national action plans on social cohesion and women's leadership. Women's participation in security sector dialogues, counterterrorism, and prevention of violent extremism in Pakistan remains very limited, and these sessions generated open dialogue in a safe environment and built a collective understanding of PVE and the role of women from various standpoints.

UN Women Pakistan held **three consultations** in Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore in Q3 and Q4 of 2021. The three consultations were held to promote gathering inputs and perspectives of women's civil society organizations and networks in the development of national action plans on social cohesion and women's leadership, in addition, these consultations assist in promoting opportunities for civil society actors to provide their perspectives and recommendations on the impact of community security threats and violent extremism. The total of participants in the consultations was 62 (40 male, 22 female) from all four provinces **(ANNEX 32)**.

As part of the consultations, the concept of Women Peace and Security was introduced, which rests on the premise that achieving sustainable peace requires the participation of all stakeholders, particularly women in formal and informal processes of peacebuilding. The resolution states that in times of crisis women are equally affected as are men and peace is inextricably linked to equality between men and women. The resolution specifically addresses how women and girls are differently impacted by conflict and war and recognize the critical role that women can and already do play in peacebuilding efforts. In particular, the WPS agenda was discussed in light of crises situations and emergencies like COVID-19. One key takeaway from these sessions was the limited knowledge about UNSCR 1325
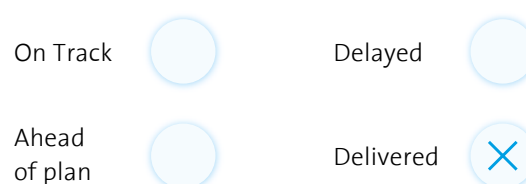
and UNSCR 2250 at the CSO level. While this may be surprising, it provided an opportunity for UN Women to build the groundwork to raise awareness around these critical frameworks and advocate for a plan based on them.

These discussions also broadened the understanding of security and gender-related issues to participants' daily experiences and community security needs, allowing UN Women to gather information about the provincial dynamics that influence VE. Given the varying levels of information of the participants, it was encouraged that participants reflect and share their views about conflict and extremism in Pakistan and consider the role and contributions of women as influential decision-makers at home and at work, who can take the lead to promote peace and tolerance and be recognized in their context. These consultations assisted to identify locally-driven recommendations of how CSOs believe CT and PVE can be gender transformative.

Furthermore, the PVE framework was also discussed in which the participants were informed about the different levels at which violent extremism can be prevented. The participants needed to understand at which level of the framework they were to intervene in the communities.

Activity 2.6

Organize a national level workshop for all stakeholders to plan and improve response and understanding of PVE based on the comprehensive research data (PAKISTAN)

On Track	◯	Delayed	◯
Ahead of plan	◯	Delivered	✕

To plan and improve response and understanding of PVE, UN Women organized two national level sessions to disseminate findings from its knowledge products that are based on the comprehensive research data.

The first session was held on 25 August 2021 (in line with activity 1.4) in Islamabad that presented key findings from UN Women's research titled **"Resilience, Community Security and Social Cohesion through Effective Women's Leadership"**. The panel discussion brought together different national stakeholders, namely the national government, local authorities, civil

society, and service providers and assisted in increasing the interface between different stakeholders working on the prevention of violent extremism in Pakistan.

Given the limited participation of women in CT and PVE processes in Pakistan, these discussions particularly aimed to bring together leading voices from Pakistan as panellists and audience members to increase their participation and representation in dialogues relating to P/CVE and provide them with a platform to increase and sustain advocacy on women engagement in CT and PVE processes in Pakistan.

In addition, a webinar was held on 28 January 2022, **"Evidence-based Gender Analysis of Pakistan's Security Policies"** to discuss and debate gendered perspectives in Pakistan's current policies as captured in the research report **"Gap Analysis of Pakistan's Security Policies"** under activity 2.1. This discussion came at a very critical time when the Government of Pakistan launched a new National Security Policy 2022, and the experts on the panel were able to juxtapose the new contours of the policies with the old ones.

Most importantly, the discussion saw the participation of the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA), Pakistan's focal institute to address terrorism and extremism in the country. As a government body, NACTA was able to shed light on the government's understanding of the gendered dynamics of extremism and its efforts/initiatives to address it **(ANNEX 31)**.

In essence, these discussions increased dialogue on localizing and implementing women, peace, and security priorities as a right in and of itself, as an imperative for the prevention of violent extremism and sustaining peace efforts, and to plan and improve response and understanding of PVE based on the comprehensive research data.

Activity 2.7

Conduct nationwide dialogues and meetings with National counter-terrorism bodies incl. ministry of interior, WPCs, women machinery in KP/FATA and CSOs to sensitize them on gender dimensions of Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) (PAKISTAN)

On Track	◯	Delayed	◯
Ahead of plan	◯	Delivered	✕

This activity comprised of a series of meetings with national stakeholders as indicated in the activity line, to start a dialogue on the role of women and their participation in the security sector decision-making processes including those related to the prevention of violent extremism.

To initiate discussions with national counter-terrorism bodies, a Roundtable Discussion between National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) and UN Women was held on October 23, 2021, in Karachi.

NACTA was established as an administrative entity under the Ministry of Interior, Government of Pakistan, in 2008 and 2013 was mandated to act as a focal national institution to unify state response to counter extremism and terrorism by combining the efforts of law enforcement and intelligence agencies and by formulating and implementing policies and action plans through continuous research, adaptive innovation and ancillary mechanisms.

The meeting between UN Women and NACTA paved the way for formal relationship-building and collaboration between the two partners as they discussed their mandate, current initiatives and future outlook to address P/CVE in Pakistan.

Through this discussion, UN Women and NACTA agreed to partner to scale the understanding of gendered underpinnings of extremism and to ensure that women are represented at the highest policy levels, and their experiences and voices are reflected not just in policies but also in any interventions and initiatives undertaken by the Government of Pakistan. It was agreed that the two partners (UNW and NACTA) would sign a Letter of Intent/Letter of Agreement (LOI) followed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), on the following broad contours:

- Conduct joint media campaigns and interventions to promote alternative narratives to extremism by engaging youth, particularly women, girls and boys and use innovative methods like sports, story-telling, and other socio-cultural activities to promote diversity and tolerance.
- Advocate for gender-sensitive policies and build the capacity of government stakeholders on gendered dynamics of extremism.
- Collaborate to expand knowledge-base of gender and violent extremism in Pakistan, collate best practices and lessons learned and recommend

The MOU is going through a formal process of approval with government authorities, which is expected to take 6 months to a year to be signed. To continue to build a relationship of trust and partnership, UN Women continues to engage NACTA through its dialogue sessions under activities 1.4 and 2.6. It has also partnered with NACTA to conduct a joint media campaign under activity 3.4.

Figure 5: UN Women presenting during the Roundtable Discussion held with National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA). Credit: UN Women Pakistan 2021.

Output 3: Strengthen women's active participation in policy dialogues and initiatives to prevent violent extremism and promote social cohesion

Activity 3.1

Organize eight awareness sessions per year for civil society groups to identify triggers of violent extremism and participate in prevention efforts through dialogue in targeted locations (PAKISTAN)

On Track	◯	Delayed	◯
Ahead of plan	◯	Delivered	✕

This awareness-raising activity was planned for local-level participants, in the form of sessions on the relationship between gender and security, and gender and prevention of violent extremism. At the same time, these sessions proved valuable for dialogues with local communities and to identify perceptions related to violent extremism. In total, UN Women Pakistan was able to carry out 8 awareness sessions engaging 170 representatives in 2019-20. In addition, 200 community awareness sessions were held in Sindh (120 in Thatta and 180 in Karachi) engaging 5,727 community women.

The main purpose of these sessions was to raise awareness of the communities on the relationship between gender and VE and gender and PVE. The sessions were also used to inform participants on the gendered impact of VE, what makes a cohesive society, and the role of women in building social cohesion by emphasizing their role in the public sphere. These sessions were also used to engage participants to propose and recommend locally driven strategies to promote harmony and tolerance in their communities.

Activity 3.2

Organize eight training sessions for women in communities on the prevention of violent extremism (PAKISTAN)

On Track	◯	Delayed	◯
Ahead of plan	◯	Delivered	✕

During the reporting period, UN Women delivered a total of 21 training sessions (four in KP and 17 in Sindh), benefiting a total of 431 (25 males, 406 females) community members, community change-makers, civil society organizations and community influential.

The objective of these training sessions was two-fold: one to enhance the understanding of participants on issues about VE, and early signs of extremism and second to highlight women's importance and role in promoting social cohesion.

A key point of discussion during these training sessions was to understand "why gender matters" in preventing violent extremism. This brought greater awareness to the diverse set of experiences that women and women's organizations are dealing with violent

Figure 6: Depiction of social cohesion and harmony by female participants in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Credit: UN Women Pakistan December 2020

Figure 7: Female community members in Pesahwar at the end of group activity, presenting what a socially cohesive society looks like to them. Credit: UN Women Pakistan 2021

extremist ideologies; hence the training was designed as a two-way learning experience. The training first examined the question of gender and why it is important to consider both men and women, and the power dynamics of gender roles in society when addressing violent extremism. The second part dealt specifically with women and the underlying forces of extremist violence. It invited thinking about women as actors in preventative efforts as well as perpetrators of terrorist acts. Finally, the third part of this exercise raised issues related to the various ways in which to engage communities, including members of the local authorities and law enforcement institutions. These trainings followed a method of discussion as a "thought" kit more than a tool kit and included a collection of practical exercises designed to help guide female local activists and practitioners to engage in reflection and dialogue on violent extremism.

Activity 3.3

Engage with opinion makers and community leaders through meetings to create an alternative narrative to extremism and spread messages. (PAKISTAN)

| On Track | ◯ | Delayed | ◯ |
| Ahead of plan | ◯ | Delivered | ✕ |

Under this activity a total of 22 initiatives were held from January 2021 to January 2022, benefitting 270 participants (207 females, 63 males).

The main objective of this activity is to engage change-makers and community members to understand and promote alternative narratives to extremism and spread messages of peace and tolerance, demonstrate community cohesion through community-wide initiatives and promote inter and intra-faith harmony through community faith leaders.

In January 2021, PAIMAN in partnership with UNW held 03 workshops engaging 60 women to undertake 15 social action projects in Karachi. These sessions helped women to promote cohesive communities, inform and lead a prevention response to tensions, and allowed them to demonstrate a clear recognition of the need for a gender-sensitive approach.

Figure 8: Female community members designing peace walls in Karachi. Credit: PAIMAN 2021

Figure 9: An example of a wall painted in Karachi to promote peaceful co-existence. Credit: PAIMAN 2021

As a result of this engagement, participants developed 15 social action projects which included inter-faith sports tournaments, setting up of peace café, and peace walls, amongst others that demonstrated their capacity to understand gendered dynamics of extremism, and also showcased the women's agency to take a leadership role in communities.

To further engage with opinion makers and community leaders through meetings to create an alternative narrative to extremism and spread messages, implementing partner PAIMAN held four provincial seminars in Thatta and Karachi, engaging 183 community influential (63 male, 122 female). These sessions examined the question of gender and why it is important to consider both men and women, and the power dynamics of gender roles in society when addressing violent extremism. These sessions also raised issues related to the various ways in which to engage communities, including members of the local authorities and law enforcement institutions.

In addition to the activities above, UN Women Pakistan engaged community opinion-makers from diverse religious backgrounds in Karachi to promote inter-faith and intra-faith harmony (activity 1.3). To propagate

alternative narratives to extremism, these 25 diverse faith leaders conducted four diversity/exposure to diverse religious and holy places of worship including a mosque, madrassa, imam bargarh, church and a Hindu temple and a Sikh gurdwara.

Diversity visits proved to be one of the most effective approaches to breaking down myths and stereotypes prevalent among the women in the society and promoting alternate narratives of extremism. For many faith leaders, this was the first time that they entered a different place of worship. To ensure intersectionality, a diversity tour was held at the first church for the transgender community (established by Pastor Ghazala Shafique). This particularly highlighted how the vulnerability is intensified when you are a minority and from the transgender community. The faith leaders were also surprised to hear that the women pastors lead the prayers in their church.

These visits also paved the way for promoting sectarian harmony amongst women of the same faith (Muslim). A visit to a madrassa and an imam bargah opened discussions about different religious aspects and allowed participants to show respect and cordiality (ANNEX 34).

Figure10: Female faith leaders at a church in Karachi. Credit: Mujtaba Rathore Jan 2022.

Figure11: Female faith leaders at a Sikh gurdwara. Credit: Mujtaba Rathore 2022.

Activity 3.4

Support women's engagement by developing alternative narrative messages using new and traditional media to develop peace, tolerance, and co-existence of youth in society. (PAKISTAN)

On Track	◯	Delayed	◯
Ahead of plan	◯	Delivered	✕

Activities under 3.4. are focused on strengthening community resilience through re-enforcement of positive role models and breaking the myths and stereotypes prevalent amongst women. These efforts took place through advocacy and tailored media campaigns to initiate discussions at the local level and to strengthen the narratives of peaceful co-existence and tolerance.

To undertake this activity, UN Women jointly with the media firm developed 30 media products as part of an alternative-narrative campaign in the form of peaceful coexistence messaging and to promulgate narratives to promote tolerance **(ANNEX 33)**. Execution of the campaign was done through the use of new and traditional media. Products were developed in the local language and included newspaper ads, radio messages, TVCs, and social media messaging. Particular attention was paid to launching media products at prime time to gain maximum outreach. According to TRPs shared by implementing partners, UN Women TVCs reached at least 30 million on each of the three channels it was played on. The message of women's leadership to build social cohesion was also amplified through the engagement of the community and social media influencers. Engagement through social media influencers reached a combined viewership of 1.55 million, amplifying messages of peace and harmony in youth.

The main goal of the creation and broadcast of communication products was to support women's engagement for developing peace, tolerance and co-existence and highlight positive value sets like peace, tolerance and diversity amongst the youth of Pakistan.

A key success of the campaign was the inclusion of NACTA (see activity 2.7 for further details), whereby they collaborated on the dissemination by adding their logos to the TVCs and participating in TV talk shows. NACTA's inclusion helped to cement the partnership with UN Women Pakistan, demonstrating their commitment to promoting women's role in preventing violent extremism and adding the government's support to the initiative (See **ANNEX 33** for details of the campaign).

In addition, UN Women supported the development and screenings of 6 short films and documentaries in Sindh, specially developed by marginalized women in Sindh. These short films showcased "Sheroes" (Female role models), and social and civic issues that impact women, and allowed women to carve out a space for their voices, stories and perspectives to come out in the public domain.

The films provided an alternative to the stereotypes and issues used by violent groups, by reflecting the diversity in the communities, different storylines and arcs and real-life heroes. Representation of diverse communities on screens and behind the camera also led to the recognition of a wider range of social and cultural experiences of diverse women in Pakistan.

Support of the art of vulnerable women not only increased their representation but also strengthened their role in communities where women have largely been marginalized due to extremist elements.

On January 28 and 29, 2022, a 2-day documentary film screening event was held in Karachi where more than 140 guests and participants from diverse backgrounds including Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Baloch, Sindhi, Punjabi watched these films, followed by a discussion with the film-makers.

Figure 12: Documentary screening in Karachi with community influentials to promote alternative narrative to extremism. Credit: Fahim Shad 2022.

During the discussions, the filmmakers highlighted how they faced hesitancy from their households when they forayed into the training and making of these films.

One aspect of this hesitancy was religious – whether making movies was something that was allowed in their faith. The women were able to allay some of these fears by talking about how religion is now propagated through digital means and mediums such as films.

The discussion also highlighted the importance of female filmmakers and how this encourages diversity in cinemas so that not only will women create the kind of films that more accurately portray female characters, but also depict multi-dimensional characters. In terms of dissemination, the screenings allowed the women to interact with well-known artists, educators or activists participants so that they can grow their network and showcase their talent.

Activity 3.5
Implement ten skills development sessions to strengthen women's economic resilience. (PAKISTAN)

On Track	◯	Delayed	◯
Ahead of plan	◯	Delivered	✕

Development skills training in support of increasing women's economic resilience is a critical component of this project and an important best practice. Given the existing gender inequalities, systematic discrimination, and women shouldering the burden of unpaid care work, which often places them in a vulnerable situation within their communities and confines them to the domestic sphere. Skills training provides a pathway for women to start earning livelihoods and increase their engagement in the public sphere. Investing in women's economic empowerment contributes directly toward gender equality, and hopefully for them to be heard as a valued members of the household and within their communities.

The skills development sessions included a total of 206 participants. In Sindh, 156 women (6 sessions) participated in the training sessions and 50 women in KP participated in 16 sessions. Before developing the training sessions, a compilation of information about the required skills was gathered through consultations

with women in each location. This includes the consultations under activity 2.5.

This is important as each province varies from another and the needs and accessibility of women also vary. For example, due to the lack of mobility in KP, it may be that the women prefer skills that will generate them an income without leaving their homes.

1. Mapping of existing skills development initiatives in the targeted areas and their relevant needs were identified. For example, in the KAP survey in Sindh, a question was asked about what makes the respondent feel empowered, respondents prioritized access to earning opportunities as a critical factor of empowerment. The high number of responses substantiating the need for income learning opportunities demonstrates that this activity line is an integral component of the prevention of violent extremism efforts.

Figure 13: Women in Swat during a skill development session. Credit: UN Women Pakistan 2021

2. The training helped participants build confidence, learn market requirements, and ultimately have better positioning to explore and earn a decent income resulting in their economic resilience. The participating women were also connected with different vendors from the market so that they could be made aware of opportunities available, and what kind of skills/products are in demand so that they can build their skills on them.

Women participants in the skills development sessions will play an important role in the national awareness-raising activity under 3.4. The women will advise on the way forward in adopting strategies that could successfully promote peaceful co-existence and tolerance messages and promote gender equality and women empowerment in their respective communities.

Activity 3.6

Provide technical assistance to existing youth outreach programmes to mainstream gender equality narratives into their approaches to social cohesion and PVE. (JORDAN)

| On Track | ◯ | Delayed | ◯ |
| Ahead of plan | ◯ | Delivered | ✕ |

UN Women Jordan, in partnership with Generations for Peace, drafted and implemented the communications plan for the project, published five human interest stories, recorded two radio programmes[26] and one video [27]n social media under the joint initiative to prevent violent extremism through the engagement of youth and especially young girls. In addition, in 2021 GFP produced an infographic video in Arabic and English 2021 as well video highlighting the first year's activities. A final video

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26 https://jordan.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/march/my-take-your-take-challenging-social-attitudes-and-gender-expectations-in-jordan
https://jordan.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/march/my-take-your-take-empowering-women-to-become-their-own-champions
https://jordan.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/december/volunteers-pushing-the-boundaries
https://jordan.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/september/voices-for-peace
https://jordan.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/december/women-peace-building-pioneers
https://www.facebook.com/GenerationsForPeaceJordan/posts/1851427208321711?_rdc=1&_rdr
https://www.facebook.com/GenerationsForPeaceJordan/posts/1872720542859044?_rdc=1&_rdr
27 Twitter ; Facebook

product was launched on social media channels Twitter and Facebook 2[28].

The videos, stories, social media posts and two implemented communication campaigns (International Women's Day #GenerationEquality in March; and 16 days of activism in December) have reached 1,938,497 users by December 2021.

Furthermore, GFP and UN Women collaborated to create content for the UN Women #PeaceDay campaign. GFP has a large community of followers among Jordanian youth, which served the purpose of reaching the identified target audience for this product.

The stories were published on UN Women and GFP's social medial channels (Facebook, website, and Twitter) highlighting the young women-led peacebuilding and community-based initiatives in Irbid, Ain Al Baidha, and Amman. The stories contributed to increasing awareness of women's participation in community security and social cohesion while promoting their role as local leaders in supporting the inclusion of girls with disabilities through informal education. This is in addition to their role as volunteers with Jordanian Civil Defence

and their participation and contribution to the National Coalition on the 1325 JONAP implementation.

One radio interview was completed on Radio Hala on 6 May 2020 with a volunteer Montaser Hussein to highlight the program, its impacts, and how it is continuing despite COVID-19. Two Television interviews were completed on the Jordan TV programme "Youm Jadeed – New Day." The first was with a volunteer, Tuqa Alabood, on 14 March 2020, and the second on 7 June 2021 with volunteer and teacher Ms Almasa AlMomani where she discussed the adaptation of the JONAP 1325 Youth Initiatives programme after COVID-19 lockdown measures and its impact on local communities.

GFP conducted one livestream in Arabic featuring programme volunteer, Tuqa Al- Abood, was identified as a speaker for Amman Peace Talks which was launched on 16 December 2021 and boosted on social media. She discussed the programme, its goals, her experiences, and the programme's impact.

The post engagement on the official Facebook and Twitter pages of GFP (the pages have now 44,277 followers) reached almost 2 million users during the

Figure 14: Youth volunteers from Alrahsydeh public School during the gender training in Jerash. Photo Credit: Generations For Peace, 2021.

Figure 15: Gwerah Center in Aqaba performs a play on gender stereotypes as part of their advocacy initiative. Photo Credit: Generations For Peace, 2021.
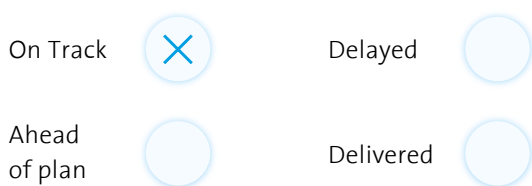
28 https://twitter.com/unwomenjordan/status/1509116979646455808
https://www.facebook.com/1476931329185795/posts/3068884399990472/

16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign and during the International Women's Day #GenerationEquality campaign supported by UN Women.

As part of the 16 Days of Activism and IWD campaigns, a series of blogs and quotes were shared on social media on the issues of youth, peace and security, equality, and non-violence. The social media channels include:

- Facebook International: The GFP International Facebook page (Generations For Peace) shares information in English to volunteers/followers from all over the world (including Europe, MENA region, Asia, and Africa).
- Facebook Jordan: The GFP Jordan Facebook page (Generations For Peace Jordan) shares information in Arabic to volunteers/followers mainly living in Jordan.
- Twitter: The official Twitter account of GFP (@Gens_For_Peace) shares information in English and Arabic to followers/volunteers from all over the world (including Europe, the MENA region, Asia, and Africa).

Activity 3.7

Support implementation of gender-responsive outreach programmes to reduce youth vulnerability to radicalization and recruitment to violent extremist groups. (JORDAN)

On Track ✕   Delayed ◯

Ahead of plan ◯   Delivered ◯

Linked to activity 2.6. UN Women Jordan continued its collaboration with Generations For Peace, in implementing life skills sessions aimed at PVE and raising awareness focusing on the youth. These life skills sessions carried out under this activity form the content of the outreach programmes to reduce youth vulnerability to violent extremism. The life skills sessions include topics on human rights, gender equality, and non-violence delivered in public schools and youth centres across 12 governorates across Jordan.

A total of 32,369 students (16,557 girls, 15,812 boys) from 200 schools in Jordan have increased their awareness and knowledge of gender equality, social cohesion, youth, peace and security and women and peacebuilding through the digital life skills activities provided by GFP with support from UN Women.

Among selected 200 schools, which were recommended by the Ministry of Education, 106 were schools for girls and 94 for boys. In addition, 10, 593 (5,966 girls) participants took place in digital activities from 65 selected youth centres, 44% of youth, participants have increased their level of knowledge and awareness of JONAP 1325 after having received the life skills training based on the pre and post-assessments conducted by GFP.

According to the end-line survey, 251 participants (181 female and 70 male) showed 36% increase in community members' perceptions of the positive contribution of women to peace and security in their community, 49% of youth and youth leaders demonstrate improvements in levels of knowledge on Covid-19 and GBV related issues, and 11% increase in the number of community members who perceived COVID-19 related GBV related issues have been reduced.

A three-day Training-of-Trainers course and one day 40 leadership training were provided by GFP to a total of 80 teachers and volunteers, and 400 youth leaders[29] from schools and youth centres. The training included awareness of JONAP 1325, gender equality and the role of women in peace and security.

The trained teachers and youth leaders provided rolled out awareness-raising sessions in public schools and youth centres. As a result, 80 youth leaders, with the support of their teachers, drafted and implemented 40 community-based local initiatives with the support of GFP. A total of 1,740 youth (1,060 females and 680 males) benefited from the initiatives and have received knowledge on JONAP 1325 and implemented local community-based in all 12 governorates initiatives supporting the social cohesion and gender equality.

The community initiatives supported raising awareness and creating space for dialogue between the mixed youth groups, boys and girls, in remote communities on community violence reduction, gender equality, and preventing radicalization.

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29 Out of 400 youth leaders 20 were from Aqaba, 20 from Ma'an, 20 from Tafeeleh, 60 from Karak, 80 from Amman, 30 from Balqa'a, 70 from Zarq'a, 20 from Irbid, 30 from Mafraq and 50 from Madaba.

Following the COVID-19 outbreak and the additional context under this activity (as agreed in the revised work plan), activities with youth and teachers were implemented online. The communication with teachers and youth leaders continued through the WhatsApp groups which were created for easy communication on a day-to-day basis. The key messages about safety and COVID 19 protection measures and the Sport for Peace activities, as well as videos on life skills, were shared digitally with the target group. The teachers also worked on assigning some tasks to the youth leaders online. It must be noted that online interaction and communication with youth, especially from isolated governorates supported their engagement in positive activities and prevented negative coping strategies and behaviours.

Fourteen Sport for Peace activities were filmed and disseminated through GFP social media platforms and Whatsup groups. In these efforts to mitigate the risks facing youth it is important to continue online activities that engage with youth and to build on what has been achieved during the implementation period of this project.

The Project Cooperation Agreement with GFP was extended under this activity to continue this important work and to integrate a COVID-19 response in the youth outreach program, teachers continued implementing the sport-based life skills sessions on gender. Forty video activities were filmed and reached 3,623 students (2,259 females, and 1,364 males). 34 teachers (14 males and 20 females) from 20 schools refreshed their knowledge of the sport-based life skills sessions on gender and raised their capacities regarding on-site activities. As a result, the teachers continued the implementation of the sport-based life skills on gender in their schools after the restriction was lifted. As a result, 990 students (600 female and 390 male) benefitted from the on-site activities through sharing examples from everyday life and discussions on gender's influence in decision-making and developing awareness and understanding of gender and JONAP 1325.

To evaluate the project with GFP, an online survey was prepared and reached 251 participants (181 female and 70 male) showing 36% increase of community members' perceptions of the positive contribution of women to peace and security in their community, 49% of youth and youth leaders demonstrate improvements in levels of knowledge on Covid-19 and GBV related issues, and 11% increase in the number of community members who perceived COVID-19 related GBV related issues have been reduced.

Figure 16: One of the two Television interviews on Jordan TV programme "Youm Jadeed – New Day with volunteer and teacher Ms. Almasa AlMomani. Photo Credit: Jordan TV

In addition, a participatory evaluation was conducted with 153 key stakeholders to identify programme related changes through 36 focus group discussions. The participants expressed their satisfaction with the project and the information and skills they gained, such as awareness-raising tools and debating. The findings from the focus groups show that the participants agree that the programme contributed to changing their society by raising awareness of some negative trends and actively engaging young people in solving community issues. For example, how males went from a stance against women and enforced gender roles to supporting the empowerment of women within society. The participants highlighted how the programme increased awareness of JONAP by providing background knowledge on the Resolution and garnering male support for JONAP.

Activity 3.8

pport women's participation in national, regional, and international counter-terrorism events to promote their participation in policy development and planning and ensure gender perspectives from the field are taken into account. (GLOBAL)

| On Track | ◯ | Delayed | ◯ |
| Ahead of plan | ◯ | Delivered | ✕ |

The objective of this activity is to bring voices of independent and women-led civil society organizations to inform discourse and policymaking on counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism. This is through increasing women's participation in relevant global and regional discussions, as such the first activity was delivered in 2019 when the project supported the participation of women-led civil society organizations in the first African regional counter-terrorism conference organized by UN office of Counter-Terrorism and the Government of Kenya. It is through this project the conference included the perspectives of the people by supporting the engagement of civil society. A side event was organized with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, where the UN Secretary-General had an informal discussion with the women-led civil society representatives, four of which were supported through this activity.[30]

In 2021, support to women's participation was delivered through this activity by organizing a high-level virtual event with the participation of women-led civil society organizations from Pakistan and Jordan (ANNEX 24). The event was organized to inform the policy debate on the interlinkages between the women, the peace and security agenda, and the UN counter-terrorism architecture. As a result of the discussions and papers submitted, a policy brief on WPS and PVE was commissioned and prepared to inform UN Women mandate in supporting the WPS agenda within the context of terrorism and violent extremism.

The event took place on 19 May 2021, with UN Women Executive Director Ms Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka and the EU Ambassador Mr. Olof Skoog presiding over the event. Country representatives included the Deputy Permanent Representative of Tunisia, who provided the best practice example from Tunisia where the WPS national action plan was linked to the PVE national plan of action recognizing the need to consult with civil society and to ensure effective women's participation.

Furthermore, representatives from Safer World and Amnesty international presented critical papers on how the UN must prioritize the protection and promotion of human rights as a State obligation and not rely on counter-terrorism laws and strategies to address rule of law and governance deficits.

EU PVE project partner in Pakistan Ms Mossarat Qadim leading PAIMAN organization presented the case of Pakistan, where she stressed that the P/CVE agenda has endangered and harmed women, women's rights, and women peace practitioners and their organizations. Such harms were reflected in the shrinking of civil society space, restriction of women's rights and freedoms, increased security agencies' surveillance and targeting of women-led organizations working on WPS agenda and P/CVE, and direct threats by security agencies to CSOs working around P/CVE. As such, PAIMAN worked to advocate with national partners on the WPS agenda however only prioritizing provisions relevant to the country starting with conducting a desk review. The desk review aims to identify synergies in 1325 and in the rights, status and responsibilities of women that are aligned to the national laws. Based on that PAIMAN worked to build the capacity of local social and political women leaders, female religious influential, teachers, and activists.

This was followed by establishing local women's peace structures called TOLANA (a Pushto word that means together to avoid any challenge). From the platform of Woman TOLANAS these women have not only created awareness of threats of violent extremism but were also able to discuss ways of addressing it. As such it is important to advocate for WPS commitments based on the alignment of these commitments with existing national laws, this must be followed by capacity building of local actors by adopting people-centred approaches, and bottom-up strategies that are based on the premise of local ownership.

From Jordan, EU PVE project partner Ms. Samara Muhareb leading ARDD organization also presented a strong paper to inform the debate. She outlined the best practices coming out of Jordan, including the progressive WPS national action plan that has provisions for the prevention of violent extremism, increasing women's representation in the security sector and the also the NAP coming with a dedicated fund to ensure its implementation. However, Ms. Mubareb stressed the need to ensure that these NAPs are localized and are owned by the communities it's targeting. In that sense, there is a lot of work remaining in ensuring such localization and ensuring that such policies result in a positive impact at the local level. Another important point is to increase spaces for women's engagement in

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30 For more information see Annex 13.

security dialogues and to ensure greater interlinkages between security sector mechanisms and civil society.

Based on the rich discussion and short papers delivered during the event, UN Women developed an analysis and recommendations report informed by the lessons identified and best practices presented during the event. The analysis report is annexed to this report (ANNEX 24).

VII. CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The COVID-19 pandemic heralded a new reality globally impacting communities, institutions, and access to basic services. Governments adopted measures to combat the virus by imposing quarantine requirements and restricted travel. This is in addition to the increased activity of violent extremist groups. These two aspects in addition to the danger to health brought about by the virus and associated health risks have collectively presented the main challenges delaying implementation during the reporting period. This has changed the status of some risks and management from medium to high while other risks remained low (see Annex 2).

In 2020 and 2021, activities at all levels were delivered using either in person and/or virtually. At the global level, and given the travel restrictions, all activities in 2021 were conducted virtually except for the comparative study where the consultant is based in Mozambique.

At the national level supporting women empowerment, gender equality, and participation in the prevention of violent extremism processes while continuing to be politically sensitive, increased momentum with CT and PVE mandated national institutions was achieved thanks to the objective studies carried out under this project. This increased political momentum is reflected in the signing of an MOU with the NACTA in Pakistan, and the increased collaboration between UN Women and the PVE unit in Jordan.

As in all emergencies, the pandemic has deepened existing challenges for women and young women, including their access to services and economic opportunities. Also, the pattern of excluding women from developing and implementing emergency strategies continued.

However, despite these challenges, UN Women at all levels were able to deliver on all the activities in this project further managing the risks to girls and women proclaimed by the pandemic and other political challenges like the Taliban take over Afghanistan.

In **Pakistan**, challenges included access and programming in KP given the sensitivity of the thematic area. However, after internal discussions including with the EUD a modality of implementation including contracting local implementing partners and building synergies with existing ongoing assistance was adopted. This has reduced potential risks to the project participants. It must be noted, that security risks, in general, were intensified with the takeover of the Taliban over the government in Afghanistan, which has emboldened violent groups in Pakistan and saw an increase in violent attacks in the province of Khyber of Pakhtunkhwa.[31]

In **Jordan**, the challenge has been implementing policy-related and capacity building activities in partnership with the P/CVE Unit. This challenge is attributed to limited political will to engage on issues related to gender and violent extremism as well as the high turnover of the leadership of the PVE unit. For example, the PVE NAP has been officially requested by international organizations and donors including the EU, but it has not been shared yet by national partners. Delays in the appointment of the P/CVE Unit Director and his resignation by the end of 2019, also affected the implementation of project-related policy-level activities aimed at institutional capacity-building of the Unit (Activities 2.2. and 2.3). This challenge has been raised early on by UN Women with the EU delegation in Beirut and Amman as well as Brussels.

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31 For more details please see: https://www.dawn.com/news/1666873

UN Women in Jordan succeeded in building rapport with the PVE unit where it presented the outcome of the mapping report (output 1.2) and the final report of the national research on gender and PVE in Jordan.

As such, the PVE Unit was to some extent engaged throughout the work on the project and especially they were cooperative regarding the research study. The project contributed to documenting the evidence and knowledge in the area of gender and PVE, which provides solid evidence for national stakeholders including for PVE Unit and Public Security Directorate to plan and implement the gender-responsive PVE policies and community police interventions. PVE

UN Women Jordan and its national partners strictly abided by the Government of Jordan's decision to suspend the physical implementation of large events and conferences due to COVID-19 and also have reduced the gatherings in 2020 until mid of 2021. In response, programming in Jordan was adapted to be delivered through online means. The work plan for 2021 has considered the shift to digital implementation for the most of activities, because of the evolving COVID-19 pandemic situation.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, one of the challenges identified on the community level was a lack of skills and knowledge among beneficiaries on using online tools and applications for digital training and meetings. This could limit their engagement in digital training, and meetings. UN Women partner CSO-GFP made efforts and provided additional guidance, technology (tablets) and training to youth and teachers to enhance their digital literacy and communications.

VIII. BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS IDENTIFIED

- Activities planned at the global level have an added value of promoting women's participation, providing platforms bringing challenges and lessons identified at the local level to policymaking platforms. Hence the knowledge generated through the activities of this project in Pakistan and Jordan has directly contributed to discussions at the UN global compact on counter-terrorism platforms and relevant processes. This is done through UN Women's role as the chair of the gender working group.

- Globally led activities must continue to build on ongoing initiatives related to the prevention of violent extremism, to bring in voices and perspectives of women-led organizations usually exclusive and often closed off platforms without representation from civil society. The agreement and consensus among partners to implement a digital consultation with women-led CSOs on the review of the UNGCTS was a step forward in ensuring inclusive processes and increased women's participation. This was made possible given the added value of women's participation in the African regional conference supported by this project. The digital consultation with CSOs (not funded through this project) was successfully organized in May and June 2020. And is a direct impact of the initial support to women's engagement in the African conference funded under this project activity 3.8.

- UN Women must continue its leadership at the global level to ensure and develop gender-responsive CT and PVE policy frameworks that govern UN support under the CT/PVE agenda. this is critical given the increased reliance on the UNGCTS framework, and the recognition of the WPS agenda as an essential framework relevant to the UN global counter-terrorism agenda. As such, UN Women must inform how this interlinkage between the two policy frameworks will take place in terms of assistance to national institutions, civil society and the people. This is to promote women's rights, but also to address the risk of instrumentalization of women, their rights and the WPS agenda (see the point on WPS from PAK below).

- It is critical to continue using social media as an effective tool for outreach and awareness-raising among youth on gender and PVE issues given the experience in Jordan. The project has successfully

applied social media to engage youth and increase their awareness of Women, Peace and Security, human rights, non-violence, and gender equality. At least 1,938,497 users were already reached through the social media campaign during 2020-2021, including 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, and the International Women's Day #GenerationEquality campaign supported by UN Women. The results of the campaign, such as increased engagement of boys and girls in social media around issues of gender equality and non-violence, have provided evidence that developing tailored-made campaigns for youth on social media is an effective strategy for wider outreach among boys and girls from different governorates. The social media posts, blogs, and stories have engaged youth in interactive discussions about complex issues, such as peace, security, and its relation to women and youth, the importance of women's and girls' engagement in peacebuilding, social cohesion, and PVE.

- The selected areas of the programme in Pakistan have been impacted by violent extremism but communities especially women do not understand and express freely the impact these incidents have on them. It has been found that it takes strong skill to bring the participants of the sessions and dialogues to the point where they can talk about PVE and the role of women. UN Women has been successful in engaging experienced partners who have a wealth of ground-level knowledge and experience to identify and engage relevant participants in each discussion who can contribute effectively.

- An important lesson learnt is that in mixed groups (women and men), women do not feel comfortable expressing themselves, especially in the context of KP. In the women-only group, women freely express their concerns and challenges and also talk about locally-driven recommendations to PVE. To better engage women in the project activities, UN Women conducted 90% community dialogues with women-only groups.

- Usage of socially accepted terminologies like social cohesion and tolerance instead of "preventing/countering violent extremism' had both its benefits and drawbacks. Given the sensitive nature of the project and the intense scrutiny it brings from state institutions, the term social cohesion through women's leadership allowed the project to engage

with various stakeholders and build up a pace that allowed UN Women Pakistan to establish the trust of stakeholders and communities. However, in many instances, it because more challenging to directly tackle issues related to violent extremism and terrorism. In various consultations and discussions, the narrative expanded to include GBV, domestic violence and other issues – which are important and intersecting issues on their own but their relevance and connection to violent extremism needed to be clarified and made stronger.

- One lesson stemming from this is that when addressing PVE under the pretext of peacebuilding and social cohesion, it is essential that a conceptual framework outlining the theory of change of the project be clearly articulated at the outset. This is to support practitioners and implementing partners establish linkages of programmatic interventions and mitigating the security threats and risks emanating from violent extremism in a given context. This will also support how social cohesion intersects with preventing violent extremism.

- The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda provides an opportunity to positively engage with PVE, and ensure that women's rights and security needs are upheld in PVE policies, mechanisms and interventions. However, in Pakistan, the WPS Agenda restricted the potential of UN Women's engagement on PVE because of the perception that it is too closely related to kinetic measures/interventions. The program very cautiously used the terminology in closed-door meetings with the government. Given the efforts of the last three years and the groundwork that has been laid in engaging with communities and now the government (through NACTA), this challenge may subside in the next phase but will continue to exist at some level. it is therefore critical to ensure that PVE engagement in a given context continues to prioritize the promotion and protection of women's rights as included in international instruments and also along the lines of the four pillars of the WPS agenda. This elaboration and articulation must also be part of the Strategy, Rationale of the project at the outset.

- Engagement and partnership with the National Counter Terrorism Authority of Pakistan was a breakthrough that culminated UN Women's efforts on the ground. This partnership, if strengthened and sustained, has the potential to scale UN Women's work in PVE by providing its government's support

and cover and can ensure that UN Women is well-positioned to influence policy revisions and discussions related to women and PVE. Currently, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been submitted to NACTA for approval from relevant ministries within the government and is expected to take some time beyond the end of the project. To continue to build on the momentum, UN Women Pakistan has continued to collaborate with NACTA through its media campaign and participation in dialogue forums so that the partnership continues to be built and strengthened and further synergies can be explored.

- Key learning from this initiative has been the importance of mobilizing women and gaining their trust. Mobilization through trusted partners and stakeholders not only raises awareness about PVE but also helps bring women together on localized platforms. These platforms and groups can help derive collective action – as witnessed through social action projects and community engagement sessions conducted in Sindh and can serve to identify emerging women community leaders who can inspire others to partake in decisions and actions that affect peace, and stability and social cohesion in their communities.

- Using skill developed/economic resilience as a pathway to building social cohesion proved to be an effective way to gain trust, have a discussion on PVE and early signs of extremism, engage women who have been affected by conflict and give them the necessary support to increase their agency and decision-making role in the domestic and public sphere. Such an approach should be scaled further to increase the beneficiary base of the project and also be tested in other areas of Pakistan – including Punjab, Balochistan and other vulnerable areas in KP.

- The media campaign developed by UN Women in Pakistan was developed with a lot of caution and keeping in mind the sensitivity of the issue, to ensure that women, girls or vulnerable communities do not feel targeted or stigmatized. These media products can be used in future engagements to generate debate and discussions since visual sessions are known to compel engagement. Not just limited to communities but these products can be utilized by local civil society organizations and in policy circles where the ground is not so fertile to initiate discussions on this sensitive topic.

- To deepen the reach and target population vulnerable to extremist narratives, UN Women has identified youth, both girls and boys, as a key vulnerable group. There is a range of factors that have made youth particularly vulnerable to extremist narratives, though they vary geographically within the country: lack of critical thinking as a result of a weak education system, a growing sense of frustration at the inability to contribute to decision-making, and lack of sense of identity and belonging, amongst other push and pull factors.

- In Pakistan, a key driver to have emerged as the driver of the breakdown of social cohesion is *a critical lack of alternative or positive means of engagement for the youth*. Based on UN Women's work on PVE and social cohesion in Pakistan, there are several entry points – like sports, arts and film-making, that provide compelling means to engage youth and provide alternative narratives to extremism. It is important to note that these entry points do not automatically lead to positive outcomes, but that these approaches should be intentional and designed in a way that increases interaction and dialogue amongst diverse communities and gives youth a safe space to interact and an outlet to express themselves creatively. Messaging and communications stemming from such activities can have a societal impact – if relevant, they can resonate with local audiences and draw on context-specific histories, stories, arts, or traditions, to highlight important issues that can build tolerance and promote peaceful co-existence. Working with young women and men is also an opportunity for UN Women to incorporate the gender equality agenda into its P/CVE programming.

- The role of religious actors or community/faith leaders in affecting peace in their communities is critical. This stems from the fact that the majority of the population in Pakistan identifies itself as religious. In Pakistan, religion generally takes precedence over any other identity groups such as family, social class, ethnicity or preferred political party. A large part of this sense of religiosity is influenced by local faith leaders who shape popular knowledge about different religions and sects. Through sermons and congregations, they influence public opinion and perceptions, shape religious discourse and appeal for religious causes to the ready audience available to them. Not just

faith leaders, but institutions dedicated to religious studies play an important role in shaping religious discourse, public opinion and political choices in Pakistan. Within the religious establishment - a critical point to note is the lack of female and progressive voices that can advocate for women's rights. This is not to say that female representation will solve the issue of radicalization or extremist narratives, but it will push the boundary of always finding religious leaders and women's rights at crossroads. The pilot initiative conducted by UN Women in Phase I provided a unique opportunity to engage not just on P/CVE but also on issues of gender inequality and human rights and also advance peace and tolerance amongst different sects and religions. Such efforts need to be expanded and scaled to have a lasting impact on the ground.

- UN Women must continue to hold preparatory meetings with potential applicant implementing partners to have an initial assessment of their capacities and understanding of the thematic issues. Such preparatory work before advertising calls for proposals is envisioned to prepare national IPs with adequate information and details on the required services to improve the quality of proposals.

- Political and cultural resistance to gender and PVE support can be addressed by using alternate terminology for PVE. Keeping in mind the sensitivities in Pakistan and Jordan the title of the project has been revised. However, UN Women adhere to its ethical standards and guidelines on outlining the theory of change of each project to its national partners.

IX. NEXT STEPS

The project has laid the foundations for critical work on promoting women's rights in the context of terrorism and violent extremism. The quality of knowledge generated has built momentum with the national actors and counter-terrorism mandated entities further permitting increased access to security institutions to increase gender mainstreaming and to ensure gender-responsive security service provision.

At the community level, the project was able to support women at the local level in Pakistan and Jordan. This has assisted in increasing awareness and capacities to ensure informed discussions on gender, security, violent extremism and terrorism. It is evident that the prevention of violent extremism is a long-term endeavour and requires building partnerships. The project has been successful in setting an excellent groundwork to energize local debates, increase women's engagement and open spaces for additional work on gender and prevention of violent extremism.

At this stage, UN Women will develop phase II of this project and will endeavour to mobilize funds to leverage the momentum with national partners. Furthermore, UN Women will explore expanding the number of pilots to replicate successful approaches and to apply the knowledge gathered to contextualized

programmatic entry points. Globally, the project seeks to increase women-led CSOs' participation in PVE and CT discussions and processes and especially within the remit of relevant provisions in the UN global counter-terrorism strategy 7th review. In particular, its provision on engaging civil society to support the enhanced implementation of the Strategy at the national level. This is an important role for civil society to further contribute to the implementation of the four pillars of the Strategy, and to hold the system accountable in its role to support women's representation and participation in security processes at the regional, national and local levels.

There is remarkable potential for UN Women **Pakistan** to build on the momentum it has created in its targeted areas and scale its efforts. During Phase I of the project, UN Women was able to pilot and test multiple strategies to engage women to prevent violent extremism and understand how different contextual dynamics (Sindh vs KP) influence program design, and also build an evidence-base to guide its efforts. These strategies can now be scaled in KP, Balochistan and Punjab as well as different areas of Sindh. These efforts can now have a multiplier effect if efforts are combined with government stakeholders, like NACTA, with whom a partnership of trust has been painstakingly built.

UN Women in **Jordan** will continue the application of the results of the national research on gender drivers of PVE and will continue the partnership with national partners including the government, security sector and civil society within the JONAP II phase GFP to support women and youth's engagement in grassroots level initiatives to prevent violent extremism and promote community security.

X. FINANCIAL REPORT

Please see the attached financial report covering the period from Feb 2021 to 31 Jan 2022.

UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. A GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON MEETING THEIR NEEDS WORLDWIDE.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. It works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on four strategic priorities: Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems; Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy; All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence; Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.