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**REPORT OF THE TRAINING OF TARGETED LOCAL COMMUNITIES FROM SOMALIA AND ZAMBIA ON PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM**



**2024(CM/IO-rkk)**

## INTRODUCTION

1. COMESA in collaboration with the National Anti-Terrorism Center of Zambia, the Horn of Africa Youth Network, Save the Children, and Agents of Peace organised a Training for targeted local communities from Somalia and Zambia on preventing and countering violent extremism. The training stemmed as an outcome of the Conference on “Mobilizing Intelligence on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in Africa” that was held in September 2023 in Maputo, Mozambique. In furtherance, the training was a response to the directives of the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the COMESA Ministers of Foreign Affairs that emphasized the need for an integrated approach across the peace and development nexus that addresses the underlying causes of conflict in the COMESA region including violent extremism. The training aimed at strengthening the capacities of local communities to counter violent extremism from respective thematic lenses including good governance, peace, and security. Specifically, the training was anchored on the following objectives:

- i. *Enhance Understanding*: Equip local community leaders from Somalia and Zambia working in governance, peace, and security sectors with comprehensive knowledge of countering violent extremism (CVE) strategies.
- ii. *Build Capacities*: Foster practical skills and competencies among community leaders to actively counter extremist narratives.
- iii. *Foster Collaboration*: Encourage cross-country collaboration and knowledge-sharing among community leaders, promoting a unified approach to CVE efforts.

### A. OPENING SESSION

2. The training was opened by His Worship the Mayor of Chingola town, Zambia, Mr. Johnson Kang’ombe. He expressed his gratitude to the Ministry of Defence and Zambia Army for their unwavering commitment to safeguarding the Nation and ensuring the safety and security of its citizens. He emphasised the vital role of safety and security, which are crucial for economic, political, and social development in any country, and he urged all stakeholders to prevent violence and crime. He indicated that in recent years, the district had witnessed the transformative power of safety and security. As crime rates in the district have decreased, investments and establishment of business ventures from both local and foreign entrepreneurs have increased.

3. He reiterated that the Government of Zambia has indeed recognized that security is not the sole responsibility of the armed forces or law enforcement agencies, but a collective effort that requires the active participation of every member of the community. Mr. Kang’ombe concluded by noting that working hand in hand with the security apparatus is key in ensuring security, which will undoubtedly contribute to building a safe and more prosperous future for citizens at large.

4. Before the opening of the training, The Head of Governance, Peace, and Security at COMESA, Dr. Oita Etyang, provided his opening remarks. He extended his gratitude to the District Council of Chingola for hosting the training and appreciated the warm reception. He highlighted COMESA’s Keeness towards collaborating with its member states to achieve its common goal, which is a peaceful and prosperous COMESA. In this light, he further extended his appreciation to the Zambia National Anti-Terrorism Centre for the continued collaboration and further extended his gratitude to the participants from Chingola and Somalia for their presence and their readiness to share on experiences and knowledge during the 4-day training.

5. Dr. Etyang highlighted the emerging threats affecting Africa's peace and security, especially in the COMESA region. In this regard, he noted that Zambia and Somalia, though geographically distant, shared the common goal of achieving peace and security within their borders, albeit within different contexts. Additionally, he pointed out that both countries had a shared narrative emphasizing the pivotal roles of local communities in shaping the dynamics of their countries. He noted that it is upon this background that COMESA in collaboration with partners convenes this training. He concluded his statement by emphasizing that the success of the training should not be measured solely by its completion, but rather by the tangible actions taken within the communities, the lives positively impacted, and the prospects shaped.

6. The National Anti-Terrorism Centre (NATC), Zambia representative, Mr. Partick Nyirenda before the Head of GPS, Conveyed opening remarks on behalf of the Chief Executive Officer. He expressed gratitude for the opportunity to address the security of the nation and the COMESA region. He outlined NATC's mandate and expressed his pleasure in participating in the training, which is aimed at increasing awareness within communities regarding preventing and countering the threat of violent extremism.

7. He further emphasised that terrorism and violent extremism are global issues that affect everyone, and he underscored the importance of collaborative efforts among progressive countries and organisations to effectively combat these threats collectively. Mr. Nyirenda concluded his remarks by extending his best wishes to all participants for successful deliberations.

## **ATTENDANCE, ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA, AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK**

### **i. Attendance**

8. The training was attended by delegates including Women-led and focused Community Based Organisations (CBOs), Youth-led and focused CBOs, Local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Governance, peace, and security, Local CSOs in child protection, Local youth leaders, Religious leaders, Security agents (local police), and Community Based women leaders from Somalia and Zambia.

*\*The list of participants is attached as Annex I to the report.*

### **ii. The training agenda was as follows:**

- a. Opening session.
- b. Examining Regional Peace and Security Dynamics – Status of the COMESA Region
- c. Threat Assessment of Violent Extremism from a Zambian Perspective
- d. Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism – A Reflection of the Somalia Experience
- e. An Introduction to the Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism
- f. Youth Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda and the Prevention of Violent Extremism
- g. Youth Engagement in Politics and Civic Engagement
- h. Gender Sensitive Approaches to P/CVE
- i. Early warning and Early response and their relevance to P/CVE at Community levels

- j. Community-Led CVE Initiatives and Cross-Country Collaboration
- k. Inclusive Community Resilience Building
- l. Recommendations and Way Forward
- m. Closing

iii. **Organization of Work**

9. The training unfolded as follows:

Mornings: 0900 - 1300 hours

Afternoons: 1400 - 1630 hours

**B. Examining Regional Peace and Security Dynamics: The status of the COMESA Region – Dr Oita Etyang, COMESA**

10. The presentation was introduced with a background to the formation of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) narrowing down to the COMESA region. The background explained COMESA's mandate of promoting regional integration through economic prosperity noting the necessity for peace and stability to be achieved, hence the establishment of the Governance, Peace, and Security Unit (GPS). The Unit was mandated under Article 3 (d) of the COMESA treaty to promote regional integration, development, and stability in the region. The programmes carried out were outlined including conflict prevention (through the COMESA Early Warning System – COMWARN), programmes on Democracy and Governance, Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD), Climate Change-Peace and Security, Youth Peace and Security, Children Affected by Armed Conflicts and Transnational Organized Crimes including Anti Money Laundering and Countering of Financing of Terrorism.

11. Based on this background, the security situation in the COMESA region was briefed uncovering the North, spanning through the Horn, Eastern, to the Southern Africa Region including the Islands. The presentation noted the complexity of the security situation in these clusters while considering the peculiar nature of the highlighted regions. Some cross-cutting security issues were identified in these clusters including human trafficking, intra-state conflicts, interstate conflicts, natural resource-based conflicts, effects of climate change, and unemployment amongst a rapidly growing youth population.

**Discussions and Observations**

12. Following the presentation, a question was asked to know how COMESA handles all the highlighted security issues in its region given their complex nature and the broad geographical scope of its member states. In response, the participants were informed that COMESA monitors these security issues primarily through the COMWARN System. In addition, COMESA values collaboration and works closely with the AU, its sister RECs, and other stakeholders within its member states to address these challenges utilising an approach of providing solutions geared towards promoting economic prosperity.

**C. Threat assessment of Violent Extremism from a Zambian Perspective. – Mr Tembo - NACT, Zambia**

13. Participants were taken through the threat assessment of violent Extremism from a Zambian perspective. The presentation began with an outline of the NATC mandate and the legal framework from which it draws its mandate from. The presenter provided a conceptual definition of violent extremism and terrorism as well as an explanation of the relationship between both concepts. The participants were further informed on the drivers of terrorism and violent extremism such as extreme poverty, inequality, exclusion, and discrimination. Against this background, the presenter narrowed down to the Zambian context where he flagged out the increase of street children, formation of gangs, human trafficking, and statelessness as possible drivers of violent extremism which may lead to terrorism if not adequately addressed.

14. The presentation further highlighted the potential threats of terrorism anchoring on the presence of terrorist activities of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and Harakat Al Shabaab Mujahideen in Zambia's neighbouring countries like DR Congo and Mozambique respectively. Participants were informed that as much as these threats had not actualized in Zambia, it was important to provide an early response to avoid spillover, turning the concept of prevention into countering.

### **Discussions and Observations**

15. Following the presentation, a question was raised on what actions are being taken by the NACT of Zambia to curb financing of terrorist activities and avoid a spillover to the Zambian territory. In response, participants were informed that the NATC is a multi-sectoral institution with expertise from different fields who work together to mitigate these issues including the Early warning measures and Early response strategies.

#### **D. Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism - A Reflection of Somalia. – Mr Mohamed Abdullahi, Agents of Peace**

16. A presentation was made on Somalia's reflection on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism. The presenter started with an overview of the current state of violent extremism in Somalia, highlighting the various factors that contribute to its spread, including push and pull factors, political instability, economic hardship, and social marginalization. Further to this, he emphasized the importance of adopting a holistic approach to preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE), which includes addressing the underlying grievances that push or pull individuals to join extremist groups.

17. Drawing from the Somalia experience, the presenter distilled key lessons and best practices for effective PCVE interventions including the importance of context-specific approaches tailored to local dynamics, sustained engagement with communities, and prioritizing preventive measures over reactive responses. In addition, the presentation emphasized the need for long-term commitment, institutional capacity-building, and multi-sectoral collaboration to achieve lasting impact in the PCVE sphere.

18. The presentation emphasised the role of Community Engagement in PCVE noting examples of successful community-based initiatives, such as youth empowerment programs, and interfaith and communal dialogue, that have helped build resilience against extremist ideologies. It further noted that there was the need to have community-led initiatives that address underlying grievances, provide alternative narratives, and promote social cohesion.

The presentation concluded by underscoring the importance of involving women and youth in PCVE efforts, as they are often the most vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups.

**E. An introduction to preventing and countering Violent Extremism – Mary Yvonne – PCVE Expert.**

19. Participants were taken through a CVE 101 session. The presenter informed participants on the importance of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and how it is a global security concern that refers to a broad range of policies and programs aimed at deterring individuals from radicalizing to violence. She informed on the terminologies used in CVE such as Counter Violent Extremism (CVE), Terrorism, Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE), Social Media Recruitment, and Counter Narratives amongst others, and expounded on them.

20. The presenter noted that CVE has emerged as a preventative approach to terrorism, aiming to address threats before violence occurs. Informing that in recent years, there has been an increased focus on research and learning on CVE, both domestically and internationally. In addressing the root causes, participants were informed that CVE aims to counter efforts by violent extremists to radicalize, recruit, and mobilize followers to violence. That is, it addresses specific factors that facilitate violent extremist recruitment and radicalization to violence. The presentation also looked at ways of identifying root causes and symptoms of CVE in a community setting stressing the push or pull factors to the acts of violent extremism.

21. Regarding approaches to CVE strategies, the presenter highlighted that the approaches were further enunciated including the Preventive Approach: - unlike traditional counter-terrorism programmes, CVE focuses on preventing radicalization and violence before it occurs. On Disengagement and De-radicalization Programs: - these programmes aimed to provide alternatives, narratives, capabilities, and resiliencies in targeted communities and populations to reduce the risk of radicalization and recruitment to violence.

22. To contextualize it, the presenter narrowed down the strategies to the African context looking at the engagement of: Regional Civil Society Platforms: - support for regional civil society CVE platforms aimed at building the capacity of women, youth, religious leaders, and other community leaders to advance CVE objectives. Research and Information-Sharing: - emphasis on promoting local research and information-sharing on the drivers of radicalization and violent extremism.

**Group Work and Presentations**

23. Following the presentation, participants were divided into four (4) groups to discuss the following questions:

- a. **What are the root causes of violent extremism from an Economic, social, political, educational, cultural, historical perspective and global dynamics?**

*\*The group presentations are attached as annex II of the report\**



*Fig1: Group work engagement on root causes of violent extremism*

**F. Youth Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda and the Prevention of Violent Extremism.  
– Ms. Lavina Oluoch, Save the Children ESARO**

24. The presentation commenced with an introduction to the Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) Agenda in the African context highlighting that it refers to a framework that recognizes the critical role of young people in promoting peace, preventing conflict, and contributing to sustainable development across the continent. The presenter informed on some of the aspects that anchor the YPS Agenda, such as the African Youth Charter and the AU Continental framework on Youth, Peace, and Security. In addition, the YPS Agenda in the African context is a comprehensive framework that recognizes and supports the positive role of young people in building and sustaining peace on the continent.

25. In furtherance, the presentation highlighted that the YPS agenda is premised on the following pillars that have a direct correlation with conflict prevention and violent extremism. These include meaningful Participation, Prevention, Protection, Partnerships and Disengagement and Reintegration. In addition, there are close commonalities between YPS Agenda in the African context and CVE. These include; empowerment and inclusion, prevention and Early Warning, community engagement and local solutions, technology and social media, human rights and social justice, capacity building, inclusive governance, and cross-sectoral collaboration.

26. The presentation concluded emphasising that by identifying and capitalising on the identified commonalities, stakeholders could work towards integrated and comprehensive strategies that could effectively address the intertwined issues of youth, peace, security, and countering violent extremism in Africa.

## **G. Youth Engagement in politics and civic education. – Mr. David Momanyi, Horn of Africa Youth Network.**

27. The presentation was introduced with an overview and highlights on the key objectives of the session as well as highlights on the opportunities and challenges of youth engagement in politics and an understanding of the role of youth in PCVE. Participants were informed of the many existing opportunities that may motivate the youth to engage in politics such as the need for change to fit their demographic and link discussions to the existing contemporary issues, he need to address historical dynamics that may have affected the communities and the need to address the representation of the youth's grievances at the decision-making levels amongst others.

28. The presenter underscored the strained relationship between the older and younger generations at political levels anchoring on the radical nature of the youth as a result of challenges such as unemployment. It was emphasised that this challenge has led to youth being taken advantage of hindering their effective engagement in politics and increasing their chances of engaging in V.E activities. In addition, the challenge of unemployment has a marginalising effect on youth regarding decision-making and their role in politics at large.

29. In terms of politics, the presenter noted that all national governments have domesticated continental and international protocols as well as declarations into National Action Plans, Strategies, Programmes, and Policies aimed at addressing youth and PCVE. The presentation concluded by encouraging the participants to further understand these policies to identify gaps in them that breed tolerance, lack of trust, lack of sense of belonging, marginalised exclusion, discrimination, inequality, and breed communities that are not cohesive.

### **Group Work and Presentations**

30. Following the presentation, the participants were divided into 5 groups and were required to discuss the following questions:

- i. When it comes to civic and political engagement who are the most active stakeholders and why?***
- ii. How would you describe the space and role of young people in civic and political engagement?***
- iii. How do you rate the impact of politics on young people and the community in general?***
- iv. How can civic and political engagement contribute to Violent Extremism and radicalization in our communities?***
- v. How do we improve the meaningful participation of young people at the grassroots level (Together with other community stakeholders) in civic and political engagement?***

*\*The group presentations are attached as annex III of the report\**





Fig2: Group work engagement on civic and political participation of youth

#### H. Gender Sensitive Approaches to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism – Ms. Fiona Otieno, Save the Children - ESARO

31. The session used a discussion/interactive approach and was informed based on the following objectives:

- a. To understand the importance of mainstreaming gender across P/CVE initiatives. to understand and communicate how gender equality and women's empowerment are linked to P/CVE.
- b. To identify measures to mainstream gender into P/CVE programmes and challenges encountered.

32. The discussions sought to understand the difference in the push and pull factors in conflict and non-conflict contexts and the variations between men and women. Furthermore, the discussions set the basis for further engagement on the trends that may drive radicalization at the community level in both countries and the role of women in P/CVE.

33. It was unanimously agreed that the understanding of gender is socially constructed and is reflected in the roles, behaviours, and qualities that a community or society considers appropriate or acceptable for women and men, girls and boys. In addition, the discussions also unravelled gender as a lens through which people's roles and access (or lack thereof) in communities and societies are shaped, such as access to leadership, economic resources, or education, thus the deep dive into women's roles in PCVE. Some of these roles were outlined including the following:

- a. Victims, supporters, fighters, and more explicit advocates of extremist ideology. However, many women not only join violent extremists freely and of their own accord but also willingly and voluntarily participate in violent extremism in varied and active ways, including combatants, suicide bombers, and violent actors.
- b. Women are also more often victims of the actions of violent extremist groups, suffering from sexual violence and rape, restrictive limitations to their freedom of movement, and in some cases, essentially becoming enslaved to the men in violent extremist groups.
- c. Women perform “softer” duties such as providing inspiration and emotional and psychological support to the male fighters or overseeing nonviolent activities such as finance and group operations.

34. Further into the discussions were the Early Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE) programs which focused almost exclusively on ‘angry young men’ as the face of violent extremism. As a result, in addition to military-style campaigns, the key actors engaged in finding solutions were male leaders, such as male community leaders, religious leaders, and former combatants who could promote moderate narratives and counter extremist ideologies. It was further noted that this concentration on a specific type of male experience, that is, other voices, such as those of women, were lacking, which has had negative consequences for PVE policy and programs.

35. It was also discussed that although counter-terrorism interventions, focused on hard security and primarily military-style interventions, they have tended to ignore gender perspectives, institutional and local actors in PCVE who have generally been more intentional about recognizing women’s roles in all facets of extremism. The discussion concluded on a reminder note that PCVE efforts should always consider the local context before decisions on how to structure initiatives and the typology of stakeholders to involve.

### **Group Work and Presentations**

36. Following the presentation, the participants were divided into four (4) groups to discuss the following questions:

- i. Discuss some of the push and pull factors that can lead men/ women to Violent Extremism.**

*\*The group presentations are attached as Annex IV of the report.*

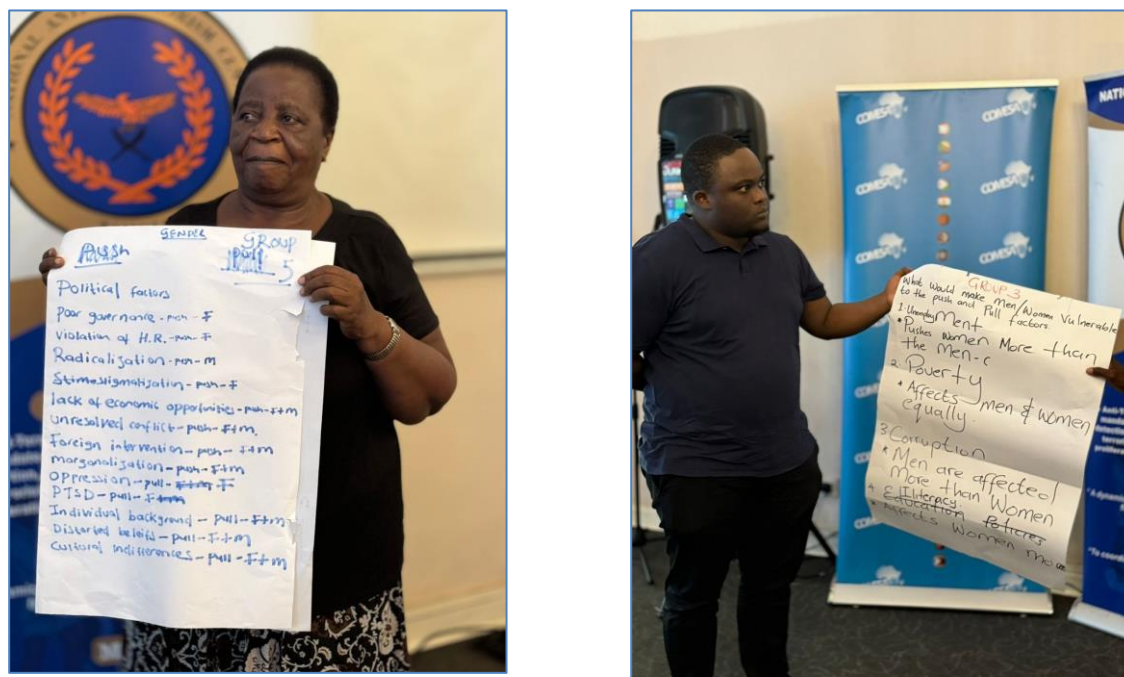


Fig 3: Group work presentation on the push and pull factors that can lead men and women to violent extremism

### I. Early Warning and Early Response and their Relevance to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism at Community Level. – Dr Oita Etyang and Mr Mohamed Abdullahi.

37. The foundation of this presentation was laid on key conceptual definitions – in this case, early warning, early warning systems, and early response. It was noted that Early warning involves the process of information gathering, analysis, and offering policy response options. Early Warning systems are proactive mechanisms designed to identify and mitigate potential threats before they escalate to violence, and it involves swift targeted actions to identify risks to prevent or mitigate violence. The components of the Early Warning and Response mechanism were further explained noting that it involved information gathering, monitoring and prediction, and information dissemination, and were contextualized to a community setting, noting that the response stage is often the one riddled with challenges.

38. The presentation informed on the objectives of Early Warning for preventing violent extremism including countering radicalization, addressing root causes that fuel extremism, and promoting social cohesion. Key strategies for integrating Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE) objectives into Early Warning systems were emphasised and aimed at identifying indicators such as the increase in social tensions. Participants were informed on the key dimensions of effective responses to violent extremism namely: inclusion, resilience, partnership, procedures, and safety and well-being. These dimensions were expounded stressing the community-based approach emphasising collaboration between the communities and the authorities.

39. The second part of the presentation accentuated early warning indicators and early warning response mechanisms. The core components of Violent Extremism prevention are recognizing risk factors and building protective factors against radicalization to violence. It was noted that Early Warning indicators may change or remain constant and sometimes can be

observable by the community or family. The indicators may include a history of violence, problematic behaviour, unhealthy family dynamics, a search for belonging, and even a sense of power amongst others. Due to these actors, Early Warning indicators are predictive, or all-encompassing and should be evaluated in context with other individual and environmental factors.

40. In terms of Early Response Mechanisms, it was understood that they can be divided into short-term and long-term. At the short-term level, there can be a pursuit of non-violent legal and social sanction methods of conflict resolution including a healthy social support system, community capacity building, and development programmes, involvement of the violent extremist person in community extra-curricular activities such as sports, and positive coping mechanism amongst others. The long-term level is more of a policy-oriented approach, mainly building on the gains of the short term and creating structures and infrastructures that will help avoid a relapse.

### **Group Work and Presentations**

41. Following the discussions, the participants were divided into two (2) groups to answer the following questions.

- i. **What are the Early Warning signs in the local community that could be indicators that radicalization will occur?**

*\*The Group Presentations are attached as Annex V in the Report.*



*Fig 4: Group work engagement of Early warning signs identification in the local communities*

### **J. Community-led Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Initiatives and Cross-Country Collaboration. Mr Patrick Nyirenda, NACT-Zambia.**

42. Participants were drilled through Community-led initiatives on CVE and Cross-Country Collaboration strategies. The presentation commenced with the understanding of countering violent extremism, stressing the importance of involving the communities in CVE, noting that addressing CVE required collective efforts. Participants were informed that communities are

often exposed to violent extremism, and this could be a breeding ground for the thriving of violent extremism if adequate interventions to prevent and counter it were not implemented forthwith and progressively.

43. The presenter further informed on the Community Resilience Programming Checklist for effective CVE in the community. The following steps are included in the checklist:

- a. Assessment of community needs and vulnerabilities,
- b. Stakeholder engagement and partnerships,
- c. Capacity building and empowerment,
- d. Promotion of social cohesion and inclusion,
- e. Counter narrative and communication strategies,
- f. Monitoring and evaluation,
- g. Crisis response and conflict resolution,
- h. Sustainability and long-term engagement,
- i. Legal and ethical consideration,
- j. Documentation and knowledge sharing.

#### **Group Work and Presentation: Cross-Country Collaboration**

44. For cross-country collaboration, experience sharing, and learning, the participants were divided into two (2) groups; the Somalian Delegates and the Zambian Delegates to answer the following questions:

- a. **Somalia Delegates**
  - i. What Role do community leaders play in countering Violence Extremism and Radicalization of Young people in the community?
  - ii. How does the Community handle the spread of violent extremism and radical narratives?
- b. **Zambia Delegates**
  - i. How do local community leaders identify the process of radicalization?
  - ii. What measures can be taken by the local community to counter violent extremism?

*\*The group presentation is attached as Annex VI in the report.*



*Fig 5: Zambia and Somalia group engagements*

**K. Inclusive community Resilience building. - Mr Anthony Njoroge, Save the Children ESARO.**

45. In the discussions on building inclusive and resilient communities and prevention of Violent Extremism, it was noted that it is important to make sure that women and girls are explicitly included in programmes aimed at countering violent extremism (VE). This means acknowledging the gendered nature of VE and understanding its differential impact on different groups, including women, girls, men, and boys. To do this, it was understood that it is essential to consult with women and girls as well as men and boys and design interventions that address their respective needs, capacities, and contexts.

46. The presenter emphasised that building trust, capacity, and networks of local influencers can have a positive impact on at-risk groups. Identifying community members and groups who had access to and influence with individuals and groups that have first-degree connections to Violent Extremism was crucial. Facilitating connections, PCVE knowledge-building, and creating space for collective action and localized decision-making would also be helpful. In addition, he noted that transparency, durability, and reliability of the programme are important to maintaining trust between CSOs and affected communities. Emphasising that it was important to make sure programme participants understood the scope of the programme activities and their anticipated duration and frequency. He further informed that if any changes occur, it was important for them to communicate promptly to the participants so that they feel engaged in the process and do not feel abandoned or misled.

47. In furtherance, undertaking regular external programme reviews that involve and consult at-risk groups, including those not reached by the programme, could help to understand why they are not participating and modify programming accordingly. Conducting these reviews will help the programme continually adapt and become conflict and gender sensitive. Including interventions that work to expand and strengthen at-risk individuals' social networks could be useful. It provides them with the knowledge that others are experiencing similar life

circumstances, a broader social support network, and additional social capital to access opportunities, particularly related to livelihoods.

48. Participants were informed that it is essential to strengthen the role of families and local-level community security actors in detecting signs of radicalization and taking appropriate action while keeping in mind the 'do not harm' principles. In continuum, Women are disproportionately affected by V.E., so programmes should offer psychosocial support and trauma counselling, education, sensitisation about their legal rights, and livelihood support. Equally noting the importance of developing outreach with boys and young men to discuss masculinity, identity, and role models, including psychosocial and trauma counselling programmes.

49. It was emphasised that facilitating engagement between decision-makers, including those in local government and at-risk youth, could help to enable voices and perspectives to be heard, thus building the social capital of at-risk groups. The presentation concluded emphasising that raising awareness programmes that present the accounts of returnees discussing why they left V.E and the impact that their involvement had on their families could be helpful.

#### **L. Recommendations and Way Forward**

50. Following the 4-day training, an action plan was developed to determine the way forward in terms of the short-term and long-term engagement of the communities based on the various identified challenges

*\*The Action plan is attached as annex VII in the report*

#### **M. Closing remarks**

51. Mr. David Momanyi, Executive Director of the Horn of Africa Youth Network (HoAYN), expressed his gratitude to the local government, including the Mayor, District Commissioner, and Town Clerk for their hospitality. He appreciated the participants from Zambia and Somalia for their active engagement, participation, and sharing of knowledge and experience. He informed the meeting that the training had achieved its objectives and assured that there would be frameworks (action plans) set up to ensure a follow-up is done and to measure the impact of the training on the communities. He acknowledged individual participants who stood out during the training and informed them that they would be engaged in future activities.

52. Dr. Oita Etyang, Head of Governance, Peace and Security Unit, COMESA, expressed his gratitude to the local government for hosting the event, the Chingola District Council through the National Anti-Terrorism Centre – Zambia for mobilizing the right participants, the delegation from Somalia and the partners. He noted that the training had achieved its objective and it had taken an unexpected yet welcomed form of an intergenerational dialogue, highlighting the different age groups represented in the training. Using an example of the identified participants who stood out during the training, he emphasised that it was important to always do things to the best of their capabilities with the view that someone is always watching. He concluded by encouraging the participants to take this act as a motivation not only in the training but also in life.

53. Mr. Patrick Nyirenda, Chief Operations Officer of the National Anti-Terrorism Centre-Zambia expressed his gratitude to the local Government leadership for being gracious hosts and their participation in the training. He appreciated COMESA for the funding and the facilitation of the training and also appreciated the partners for offering their expertise in training the invited communities from Somalia and Zambia. Finally, he thanked the delegates from Zambia and Somalia for the knowledge and Experience shared amongst them despite their diversity.

54. The representative of the Somalia delegation presented closing remarking, appreciating the facilitators and partners of the training for organising and moderating the training in a well-orderly manner. She recommended that given the success of the training, it was important to carry out more trainings that engage communities. She called for continued collaboration and encouraged the participants to continue networking with each other.

55. The representative of the Chingola delegation thanked COMESA, NATC, the Local Government, and partners for organising the training. He encouraged the Chingola delegates to learn from the experience shared by the Somalia delegates and urged them to ensure that they continue engaging the community with the skills and experiences gained from the training.

56. The Town Clerk of Chingola Town began by sharing her heartfelt appreciation to the delegation from Chingola for their engagement in the training. She noted the training's content and encouraged the Chingola delegation to be Ambassadors of the town. She further informed that after the training, it was important for them to meet with the Chingola delegation to come up with strategies on how the learnings can be transferred to the rest of the community.



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### Group Work Presentations

#### An introduction to preventing and countering Violent Extremism - Group Work and Presentations

Following the presentation, the participants divided into five (5) groups and engaged in discussions and presentations on the following questions:

- 1. What are the root causes of violent extremism from an Economic, social, political, educational, cultural, historical perspective and global dynamics?**

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
<b>Historical factors</b>	<b>Social factors</b>	<b>Economic factors</b>	<b>Political factors</b>
Land alienation	Uneven distribution of resources/ opportunities	Unemployment	Poor governance
Tribal conflicts/ division	Lack of quality education	Poverty	Violation of human rights
Border & Religious conflicts	Social exclusion	<b>Educational factors</b>	Pursuit of political ideology
<b>Technological factors</b>	Injustice	Illiteracy	<b>Psychological factors</b>
Spread of misinformation	<b>Global Dynamics</b>	Inadequate school facilities	PTSD
Hate speech	Foreign intervention	Inadequate civic education	Marginalisation
Spread of radical images			Individual upbringing

## Youth Engagement in politics and civic education

Following the presentation, the participants were divided into five (5) groups and were required to discuss the following questions:

1. ***When it comes to civic and political engagement who are the most active stakeholders and why?***
2. ***How would you describe the space and role of young people in civic and political engagement?***
3. ***How do you rate the impact of politics on young people and the community in general?***
4. ***How can civic and political engagement contribute to Violent Extremism and radicalization in our communities?***
5. ***How do we improve the meaningful participation of young people at the grassroots level (Together with other community stakeholders) in civic and political engagement?***

<p><b>Question 1</b> When it comes to civic and political engagement who are the most active stakeholders and why?</p>	<p><i>Youth:</i> Because – they are the majority - They have adequate time to allocate political engagement - they are up to date with information. <i>Women:</i> Because – they are good at human and resource mobilization They are mostly known to be good managers of society. They are easily emotionally attached to society’s needs. <i>Religious groupings:</i> Because – they have a large constituency.</p>
<p><b>Question 2</b> How would you describe the space and role of young people in civic and political engagement?</p>	<p>- The space for young people is more or less a myth than a reality on the ground in political and civic engagements - Ideally, they are supposed to play a critical role in civic and political spaces however, they are rather used as tools to achieve the older generation’s political agendas.</p>
<p><b>Question 3</b> How do you rate the impact of politics on young people and the community in general?</p>	<p>- Instant and energetic results e.g. the 2021 elections in Zambia - It is a motivational factor for young people to get involved in politics and seek government positions.</p>
<p><b>Question 4</b> How can civic and political engagement contribute to Violent Extremism and radicalization in our communities?</p>	<p>- Lack of inclusivity in civic and political engagements can result in VE - The advent of economic inequalities and disparities led to feelings of frustration thus resulting in VE</p>
<p><b>Question 5</b> How to do we improve the meaningful participation of young</p>	<p>- Organise more sensitization initiatives for youth on the importance of civic and political engagement - Institute mentorship programmes/ workshops with the community stakeholders (elders, CSOs, politicians).</p>

<p>people at the grassroots level (Together with other community stakeholders) in civic and political engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Introduce and intensify political and civic education in schools from the primary levels to tertiary.</li><li>- Encourage community political leaders to involve the youth in their day-to-day activities to mentor them in turn avoiding their involvement in political violence.</li><li>- Encourage the engagement of youth of different backgrounds to exchange best practices amongst them.</li></ul>
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**Gender Sensitive Approaches to P/CVE**

Following the presentation, the participants were divided into four (4) groups to discuss the following question.

***What are the Push and Pull factors in the Community that can lead men/women to Violent Extremism?***

	MEN		WOMEN	
	PUSH	PULL	PUSH	PULL
Group 1	Poor governance Unemployment	Culture Poverty	Culture Inequality	Unemployment Poverty Illiteracy
Group 2	Limited access to opportunity Brian washing	Historical grievances Extreme ideology	Conservative Society Influence discrimination	Oppression Illiteracy
Group 3	Unemployment Poverty	Corruption	Inequality Culture	Unemployment Oppression
Group 4	Poverty Marginalization	Ethic superiority Corruption	Poor governance Lack of economic activities Marginalization	Corruption Poverty



***Early Warning response and relevance to P/CVE at the community level***

Following the discussions, the participants were divided into two (2) groups to answer the following questions.

***What are the Early Warning signs in the local community that could be indicators that radicalization will occur?***

GROUPS	COMMENTS
Group 1	Extreme social media posting Promoting extremist religious ideologies Collecting funds for unknown purposes Disgruntled youths Mushrooming of gangs Increased drug addiction Isolation Xenophobia Injustice
Group 2	Change in behavior Presenting threatening behavior Involvement in gangs Engaging with extremist content on Social Media Sudden change in routine Desire to join extremist movements by vocalizing support Sudden increase in income without justification

## Cross-Country Collaboration

Following the presentation, the participants were divided into two (2) groups: the Somalia Delegates and the Zambian Delegates.

The Somalia Delegates were answering the following questions:

1. **What Role do community leaders play in countering Violence Extremism and Radicalization of Young people in the community?**
2. **How does the Community handle the spread of violent extremism and radical narratives?**

The Zambia Delegates on the other hand tackled the following questions:

1. **How do local community leaders identify the process of radicalization?**
2. **What measures can be taken by the local community to counter violent extremism?**

### SOMALIA GROUP

#### ***What role do community leaders play in Countering Violence Extremism and Radicalization of young people in the community?***

By identifying the red flags of Violent Extremism in the Community.  
 Establishment of Community engagement programs such as Civic Spaces  
 Strengthening Women's empowerment  
 Addressing issues that lead to violent extremism in religious institutions such as unemployment.  
 Organizing recreational programs such as sports activities.

#### ***How does the Community handle the spread of violent extremism and radical narratives?***

Conducting awareness campaigns  
 Offering psychological support to the victims  
 Creating opportunities for the reintegrated persons  
 Promote volunteerism to promote integration  
 Know your neighbor campaign  
 Organizing Cultural festivals and national guidance programs  
 Involvement of elders as messengers of peace  
 Rehabilitation and Community Mobilization  
 Involvement of security such as the police in community engagement programs  
 Accountability and Dialogue amongst the Community

### ZAMBIA GROUP

**How do local community leaders identify the process of radicalization?**

Behavioral change  
Change in dress code  
Drug abuse  
Funds from unknown sources

**What measures can be taken by the local community to counter violent extremism?**

Identify the actors that propagate VE in the community  
Diversify the employment opportunities so as not to depend on one economic activity such as mining.  
Promote local and regional counselling centers.  
Capacity building of skills and mentorship for the youth.  
**Promote a culture of peace and unity.**  
**Community engagement in extracurricular activities such as sports.**  
**Introduction of re-integration activities.**  
**Integrate the youth in National programs such as the Zambia National Service.**  
**Include Countering Violent Extremism into the Education Curriculum**  
**Introduce programs for the Boychild.**

**Fostering Sustainable Collaboration for Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) with a Focus on Resilience Building:**

**Action Plan**

**Introduction**

The action plan outlined below aims to foster sustainable collaboration for countering violent extremism (CVE) with a specific focus on resilience building. By addressing the root causes of radicalization and promoting community resilience, this action plan seeks to enhance efforts in preventing and mitigating the spread of violent extremism. Through strategic partnerships, capacity-building initiatives, and targeted interventions, the action plan aims to strengthen the resilience of individuals and communities against extremist ideologies, ultimately contributing to a more peaceful and secure society. The collaborative approach outlined in this action plan emphasizes the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement, information sharing, and coordinated efforts to address the complex challenges posed by violent extremism effectively.

a) Purpose:

To address land issues, community resilience, and countering violent extremism (CVE) by bringing together community leaders, women-led organizations, youth groups, religious leaders, and local police, to equip participants with knowledge, skills, and strategies for preventing and countering violent extremism.

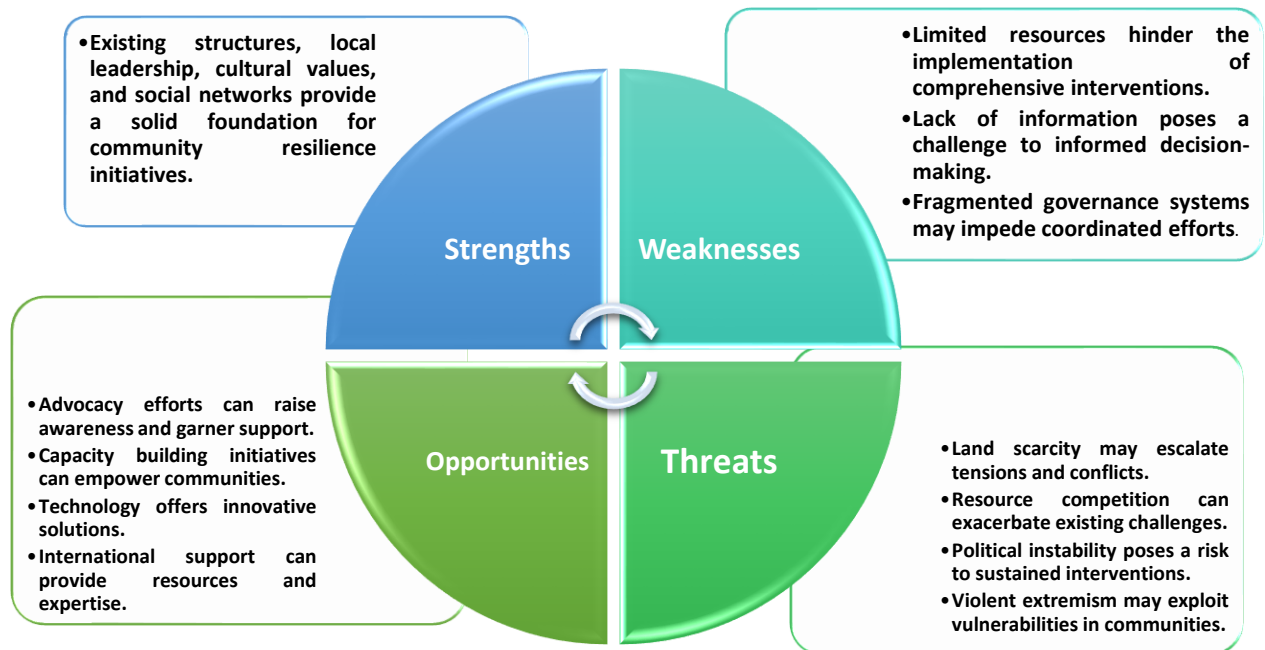
b) Scope:

Focus on Zambia and Somalia, acknowledging shared challenges and fostering cross-country collaboration including interactive sessions, group discussions, and case studies, fostering a dynamic learning environment.

c) Objectives and plan:

- Strengthening Local Capacities for Conflict Resolution and Resource Management
- Empowering Marginalized Groups for Inclusive Decision-Making in Land Management  
Advocating for Legal and Ethical Considerations in Land Tenure Security
- Fostering Cross-Country Collaboration in Sustainable Resource Management

### **SWOT Analysis - Zambia:**



### **Short-, Mid-, Long-Term Intervention Strategies:**

#### **Short Term (0-1 year):**

- Establish localized task forces.
- Implement community-driven surveys.
- Facilitate regular dialogue forums.
- Develop a crisis response plan.
- Address grievances through inter-community dialogues.

#### **Medium Term (2-3 years):**

- Conduct conflict resolution and countering extremist narratives training.
- Promote social cohesion through community events.
- Establish legal and ethical considerations.
- Overcome resource-based conflicts.
- Inclusive council of elders and peace champions

#### **Long Term (3 years +):**

- Collaborate with legal experts.
- Engage in cross-country collaboration.
- Engage the private sector for job opportunities.
- Equal representation in political offices.
- Transparency and accountability for administrations.

## SWOT Analysis - Somalia:



## Short-, Mid-, Long-Term Intervention Strategies:

### Short Term (0-1 year):

- Establish localized task forces, considering Somalia's clan structures.
- Facilitate community-driven surveys with cultural sensitivity.

### Medium Term (2-3 years):

- Conduct conflict resolution training tailored to Somalia's unique socio-political context.
- Promote social cohesion through culturally relevant community events.

### Long Term (3 years +):

- Collaborate with legal experts and traditional leaders to ensure interventions align with Somalia's legal and cultural frameworks.

**Workplan and Timeline:**

**Key: M - Month**

Task/Timeline	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12
<b>Preparation Phase</b>												
Establish project team and roles - Identify lead personnel for project coordination, communication, training, and monitoring & evaluation.												
Stakeholder Engagement - Initiate discussions with identified partners to align goals and responsibilities.												
Needs Assessment and Survey - Conduct a community needs assessment and survey in target areas in Zambia and Somalia												
Web and Social Media Setup: Launch a dedicated project website and set up and optimize social media profiles.												
Community Awareness Sessions: Conduct initial awareness sessions in selected communities about the upcoming CVE training.												
<b>Launch and Training Phase</b>												
Official Launch: Host a virtual or in-person launch event with key stakeholders, trainers, and community representatives.												
Training Development: Develop training materials, manuals, and resources. Collaborate with trainers from Zambia and Somalia.												
Training Sessions: Implement the CVE training program in												





Task/Timeline	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12
Organize a closing event, either virtual or in-person, to acknowledge participants, trainers, and partners.												
Resource Sharing: Share training manuals, resources, and lessons learned with relevant stakeholders and organizations.												
Long-Term Sustainability Planning: Develop a plan for the sustainability of CVE efforts beyond the project duration. Identify potential funding sources and partnerships for ongoing initiatives.												
Public Awareness Campaign: Launch a final public awareness campaign summarizing project achievements and encouraging continued community involvement.												
Continuous Monitoring: Ongoing Throughout the Project Regularly monitor and update the project website and social media channels.												
Engage with stakeholders through webinars, interviews, and community events and activities to carry on initiatives under the collaboration												

**Leadership**

Lead Organization/Person: the team needs to identify project lead(s) responsible for managing the initiative and coordinating with various stakeholders. The team can foster strong relationships with local communities, government agencies, NGOs, and international partners to ensure shared decision-making and collective problem-solving.



### Communication Channels:



### Environmental Scan: External Factors Influencing Action Plan Success

(i) *Political Landscape:*

- Zambia: Political stability and support from the government are crucial for successful implementation. Any political changes or instability may impact the continuity of the action plan.
- Somalia: Given the political challenges, the action plan's success may be influenced by the evolving political situation and the government's capacity to support initiatives.

(ii) *International Relations:*

- Zambia: Support from international organizations and diplomatic relations can enhance resources and expertise. Changes in global dynamics may affect the availability of international aid.

- Somalia: International collaborations are vital for addressing extremism. Global efforts against terrorism may influence the success of the action plan.
- (iii) *Economic Conditions:*
- Zambia: Economic stability affects available resources. Economic downturns may limit funding for the action plan, impacting its execution.
  - Somalia: Economic challenges may hinder the allocation of funds to initiatives. International economic support can play a significant role in the success of the action plan.
- (iv) *Social and Cultural Dynamics:*
- Zambia: Cultural values and social networks are strengths but may also pose challenges if not considered in the design. Public perceptions and attitudes toward the action plan can influence community engagement.
  - Somalia: Cultural nuances and traditional structures are integral to community engagement. Sensitivity to these dynamics is essential for the successful execution of the plan.
- (v) *Security Situation:*
- Zambia: Ensuring the safety of communities is paramount. Any escalation in crime, including gang activities, can hinder the effective implementation of the action plan.
  - Somalia: Given the security threats from extremism, the success of the action plan is closely tied to improvements in overall security conditions.
- (vi) *Technological Advancements:*
- Zambia: Leveraging technology for communication and information dissemination is an opportunity. Access to technology and digital literacy can influence the effectiveness of these strategies.
  - Somalia: Technology can be a powerful tool for communication, especially in conflict areas. Ensuring access to technology and overcoming digital divides are critical for success.
- (vii) *Global and Regional Events:*
- Zambia: Global events, such as economic shifts or health crises, can have cascading effects. Regional stability and cooperation are factors that can either support or impede the action plan.
  - Somalia: Regional dynamics and events, including conflicts in neighbouring countries, can impact the security situation and, consequently, the success of the action plan.
- (viii) *Climate Change:*
- Zambia: Climate-related vulnerabilities, such as droughts, can impact food security and amplify existing challenges. Climate-resilient strategies need to be integrated into the action plan.
  - Somalia: Climate-related crises, including droughts, can exacerbate vulnerabilities. Mitigating these effects is essential for the long-term success of the action plan.
- (ix) *Legal and Regulatory Frameworks:*
- Zambia: Adherence to legal frameworks is critical. Changes in laws or regulatory environments can either facilitate or impede the successful execution of the action plan.

- Somalia: Establishing legal and ethical considerations aligned with Somalia's unique socio-political context is vital for the plan's success.
- (x) *Public Perception and Awareness:*
- Zambia: Public understanding and support for the action plan are essential. Effective communication and awareness campaigns are critical for success.
  - Somalia: Raising awareness within communities about the action plan and its objectives is crucial for garnering support and fostering collaboration.