

# **Youth Inclusive Mechanisms for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the IGAD Region**

## **Learning Alliance (LEA) Workshop Report August 16 - 18, 2019 Kampala Uganda**

Organisation for Social Science Research  
in Eastern and Southern Africa  
OSSREA



## Introduction

As outlined in our project proposal one of the interventions in this project is to conduct a learning alliance (LEA) with the aim of youth being given the space and voice to express themselves and learn from one another. We expect youth to speak out and share their views, opinions and experiences about preventing and countering violent extremism. The LEA is planned to be a platform for sharing of experiences between and among the youth in the three districts where the research took place. We did not depart much from the training manual but we focused the LEA on how participants, most of them are youth, can be able to effectively participate in their respective local context to be change agents towards the issues concerning PCVE.

The participants of the Uganda Learning Alliance came from the three districts where the research took place. The three districts were Gulu, Mayuge and Kampala. Participants represented their respective communities at different capacity and disciplines. Some of them are youth leaders, NGO leaders, Cultural institution leaders, Journalists who work on youth issues, Youth activists, government youth program leaders. Some of the participants attended the Trainer of Trainers conducted in their respective districts. The participants were selected in partnership with the focal person of the project in Uganda. We have based the selection based on a criteria which addresses gender balance, direct interaction with PCVE issues in their respective districts, potential as a change agent in the future etc.. The LEA created a platform where participants from the three districts have an opportunity to interact with one another and learn from each other. Participants were so happy that we chose this model where learning happens through peer-to-peer interaction and also an opportunity to understand the context of PCVE from others.



The learning alliance was also planned to be a platform where participants from Uganda can learn from fellow participants from Kenya and vice versa. The idea of participants from three counties in Kenya and three districts in Uganda interacting to exchange information and learn from one another on various issues of youth-inclusive mechanisms for preventing and countering violent extremism was so innovative participants are excited about it. We used WhatsApp as a platform for the LEA where by participants from

the two countries were added to the WhatsApp based OSSREA PCVE LEA Group. Currently the online discussion is running where by we post discussion points every fifteen days and participants share their experience and knowledge on the same and learn from one another. We are planning to run the group for three months and at the end of it depending on the quality of discussions, we shall come up with a synthesis report of the discussions.

## **Organisation of the LEA**

The Learning Alliance workshop in Kampala were organized based on the research findings and the manual. We have also prepared a guideline on how participants amplify the youth voices in preventing and countering violent extremism. You will find it as an annex in this report. Brief presentations on various issues concerning youth engagement in preventing and countering violent extremism were made. Since participants came from various districts of Uganda, namely Gulu, Mayuge and Kampala and have practical experience in dealing with the same issues, we decided to allocate most of the time for participants to share their experience from their local context among each other. The role of the facilitators was to entice the discussions and to make the flow of the sharing and learning process smooth and participatory.

In the middle of consecutive sessions we allowed participants to go into groups in their respective districts and do group work on various points raised in the manual. After the group discussions, the team leaders from each groups presents what the participants deliberate upon and the rest of the participants gives feedback to the group. These kinds of approach helped us to make the participants of the workshop to not only take ownership of what has been discussed in the different modules of the training manual but also to enable them to actively participate in the learning process.

## **Topics Covered**

The facilitators of the learning alliance used the manual and the LEA guide to conduct the workshop. The following topics were covered:

1. Introduction about the Manual and the Learning Alliance: In this session, we took the participants through the advocacy process for influencing policy and practice and on how to use the training manual and learning alliance guide.
2. Understanding violent extremism: In this session of the workshop the participants were taken through an overview of key definitions that would help them in critically understanding violent extremism. Questions like a) What do we mean by violent extremism? b) How is violent extremism linked to other terms like ideology, radicalization, countering violent extremism and preventing violent extremism? c) What is the AU (OAU) understanding of Terrorism acts and violent extremism? d) What are the drivers of violent extremism in the IGAD region? were discussed. Being clear on these points will help the participants to concentrate on the issues of violent extremism only.
3. Understanding the community (Community Shield): In this session we took the participants through an onion ring presentation of the community that they operate in or live in. This exercise helped participants to understand their community through various lenses. Understanding the community through religion, age group, poverty level, resources, ethnicity, proximity etc... helps participants in analyzing any advocacy effort they might intend to pursue.
4. Youth-Led Interventions to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism – In this session the participants were taken through successful youth-led interventions in addressing violent extremism. Questions like (a) what are the key values that youth hold with regard to violent

extremism? (b) In what ways can youth determine and engage in P/VE activities in their community? (c) What resources and opportunities exist to help youth in P/CVE work; guided the discussions. To explore the questions the facilitator took them through a case study of a youth-led intervention from the Coast of Kenya called Kumekucha.

5. Social media strategy – In this session the participants of the learning alliance were taken through how to use social media for advocacy purposes. From coming up with a well thought out vision statement and creating SMART objectives, to various strategy guides that will help them to strengthen their strategy. Guidelines such as how to listen to their surrounding environment on matters of their concern, how to communicate, how to build an audience, how to manage social media accounts, how to generate content and make it engaging, how to develop a social media policy, and how to measure the effectiveness of their social media strategy and campaign were covered. At the end of the presentation, the participants were grouped into four and were told to select or volunteer one organization from the group and help that organization to come up with a draft social media strategy.
6. Soft Skills (Life Skills) – In this session of the workshop the participants of LEA workshop were taken through the personal attributes that enable the youth to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people. What are some of the cluster of personal qualities, habits, attitudes and social graces that someone needs to have to stay away from violent extremism. Discussion on leadership, decision making, team work, communication, negotiation, conflict management, influencing and time management were raised and discussed.
7. Panel discussions: This session gave the youth to express their views on issues of violent extremism in their districts and country. The participants include a youth leader from a CSO representing Uganda in the IGAD PCVE Center, a youth activist, a youth representing cultural leaders, a youth leader from a government youth program, a youth who hosts an FM radio on



youth issues. The discussions were on youth engagement, policies, practices in Uganda. What the views of the youth in this regard is. What needs to be done to improve those policies and practices. They also reflected on what they are doing to sensitize the youth and the community on issues of violent extremism. The panellists responded what they are doing in their respective capacities. The panellist from the media said she is currently running a radio program to raise the awareness of the community on issues of violence. The representative from government raised

the youth center being established at Mayuge, the panelist from the CSO said her organisation is doing a lot of activities towards the prevention of violent extremism. She talked about her involvement in the IGAD PCVE center of excellence as a focal person for CSOs in Uganda. The youth activist told the participants his experience on an issue involving a young girl in Gulu and how he used social media to bring the issue into the attention of officials and the public and how that helped her to come out of her situation. The discussions were lively and the rest of the participants also contributed to the discussion.

## Programme Agenda

Time	Activity	Responsibility	Expected Outputs/Outcomes
<b>DAY ONE</b>			
8:30 – 9:00	Arrival and Registration	Ms. Lina Zedriga and Mr. Alemu Tesfaye	Registration forms completed
9:00 – 9:10	Welcome remarks	Dr. Truphena Mukuna, Mrs. Lina Zedriga	Brief remark about OSSREA and the Research Project
9:10 – 9:20	Participant introduction	All participants	Participants will have an opportunity to know each other
9:20 – 9:40	Overview of the Learning Alliance Programme Agenda	Alemu Tesfaye	Participants will have an overview of the Learning Alliance Workshop agenda.
9:40 – 10:00	Introduction about the Manual and its objectives	Mrs. Lina Zedriga	Participants will be informed about the objectives, how it is organized
<b>10:00 – 10:30</b>	<b>Health Break and Group Photo</b>	<b>All Participants</b>	<b>Networking opportunities</b>
10:30 – 10:45	Short Videos on the Research Journey	Alemu Tesfaye	Participants will be informed about the research journey
10:45 – 11:00	Short Videos on Evolution of Extremism	Alemu Tesfaye	Participants will have an opportunity to understand more about the evolution of extremism
11:00 – 11:30	Presentation: Understanding Violent Extremism	Dr. Truphena Mukuna	Participants will have an overview of key definitions that would help them in critically understanding violent extremism
11:30 – 1:00	<b>ACTIVITY I:</b> Brainstorm in-pairs on what violent extremism means in their contexts and local languages	All Participants	Participants will be able to define Violent Extremism and how it is linked to other terms like ideology, radicalization, CVE, PVE; What are some of the groups that they know?

Time	Activity	Responsibility	Expected Outputs/Outcomes
	<b>ACTIVITY II:</b> Brainstorm on the drivers of VE at the various levels		Discuss the drivers of violent extremism at the various levels (Individual, Family, School, Community, National);
<b>1:00 – 2:00</b>	<b>Lunch and Health Break</b>	<b>All Participants</b>	<b>Networking opportunities and more informal discussions about their Learning Experience</b>
2:00-2:30	Understanding the community – Lived experience by Mrs. Lina Zedriga	Mrs. Lina Zedriga	Participants will be informed about the role of education as an intervention in preventing violent extremism
2:30 – 2:35	Short video on the role of education in preventing violent extremism	Alemu Tesfaye	Participants will be notified about education as an intervention tool in preventing and countering violent extremism
2:35 – 3:00	Presentation: Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism: Global, Regional and National Interventions	All Participants	Participants will be informed about the global, regional and national interventions on VE
<b>3:00-3:30</b>	<b>Health Break</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Networking opportunities and more informal discussions about their Learning Experience</b>
3:30-4:00	<b>ACTIVITY III:</b> In groups of five participants discuss 1) Promising practices, programmatic models and interventions 2) How we can mitigate the drivers identified in the	All Participants	Participants will have an opportunity to discuss their experience of P/CVE interventions at various levels  Participants will have the opportunity to share their views on how to mitigate these drivers



Time	Activity	Responsibility	Expected Outputs/Outcomes
	previous session at the various levels		
4:00-4:30	Group Presentation - Reflection of the experiences from the four groups	Group Leads	Participants will have an opportunity to share their experience of P/CVE Interventions in their country and district
4:30 – 5:00	Wrap-up of the day		Participants will be informed about logistical matters
<b>DAY TWO</b>			
9:00 – 9:20	Recap of Day One	Mrs. Lina Zedriga and All Participants	Participants will have an opportunity to re-digest what they learnt the previous day
9:20 – 10:00	Presentation: Youth-Led Interventions to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism	Dr. Truphena	Participants will have an opportunity to understand (a) what are the key values that youth hold with regard to violent extremism? (b) In what ways can youth determine and engage in P/CVE activities in their community? (c) What resources and opportunities exist to help youth in P/CVE work?
<b>10:00 – 10:30</b>	<b>Health Break</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Networking opportunities and more informal discussions about their Learning Experience</b>
10:30 – 10:40	Short videos on Youth Engagement and Interventions	Alemu Tesfaye	Participants will have an opportunity to be informed about youth-led interventions in P/CVE matters
10:40 – 11:00	Q&A	All Participants	Participants will have an opportunity to ask/respond to questions and understand more about Youth-led interventions to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism
<b>10:30 – 11:00</b>	<b>Health Break</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Networking opportunities and more informal discussions about their Learning Experience</b>
11:00 – 12:00	<b>ACTIVITY IV:</b> Groups of five	All Participants	Participants will have an opportunity to discuss their experience of youth-led

Time	Activity	Responsibility	Expected Outputs/Outcomes
	people will read the Kumekucha case study in the manual and reflect on question a)  <b>ACTIVITY V:</b> Group work on opportunities and challenges for youth-led initiatives		interventions in P/CVE matters at various levels  Participants will have the opportunity to express their views on youth-led initiatives in their local context
12:00 – 1:00	Group Presentations - Reflection of the experiences from the four groups	Group Leads	Participants will have an opportunity to share their experience of Youth-Led P/CVE Interventions in their country and district
<b>1:00 – 2:00</b>	<b>Health Break</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Networking opportunities and more informal discussions about their Learning Experience</b>
2:00 – 2:30	Presentation: Digital Skills and Counter Narration/Positive messaging campaign	Alemu Tesfaye	Participants will have an opportunity to understand What digital skills are required to engage with the youth and will also be informed about the in-and-outs of counter narration and how to develop a campaign
2:30 – 3:00	<b>ACTIVITY VI:</b> Group discussion on 1) the impact of the internet in promoting violence 2) How can digital skills be promoted towards protecting the participants from engagement in violent activities?	All Participants	Participants will have an opportunity to discuss their experience on the internet
<b>3:00-3:30</b>	<b>Health Brake</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Networking opportunities and more informal discussions about their Learning Experience</b>



Time	Activity	Responsibility	Expected Outputs/Outcomes
3:30-4:30	<b>ACTIVITY VII:</b> Come up with a made-up scenario that contextualize and illustrate violent extremism and develop a counter narration (positive messaging) campaign based on the scenario	All Participants	Participants will have an opportunity to understand what counter narrative campaign entails
4:30-5:00	Reflection of the experiences from the four groups in any form of presentation	All participants	Participants will have an opportunity to share their experience of Counter Narration in their country and district
<b>DAY THREE</b>			
9:00 – 9:20	Recap of Day One	Mrs. Lina Zedriga and All Participants	Participants will have an opportunity to re-digest what they learnt the previous day
9:20 – 10:00	Presentation: Soft Skills (Life Skills for Preventing and Managing Violent Extremism	Dr. Truphena	Participants will have an opportunity to be informed about how soft skills (life skills) help in P/CVE matters
<b>10:00-10:30</b>	<b>Health Brake</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Networking opportunities and more informal discussions about their Learning Experience</b>
10:30 – 11:00	<b>ACTIVITY VIII:</b> Individual exercise to understand life skills and their categorization	All Participants	Participants will have an opportunity to share their experience and understand soft skills and its categorization
11:00-12:00	<b>ACTIVITY IX:</b> Group work – on benefits of life skills to reduce their vulnerability from	All Participants	Participants will have an opportunity to share their experience on the benefits of life skills

Time	Activity	Responsibility	Expected Outputs/Outcomes
	radicalization and violent extremism		
12:00-12:30	Group Presentation - Reflection of the experiences from the four groups	Group Leads	Participants will have an opportunity to share their experience of policy makers engagement with the youth on P/CVE matters
12:30 – 1:00	Panel discussion: The role of the youth, community, schools, CSOs, government in reducing radicalization and violent extremism	Selected youth participants	Youth participants will have the opportunity to express their views on the roles of various actors in reducing radicalization and violent extremism in their community.
<b>1:00 – 2:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>All</b>	

## List of Participants

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## ANNEX

### **Amplifying the Youth Voices in PCVE**

#### The Learning alliance-LEA

- i. What is the importance of this LEA? What is the thinking behind it?
- ii. What is it and what do we hope to achieve?
- iii. What approach shall we use to achieve our objective?
- iv. What output do we want from this LEA? How do we intend to present it?

## Introduction

In Africa today, youth form 75% of the population and this will be the case for the next few decades to come. The youth and children's population is 580 million which is 47% of the continents population. By 2055, this population will reach 1 billion. Providing youth with a voice and space to express their views through participatory engagement is critical. Inequalities that marginalize youth and exclude them in matters that concern them is a denial of human rights. Youth therefore need to be recognised and empowered. They need to feel that they belong, are trusted, they can,

their views are valid and important, they are understood, the dense communities have come in them, they are not lesser mortals their time is now etc. They need reassurance and correction with love. They desire to be guided as they chart their paths.

Investment in young people today is not a choice but a must. Child-youth policies need to be put in place by national governments to achieve the SDGs and leave no-one behind. This can only happen if, we use an integrated approach to face the challenges that bedevil Africa and the globe today. Our project is hinged on SDGs 16(Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), 1(Eradication of Poverty), 4(Quality Education),5(Gender Equality),8(Decent Work and Economic Growth) and 17(Partnerships for the Goals). It is also focused on the UN strategy2016 for Peace and Security – Human rights approach to peace and security that has seen a number of declarations by the UN security council such as;

- United Nations Security Council Resolution 1624 (2005) which was concerned with preventing the incitement of terrorist acts through both its prevention and criminalization under national law (para. 1), as well as through effective international cooperation on all aspects of counter-terrorism, especially the denial of safe havens to terrorists engaged in such incitement (paras. 1 and 2). In addition, the Security Council was concerned with strengthening international efforts to address rising levels of intolerance - which, together with extremism, are underlying motivators of the incitement of terrorist acts - through such efforts as increased dialogue and understanding among civilizations (Para. 3).
- Resolution 1624 (2005):VE Action Plan in 2016, the resolution stressed the importance of developing counter-narratives to violent extremism, especially in relation to non-violent means of conflict prevention and resolution. (Para. 19). As such, this resolution builds on and further develops key themes and issues identified in Resolution 1624 (2005).
- The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism ([A/RES/70/291](#))
- In its resolution 2178 (2014), on stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), the Council underscores that CVE is an “essential element” in addressing the threat to international peace and security posed by FTFs. The Council encourages Member States to engage with relevant local communities and non-governmental actors in developing strategies to counter the violent extremist narrative that can incite terrorist acts. States are also called upon to address the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism, including by empowering youth, families, women, religious, cultural and education leaders, and all other concerned groups of civil society, and promoting social inclusion and cohesion.
- UN Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015), which calls for the greater integration by States of their agendas on women, peace and security, including on counter-terrorism. ensure adequate representation of women in the security sector, around the table when policy and programming is being defined, as well as in operational law enforcement roles. It is also necessary, however, to ensure that both men and women in law enforcement are

aware of the different experiences and challenges VERLT presents to women and men, as well as girls and boys. This includes how different people are targeted for recruitment, how they work to prevent VERLT, and how they may differently experience victimization by violent extremist groups. It also includes a deeper knowledge of the gender stereotypes exploited by violent extremists, and why it is important that communities and law enforcement work together to debunk such stereotypes. This can promote positive role models and narratives that serve to strengthen tolerance and prevent VE.

- United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security (2015) identifies clear links between youth, education, peace and security and underscores the role of education in violence prevention and peacebuilding.
- United Nations Security Council resolution 72/246. The importance of increased interfaith and intercultural tolerance and understanding, are also reflected within the content of other resolutions such as the General Assembly's annual resolutions on measures to eliminate international terrorism (most recently, resolution 72/123), as well as resolutions on themes such as the effects of terrorism on the enjoyment of human rights (e.g., resolution 72/246).

- **Women, peace and security resolutions**

- Resolution 1325 (2000) [S/RES/1325 (2000)] – Affirms the importance of the participation of women and the inclusion of gender perspectives in peace negotiations, humanitarian planning, peacekeeping operations, and post-conflict peacebuilding and governance.
- Resolution 1820 (2008) [S/RES/1820(2008)] – Recognizes sexual violence as a tactic of war and a matter of international peace and security that necessitates a security response.
- Resolution 1888 (2009) [S/RES/1888(2009)] – Strengthens efforts to end sexual violence in conflict by establishing a Special Representative of the Secretary-General and team of experts on rule of law and sexual violence in conflict.
- Resolution 1889 (2009) [S/RES/1889(2009)] – Establishes indicators for the monitoring of resolution 1325 and requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on women's participation and inclusion in peacebuilding.
- Resolution 1960 (2010) [S/RES/1960(2010)] – Establishes a monitoring and reporting mechanism on sexual violence in conflict.
- Resolution 2106 (2013) [S/RES/2106(2013)] – Stresses accountability for perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict, as well as women's political and economic empowerment.
- Resolution 2122 (2013) [S/RES/2122(2013)] – Positions gender equality and women's empowerment as critical to international peace and security, recognizes the differential impact of all violations in conflict on women and girls, and calls for consistent application of WPS across the Security Council's work.
- Resolution 2242 (2015) [S/RES/2242(2015)] – Establishes the Informal Experts Group (IEG); addresses persistent obstacles in implementing the WPS agenda, including financing and institutional reforms; focuses on greater integration of the agendas on WPS and counter-

terrorism and countering violent extremism; and calls for improved Security Council working methods on women, peace, and security.

- [Resolution 2467 \(2019\)](#) [S/RES/2467(2019)] – Positions conflict-related sexual violence as firmly rooted in the broader women, peace and security agenda; stresses justice and accountability efforts; calls for support and protection to women’s civil society organizations; and calls for attention to the issues of children born of rape.

Building upon commitment to the women, peace and security agenda, the Security Council has further considered women, peace and security as a cross-cutting issue in its work and adopted thematic and country-specific resolutions relevant to the agenda.

African Agenda 2030 underscores the importance of peace and security and women and youth being empowered in a participatory manner.

National governments have followed suit, and developed National Action Plans for youth. These include youth strategies, policies and programmes. They have also developed national counter terrorism centres, strategies for county governments, youth assemblies, inter-denominational, dialogue platforms, peace, education current.

### **Overview of the project**

However, youth radicalization and violent extremism still persists.

[\(Give an overview/background of the project-Youth Inclusive Mechanisms in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the IGAD Region. This includes the objectives, main research question, statement of the problem, methodology, Theory of Change and pathways to achieve it, major findings, the social innovation that we introduced \(TOT and LEA\)\)](#)

The bottom –up, top-down approach that is rooted in community-based participatory Appraisal Research Approach that we employed in our action research is yet to take root. Localizing P/CVE is at a nascent stage. This project by OSSREA on Youth-Inclusive Mechanisms in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the IGAD Region is a good practice that should be scaled up by the national governments. It is a comparative research study that is context-specific, gender-responsive, multi layered and multi-stakeholder. Our grassroots approach while considering individual household community and national dimensions to PCVE and remaining cognisant of the global and regional perspectives of PCVE is admirable and should be scale up. Local communities, individuals, leaders, households have understood VE at their level in different contexts and the relationship it has with the globe and region. They can relate their experiences compared with others in their own counties and across countries or regions. The participatory multi-stakeholder engagement from the beginning to the end of the project has changed mind-sets of different categories of people towards working together, research and co-production of knowledge for policy makers decision-making. The project stakeholders understood their roles from the beginning of the project.



This project has created solidified partnerships that are sustainable because the community and government have embraced it. Each community and local government has champions who are dedicated to ensure that youth in communities move from vulnerability to building resilience for PCVE. This is a brighter future for our youth and the communities in which they live. In this LEA therefore, we hope to give the knowledge and skills for advocating for that positive change that you truly desire. You as the youth of this continent and country who are peace ambassadors and want to have impact with your work, this LEA is what you need. We hope to equip you with knowledge and skills on how to inspire, fellow youth to PCVE. You will not only be change agents but the change itself.

### **The Rationale**

This LEA is youth-led with the aim of youth being given the space and voice to express themselves and cause the change or be change agents. We expect youth to speak out and share their views, opinions and experiences about preventing and countering violent extremism. Respect for one another's opinions must be observed. Everyone has a right not to share or share their views. The facilitators will stimulate conversations with youth and engage them to participate in matters that concern them. It is "Nothing about the youth without the youth". It is all about their voices being heard"

Facilitators will employ different methods to hold these conversations. This LEA should be highly interactive and participatory. This will be done through,

- On-line and offline mechanisms
- Off-line – story telling,
- Radio call- in shows
- TV programmes
- Road side shows
- Skits/drama
- Communicating messages through bill boards
- Comics and Cartoons
- Writing articles in Newspapers

- Online – Blogging

- Talk about lived experiences with a passion for change eg. Peace ambassadors Boresha-base, sports IGAs.
- Plan your activities on how to engage youth and members on the communities in which they live with the aim of building resilience to radicalization and VE.
- Promote trust, social cohesion, equality, human dignity, tolerance cultural, diversity, mutual respect, interconnectedness, belonging and loyalty. respect, interconnectedness, belonging and loyalty, respect, interconnectedness, belonging and loyalty.

## Definitions

- Youth participation** – Refers to how young people can be involved in processes, institutions and decisions that affect their lives. They should participate in all social, political and economic lives.
- Active youth participation** – refers to engagement or readiness to engaged eg. creation of awareness participation in research with a goal of changing the behaviour of others.
- Passive youth participation** - Allowing whether happens to happen without controlling the situation. eg. Listening to someone at an event with an intension of getting on evolved in the issue to change the lives of others. See [www.voices of youth.org/youthadv.org](http://www.voicesofyouth.org/youthadv.org)
- Advocacy** – Doing something to support, recommend or implement actions linked to an idea or cause that you care about. It is about making voices to be heard to defend the vulnerable in the society. It is the use of the collective voice to defend and protect rights or to support different initiatives or causes. Advocacy often brings changes, in policies, programmes, actions behaviours institutions and investments. When advocating for an issue you hold those in charge accountable to ensure that your rights are protected and upheld. It is not asking for favours but your rights.

Advocacy can be both on large scale and small-scale. It can be a movement and also collective bargaining for change. It can be doing research and sharing findings with the large audience to promote change. eg. OSSREA and partners research is advocating for an all-government and all-community approach to PCVE on one hand and use of soft power approach to build resilience to the crisis that communities are faced with. OSSREA is doing its advocacy in various ways eg. Sharing the information on various social media platforms, our website, newsletters, brochures, journal articles, blogs, research reports and face to face dialogue with different stakeholders. We have developed an evidence based training manual on youth-led digital and soft skills in PCVE sharing experiences we got in the field etc.

Advocacy can also be about mass action – changing laws and organizing demonstrations or values to support a cause. Civil society organizations use academic research or do own research to provide data and evidence for advocacy against ills in the society.

- v. **Policy** - set of principles, ideas or plans that guide decisions to achieve a certain outcome. They shape the way we do things. They determine how we behave and how we experience our everyday lives. They provide guidelines on how to make decisions, (See Kenyan research report – global, regional and national policies). In PCVE all national governments have domesticated international protocols and declarations into national action plans, strategies, programmes and policies. These are guiding the direction of PCVE. Youth peace ambassadors need to understand these policies so as to identify gaps in them that breed tolerance, lack of trust, lack of belongingness, lack of connectedness, marginalized exclusion, discriminations, inequality and breed communities that are not cohesive.

Youth peace ambassadors should strive to use this knowledge and data to bring change – change mind – sets, make others aware of your findings and seek audience with local leaders and policy makers to dialogue. Influence fellow youth to form a collective voice for advocating for upholding of the rule of law and human rights.

## Drivers of Violent Extremism and how to reverse them

### Group work

- i. What conflicts exist in your households, communities and the country, region and globally that affect youth?
- ii. How do you solve them?
- iii. How do you feel after solving them?
- iv. How do you protect yourself from these conflicts?
- v. What drives youth into radicalization and violent extremism?
- vi. What opportunities and challenges exist in the community to prevent and counter violent extremism?
- vii. How can youth be game changers and solve this problem? –explain situations where we can have a win-win solution to resolving conflict.
- viii. What are the tell-tale signs of radicalization?
- ix. How can you help a friend who is radicalized to change his/her ways?

#### *Early signs of radicalization into violent extremism*

1. Sudden break with the family and long-standing friendships.
2. Sudden drop-out of school and conflicts with the school.
3. Change in behaviour relating to food, clothing, language, finances.
4. Changes in attitudes and behaviour towards others
5. Antisocial comments,
6. Rejection of authority,

7. *Refusal to interact socially,*
8. *Signs of withdrawal and isolation.*
9. *Regular viewing of internet sites and participation in social media networks that condone radical or extremist views.*
10. *Reference to apocalyptic and conspiracy theories.*

Source : <http://www.stop-djihadisme.gouv.fr/>

Start with yourself – who are you? why are you interested in bringing the change? What methods will you use? How will you make a difference? What are your short term and long term goals? How much do you know about the particular issue? What areas need improvement? (Refer back to soft skills) consider leadership, teamwork, negotiation, collaboration, problem-solving, critical thinking, communication stress management etc.

## Youth Roles in Advocacy

In advocacy process four main roles are key – research, speaking, writing and implementing. Identify your niche.

- Researcher – Investigates, finds out why things are a certain way; how they came to be that way, and how they can change.
- Speaker – shares information inspires others to take action in different ways.
- Writer Good writing connects ideas, concepts, realities and helps to tell a story that people can connect to.
- Implementer: - Likes to get things done. Gets involved in action, actualizing ideas.

Youth ambassadors need to know that teamwork, action and interpersonal relationships are critical in advocacy. Everyone has their place. The questions we have asked above on self-identity will help them to know which roles they can carry out best. One can have 3/4, 2/4, 1/4 and 4/4. Valuing everyone as an equal partner of the team but with a special set of skills and abilities that play a role in the process matters a lot. Here soft skills of the 21st go hand in hand with the norms, values and traditions of our communities. As the combination of the two brings about social harmony and social cohesion- a key pillar in advocacy and in building resilience communities.

A quick reminder of these soft skills are:

- Effective communication
- Self esteem
- Self-awareness and identity
- Negotiation skills
- Decision making

- Interpersonal relationship
- Peaceful conflict resolution
- Critical/Creative thinking
- Problem solving and stress management
- Leadership
- Assertiveness
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Empathy
- Peer-pressure resistance

**Q 1. On the post cards given to you, choose any two of the soft skills and state how they can help you stay away from radicalization and violent extremism.**

- Self-understanding and acceptance If a person understands and accepts themselves, they are less likely to give in to peer pressure or to people who seem to offer them acceptance, a feeling of belonging and importance. This can reduce their vulnerability to Extreme violence and other forms of risk taking behaviour.
- Assertiveness Ability to say ‘NO’, When someone is forcing you to do things you know are wrong, such as joining gangs or illegal groups. When saying ‘No’ we must respect our rights and those of other people. Listen and express confidently and assertively.
- Decision Making, critical thinking and creative thinking helps us assess our exposure to risks. When a young person is able to weigh different options and evaluate related consequences creatively, get out of danger and seek help. This gives us the ability to identify different options to the challenge we face and make a healthy choice. Every choice has a consequence. It is important for us to evaluate consequences as well. We need to ask ourselves whether the choice is legal socially, acceptable, against one’s values, etc.

## **The Advocacy Process**

An advocacy process is iterative (back and forth). It includes fact-finding, planning, engaging with policy, building momentum and making individual lifestyle choices. You must gather knowledge before making a plan. The more you engage with policy, the more you may identify activities to include in your plan or issues to gather more connection on. As peace-ambassadors in PCVE, be passionate about your communities, nation, region, Africa and the globe. Always remember that you are not only a change agent but the change itself.

### **1. Research – Gathering data for evidence.**

Radicalization and violent extremism have destabilized peace in our communications households and at individual level. This destroys all gains of development. Insecure people cannot concentrate on development issues. In our study, we found out that drivers of violent extremism are varied and keep changing. They are also inter connected like a spider web and shift like an amoeba. We gathered evidence on this subject, the interventions that the government of Kenya and Uganda have put in place, policy environment in which the youth live, what has worked, what has not

worked and why? We also found out that there are other emerging issues in PCVE like home-grown terrorism in Kenya up-surge of women in radicalization and violent extremism, children involvement in VE, parental neglect as a major factor in radicalization and VE, women as active and equal perpetrators of VE, non- implementation or partial implementation of government policies as a driver to VE, lack of understanding of the Islamic religion and ideology as a critical factor in VE. We also found out that youth unemployment and poverty are not the main drivers of VE without understanding the underlying factors. Basically radicalization and VE has no race, tribe, religion, gender, social status nor educational level. The only option is to use a multi-stakeholder, gender-responsive, multi-layered and context-specific all-government and all-community approaches to build resilience to VE.

As a youth peace advocate, you need to understand what the youth vulnerabilities to VE are and how you can change this in a multi-stakeholder participatory inclusive manner to build youth resilience to radicalization in VE. To understand this, you need to gather evidences through research. Evidence/ data provides facts upon which you base your arguments. These facts defend you and make you credible and honoured. Only then will your voice be heard and you get followers who support what you are standing for. Be pragmatic in your approach, so that the problems you identify to solve are not only immediate but should consider the future for providing lasting solutions. Always seek to answer the question: am I passionate about de-radicalizing youth, rehabilitating and re-integrating ex-combatants?

What opportunities and constraints exist for me? What decisions should I make today to satisfy the youth and their community's needs, 10, 15 and 30 years to come?

eg. The youth unemployment and poverty have been for a long time been referred to as the main drivers of VE. Most communities still think so but some few youth involved in VE and radicalization are employed, well-educated and from well to do families. The governments of Kenya and Uganda have many policies, strategies and plans for youth empowerment to reduce radicalization. But this problem persists. They have even integrated peace education and life skills in the curriculum. Since inequalities and joblessness persist making youth vulnerable to VE due to poverty lasting, solutions need to be thought of in a holistic manner.

Think of best ways out of this problem, eg. Curriculum change that will integrate 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, be competency-based with technical and soft skills for digital jobs of today and tomorrow. Think about strengthening traditional value systems of different African cultures that promoted social harmony and social cohesion, mutual trust, tolerance, belongingness connectedness and inclusion. The “Ubuntu” – I am because we are” Being your brothers’ keeper, promoting equality, dignity and human rights for all through sharing. Renewing, the agents of socialization in our African communities thus the family, school, peers, religious institutions and media. So with radicalization and VE of youth, think about the game changer.

***So how do you gather information/research?***



The aim is to gain a deeper understanding of PCVE so that you become part of the solution – the change and change agent. A few considerations must be made by answering these questions:

- i. **What is the background information about this issue-context matters.**
- ii. **How did we find ourselves where we are today as a community/nation? Use any of the methods mentioned above to demonstrate this.**
  - a) The historic context provides the root cause of the problem e.g. the land question and marginalization. This emanates from colonialism in Kenya and in Uganda it is as a result of government policy- the development agenda. Interrogate the social impact of this issue. (Squatters, insurgent groups, poverty, IDPs, refugees etc.). The historical perspectives help us understand how people feel at the individual, household, community level. This will help you to understand the feelings that people have developed over the years.
  - b) Social Context: PCVE is context specific, gender-specific, multi-layered and multi-sectoral. The social networks are very critical here. The support of the community at different levels is very important for peace advocacy to succeed. Building relationships is the foundation of your advocacy work. This will help you understand a culture of a community and emotions about the topic of study. The special and cultural dynamics and understanding of the issue guide your next steps. That is, why you need to do some literature review and talk to community members (elders) about your intention.
    - The local and national authorities' must be consulted because PCVE is an imotive issue. Here local and national government officials, cultural leaders, teachers, school board members are key to be consulted. They possess information about what is going on and what has been done so far.
    - The social context will help you understand the inter-generational dynamics at the household and community level. This is key to a youth peace ambassador (YPA) to understand how decisions are made in the community.
    - **What is the level of inclusivity or exclusion of community, members especially the youth?**
    - **Considering the gender dynamics, how are women and men affected or involved? And in which way, positively or negatively?**
    - **Is there good working relationships in the community or there is tension?**
    - Youth said that they don't trust anyone other than themselves. Elders said the future is bleak because they can't see any youth capable of taking after them.
    - **How is culture a factor in this issue eg. religion, gender in terms of masculinities and feminism traditional values and norms like alternative conflict resolution mechanisms.**
    - **How has PCVE or related issues like gang violence, drug abuse, poverty, youth unemployment, parental neglect (any of the drivers) been dealt with in the past?.**
    - Personal-safety and security must be considered. This is of utmost importance. However passionate you are to an issue it should not put your life on the line.
    - **How are you managing the risks as you carry out peace advocacy for PCVE?**

⇒ All YPA must understand the power dynamics as well as the cultural and political context of their countries. If taking a human rights approach according to the UN strategy of 2016, then find out whom to turn to for safety and protection.

To bring change as a youth peace ambassador, building relationships forming partnerships, and working with other like-minded people is extremely important. Link yourself to youth-friendly platforms, who share a similar ideology of championing the youth cause and empowerment youth as beneficiaries, partners and leaders in PCVE.

Learn to hold inter-generational dialogue with elders in the community and local leaders who will endorse you to higher level officials. Being part of inter-generational dialogues exposes you to experiences and ideas about how to grow the community and have social cohesion. Respect and kindness is a virtue that all YPAs must possess. But above all the soft skills to help them “drive with the kings”.

#### c) Political Context

In doing research on Youth-inclusive Mechanisms in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the IGAD region in Kenya and Uganda the political context in which the youth live was very critical. It guided the process and structure of this project. The multi-stakeholder engagement saw CEWARN-IGAD playing a pivotal role in linking academia and civil societies to policy makers – in co-production of knowledge.

- YPAs need to identify and understand the policies that are in place to leverage radicalization and violent extremism.
- In this project, we explained how we engaged policy makers from the project design, panning, implementation and evaluation. We did this by first engaging CEWARN-IGAD which linked us to the Ministers of Interior and Security in Kenya and Uganda and particular to the senior CEWERUs who are key in early warning in peace. They work closely with other policy makers in the NCTC IPOA, ATPU, KDF NCTC although country commissioners, chiefs and sub-chiefs, peace committees (Kenya). In Uganda CEWARN is linked to DPC, LCC, Cultural Leaders. Our bottom-up, top-down approach has continued to reward us because we have localized and demystified PCVE and made it easy to understand. We are working both at the grassroots, country district and national government level as well as regional level (IGAD and African Union).
- We engaged these government officials in the project inception meetings where we explained the project objectives, methodology theory of change framework and budget. We also engaged them in data collection and validation disseminations dialogue workshop. This was done in the local research areas in both Kenya and Uganda thus Nairobi, Mombasa and Garissa (Kenya) and Mayuge, Kampala and Gulu. These knowledge sharing workshops provided a platform that brought together policy makers, CSO, Youth Organizations, Community Leaders, Cultural Leaders Community members, Academia

Security actors and Media. We got letters of introduction from the Ministry of Interior Security the country commissioners who later introduced us to the local chiefs and LCs.

- YPAs should know how youth voices are represented and spaces available for them to be heard.
- It is important for YPAs to understand the policies, strategies and programmes on PCVE including the regional and international perspectives. In as much as we found out that both Kenya and Uganda have good policies strategies and programmes for PCVE, the major drawback is weak implementation mostly marked with corruption.

### *Methodology*

Data gathering can either be by desk top interview or field work. In desk top review you gather data from published work, on research online, go to the library and read newspapers and books reports etc. This helps you to broaden your perspective on an issue. As you do this, save the documents for future reference. Take notes. If doing online research, take note of the websites, reputable news agencies and good academic journals. Note that the strength of your research outcome is based on the strength of your background information. Use reliable, unbiased evidence ,use up to date information.

Field work is personal engagement. It involves talking to various stakeholders. It should be well structured to gather various opinions and perspectives on PCVE. Since radicalization Violent Extremism and terrorism are a global challenge and right in our own midst, field work research helps you understand how people are affected by and what they feel about VE. Before engaging into fieldwork, identify relevant stakeholders, persons or institutions of interest in PCVE. ***Draw a mind map on how to engage them and their connection to PCVE. These stakeholders include various government officials' academics, NGOs, CBOs and NGOs working on PCVE, religious groups private sector peers and colleges, partners guidance and family members.***

Ref: Engaging with different community groups [www.voiceofyouth.org](http://www.voiceofyouth.org)

#### d) Fact-Finding

Before group to the field at the research planning stage, develop a research tool to advice you in collecting relevant data according to your objectives. Several tools can be used at this stage depending on the research, methodology. A mixed methods research is best suited because it allows qualitative and quantitative data to be collected and triangulated.

Decide which tool for which stakeholder. In our research, we had a questionnaire for youth, a key informant-interview guide for policy makers, security actors community leaders religious leaders, academia. We also had a focus group discussion guide for conducting FDGs. All these aimed at finding out the drivers of VE/radicalization among male and female youth, the policy environment in which they live the globally regional and national policies and interventions in place to give youth a voice and space in their communities, what has make what has not worked and why. Basically, we sought to know how the different PCVE stakeholders are affected by youth

radicalization and violent extremism how they are involved, their experience their suggestions on what should be done.

As we did this, we were keen to check if what we found out during our desktop review resonated with what the various stakeholders were telling us. Thus helped us find out emerging trends in PCVE do comparisons across countries and within the same country but different contexts, comparison about male and female youth in different perspectives of PCVE misconceptions what is happening why is what people think about PCVE in Kenya and Uganda.

## 2. Collating the information

To put all the research data that you have collected together, go back to your objectives, categorize your funding according to your research problem, context/background, possible solutions possible partners to work with and how you will make this possible.

(It should not be an academic exercise).

## 3. Develop an advocacy plan

Develop a plan for your advocacy using a clearly defined pathway.

- Identify influencers in the community who make decisions. These will help you be successful. They will tell you whom to engage with and best ways of doing it.
- Think through ways of influencing the decision-making process.
- Find out who influences the decision makers eg. Media and CSOs.
- Identify peers who are like-minded and are committed to PCVE so that you have unity of purpose and a collective voice on PCVE.
- Ensure you embrace leadership, teamwork, negotiation, communication skills, problem-solving and critical thinking skills to give you a holistic approach that is inclusive for maximum results. In this manner, even those who are opposed to your views will contribute their reasons why they have a contrary opinion. This will also ensure that all sensitivities are taken care of. Note that things become clearer as you progress. Take note of group dynamics too. Do not have a fixed plan of action. It is advisable to be flexible to accommodate diversity of views.

Develop an activity plan

Objective	Inputs Activity	Expected Outcome	Indicators (Measure of progress)	Impact

⇒ Include how to evaluate if activities in PCVE are youth-led (The evaluation-makers of progress). These markers of progress are set targets for what you are trying to achieve and they determine whether you are on track. It's what monitoring and evaluation does. It checks

immediate what you none to achieve by your advocacy campaign. In our case, we are looking for ways and means of making PCVE to be youth-led using a two-provided approach thus all-government and all-community approach. The aim is to make PCVE youth inclusive. If PCVE can be integrated into the school curriculum, have more youth being granted amnesty and getting re-integrated, into the community have improved police-community relations have less extra-judicial cases reported, less conflicts, reduced numbers of gangs, revised youth population involved in drugs, reduced number of girls in VE increased dialogue by policy makers on PCVE.

#### **4. Monitoring and Evaluating Progress made**

As a YPA, you must include an M & E plan in your advocacy plan. This must be done at the design stage to ensure that you achieve your advocacy goals. It is a tool that makes you constantly monitor and track progress towards achieving your desired outcomes.

This inspires confidence in the working or not working of your advocacy. To do this you regularly gather information to determine the impact that your advocacy is having and to see if you need to do things differently. Acknowledging faults and being honest to change ways of doing things help a lot. The YPA needs to experience reflect and think about lessons learnt, how people are responding to your message initiative what feelings and emotions are arising from your mark, what you are learning from the community.

Monitoring aim is to create effectiveness of advocacy. It leads to learning, grow and improvement and eventually successful advocacy.

#### **5. Policy Engagement**

From the beginning of this training, we put research uptake as a priority because it is action research where all stakeholders are valued and are not mere respondents but beneficiaries' partners and leaders. In analysis of the political context in which the youth live, policy makers were a critical factor. Research for its own sake without engaging policy makers is not helpful. Research informs policy and practice. In this project the multi-stake holder approach in which policy makers were, engaged aimed at analysing the policy environment in which youth live, then identifying opportunities and constraints that stifle/choke or amplify their voice in PCVE.

Youth-focused policies are imperative to realizing a sustainable future. Youth peace ambassadors need to get equipped with skills that will help them interrogate policies and engage policy makers.

We found out that youth in both Kenya and Uganda are not consulted on matters than concern them. They are therefore not engaged in policy division making process. Most policies are top-down. As YPAs you must be well versed with PCVE related policies before embarking on advocacy for implementation of the same policies. In Kenya, the constitution of 2010 allows for every citizen public participation in matters that concern them. Vision 2030 and the Jubilee manifesto support youth engagement in all matters affecting them. While this is the case, youth

engagement with policy makers is still at a nascent stage. In most cases, the inter-generational gap is a main hindrance to effective youth and policy engagement. This is due to the negative attitude that both the youth and older generation have towards each other. Strive to advocate for mind-set change between the two for social harmony and cohesion.

- Effective policy engagement means in depth research into what specific policy your advocacy campaign is addressing.
- You need to know your target audience – ministry responsible.
- Share the policy section with team members, schools, communities' local government district and country officers.
- Identify gaps in the policy documents for example those that do not mention youth as a special group in the community marginalised, male and female etc.

The second stage of policy engagement is attending conferences and meetings with decision makers. For YPA it's not enough to attend but to actively participate so as to amplify the voice of youth who are not present and articulate their issues at the decision-making table. This is a great platform for a YPA to prove him/herself. You should create a position paper to present. (see youth advocacy guidebook)

- Use the policy documents that you researched to argue, your point. If no policy exists in that area, advocate for one to fill that gap.
- Speak about strengths and weaknesses of a particular policy (choose any of the policies and outline strengths and weakness)
- Inspire fellow youth into action dialogue to champion their cause.
- Offer recommendations on what should be done.
- YPA should attend conferences for developing networks with other young people organizations and sectors. It also opens one's mind to new ideas.

## 6. Communicating the Knowledge

YPA need to continuously endeavour to build momentum continuously draw people together to support your cause. Communication is very critical at this point. You need to communicate and create awareness about PCVE issues so as to build resilience communities. Here, the YPA needs to retrieve the information you gathered during the fact-finding and turn it into knowledge that people can easily understand. Thus translate research into knowledge and knowledge products as evidence for policy making. This can be off-line in knowledge sharing workshops or online face books twitter, journal articles research reports e-books policy briefs fact sheets, instagram active videos and commentaries, animated video etc.

- Know your target audience in PCVE, all community members are key. Plan with you want them to get the information and engaged!
- Use appropriate language eg. Policy makers need briefly short videos songs and info graphics.



- Spend time developing your story so that it appears to the masses and is meaningful. Ensure you raise emotive issues that speak to their concerns.
- Ensure that you package, your message to be informative, kind, respectful, sensitive to cultural generation diversity. Don't be abrasive, aggressive and proactive.
- Tell other stories in your experience related to this eg. The story of the humming bird and the burning forest; the analogy of a mouth and the community. Uganda Acholi women protest .
- Organize events to share information, networking and developing ideas to support the advocacy process. To do this, consider the following.
  - Purpose/objective of the event what you hope to achieve.
  - Audience, size and activities
  - Organization consider time virtue information, materials and activities.
  - Media and social media engagement for public awareness as part of the advocacy process. These range from print media, radio TV, Social gatherings, notice board, internet social media, newsletters publications blogs, cartoons.
- Host the event.

### Use of social Media

- It is a powerful advocacy tool for awareness creation and communication of ideas (Refer to communication module)
- Create a social media campaign to encourage the broad support for youth inclusiveness in PCVE. Get a hash tag and launch a social media campaign platform through the following steps.
  - i) Create an account on a social media platform on Face book Twitter, YouTube, Instagram etc.
  - ii) Create a face book page or whatsapp group and invite people to join.
  - iii) Identify and create useful hash tags to help identify your issue and track discussions. Make the hash tags catching to gain attention faster. eg. Bring back our Girls Campaign Youth-led PCVE.
- IV) Produce and share content in terms of journals, memory photos, video, music. What you share should strictly speak do your issue be unique and creative.
- V) Host live chats – This is an easy way to bring people together eg. Webinar, FB chats.
- Vi) Organize social media thunderclap
- VII) Collaborate with social media influencers i.e individuals who have a large following and powerful impact on social media eg. Boriface, Mwaoung or Churchill, Erick Omedi, Prof. Hamocil
- VIII). Identify the best times to post on social media eg. To engage school children post before and after school, for adults at night. While for policy makers during the night.

IX) Respond and communicate to create space for dialogue

X) Use strong passwords to protect yourself on social media to evoke hacking of accounts.

## **7. Making Follow-up**

Throughout your advocacy you will meet a wide-range of people. Establish a relation with them for future engagements.