

Pathways to Female Radicalization and Desistance: Learning from the UK's Channel Program

BACKGROUND

Effective strategies, plans, and programs to prevent and counter violent extremism (P/CVE) should account for the diverse roles of women as perpetrators, supporters, and victims of terrorism, as well as community leaders working to prevent the spread of violent extremism. Women and girls have played key roles as ideologues, facilitators, fundraisers, and recruiters for violent extremist groups. They have participated as fighters and served to inspire others to join these groups. The international community increasingly recognizes that failure to account for the agency and motivations of women in supporting violent extremism can result in ineffectual responses. UN Security Council 2242 (2015), for example, called on the Security Council to improve its working methods in relation to women, peace, and security, including improved gender-sensitive research on drivers of radicalization to violent extremism for women.

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

To help address this gap in the quantitative research on P/CVE, the Global Center on Cooperative Security (Global Center), with support from UN Women, is undertaking a research project to analyze trends in motivation, circumstances, and trajectories of women and girls between the ages of 13 and 30, engaged in, or at risk of, radicalization to violent extremism. Based on experiences and insights of intervention providers for the UK's Channel Program, this study aims to expand and deepen the evidence base on the drivers of radicalization and factors of disengagement and desistance among women and girls. Drawing on the research findings, the Global Center will provide concrete policy recommendations to help enhance the effectiveness of gender-sensitive intervention program.

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. The Global Center's work focuses on enhancing community resilience to violent extremism and on supporting national and non-governmental institutions in responding to multidimensional security challenges. 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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