Evaluating Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Programming

BACKGROUND

As the threat posed by contemporary terrorism has continued to evolve, governments, international organizations and civil society actors have ventured new measures to prevent and suppress extremist violence. Perhaps the most significant development in counterterrorism policy in recent years has been the emergence and institutionalization of "countering violent extremism" (CVE) measures. CVE aims to prevent radicalization and recruitment to terrorism by strengthening the resilience of individuals and communities against the appeal of violent extremism. The CVE label now attaches to a broadly defined range of initiatives from public diplomacy, to community engagement and outreach, to education, cultural, sporting and development activities, and to individual-level interventions for those thought to be particularly vulnerable. Across the breadth of CVE, practitioners are beginning to encounter a series of challenges relating to program development and implementation, as well as evaluation, which is critical in assessing impact.

To explore these issues, the Global Center on Cooperative Security and Public Safety Canada, with additional support from the Government of Canada under the auspices of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), co-organized a symposium in March 2013 that focused more deeply on the evaluation of CVE programming and the sharing of good practices and lessons learned from recent CVE efforts. Drawing from these discussions, the Global Center produced “Evaluating Countering Violent Extremism Programming: Practice and Progress,” a report analyzing CVE practice and offering suggestions for further development in the field of evaluation and its application to CVE programming.
ABOUT THIS PROJECT

Through discussions at the 2013 Symposium and based on a recommendation in the outcome report, the Global Center, with support from the government of Canada, is developing a digest of CVE practice that will serve as an illustrative guide for practitioners in implementing and evaluating CVE programs. Beyond informing ongoing efforts to evaluate CVE measures - especially those being pursued by civil society organizations - the digest will provide an initial analysis of the findings of CVE evaluations undertaken to date. In compiling the digest, the Global Center will undertake documentary, survey, and interview research with officials from governments and international organizations, as well as civil society actors, who are involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of CVE measures. The Global Center will convene a stakeholder workshop in early 2015 to review the outcomes of this research, with a view to publishing a final report in spring 2015.

ABOUT THE GLOBAL CENTER ON COOPERATIVE SECURITY

The Global Center works with governments, international organizations, and civil society to develop and implement comprehensive and sustainable responses to complex international security challenges through collaborative policy research, context-sensitive programming, and capacity development. In collaboration with a global network of expert practitioners and partner organizations, the Global Center fosters stronger multilateral partnerships and convenes key stakeholders to support integrated and inclusive security policies across national, regional, and global levels.

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