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PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM (P/CVE)

Tools for Gender in P/CVE

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ABOUT THIS COMPENDIUM

This toolkit aims to support practitioners to effectively incorporate gender considerations in preventing/countering violent extremism (P/CVE) programming. It brings together methods and tools adapted from a variety of resources and selected for their practicality. Practitioners can use these tools when designing and implementing P/CVE programs and when training others on effective gender integration in P/CVE.

This collection does not pretend to be a comprehensive treatment of gender in P/CVE programming. Therefore, practitioners should learn more about this topic by reviewing the bibliography included at the end of this compendium.

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GENDER

A complex system of roles, expressions, identities, performances, and more. It is a socially constructed identity related to women, men, boys, and girls, as well as non-binary gender identities. It is an acquired identity that is learned, changes over time, and varies widely within and across cultures. In contrast the term sex is used to indicate the biological difference between men and women.

GENDER ANALYSIS

Involves asking questions about the different experiences of an environment for men, women, boys, girls, and sexual and gender minorities (SGMs). These questions focus on experiences, expectations, and relationships.

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

Any act of physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, or institutional violence that is directed at an individual or group of individuals based on their sex or gender identity it generally involves unequal power relationships.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

A strategy or approach to achieve the goal of gender equality. Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities, policy development, research, advocacy, resource allocation, planning, etc.

INTERSECTIONALITY

A form of analysis or lens to understand the ways in which various forms of inequality often operates together and exacerbates each other. These can include gender, class, sexuality, immigrant status, race, etc.

INFLUENCE OF WOMEN IN PEACE AND SECURITY

It is important to integrate voices from women and girls, as well as men and boys, in P/CVE because they are equally impacted by violent extremism. They also play important roles in preventing and countering acts of violence through local institutions such as police officers and teachers or through informal family roles. P/CVE programs must also consider that women and girls may be actively engaged with violent extremist groups and consider how to reach these groups as well as their male counterparts in the organizations. This is why it is imperative to listen to all members of the community when developing and implementing P/CVE programs.



Evidence from the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 indicates that when women participate in peace processes, they are usually focused less on brokering for power and more on reconciliation, economic development, education, and transitional justice – all critical elements of a durable peace.

A photograph of a woman from behind, walking on a grassy hill. She is wearing a red wrap over a patterned dress and has a large, patterned headwrap. She is carrying a long wooden staff or spear over her shoulder.

20%

When women are included in the peace process, the probability of the peace agreement lasting at least 2 years increases by 20%.

35%

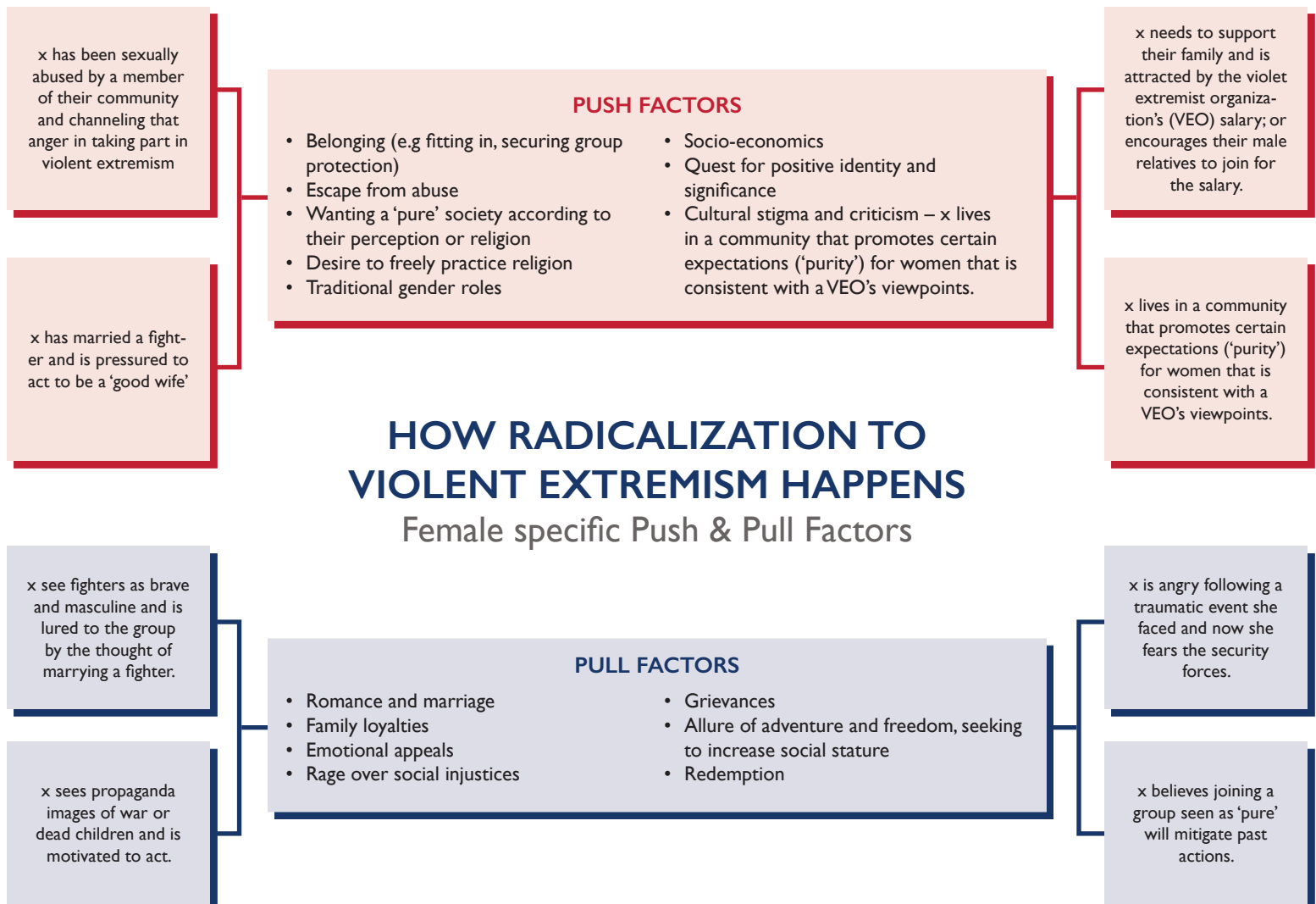
The chances of a peace agreement lasting at least 15 years increases by 35% if women are involved in the peace process.

IDENTIFYING EXTREMISM AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN P/CVE

This tool explores the various reasons why women join violent extremist groups which vary by community and context and may be different than the reasons why their male counterparts join. When considering women's role in participating and preventing CVE consider the following questions based on your context:

- What are some factors that drive individuals towards radicalization and extremism?
- Are these factors different for men than for women, or the same?
- Do women engage in violent extremism freely of their own accord or are they always coerced into it?
- Do women recruit other women?

The following points highlight some of the negatively perceived elements of an individual's situation that "push" individuals away from the situation at home and into the arms of an extremist group; as well as the positively perceived elements of extremist groups that "pull" individuals to the group.



PRACTICAL EXERCISE

MODELING VE MOTIVATIONS

MATERIALS:

- Flip chart paper (1 for each group)
- Writing utensils/markers.

TRAINING NOTES:

STEP 1

Break participants into smaller groups (2-8 people) and have each group develop a fictitious woman on the path to VE in their local community.. This woman can be at any point on the radicalization process, or already committing acts of violent extremism. She can also be either an active agent of extremism, radicalizing herself and making the decision to join a violent extremist group, or she can be a passive agent of extremism, perhaps following her husband or a male relative into a violent extremist group.

STEP 2

Participants should assign their fictitious woman characteristics, a personal background, and life events. Groups can draw the woman on their paper or simply write down notes. Give each group around 10 minutes to complete the composition of their woman.

STEP 3

Invite each group to present their fictional radicalized woman to the audience, each taking around 3 minutes.

STEP 4

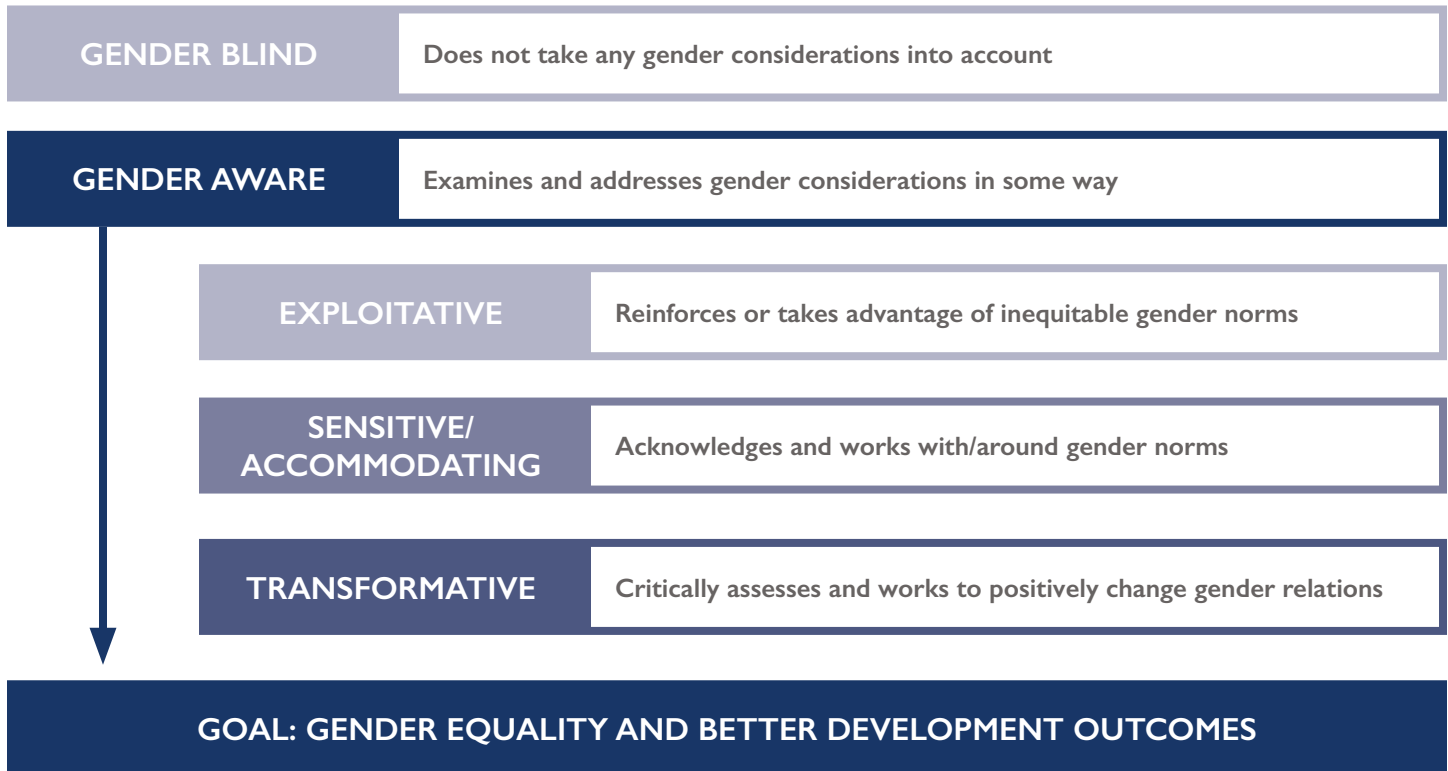
When the groups have presented, instruct participants to switch women on the path to VE with another group so that each group now holds a new fictional character.

STEP 5

Remembering the presentations, participants in each group should brainstorm how they might intervene with this woman in order to turn her away from her radicalized or violent extremist path, based on her specific characteristics and background. Give them about 10 minutes and afterwards have each group share their interventions to the audience (around 3 minutes) and open the floor for questions or comments about the suggestions. Finally invite participants to comment on what they noticed from the exercise

UNDERSTANDING GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN P/CVE

The goal of gender mainstreaming is to at minimally have the program be gender aware, and ultimately to achieve gender equality.



Source: The Gender Practitioners Collaborative. Minimum Standards for Mainstreaming Gender Equality

Answer yes (**Y**) or no (**N**) to the following questions regarding gender mainstreaming in your P/CVE program.

- Y** **N**
- ☐ ☐ Does the program have a strategic approach to achieve gender equality?
 - ☐ ☐ Are men and women's concerns and experiences integrated in the program design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the program?
 - ☐ ☐ Does the program consider specific gender dynamics and socio-cultural pressures that prescribe the roles of men and women, boys, and girls, of the community your program serves?
 - ☐ ☐ Does the gender strategy consider the intersectionality of gender to understand the experiences and concerns of women and men cutting across all political, economic, and social spheres?
 - ☐ ☐ Does the program take strategic action to transform unequal gender relations, contributing to changes in social norms, cultural values, power structures and the root causes of gender inequality and discrimination?

If the answer to any of these is no, consider adapting the gender strategy (or create one if there is no gender strategy) to transition to gender aware and transformative results towards gender equality.

CONCEPTS OF A GENDER-RESPONSIVE STRATEGY

In very general terms, a gender-responsive approach or strategy seeks to examine, challenge, and transform the underlying causes of gender inequality.

A GENDER-RESPONSIVE STRATEGY...

 DOES NOT	 DOES
 ...focus exclusively on women	 ...focus on inequalities and differences between, and among, men and women, and boys and girls. If you decide to work with women because of the discrimination they face, or the perceived advantages of doing so, initiatives should be based on a thorough analysis of gender roles, relationships, and power dynamics
 ...target women as a “vulnerable or minority group”	 ...recognize that both women and men are agents of change and active participants in their communities. Do not label women solely as victims; recognize and acknowledge their tremendous capacities for positive influence and the roles they play in their communities
 ...apply the same treatment for women and men in all situations regardless of context	 ...design interventions that consider inequalities and differences between women and men and structure resources so that programs recognize inequalities and attempt to rectify them
 ...attempt to achieve equal participation of men and women	 ...move beyond counting the numbers of participants to focus on the quality of participation and desired effects initiatives have on men and women and gender relations, recognizing that equal opportunities for women is only one aspect of gender equality
 ...assume that all women and all men share the same interests	 ...understand the difference among and between different groups of women and men based on criteria such as socio-economic status, ethnicity, religion, age, etc., moving beyond gender stereotypes (such as assuming that all mothers are more involved with their children than fathers, or that all women are passive actors in violent extremism versus active players, as many differences exist within gender groupings)
 ...identify existing roles and responsibilities for women and men	 ...encourage participation based on ability and interest, rather than existing socially determined gender roles
 ...ask women and men about topics related to the program objectives	 ...consider set of economic, social, political roles; rights; entitlements; responsibilities; and obligation for men and women

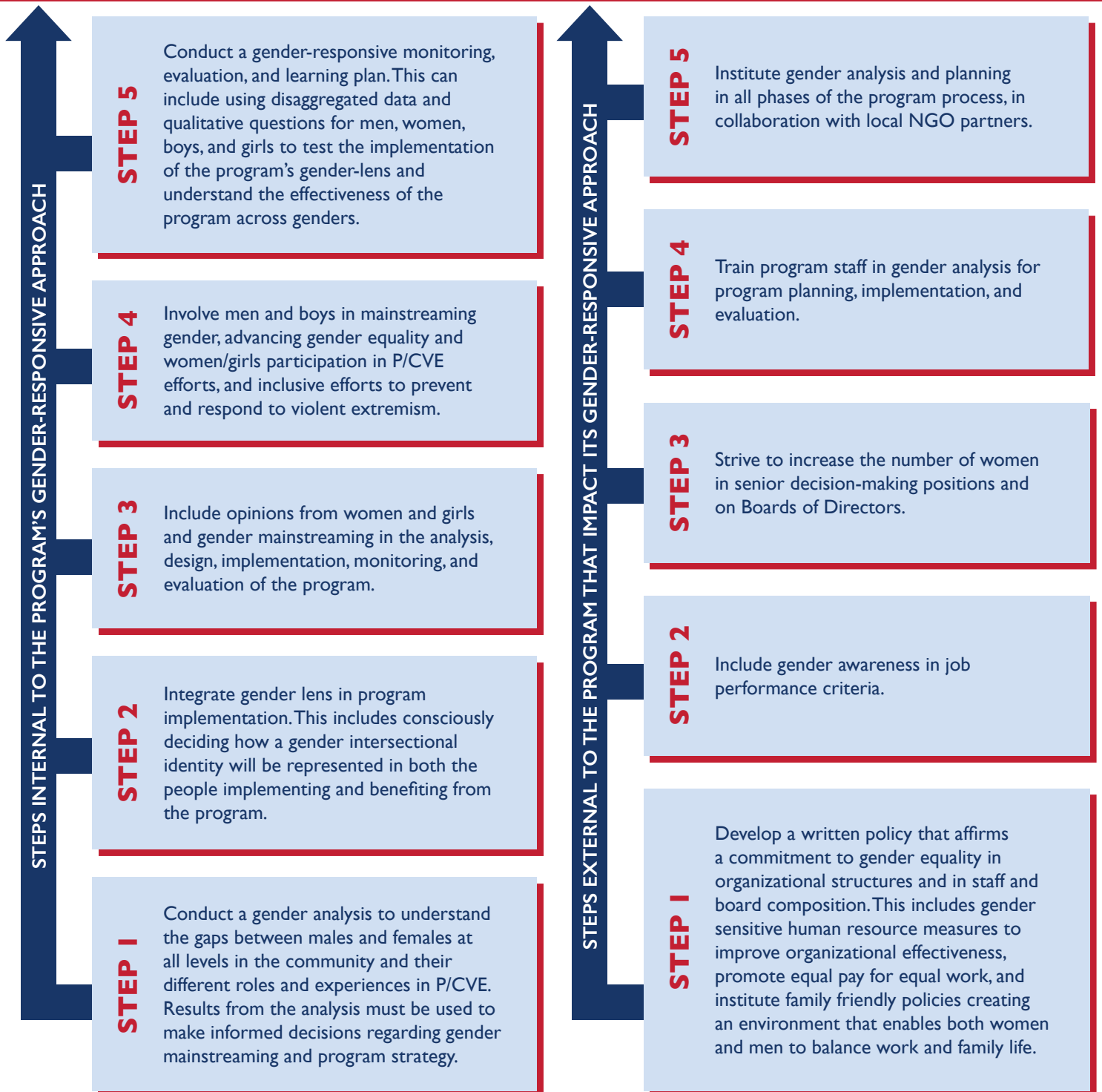
Adapted from: The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. (2019). *Understanding the Role of Gender in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization That Lead to Terrorism: Good Practices for Law Enforcement*.

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DESIGNING A GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH: COMMON INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STEPS

GOAL

Reaching the goal of a gender-responsive approach includes measures both internal and external to the program – taking inclusive steps for both the program and the organization.



AVOIDING GENDER STEREOTYPES IN PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION



Do include women and girls in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluations of programs and practices related to P/CVE.



Do identify ways to strengthen women's roles within their families.



Do not assume male individuals or male leadership of a mixed organization recognizes and expresses how P/CVE impacts their female counterparts.



Do consider women partners in institutional roles including teachers, security forces/law enforcement, religious leaders, judges, politicians, etc.



Do recognize and address the direct and indirect impacts of violent extremism and terrorism across genders and consider how this effects men and women, and boys and girls differently.



Do not assume only women should talk to women about P/CVE and gender equality.



Do include men and boys in advancing and promoting women and girls' participation in P/CVE and addressing the factors that create vulnerabilities for their radicalization.



Do work closely with civil society organizations that are already engaged in advancing women rights and gender equality.

OPPORTUNITIES AND OUTCOMES WHEN WOMEN ARE ENGAGED IN P/CVE

Women and men both have roles in P/CVE. Women's role in families and communities, as well as the likelihood that they will be the first to experience violence, means they play a role in detecting the signs of impending violence.

Women may recognize unusual patterns of behavior and activity, such as mobilization and stockpiling of weapons. For instance, in Kosovo, women were the first in their communities to voice concerns that men were amassing weapons and training for battle in 1998. These signs were reported well before violence broke out.

Approximately 6-8 weeks before the outbreak of widespread violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992, large numbers of women, particularly of Muslim origin, left the city of Prijedor. They described this as having been a measure for protecting their families from danger, because they saw the warning signs of impending violence.

In addition to the informal roles women play in P/CVE through their family and community connections and the institutional roles highlighted in the previous tool, there are online women networks focused on preventing violent extremism including:



[Women and Extremism WaE](#)
— an online network focused on women within and preventing violent extremism



[Women without Borders](#)
SAVE Network - the world's first female counter extremism platform



['Mothers for Life'](#) - a unique global network of mothers who have experienced violent jihadist radicalization in their own families.

IMPROVING MEN AND BOYS' INCLUSION IN P/CVE ACTIVITY PROGRAMS

Gender-responsive programing in P/CVE does not mean only considering and thinking about women's roles and gaps. Understanding the power dynamics and experiences of men and boys is also important and it is imperative that men and boys are included in work to bring gender equality in your community and P/CVE contexts.

A photograph of two young Black boys outdoors. The boy in the foreground is wearing a yellow shirt and pointing his right index finger towards the camera. The boy behind him is wearing a black jacket with green trim and is giving a thumbs up. Both are smiling. In the background, other people are partially visible but out of focus.

Efforts of men's programmes are effective because they provide a sense of belonging and a much-needed space for men to deconstruct their preconceptions of masculinity. They also offer an opportunity for men to evaluate their harmful behaviors without judgement.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

MALE-FOCUSED ACTIVITIES FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN P/CVE

MATERIALS:

- Flip chart paper (1-2 for each group)
- Writing utensils/markers
- Copies of the case studies printed out with the questions to review.

TRAINING NOTES:

- Break into an even number of groups with 2-8 people in each. Half of the groups will review and respond to Case Study Number 1 and half will review and respond to Case Study Number 2.
- Ask the groups to read their case study. Each group should be given 10 minutes to review and respond to the question related to the case study and their own P/CVE program context. Ask each group to share a summary of their case study, present their thoughts, and open up a conversation among the audience if they have questions or additional thoughts, 5-7 minutes per group.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

MALE-FOCUSED ACTIVITIES FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN P/CVE

INSTRUCTIONS:

Read the following case study and discuss the following questions in your group:

- Did the program planning or research questions surprise you and if so, why?
- What are the key expectations that a young man must meet to be considered “an adult male” in your society? Is there a gap between expectations and reality?
- What are the gendered messages used to recruit men into violent extremist groups in your community? Are these messages different from those for the recruitment of women?
- What are the key priorities of men in negotiations? How do these differ from those of women?

CASE STUDY #1

Tunisia’s democratic transition is often hailed as the only success from the 2011 Arab Spring revolutions, but the country is still dealing with vast unemployment, weakened institutions, and threats from violent extremist. The country must now work to prevent violent extremist groups from recruiting Tunisian youth. As unemployment spikes, younger generations are tending to adopt more conservative outlooks. Asking questions about traditional pathways to adulthood-or manhood-may help in understanding extremist groups’ recruitment tactics and factors motivating youth to join. For example, how does a boy become a man? Does obtaining employment or showing power over others signal adulthood? Where do young men look for income if jobs are not available? A potential intervention might explore alternative pathways to manhood shaped around nonviolence.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

MALE-FOCUSED ACTIVITIES FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN P/CVE

INSTRUCTIONS:

Read the following case study and discuss the following questions in your group:

- Did the program goals or activities surprise you and if so, why?
- To what extent are notions of masculinity based on the use of violence? In what ways?
- To what extent are men supportive of or resistant to women's leadership and gender equality in your community?
- What strategies may work to encourage men and boys in your community to fully support women's empowerment in conflict-affected settings?

CASE STUDY #2

The Young Men's Clubs Against Violence (YMCAV) organized by Promundo is a "gender-transformative group education project" aimed at reducing street violence by preventing 10- to 19-year-old boys from joining local street gangs – or helping them to leave. It is being conducted in Kinshasa DRC. In 2016 Promundo carried out research in Kinshasa to examine how to reduce violence-supportive norms and promote gender-equitable attitudes among young men, as well as how to effectively create environment, programs, and policies that prevent young men's involvement in violent groups. The resulting YMCAV project carries out group education for young men, challenging them to redefine what it means to be a man. It also creates supportive environments in schools and youth centers and works to expand program and policy support from other Congolese stakeholders.

ENGAGING SECURITY SECTOR IN A P/CVE PROGRAM

Engaging security sector in P/CVE and gender mainstreaming is twofold:

1. To reduce negative experiences in the community that may push men and women into violent extremism; and
2. Consider gender mainstreaming tools and lessons learned to give men and women a resource in the security sector to support preventing or escaping violent extremism.

Ensuring that security services are diverse, and representative of the local population helps maintain credibility. The inclusive composition of uniformed forces, including men and women from different ethnic groups, racial minority populations and religions, may help build trust between security services and communities. Unfortunately, women are often underrepresented in the public and security sectors, particularly in leadership positions. The involvement of women in these sectors allows their participation in key decision-making processes related to P/CVE and the responsibility for matters that concern the welfare of the communities.

5 TOP TIPS ON HOW TO BUILD AN INCLUSIVE AND GENDER-AWARE SECURITY FORCE

1

Develop and implement gender awareness training for security officers working on P/CVE in a community including gendered strategies used by VEOs to recruit men and women.

2

Train officers, leadership, and cadets on gender-sensitive P/CVE issues. Topics may include civic rights and gender equality; relevant rights of citizens under the law; gender-responsive prevention of radicalization and violent extremism and what to do if signs of either are recognized in families or communities; as well as sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

3

Have female officers available to talk to female witnesses, victims, and perpetrators. Uniformed female personnel in the front lines may be particularly more effective in P/CVE efforts and in collecting vital information about security threats in contexts where gender differences and cultural expectations restrict men from accessing certain groups.

4

Encourage community outreach of 'front line' officers and community patrols and ensure different genders and ethnicities are represented. If security personnel are trusted in communities and build relationships with them, they can be an important contributor to preventing violent extremism.

5

Integrate gender considerations in strategy and activities around P/CVE. Senior leaders can develop and support specific outreach programs that aim at establishing relations with women in minority communities; suggest setting up internal structures facilitating the integration of gender perspectives into P/CVE during institutional review; and allocate funds for recruitment, retention, and promotion of women officers.

DOS AND DON'TS TO CONSIDER FOR GENDER APPROACHES TO P/CVE



IF YOU WANT TO...	✗ DON'T...	✓ DO...
...avoid problematic gender stereotypes	✗ ...assume that women are only victims of violent extremism or the solution to the fight against it	✓ ...include men and see them as partners and supporters in the fight against radicalization and extremism
...practice diversity and inclusion	✗ ...stigmatize a single societal group (ethnic, religions, gender), which is ethically wrong and can prove to be counter-productive in P/CVE process	✓ ...include, listen, and respond to individuals and organizations from a variety of different backgrounds and intersections, including men, women, boys, and girls of different ethnicity, religion, socio-economic background, etc.
...provide opportunity for learning and exchange	✗ ...design approaches without understanding and applying local gender context	✓ ...create safe space for learning and dialogue, in which women, men, boys, and girls can tryout democratic interaction ...train men and women on gender roles of women in violent extremism and P/CVE process
...let the grassroots lead	✗ ... make any assumptions about the situation in particular context for men and women, boys, and girls without having the required knowledge ... simply 'include' or 'engage' the grassroots individuals and groups of different genders – let them lead	✓ ... acknowledge the grassroots expert knowledge of individuals and groups of different genders in the situation on the ground

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

P/CVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND MEASUREMENT

MATERIALS

- Flip chart paper (1-2 sheets per group)
- markers

TRAINING NOTES:

- Form small groups (2-8) people and give them writing materials.
- Instruct groups to identify a radicalization or violent extremism issue in their community that they would like to work on or are already working on. Let them know they have about 10 minutes to construct a basic context analysis plan stating how they would gather data and how they might be able to target that issue through a program in their community. Ask them to also detail:
 1. How they might engage or are already engaging women in their P/CVE program on that issue.
 2. How they might target or are already targeting women as perpetrators, victims, or supporters in their P/CVE program on that issue.
 3. How they might target or are already targeting women as peacebuilders, mentors, or supporters in their P/CVE program on that issue.
 4. How they might or are already engaging men and boys on promoting gender equality in their P/CVE program on that issue or in their community.
 5. Identify creative ways to measure effectiveness of these actions.
- Once they are done constructing their concepts, have each group present to all the participants (assume 2-4 minutes for each presentation). After each presentation, open up a dialogue with the audience to ask questions or provide comments and suggestions (about 3-5 minutes after each presentation).

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