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**Preventing Violent Extremism
in Nigeria:
Effective Narratives and Messaging
National Workshop Report**

Abuja, 23-24 May 2017

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INTRODUCTION

In an attempt to provide a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between national policies and local realities, promote multi-stakeholder dialogue and encourage the sharing of experiences, the **Club de Madrid** (CdM) organized a two-day National Workshop in Abuja, Nigeria, on the 23rd and 24th of May 2017 on the theme of “Preventing Violent Extremism in Nigeria: Effective Narratives and Messaging.” The meeting was held in collaboration with the Nigerian **Office of the National Security Adviser** (ONSA) and in partnership with **Partnership against Violent Extremism** (PAVE).



The *Leaders Telling a Different Story* project seeks to support and contribute to on-going national efforts to address the pressing threat of violent extremism. To achieve this goal, Club de Madrid partnered with **PAVE**'s multi-stakeholder network to support the civil society component of the process and simultaneously enhance collaboration between government, civil society organizations (CSOs) and community groups to combat the threat of violent extremism in Nigeria.

The national workshop was organized as part of the Club de Madrid's **"Preventing Violent Extremism: Leaders Telling a Different Story"** project, which is supported by the **European Commission** and aims to overcome the chasm between civil society and government in understanding how to best prevent violent extremism (PVE), enhance citizens' voices and foster government accountability. Ultimately, this project seeks to improve national and regional responses to violent extremism threats by creating stronger alternatives/counter-narratives that can effectively challenge the mentality of vulnerable groups and reduce recruitment in three countries: Nigeria, Lebanon and Tunisia.

Participants addressed issues of effective messaging, online radicalization and recruitment in an effort to reframe the narrative through the development of evidence-based recommendations on constructive communication strategies and messaging. The findings and conclusions in this report highlight the main themes of discussions held during the national workshop and do not necessarily represent the official position of the CdM.



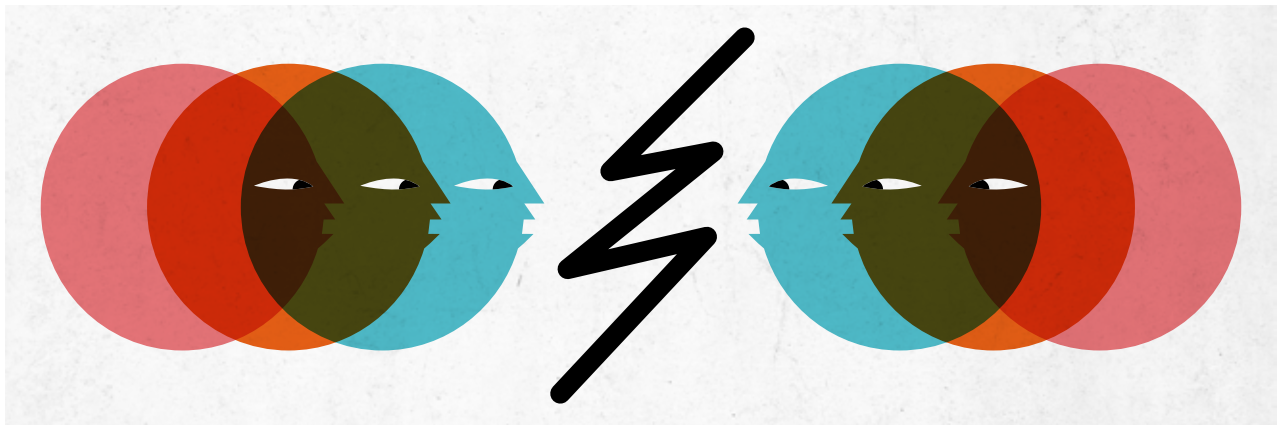
PREVENTING RADICALIZATION AND RECRUITMENT INTO VIOLENT GROUPS

Key drivers of violent extremism in Nigeria

The current situation faced by Nigerians is a direct result of violent extremism practices and blooming domestic insurgencies that are driven by homegrown terrorism and other unresolved factors, relentlessly fueling disenchantment among citizens.

The insurgency and eruption of extremism in the nation cannot only be reduced to Boko Haram, and the overemphasis on the country's Christian-South and Muslim-North division underestimates the role of deep-rooted ethnic, linguistic and class conflicts that constitute some of the underlying drivers of violence. Undeniably, the most recent and widespread extremist group in Nigeria, Boko Haram, continues to grow and commit various terror acts, posing one of the main threats to national security.

A self-declared ally of the Islamic State, this terrorist organization has been responsible for immense damage and suffering in Nigeria and surrounding countries, including Chad, Niger, and Cameroon. Through mass abductions, assassinations and bombing campaigns, the group has created chaos and hindered political stability and development efforts in the region. Using an “us vs . them” narrative, they have spread the fundamentalist ideology of jihad in its effort to override the Nigerian state and turn it into a Taliban-like Sharia state. A combination of unfortunate national circumstances, weak state actors, fragile or non-existent civil society organizations and power vacuums have enabled the Boko Haram campaign to run rampant in certain parts of the country.



The rise in the use of religious texts to justify criminality and mass atrocities is certainly troubling. These groups, especially Boko Haram, believe they are waging jihad. However, this could not be further from the truth.

Although the group manipulates Islam to craft convincing arguments based on religious claims, religion is not the foundation of its recruitment. Instead, these extremists target **social grievances** and present themselves as **problem solvers** and providers in areas where the government has not been able to deliver or improve its strategic approach.

Participants highlighted the need to address the root causes of the Boko Haram insurgency and acknowledge the contextual realities that have enabled the rise of extremist practices. Despite

the undeniable relevance of this violent extremist group, there is a need to assess other issues that go beyond the Boko Haram menace and that are currently affecting the country's security situation.

Boko Haram was born out of an environment of disillusion in which Nigerians felt historically, socially, politically and economically marginalized by a government that was perceived as too weak to successfully provide services and fulfill its role as the central authority. In addition, the division of the population into religious sects, the general situation of poverty affecting a significant number of inhabitants and the corruption of national security forces were never fully addressed and terrorist groups undoubtedly took advantage of this situation.

The following grievances experienced by Nigerians on a daily basis were identified as:

The main drivers of violent extremism

Corruption

among national political and economic elites perpetuates a vicious cycle of impunity. A culture of dishonesty and duplicity has developed, in which government positions are seen as a vehicle for obtaining economic benefits and increasing private wealth. This unjust situation, combined with a general lack of accountability, aggravates ordinary citizens, generates dissatisfaction and facilitates the recruitment efforts of extremists.



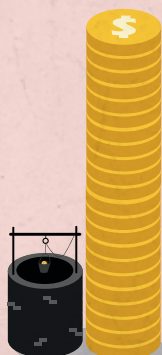
Inefficiencies in the formal justice system

and the usual delays in court decisions exacerbate the sense of marginalization and exclusion of citizens, whose calls for equality remain unheard.



Poverty, the unequal resource distribution and the level of unemployment

affecting the majority of the population cause intense resentment towards the political status quo. The economic disparities between the northern region and the rest of the country are noticeable and have not been properly addressed.



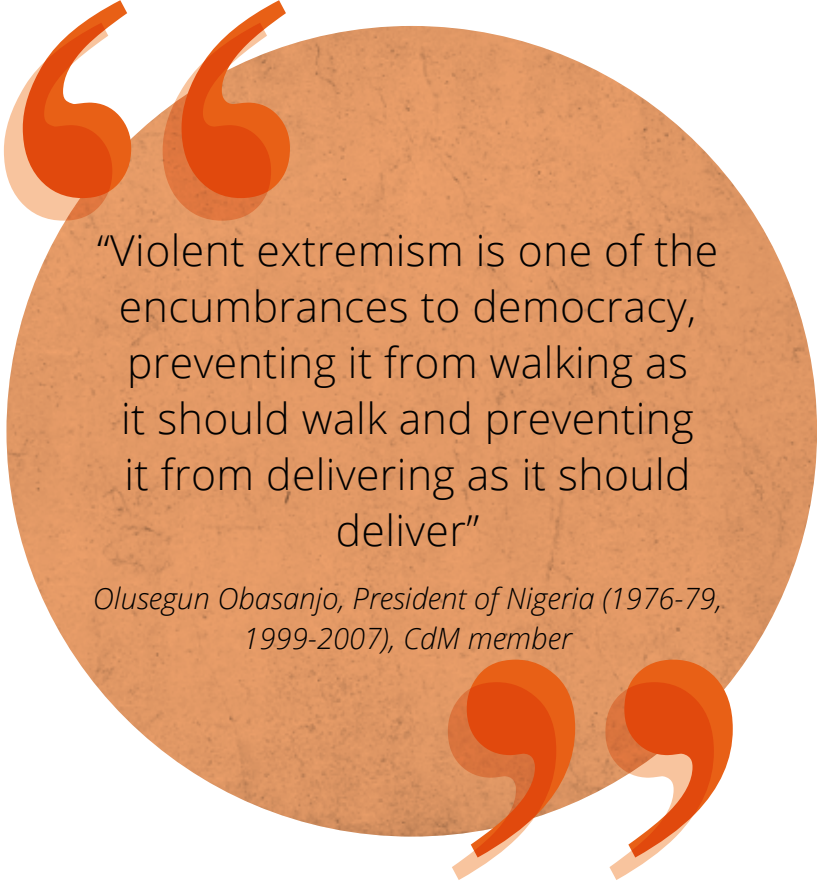
Lack of formal education

prevents citizens from gaining practical critical thinking skills that would greatly aid in dissecting Boko Haram's messages. In this context, many Nigerians were persuaded by



the extremist narrative and believed that violence was the only way of expressing their discontent.

Close monitoring of extremist messages was strongly encouraged, as it would enable the identification of the main ideological points and key strategies of the group. The CdM stressed the importance of advocating for alternative narratives that have the potential to lead to positive change in the region, particularly in communities that are difficult to access and face danger and instability on a daily basis. Furthermore, in an environment in which unemployment and lack of formal education are significant concerns, the promotion of social inclusion mechanisms and good governance should make up the core of any strategy that aims to prevent violent extremism.



“Violent extremism is one of the encumbrances to democracy, preventing it from walking as it should walk and preventing it from delivering as it should deliver”

Olusegun Obasanjo, President of Nigeria (1976-79, 1999-2007), CdM member

National efforts in the fight against violent extremism

Nigeria currently faces a series of political, social, economic and humanitarian challenges. Addressing security and humanitarian problems demands a coordinated and comprehensive approach that tackles the underlying structural drivers of extremism.

Multiple efforts, debates and national dialogue processes over P/CVE issues are being prioritized and put under the spotlight. The P/CVE framework has become an integral component of all interventions that aid in the fight against violent extremist groups and has provided a soft power approach that complements sustained military practices and law enforcement efforts.

The National Security Advisor stated the need to invest in the population and promote good governance and human rights, protect the civilian population, develop healthy institutions, involve the criminal justice system, and provide better jobs and education opportunities. With the promulgation of the 2011 terrorism prevention and anti-money-laundering acts, the country has strengthened its ability to combat the financing of terrorism and tackle some of the root causes of extremism. The 2013 amendment of the former acts improved inter-agency coordination by granting coordinating bodies more power and by delineating specific functions between institutions.



The development and adoption of the **National Counter Terrorism Strategy [NACTEST]** in 2014 and its review in 2016 paved the way forward for a multi-faceted approach to P/CVE and guided the development of a comprehensive national approach to tackle violent extremism. At present, P/CVE programming in Nigeria is characterized by three interrelated components:

- De-radicalization, focused on the rehabilitation and reintegration of former extremists back into society.
- Counter-radicalization, aimed at preventing recruitment through the promotion of good governance, citizen participation, reconciliation and peace building.
- Strategic communication, directed at improving messaging and the quality of communication exchanges. This activity consists of the identification, development and promotion of positive narratives and counter-narratives that challenge violent extremist messaging. The CdM's project goals aim at supporting national P/CVE efforts, particularly within this program.

Representatives of the Office of the National Security Adviser and the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture gave an overview of the national government's P/CVE approach, with special emphasis on strategic communications and counter-narrative strategies. Over the past few years, the Nigerian government has made significant efforts to provide civil society with the tools needed to prevent radicalization and foster resilient communities with the capacity to discern and analyze contradictory narratives.

THE THREE ELEMENTS OF P/CVE IN NIGERIA

1

DE-RADICALIZATION

2

COUNTER-RADICALIZATION

3

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

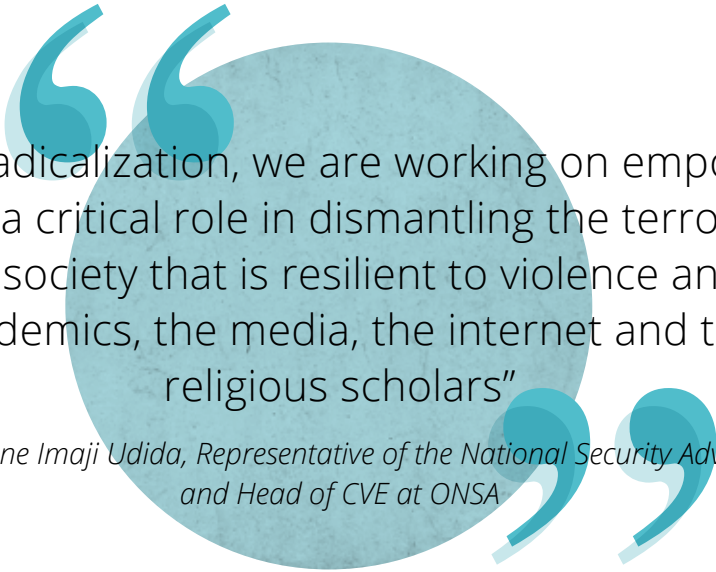
Nigeria's counterterrorism law assigns the responsibility of aligning counterterrorism efforts between security and enforcement agencies to the ONSA. Currently, the operations of the ONSA are coordinated by a policy framework based on the National Action Plan, which ensures collaboration between different government levels, civil society actors and the private sector and encourages an increased coordination between Nigeria and its neighbors, including peace and community engagement initiatives in broader communities. Across its various programs, the organization highlights the role of young people and women in the fight against extremism and the importance of promoting community engagement, education, cultural activities and dialogue between citizens. All programming by the ONSA takes into account the nexus between peace, security and development and the role that development can play in addressing the drivers of violent extremism and conflict.



However, the road to success has not been easy. There have been repeated complaints about the limitations or lack of local ownership during the P/CVE process, as some local CSOs have faced several difficulties when trying to engage with government or international actors. Challenges include an overall lack of trust and accountability, lack of funding and access to donors and difficulties in understanding what P/CVE entails for effective programming within communities.

Although the P/CVE process in Nigeria is evolving and there are still several challenges to overcome, the government has been willing to adopt a flexible strategy that can help shape an alternative narrative for positive change. Nigeria can benefit immensely from the increased conversation to neutralize negative messaging, promote tolerance and trust and fully develop and implement its national framework for P/CVE.

The CdM mentioned the importance of the strategic communication component of the National Action Plan, as it has the potential to engage civil society in prevention efforts and guide social perceptions towards alternative messaging. Local and national stakeholders call on the government to invest in the population through the promotion of good governance and respect for human rights, protection of civilians, implementation of anti-corruption measures, development of healthy institutions, improvement of the criminal justice system and better job and education opportunities.



“In counter-radicalization, we are working on empowering civil society to play a critical role in dismantling the terrorist narrative and building a society that is resilient to violence and extremism through academics, the media, the internet and the work of religious scholars”

*Catherine Imaji Udida, Representative of the National Security Advisor
and Head of CVE at ONSA*

The role of civil society in preventing violent extremism

In Nigeria, a wide range of CSOs from various backgrounds work on conflict prevention and resolution, peace-building, inter-religious dialogue, education and P/CVE programming, among other issues. Due to their profound knowledge of the formal and informal relationships between stakeholders in the region, as well as of the social drivers of extremism in the most affected communities, they are vital for the implementation of P/CVE efforts.

CSOs and individuals engaged in P/CVE emphasized the importance of developing **grassroots strategies** initiated by locals who understand the main concerns of the community and can therefore provide a trusted voice where it is most needed. In this sense, the responsibility of civil society is to actively collaborate with other actors (state and non-state alike) to share local insights on violent extremism and give feedback on the most effective methods and strategies to deal with the issue.

A *synergistic* approach between CSOs, international and governmental actors is required to advance the efforts happening at the community level. Violent extremism is not just about terrorism. There are several dimensions to take into account when analyzing the issue, such as the **emotional and psychological elements** that are triggered by extremist violence. In order to reduce people's vulnerability, we need to provide them with appropriate skills to analyze, seek and filter narratives and separate what is true from what is false.



Religious clashes, gender dynamics and mistrust could further hamper ongoing efforts aimed at reintegrating Boko Haram defectors or its victims into local communities. Locally rooted initiatives are able to promote social alignment and re-integration into communities where Boko Haram has recruited heavily. Given that these communities are highly stigmatized and marginalized, intra- and extra-community dialogue is needed to understand historical and current grievances and collectively find a solution at the community level.


GOOD PRACTICE

During an intra-community dialogue initiative undertaken in northeast Nigeria, women and men sat down inside their mosque for the first time to address each other's concerns and grievances. Conversations with security agencies and the police were also promoted to discuss their role as service providers. As a result, widowed women expressed their grievances and a public school registration took place, in which their children, usually stigmatized and rejected by most schools, were enrolled in public institutions. Women were also given the economic empowerment and taught the money saving skills to acquire real estate that would eventually let them achieve greater economic power. This simple initiative was able to transform the narrative of women's grievances within a short period of time and showed the youth in the region an alternative vision of the ways in which their future could develop.

Hamsatu Allamin, Community Leader from northeast Nigeria



The promotion of community-led PVE programs has the potential to give voice to those who have been voiceless. The engagement of civil actors who can contribute to the dialogue from the perspective of their day-to-day experiences has been an incredibly successful addition to crafting counterterrorism plans. Therefore, it is crucial to continue strengthening the *whole-society approach* when looking for an effective strategy to prevent and counter extremist threats.




“Countering violent extremism is really about building community resilience and creating safe communities”

Jaye Gaskia, Chairman of PAVE Initiative

As a result of the violent extremism crisis, the Nigerian government has created new institutions and spaces. The Counter Terrorism Centre (CTC) is an organization charged with the responsibility of coordinating counter-terror activities and empowering civil society to play a critical role in dismantling the terrorist narrative. Through the development of programs targeted to address specific local needs, the CTC promotes community engagement and builds resilience against violent extremism. However, major institutional challenges lie ahead. In particular, it is important to highlight issues surrounding intelligence coordination and to reach a consensus on protecting judges and Islamic scholars who support de-radicalization efforts in prisons, along with the limited availability of witness protection programs and the lack of effective community engagement endeavors. In addition, the founding bodies of several of the P/CVE initiatives in the country are coming from abroad and do not possess a local component.

There is a need to bridge that gap by engaging local actors and furthering reconciliation, rehabilitation and prevention efforts. In this sense, it is crucial for the government to build partnerships with relevant CSOs and networks, media actors, religious and traditional leaders and the private sector to promote a more inclusive strategy toward combating violent extremism. In order to establish effective collaboration frameworks between state and non-state actors, a sense of trust needs to be developed through the promotion of legitimate forms of governance and participation mechanisms.



PAVE is a Nigerian multi-stakeholder network of state and non-state actors founded to enhance collaboration between government, CSOs and community actors working collaboratively to prevent, mitigate and respond to potential on-going violent extremism and conflict in communities across Nigeria.

In this workshop, PAVE collaborated with the CdM in gathering representatives from over 30 CSOs from different states in Nigeria to discuss their role in the design and implementation of the country's P/CVE policy framework. Over the course of the workshop, a closed session of the Civil Society Working Group was held, during which the **Civil Society Declaration on Processes Towards Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in Nigeria** was articulated (Annex 1). The declaration from the Civil Society Working Group was subsequently presented to the broader multi-stakeholder session.

In the document, the group identified clear next steps:



PAVE Network as an opportunity to build synergy and enhance collaboration — collective planning, joint work, and mutually reinforcing action — between and among various categories of stakeholders, for partnership among CSOs, and between CSOs and state actors and development partners.



Evolution of PAVE Network into a multilayered alliance and a robust practice community on P/CVE in Nigeria.

The road ahead for PVE

Some of the main ideas and recommendations highlighted in the workshop include:

Strategic approach

- Develop proper **stakeholder mapping and research** to better understand people's decision to join extremist groups. Mapping motivations is crucial to crafting an effective counter-strategy because it allows particular grievances and deprivations that push people towards extremism to be identified.
- Create accurate **profiles of religious leaders and places of worship**, which should identify those promoting radicalized messages, along with where and why this promotion is taking place. The establishment of a registration portal for preachers would be extremely useful in this endeavor.
- Design a PVE strategy with a focus on **interpersonal interactions**, which is the main recruitment channel used by extremist groups. **Face-to-face encounters** have proven to be the most effective way of engaging with people to connect on a personal level and work towards building a relationship of trust.

Youth and women empowerment

- Build the capacity of young people to develop and implement **Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) mechanisms**. An effective EWER system must have solid connections to civil society and key actors. Therefore, the roles of trusted local leaders, including young people, need to be strengthened to serve as reliable providers of information and support.
- Integrate **P/CVE initiatives into school activities** and establish **safe spaces for young people and women** looking for confidential groups and constructive conversations on how to fight and address violent extremism.

- Promote **enhanced participation of excluded groups, such as women and young people**, in democratic governance processes. Inclusive societies are more likely to be peaceful and stable. Finding **innovative ways to engage** with these groups is urgent.

- Encourage **leisure activities** and the establishment of **cultural centers** to keep young people positively engaged with society and prevent them from developing social vices.

EXAMPLES

1.

The **Nigerian Stability and Reconciliation Programme** (NSRP) has coordinated the formation of **Peace Clubs** that create a safe space for young participants to voice their concerns and break the silence around cultural violence faced by girls and women. Additionally, the NSRP has established Women Peace and Security networks, which bring together key women-focused civil society actors and organizations and help them, engage with government structures and the wider community to develop and implement the National Action Plan on women, peace and security.



2.

The **Peace Initiative Network**’s programs in northern Nigeria and the city of Kano **use football** to unite young people, particularly those who are out of school, and present a narrative that stresses the importance of fair play, peace and leadership.

Trust-building efforts

- Strengthen the **relationships among different sectors of society**, namely the Ministry of Justice, the police, community leaders, local NGOs, the NSCDC, and other security and law enforcement agencies. The government should play a key role in **rebuilding trust and confidence** among different actors through programs aimed at improving **Civil-Security Relations** [CSR]
- Encourage the **eradication of corruption and impunity** in security agencies and other law enforcement actors. Reforming these forces would help restore trust between them and civil society actors.
- Reinforce **traditional justice systems**, as most people in the region do not have access to formal systems of justice. Bureaucracy usually makes it difficult for people to find resolutions to their problems quickly.

EXAMPLE

The **Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue** has facilitated three inter-communal dialogue and conflict mediation processes in the Middle Belt region since early 2013. This bottom-up approach to peace building



fostered community-driven dialogues and enabled citizens to voice their concerns while being directly involved in the community reconciliation process. Ensuring the inclusion of all levels of society in the PVE process successfully created an alternative culture of dialogue among and between communities in the resolution of disputes and helped build a relationship of trust between different stakeholders.



PRODUCING AND AMPLIFYING ALTERNATIVE NARRATIVES





The communication strategy of Boko Haram

Boko Haram's communication strategy is to exploit and coerce vulnerable individuals, especially young people, through different media channels and online platforms. This strategy has evolved over time in response to changing conditions on the ground. Although videos and other propaganda initially focused on presenting the group as a defender of Islam¹, they now prioritize the depiction of the build-up of the Islamic State in North East Nigeria. The current strategy is complemented by the spread of messages that promote Boko Haram's sense of justice and good governance and feature the implementation of Sharia law.

This shift in strategy resulted in a change in the content of the messages, which now focus on justice and governance and feature the implementation of Sharia law. With the rise of Daesh, there was a definitive change in strategy. While Boko Haram videos used to be centered on the image of Amir Imam Abu Bakr Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram, he now barely appears in videos. This shift is in line with Daesh's communications strategy and its effort to present itself as a grassroots movement.

¹. From 2012-2013, Boko Haram presented itself as the defender of Islam while it was targeting Sunday church services. The group wanted to create sectarian and religious divisions within the country, focusing on the role of the government and Christians.

Based on a 2017 study conducted by the **Institute for Security Studies**, Boko Haram's messages are mostly used for recruitment and seek to raise awareness about the group and its activities, counter the government's narrative and delegitimize it as a ruling entity. Messages can be divided into four key themes:

-  **Claims of an attack**, which are meant to amplify the reach of their operations. Every year since 2011, attack claims have featured in approximately half of all Boko Haram messages, with the exception of 2015, when they only constituted 29% of all messages. Unsurprisingly, that year coincided with the period in which Boko Haram was steadily losing ground.
-  **Warnings and future threats**, which appear in over 30% of messages. Some of the usual targets are politicians, schools, security personnel and Christians. These warnings are seen as an opportunity for innocent civilians to protect themselves by avoiding association with or proximity to the aforementioned groups. However, given the proliferation of these warnings, it can be difficult to discern between a legitimate threat and a deceptive bluff.
-  **Imposition of conditions and negotiations**, which encompass around 25% of messaging. Some group leaders have repeatedly denied engaging in conversations with the federal government, as it would be considered hypocritical to associate with an entity frequently derided as illegitimate. Despite the frequent denials, at least two attempts to sit at the negotiating table have been recorded over the past five years.
-  **Justifications for targeting civilians**. Boko Haram claims that the group does not target civilians, but it reserves the right to determine who constitutes one and who does not. For instance, those who partake in government activities and Western education are not considered to be civilians. The group's inability to reconcile its view of innocence with that of the general public has become a major theme in messaging, particularly when there are Muslim casualties.

Both Daesh's and Boko Haram's messages in Nigeria suffer from a series of vulnerabilities that could and should be exploited by **producers of positive alternative narratives**:

- ▶ Radical narratives are less sophisticated and seductive than the ones produced by Daesh in other contexts such as Syria and Iraq. Those responsible for Daesh's and Boko Haram's communication efforts in Nigeria seem to be less skilled and have fewer resources and less imagination. To illustrate this point, only four out of 39 videos distributed by Nigerian jihadists since 2012 make use of cultural references that are familiar to potential audiences and none of them carry a positive or constructive message. Taking this into account, counter-narratives in Nigeria need to be filled with positive and attractive messages that use vivid colors and a style that is familiar to potential audiences.
- ▶ Daesh and Boko Haram videos in Nigeria are excessively long, reaching an average of 17.6 minutes. Counter-narratives could gain a competitive advantage by producing audiovisual material that does not go over two minutes.
- ▶ 30% of the videos produced by Nigerian jihadists feature Amir Imam Abu Bakr Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram. The group's extreme dependence on its leader weakens its strategy in two main ways. On the one hand, it makes the message look old-fashioned, monotonous and egocentric and, on the other hand, young people may not be as attracted to such a hierarchical organization.

Messaging in Nigeria

BOKO HARAM'S VULNERABILITIES

Narratives are less sophisticated and seductive than the ones produced by Daesh in other context such as Syria and Iraq.

Videos in Nigeria are excessively long, reaching an average of 17.6 minutes.

Great dependency of the group on its **leader**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALTERNATIVE NARRATIVES

Counter-narratives can be filled with **positive and attractive messages** that are embedded in lively colors.

Videos that do not go over two minutes.

Use of a **more inclusive messaging**, without a hierarchical organization.



Finally, the kidnapping of the Chibok schoolgirls is probably one of the most powerful and moving Boko Haram-related stories in Nigeria. The group has only released two videos related to the matter, but the story has great potential from an alternative/counter-narrative perspective.

Alternative messaging needs to take advantage of the deficiencies in Boko Haram's communications strategy and show an opposing narrative. Messages need to depict dozens of young people speaking naturally in their own voice, without a script and with no apparent hierarchy. In addition, in cases where young people are the target audience, messages should not be transmitted by authorities in an excessively formal manner, but should instead be delivered by agents who have credibility among young people.

The importance of evidence-based narratives

There are currently many questions surrounding the actual reach and impact of P/CVE, counter-messaging and counter-narrative campaigns, but most studies thus far have focused on the role of experts, community and religious leaders, scholars, and local leaders.

The **Leaders Telling a Different Story Project** addresses a fundamental gap in research by analyzing ordinary citizens' perceptions and engaging **local and cultural interlocutors**. The project conducted focus groups discussions to test the perceptions and responses to radical and counter-radical messages in the country to understand the role of these messages in the recruitment process for radical groups.



By obtaining the opinion of the end-user, a demographic so far underrepresented in PVE research, the efficacy of radical and counter-radical messaging can be analyzed and understood to inform better policy decisions. This way, the project seeks to determine the role of **democratic leadership** in preventing extremism through an **evidence-based approach** that helps tackle fundamental issues of social and economic marginalization and that provides an understanding of the dynamics of how an individual receives and perceives messages.

The research component of the project in Nigeria seeks to improve local and national responses to violent extremism threats by creating stronger alternative/counter-narratives that can effectively challenge the mentality of vulnerable groups and ultimately reduce recruitment. Through the use of **evidence-based narratives** that address the concerns and opinions of locals, alternative messages should be based on real life experiences that the audience can fully relate to. By addressing the sentiments and apprehensions of ordinary Nigerians, the appeal of counter-radical messages should be greater.. The initial findings showed clear trends in the areas of media consumption habits, responses to radical messages, dissemination of counter radical messages and strategies for recruitment.

“The content of radical messages tries to place itself as the plug in the wall where the state has failed”

*Dr. Drew Mikhael,
Lead Researcher of the
PVE-Leaders Telling a
Different Story Project*



Media Consumption Habits

Participants in the study expressed **skepticism towards traditional means of communication** across all ages and genders. Participants admitted triangulating their news for verification purposes, be it through word-of-mouth, discussion with friends or crosschecking with other channels. There is a culture of **face-to-face information sharing** in which the source's reputation is highly valued. Unsurprisingly, younger participants are more likely to use social media than older subjects, but even so they are careful to crosscheck information before discussion. The **main source of information is the radio**, mostly because it is portable, cheap and can be listened to while engaging with household and other daily activities.



Responses to Radical Messages

Participants had mostly seen radical messages beforehand and could **easily pinpoint the producer** due to the content, narrative style and the frequency with which they were disseminated. After seeing these messages, respondents often **defended Islam** and explained how terrorist groups manipulated the religion's words. Furthermore, they attributed the emergence of Boko Haram to other **economic and social failures** within the country, such as the lack of general education, particularly religious education that explains the true nature of Islam, and lack of services provided by the government.

In this context, **Boko Haram portrayed itself as a problem-solver** that could provide services in areas where the government could not. Focusing on the messages themselves, the **reputation of the speaker** was of paramount importance, as well as the framing of the content. Messages **resonated easily with the everyday lives** of ordinary Nigerians and were typically worded in **direct opposition to the government**.



Impact of Counter-Radical Messages

Participants complained about the content of counter-radical messages and their general approach, arguing that efforts to present an alternative narrative should address issues of government service rather than attack Boko Haram's actions. There was a strong call for the government to **standardize religious education**. The absence of teachers who could provide answers, clarification and a sense of direction to young people after being confronted by Boko Haram messaging was one of the factors behind recruitment. Just as with radical messages, the **identity of the messenger** was just as important as the content of the messages.


In terms of content, the study showed that Nigerians tend to be more persuaded when messages are **'truthful'** and show earnest attempts to tackle real-life problems faced by communities. Interestingly, many participants dismissed **the concept of counter-radical messaging** and attributed recruitment to the **lack of critical thinking skills** resulting from poor education (particularly within households).



Recruitment Strategies

The use of both **hard coercion** (kidnapping) and **soft coercion** (marriage) was widely recognized. The **role of women** in the latter was pivotal, as the family would then be raised to follow Boko Haram's ideology. The subservient role of women in Nigerian society makes matters more difficult, as those who wish to escape marriage have to face the dishonor associated with divorced women.

It is evident that **Boko Haram exploits this gender dynamic** and takes advantage of the underprivileged social position of females. In terms of particular recruitment strategies, **interpersonal interactions** were valued above all, with recruiters often offering **financial rewards** and benefitting from the **lack of critical thinking skills** within the population.



“The narrative we need is one that we all share, not a narrative of followers, but a narrative of development, not a narrative of grievances but a narrative of working together to get a solution.”

Olusegun Obasanjo, President of Nigeria (1976-79, 1999-2007), CdM member

The role of the media and communications outlets in fighting back violent extremism

Regardless of size or political ideology, all media outlets have a role to play in the fight against violent extremism. Terrorist groups promote their narrative through their innovative use of social media, which is why it is imperative for the government and other organizations involved in the fight against terrorism to use both traditional and new media channels when crafting and disseminating a counter-narrative.

Media outlets should not act as a mere tool to spread a narrative, but should also disseminate their own alternative messages and become important players in counterterrorism activities. Frequently, these efforts pose enormous challenges for media outlets, as they are frequently extorted and forced to broadcast Boko Haram messages and sometimes lack the technical and financial capabilities to reach certain areas.

The specific communication methods and strategies should...

Integrate **innovative schemes** and make use of the film industry, videos, graphics, photos and picture ads. Both traditional offline platforms and new online platforms should be exploited.

Reconnect evidence-based narratives in original ways, through channels that do not look like conventional media. These counter-terror messages should be precise, rich in content and show the values of the alternative messaging mission.

Promote **attractive and persuasive messages that seduce the audience.** Terrorist groups make use of imagery and audiovisual techniques that fascinate viewers and create confusion between fiction and reality. Counter-radical messages need to resonate with the public in a similar fashion.

Target the **most vulnerable groups** of society, such as women and young people, who can also become powerful actors in PVE efforts.

Use **vernacular language.** Audiences need to identify with the message and develop a sense of trust with the news source.

Raise awareness of the **day-to-day realities of people** in the region and aid in community reconciliation and the healing process. It is important to address all the minor and major reasons that gave birth to terrorist groups like Boko Haram, such as poverty, bad governance, corruption and impunity.

With this in mind, counter-narratives coming from the media need to report on the violence used by terror groups, their manipulation of young people and their misleading portrayal of life under their rule. **The focus of the debate** needs to change to show how reality differs from the portrayal shown in radical messaging.

“If you want to counter the narrative of Boko Haram, you need to speak to the people in Kanuri language. First, you have to create trust and then you have to come up with messages that seem fair and useful to the listener”

*Faruk Dalhatu, Managing Director,
Dandal Kura Radio International*

“Members of both civil society and the government need to find alternative means of reaching out to communities in need. If the inhabitants of Borno State would not set up stations to broadcast whatever is going on for fear of reprisal from Boko Haram, they have a legitimate concern”

*Despan Kwardem, Representative from the Federal Ministry
of Youth and Sports.*



EXAMPLE

The **Positive Voices Campaign Project** (PVCP), uses role models to improve the resilience of young people to negative influences through positive messaging and mentoring. The project was designed to provide a counter-narrative for Nigeria's youths by reducing their vulnerability to radical groups and promoting role models to inculcate positive values. Young people were selected across five conflict-filled states and participated in videos that were used as a platform to disseminate positive narratives and counter extremist stories.

Next steps and recommendations in the delivery of persuasive counter narratives

THE MESSAGE

Policy makers should focus on spreading the “correct narratives” of Islam, particularly in disconnected places where access is difficult and people do not have the opportunity to listen to counter-radical accounts. Messages should be built on a persuasive and **consensus-based translation of the Koran and the Sunna** and show that extremists manipulate religion to produce persuasive messages. It is imperative to highlight that the vast majority of Muslims reject the radical interpretation of Islam

Taking into account that extremist narratives are often based on feelings of marginalization and exploitation, the goal of counter-narratives should be to highlight an **individual’s emotions and sense of self-worth** to allow people to empathize and relate to the broader society over isolated extremists.

In order to combat violent extremism effectively and address the population’s grievances through peaceful and constructive means, it is crucial to **scale-up regular citizen’s voices** during the crafting of a PVE strategy. Positive role models need to debunk stereotypes and constructively spread awareness of the alternative narrative mission, which should focus on **emotional healing and reconciliation** efforts across different sectors of society and help rebuild social trust. Most importantly, the counter-narrative against violent extremism needs to have a principle of **“shared humanity”** that abandons the victim-perpetrator



narrative of who-killed-whom to focus on the common experiences shared by all humans on both sides of the conflict.

In terms of developing a national communications strategy based on **local concerns** and tailored towards a **specific target audience**, participants highlighted the need to focus alternative messaging on the **positive aspects of government services**. Although **counter-radical messages are not a panacea**, their producers should still focus on their content and stress the hardships of living under Boko Haram.

Ongoing **analysis of the content of radical messages** is required, as they provide important evidence about the drivers of extremism and consequently on the approach of radicalized groups towards recruitment. The analysis of extremist messaging enables policy makers to identify some of the main grievances of the population and effectively design livelihood support initiatives that enhance citizens' standards of living.

THE MESSENGER

Inclusive messaging needs to incorporate all relevant stakeholders in the discussion, particularly young people and **local actors** who are considered to be **trustworthy**. Furthermore, an effective strategy should focus on the development of a **more effective communication system** that spreads and disseminates counter-narratives by making use of both traditional and more innovative means of communication such as social media. Messages should address vulnerable groups using language that stresses their value and importance in their community rather than their helplessness as targets or beneficiaries of programming.

Inclusive messaging needs to incorporate all relevant stakeholders in the discussion, particularly young people and local actors who are considered to be trustworthy. Furthermore, an effective strategy should focus on

"We must, as a community, challenge violent extremism's misinterpretation of the scriptures by finding innovative ways to tell a different narrative and charter a future of peace and tolerance"

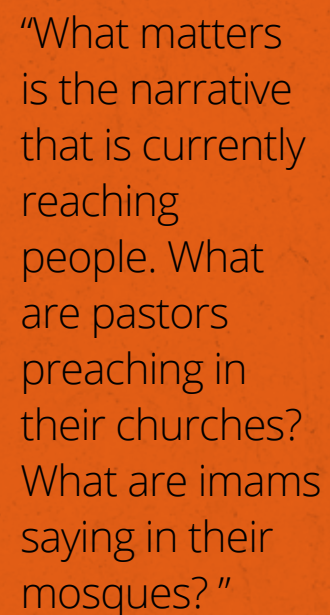
Alhaji Aminu Nabeg, Permanent Secretary of the Office of the National Security Advisor

the development of a more effective communication system that spreads and disseminates counter narratives by making use of both traditional and more innovative means of communication such as social media. Messages should address vulnerable groups using language that stresses their value and importance in their community rather than their helplessness as targets or beneficiaries of programming.

The government and other relevant stakeholders should promote the **empowerment and protection of women**, as well as advocate for **improving their role** in Nigerian society. This should go beyond traditional homemaking to include other activities that help elevate their position in society. The promotion of the role of women in Nigerian society would help prevent Boko Haram's exploitation of gender dynamics during its recruitment efforts.

Regarding the role of religious leaders in the promotion of alternative narratives, it is important to recognize their relevance and hold them accountable for what they preach by creating a detailed profile that provides an account of their main motivations and concerns.

Finally, **peer-to-peer involvement** of young people is crucial, particularly when it comes to issues that directly affect them. To make them less vulnerable, young people need to be given the skills to analyze, seek and filter narratives to separate what is true from what is false. The educational curriculum should then be modified to ensure that children develop **media literacy and critical thinking skills**.



"What matters is the narrative that is currently reaching people. What are pastors preaching in their churches? What are imams saying in their mosques?"

*Cardinal John Onaiken,
Archbishop of Abuja*

IV

III. FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE AND MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Assessment of current challenges

At present, the establishment of successful and effective partnerships among different stakeholders in P/CVE efforts is hampered by a number of different issues. One of the key concerns is that current **P/CVE efforts are too narrowly focused on the northeast** and, despite the fact that this area is under the most distress, the threat and risk of violent extremism is nationwide and should be treated as such.

Furthermore, those who contributed to the debate noted the **lack of synergy** and **weak coordination** within and between civil society organizations, state institutions, international organizations and other actors. Rivalries among and within development partners further complicate the problem and often result an agenda that does not address the needs of the population.

Participants also addressed the **lack of formal conflict management institutions** at state and local levels and the



“There are issues of trust and accountability. Over time, if trust is not built, then nobody is held accountable”

*Gaspar Okechuku,
Representative from the
Center for Democracy
and Development in
Nigeria.*

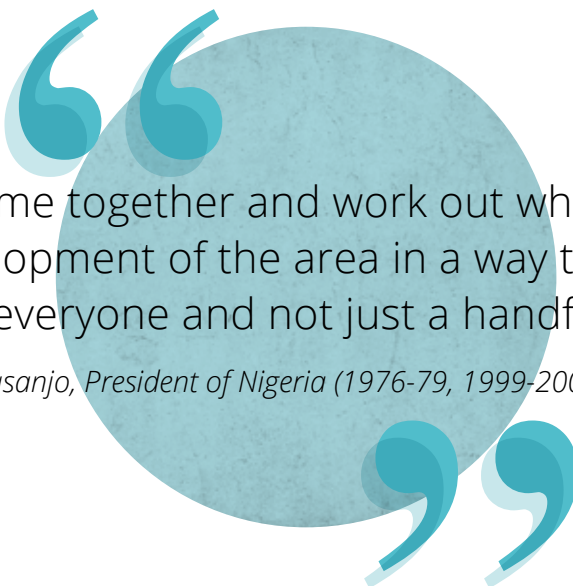
capacity gaps and weaknesses of various stakeholders, which lead to the sometimes **scattered and disconnected nature** of ongoing initiatives and interventions. Additionally, the **inflexible “one size fits all” response framework for conflict management** conducted by government institutions under a “law and order” approach has proven to be largely unsuccessful and shows no sign of change in the near future. This situation is aggravated by weak strategic development planning frameworks and a lackadaisical attitude towards investments in peace building and conflict prevention.

Recommendations for the pursuit of enhanced cooperation

Several steps can be taken to strengthen alliances among P/CVE stakeholders:

-  **Develop a comprehensive mapping of P/CVE initiatives** in the country. It is important to document what is being done against violent extremism, who is carrying out these efforts, and where these endeavors are taking place. This way, a periodically updated and easily accessible **database of P/CVE interventions** and initiatives in Nigeria could be created, along with a central and accessible **P/CVE resource and knowledge management center/portal**.
-  **Establish an effective coordination mechanism** to foster synergy, amplify impact and enhance the scope and coverage of P/CVE initiatives. Government agencies, community institutions, civil society and international development partners need to work together and coordinate their respective interventions to achieve the common goal of P/CVE. There is a need to **harmonize the strategies** of partners, which should be guided by a common mandate, and to **build a feedback mechanism** into partnership frameworks.

- ▶▶▶ **Strengthen existing state conflict management agencies** or establish new ones where needed in order to foster networks among state and non-state actors that increase P/CVE initiatives across the country. The PAVE Network could be leveraged to play a central role in monitoring, evaluating and learning (MEL) efforts during the course of the implementation of the National Policy and Action Plan.
- ▶▶▶ **Mainstream conflict sensitivity and peace building efforts** into overarching development strategies in community development plans, with a focus on P/CVE.
- ▶▶▶ **Promote the creation of a participatory and needs-based budgetary system** based on an integrated national development-planning framework. The creation of this budgetary system would be facilitated by the creation of a multi-stakeholder peace fund for sustainably funding peace initiatives with contributions from the government (at all levels), the private sector and international development partners.
- ▶▶▶ **Encourage local actors to develop their own P/CVE initiatives** that target specific local concerns. Many of the founding bodies of PVE projects in the country are international entities, which have better funding but do not necessarily provide the most convenient strategy to deal with efforts of reconciliation, rehabilitation and de-radicalization within a particular community.



“Let us all come together and work out what can be done for the development of the area in a way that will benefit everyone and not just a handful”

Olusegun Obasanjo, President of Nigeria (1976-79, 1999-2007), CdM member

V CONCLUSIONS

The workshop enabled participants to identify pressing challenges and promising opportunities to strengthen national P/CVE capacities and design better-informed policies on delivering alternative and positive narratives against violent extremism. By sharing the results from the qualitative research and evidence-based recommendations on radical and counter-radical messaging conducted in Nigeria, awareness was raised on the importance of reorienting the narratives of political, community and religious leaders and the media towards tolerance, inclusion and inter-religious dialogue. The CdM stresses the importance of encouraging credible and positive voices, particularly young people's, and increasing collaboration and trust between Nigerian civil society organizations and state and multilateral stakeholders.

The threat of violent extremism needs to be dealt with through the crafting of a comprehensive national, regional and international strategy that combines both soft- and hard-power approaches. In order to achieve the goal of preventing and countering violent extremism, the role of political leaders such as CdM member — all former presidents and prime ministers of democratic countries — and the international community in the promotion of good governance and social inclusion are of paramount importance. In the

long run, the success of the strategy will depend on how effectively the underlying causes of insecurity and instability are addressed and how successfully measures that tackle the challenges of governance, democratic institutions and lack of opportunities are implemented.

CdM is committed to continually promoting democratic and comprehensive solutions to PVE challenges in Nigeria. As a follow-up, the project will organize a high-level mission in July with the aim of conveying the conclusions and key messages from the National Workshop in meetings with key government and civil society representatives in Nigeria.

CdM's *Leaders Telling a Different Story* will use this platform to disseminate the findings and recommendations of the focus group study conducted in Nigeria early this year and to support ongoing national efforts on developing and implementing the National Policy Framework and Action Plan (NAP) in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism.

Considering that civil society actors play a crucial role in delivering more effective alternative narratives, CdM members will support and advocate for stronger engagement with CSOs and networks such as PAVE in the implementation of the new P/CVE policy framework.



CIVIL SOCIETY DECLARATION ON PROCESSES TOWARDS PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN NIGERIA

Declaration drafted by over 30 CS representative from different States in Nigeria during the National Workshop on Alternative Narrative to Violent Extremism, convened by the Club de Madrid, in partnership with PAVE

Introduction and Context

The Club de Madrid in Collaboration with the Office Of The National Security Adviser [ONSA], and in Partnership with Partnership Against Violent Extremism PAVE Network] funded by the European Union, organised a Two Day National Workshop on the Theme of “Preventing Violent Extremism in Nigeria: Effective Narratives and Messaging”, at the Sheraton Hotel Abuja on the 23rd and 24th of May 2017.

The National workshop was organised as a part of the “Preventing Violent Extremism: Leaders Telling A Different Story” project of the Club de Madrid [CdM] being implemented in a twelve month pilot across three countries [Nigeria, Tunisia and Lebanon], and across two regions [Africa and MENA].

In the course of the Workshop, a closed session of a Civil Society Working Group was held, during which the following Declaration was articulated. The Declaration from the Civil Society Working Group was subsequently presented to the broader multi-stakeholder session.

The Partnership Against Violent Extremism [PAVE Network], a network of Civil Society Organisations working on PCVE and partnering with other stakeholders including State Actors, and in particular ONSA, takes ownership of this declaration, and commits to the vigorous promotion of its content in all her engagements with other stakeholders – State and non-state, national and international.

The deliberations and declaration of the Civil Society Working Group is categorized around three subthemes as follows:

A. Preventing Violence and Recruitment into Violent Groups;

Community projects **(what is working):**

1. Establishment of peace clubs in Partnership with Ministry of Education [MoE].
2. Food for Peace Initiative targeting the informal system of education (almajiri settings).
3. Improving community resilience through strengthening the Early Warning And Early Response [EWER] mechanisms in communities; through multi stakeholders approach capacity building for monitors, setting up EWER structures at community levels, of town hall meetings, dialogues to discuss and build strategies of engagements, communication and security (learning and sharing information). Also recognising that there are layers of early response, some of which can be effectively activated within communities and at community level.
4. Literacy engagements with children and youth; Utilising the Non-formal learning education systems which had offered

many opportunity to get involved.

5. Positive voices initiative; young people identified and supported at community level, reaching out to more and sharing peace messages through skills and empowerment (peer-peer mentoring)

LESSONS LEARNT

- Improved access to education has promoted engagements especially with and among young people and children.
- Communication and positive relationship enhanced between and within communities and relevant institutions, leading to strengthened flow of information.
- People feel and get involved in identifying threats; this has effectively worked especially from youth perspectives; understanding, recognising and amplifying their roles and responsibilities to their communities.
- Opportunity for mentoring has been created in the cause of several initiatives.

Everyone has a little to contribute in his or her own way

Recruitment into violent groups, shared realities;

Evidence has shown that extremists have various ways of engagements some of which are;

1. One-one engagements with the disconnected people, rural communities (as in the case of BH in Nigeria, research has shown recruitments were done by preaching directly in vulnerable communities. Example is their recruitment in Kogi central targeting a Muslim majority in Okene; some commanders were identified to be from this LGA, and evidence

had shown that BH come in to preach in this community. Ideology, economy, politics etc.)

2. Social media campaigns; Evidence has shown that extremists use social media to promote their cause, influence and recruit people especially young people.
3. Peer-Peer involvement; When young people are not at the centre of decision making particularly on issues directly relating to them, this has engendered rebellion in some places, making rebellious youth more vulnerable to BH messaging.
4. Systemic injustice has contributed a lot to recruitments, in prisons, from among victims, etc.
5. Violent extremism should not be limited to Boko Haram and North East zone of Nigeria and Islam alone.
6. Issues of rehabilitation and reintegration for those who are ready should be considered.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Propagating the correct narratives of Islam; especially in disconnected places and places difficult to access (peace actors can only pass peace message the same way extremist recruits)
- A proper stakeholder mapping and research to know how/what motivates people to join extremist groups
- Profiling of religious leaders and worship places (Develop a registration portal or an identification means for preachers)
- Continuous Analysis of messaging contents
- Enhancing youth empowerment through building their capacity on the EWER mechanisms.
- Strengthening traditional structures (community heads, women leadership, religious leaderships, etc) for EWER mechanisms.

- Strengthening relationships with relevant institutions (Ministry of Justice [MoJ] and the justice sector, Police, NSCDC, and other security and law enforcement agencies etc.)
- Building trust and confidence between citizens and security agencies through programs aimed at improving Civil-Security Relations [CSR]
- Strengthening the traditional systems of justice, (Establishing/strengthening ADRC) as most people do not have access to the formal system of justice
- Introducing and integrating PCVE into school activities
- Establishment of safe spaces within communities for youths and women
- Enabling enhanced participation in democratic governance process for citizens in general, and women and youth in particular
- Livelihood support initiatives should be improved to enhance living standards and conditions of living of citizens.

B. Producing and Amplifying Alternative Narratives

What we know; distortion of religious messages to attract or recruit

Existing narratives; The myth of monolithic Christian South & Muslim North; Failure of Governance; Promotion of the feeling and sense of victimhood; Politics of segregation and exclusion; Appealing to the Sense and spirit of adventure among youths – making Violent Extremism seem to be like a glorious adventure (how terrorists are celebrated not peace actors); distorted perception of western education, etc.

What we should do; Research the current narratives – trends, dynamics; Get a sense of

who is listening?; who are Violent Extremists targeting?; what is the reaction/effect of the messaging on targets?; are people joining violent extremist groups because of the messages or there is more? Linking the activities to actors, and to messages!!!

The research can also look at how to prevent further radicalization and encourage 'returnees'

Develop, amplify and disseminate Alternative and Positive narratives to counter the existing narratives:

Existing Initiatives include;

Beyond the bullets (radio program) telling the other side of the side of the story, successes of war against terror.

It is important to note that narratives are evolved within and shaped by collectives in the course of taking Collective Social Action

LESSONS LEARNT

- Promoting positive messages through media especially radio has been shown to be effective in attracting wide coverage and large audience. Experiences from such initiatives include;
- People were encouraged and made to understand that they have a key role in supporting the fight against violent extremism (in the case of boko-haram)
- Messages are being sent out through multi-dimensional approaches (for example in different and accessible languages) helped a lot people in understanding the messages clearly.
- Positive response is engendered as people

were constantly informed, especially celebrating peace actors that are doing something about the violence.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Religious leaders should be supported to produce the right alternative narratives
2. Alternative Narratives must be locally based and preferably tailored to suit target audience. Like shoes, there is no one size that fits all!
3. Alternative Messages should not focus on government failure alone, but also on their positive impacts, and promising trends.
4. Alternative Messages should Emphasize the importance of education to the individual and in society.

MEDIUM FOR SHARING NARRATIVES;

- Media (social media a significant tool); those engaged with preventing and countering violent extremism must strive to become dominant voices and opinion molders on the social media.
- One-One interactions should be promoted and emphasised with communities without access to internet
- Platforms should be put in place by community leaders for communication, especially on values and discipline.
- Places of worship, market places, places where people earn/make a living, homes, etc are to be utilised as spaces for engagement in PCVE

Enhanced collaboration between government and CSOs, for information sharing is Key and central to developing and disseminating Alternative messages and positive narratives.

C. FOSTERING EFFECTIVE AND MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIP

Building and nurturing effective and efficient partnerships is key as an approach to preventing recruitments by violent extremism and developing and disseminating alternative messages and positive narratives

CHALLENGES:

- Lack of synergy and weak coordination within and between CSOs; State Institutions across tiers and arms of government [FG, SGs, LGs]; Communities, etc.
- Lack of synergy and sometimes unhealthy rivalry for turf among and within development partners who often set the agenda.
- The Absence of formal conflict management institutions at state and local government levels, including within communities.
- Capacity gaps and weaknesses within various stakeholders – State and non-state alike.
- Absence of/weak strategic development planning framework and processes.
- Lackadaisical attitude to investment in peace building and conflict prevention.
- Inflexible one size fits all response framework for conflict management by government institutions, often exclusively based on a 'law and order' approach.
- Too narrow a focus of PCVE interventions on the North East in spite of the fact of the recognition that the threat and risk of violent extremism is a nationwide one.
- Scattered, dispersed and disconnected nature and character of ongoing initiatives and interventions.

- The role of women in peace and security in Nigeria is not recognized nor appreciated.

What is currently working well;

- Bilateral, one to one partnerships
- Short to medium term funded/resourced interventions based on the bilateral partnerships

What we should be doing to overcome challenges;

- Strengthening existing state conflict management agencies and establishment where there is none.
- Need for a coordinated and integrated increase in PCVE initiatives in Northeast, and across other parts of the country.
- Urgent necessity for a Comprehensive mapping and audit of PCVE initiatives in particular, peace and security initiatives in general. It is important to have a documented sense of what is being done, who is doing what, and where these are being done.
- Establishment of effective coordination mechanism to foster synergy, amplify impact and enhance scope and coverage. Government agencies, community institutions, civil society and international development partners need to be enabled to work together, and coordinate their respective interventions towards achieving the common goal of PCVE.
- Providing sustained and adequate resources and enabling conditions for institutions for conflict management and peace-building across the country.
- Mainstreaming conflict sensitivity and peace building, including PCVE into overarching development strategies and plans at

Federal, State, and local government levels, and in community development plans.

- Feedback mechanism should be built into partnership frameworks
- Need to Harmonize strategies of partners and to be guided by a common mandate.
- Putting in plans mechanisms for COORDINATION and COLLABORATION among and within categories of actors - for instance within CSOs, within State Actors, within development partners; and among all of these.
- Urgent need for a participatory and needs based budgetary system based on integrated national development planning framework, with PCVE mainstreamed.
- Establish a multi-stakeholder Peace Fund for sustainable funding of peace initiatives with contributions from Government [at all levels], private sector and international development partners
- Develop sustainable and enduring partnerships beyond funding cycles.
- To harness the importance and need for women's participation in developing alternative messages and narratives.

EXISTING OPPORTUNITY FOR ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP;

- PAVE Network as an opportunity to build synergy and enhance collaboration [collective planning, joint work, and mutually reinforcing action] between and among various categories of stakeholders, for partnership among CSOs, and between CSOs and state actors and development partners.
- Evolution of PAVE Network into a multilayered alliance, and a robust Community Of Practice on PCVE in Nigeria.

IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS;

- Mapping and audit of PCVE interventions and stakeholders.
- Development of a comprehensive and periodically updated accessible data bank on PCVE interventions and initiatives in Nigeria.
- Development of an accessible Central PCVE Resource and Knowledge management Centre/portal.
- PAVE Network leveraged to play key and central role in Monitoring, Evaluation And Learning [MEL] in the course of implementation of the National Policy and Action Plan on PCVE

CONCLUSION;

Whereas preventing and countering violent extremism [PCVE] requires a whole society approach, involving an all of government and all of society orientation;

And whereas this approach necessitates synergy and coordination between and among all stakeholders, state and non-state actors, national and international actors etc;

Understanding that Civil Society will play key roles in program design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation as well as in advocacy;

Nevertheless, Civil Society affirms its commitment towards holding government and every other actors and stakeholders accountable, promoting observance of human rights and international humanitarian law, and ensuring the protection of civilians and the rights of every citizen.

WLA. **ABOUT**

The WLA-Club de Madrid is a non-profit international organization and the world's largest, independent group of democratic political leaders, committed to addressing the challenges of good governance and effective leadership. The added value of the Club de Madrid is a membership of more than 100 former Presidents and Prime Ministers from over 65 countries, willing to share their diverse expertise and networks. We partner with governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society, scholars and the business world, building bridges between them and the current leaders and policy makers and encouraging dialogue to foster social and political change towards inclusive and peaceful societies

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