

MAINSTREAMING PCVE INTO REGIONAL STRATEGY AND PLANNING.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Nothing can be fixed until
it is understood.

SESSION OBJECTIVE

To explore the integration of PCVE into regional strategies and planning.

AGENDA

- ☐ Introduction
- ☐ Conceptual Clarification
- ☐ Factors of Violent Extremism in Nigeria
- ☐ Types of Conflicts in the North West Geo-Political Zone
- ☐ Understanding the Need for Mainstreaming PCVE
- ☐ Regional Integration of PCVE in Practice
- ☐ Challenges to Mainstreaming PCVE into Regional Strategy and Planning
- ☐ Mitigation Strategies
- ☐ Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

- Violent extremism poses a significant threat to global peace and security. Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) is a critical component of regional security and stability. Mainstreaming PCVE into regional strategies and planning is essential for addressing the complex and evolving nature of violent extremism.
- The North West geopolitical zone of Nigeria includes the states of Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, and Zamfara.

- The zone is one of the poorest in Nigeria, with a poverty rate of 80% in 2022, and rural areas severely neglected (Global Food Security, 2023).
- With a high population density estimated at 49 million people, around 23% of the total population of the country (National Population Commission, 2022).
- The entire populace of the states in the North West are predominantly farmers, but a large segment of the population is also engaged in animal husbandry and commerce.
- The North West region has the second highest rate of non-Western educated individuals as well as the largest number of out-of-school children (IPCR, 2024).

- The prevalence of large forests extending across the states of the zone has facilitated violent acts by gangs who use the expansive and dense forests to terrorize human settlements in rural areas and commuters on highways.
- The proliferation and easy access to sophisticated light arms and ammunition, which are smuggled across the country's porous borders, as well as the fallout from the degradation of Boko Haram insurgents in the North East region compounded the issue. Many of these insurgents escaped into the scattered dense forests of the North West states (Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, 2016).

- Since 2011, competition over diminishing natural resources, particularly water and grazing land, has led to recurrent violence between herding and farming communities. Exponential demographic growth, environmental degradation, and climate change have increased pressure on limited land resources.
- In response, armed groups and gangs, operating under the banner of "bandits," and recently the resurgence of "Lakurawa," have formed to perpetrate violence, making the region the current epicenter of violence in the country.

- The violence is further impoverishing the population and destroying agricultural, market, and trade activities. It has claimed at least 13,000 lives between 2011 and 2023 (Global Observatory, 2024).
- The confluence of poverty and violence highlights the region's paradox: immense resource potential coexisting with persistent instability. Understanding this dynamic is essential for developing effective governance and tailored development strategies to address the region's unique needs.

Conceptual Clarification

Violence

- Violence involves the use of force by perpetrators against individuals, groups, or society with the intent to injure, maim, destroy, seize property, and kill both humans and animals, ultimately fostering chaos and insecurity.

- Galtung (1969) distinguishes between “direct violence,” and “structural violence,”
- Using violence to influence the outcome of a conflict is often irreversible in cases where the action is wrong. For instance, if you are a trade unionist, a woman, a mother, a football player, a friend, a daughter, a Muslim, a sociologist, a social democrat, and a scholar, and the conflict lies with your role as a social democrat, targeting you erases all the other roles you represent. Violence lacks the clarity needed to distinguish between various roles (Jorgen, n.d.).

Violent Extremism

- Ruggero and Giorgio (2025) sees violent extremism as individuals, associations or religious movements that use, incite, threaten with, legitimize or support violence and hatred to further their religious, social or political goals, motivated by exclusionary religious beliefs, and based on the rejection of out-group faiths and freedom of worship principles, and centred on intolerance towards all views other than the in-group.

Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE)

- According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria Policy Framework and National Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (2017) PCVE is defined as policies and activities that aim to prevent and counter individuals and groups from committing or materially supporting ideologically motivated violence against innocent targets by discrediting the messages and propaganda of the extremists, disrupting their plans and activities, and challenging their actions. It also includes measures to engage and change the behaviour of violent extremist offenders, rehabilitate and reintegrate them back to society.

Mainstreaming

- Mainstreaming involves integrating PCVE strategies and approaches into various aspects of society.

Factors of Violent Extremism in Nigeria

- Push factors refer to structural conditions that create an environment conducive to the growth of violent extremism, such as unemployment, poverty, inequality, social exclusion, health-related issues, other socio-economic factors (although not in isolation), and governance challenges.
- Pull factors are those that facilitate the mobilization of individuals and groups toward extreme positions or ideologies. These factors include grievances (which serve as vulnerabilities to be mobilized), the sense of belonging to a group, and the appeal to ego or status.
- Charismatic violent extremist leaders play a significant role in mobilizing citizens, both online and offline, toward extreme ideologies (PF-NAP, 2017).

Types of Conflicts in the North West Geo-Political Zone (IPCR, 2024)

S/No .	STATE	TYPES OF CONFLICTS	PARTIES
1	Kano	Ethnic Conflict	Hausa, Igbo and other ethnic groups
		Religious Conflict	Muslims, Christians
		Political and Electoral Conflict	NNPP, APC, PDP, and Yandaba
		Chieftaincy Disputes	Emirs, Political Leaders
		Gangs Group	Yan Daba

2	Sokoto	Farmers-Herders Conflict	Nomadic Pastoralists, sedentary crop farmers
		Banditry	Militia groups – Yan Taadda, Yan Bingida, Yan Sakai
		Ethnic Conflict	Fulani vs. Hausa
		Conflict over natural Resources	Mining officers, Legal miners, illegal foreign miners, local illegal miners, youths
		Lakurawa	Lakurawa
		Religious Conflict	Muslim, Muslim sects, Christians

3	Kebbi	Farmers-Herders Conflict	Nomadic Pastoralists, sedentary crop farmers
		Banditry	Militia groups – Yan Taadda, Yan Bingida, Yan Sakai
		Lakurawa	Lakurawa
		Conflict over natural Resources	Mining officers, Legal miners, illegal foreign miners, local illegal miners, youths
		Religious Conflict	Intra-Islamic sectarianism

4	Jigawa	Farmers-Herders Conflict	Nomadic herders, sedentary crop farmers, youths, foreigners, arms and drug traffickers, Bandits.
		Banditry	Bandits
		Political and Electoral Conflict	APC and PDP politicians, political thugs,

		Conflict	Politicians, political thugs
		Ethno-religious conflict	Ethnic and religious leaders, youth groups, militant wings, fundamentalists, drug and arm traffickers
		Banditry	Bandits

6	Katsina	Farmers-Herders Conflict	Nomadic Pastoralists, sedentary crop farmers
		Banditry	Militia groups – Yan Taadda, Yan Bingida, Yan Sakai
		Ethnic Conflict	Fulani vs. Hausa
		Conflict over natural Resources	Mining officers, Legal miners, illegal foreign miners, local illegal miners, youths
		Political and Electoral Conflict	APC and PDP politicians, political thugs
		Religious Conflict	Muslim, Muslim sects, Christians

7	Zamfara	Farmers-Herders Conflict	Nomadic herders and sedentary crop farmers
		Electoral and Political Conflict	APC, PDP Politicians, political thugs
		Natural Resource Conflict	Local and foreign illegal miners
		Banditry	Bandits, Yan Sakai

Understanding the Need for Mainstreaming PCVE

- Mainstreaming PCVE into regional planning acknowledges that violent extremism is not solely a security issue but a complex socio-political and developmental challenge.

Key Principles for Mainstreaming PCVE

- **Inclusivity and Multi-stakeholder Engagement**
- **Prevention Focus**
- **Regional Cooperation**
- **Human Rights and Rule of Law**
- **Sustainability**

Strategic Approaches to PCVE Integration

- **Policy Alignment**
- **Community Engagement**
- **Capacity Building**
- **Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning**
- **Community Empowerment**

Regional Integration of PCVE in Practice

- **Regional Development Initiatives**
- **The SARVE** (System and Structure Strengthening Approach Against Radicalisation to Violent Extremism) project by ActionAid is a significant initiative aimed at addressing violent extremism in Nigeria. The project focuses on enhancing community resilience, particularly among youth and women, by providing livelihood opportunities, training, and fostering peaceful coexistence.
- **Amnesty Programme:**

Resettlement Scheme for Persons Impacted by Conflict (RSPIC): The RSPIC was launched in February 2024 by the FGN to address the humanitarian crisis caused by internal displacements across the nation, beginning from the North West geo-political zone.

Psychological Operations (PSYOPS): PSYOPS have been employed as a critical non-kinetic approach in countering threats to national security. These initiatives include information dissemination, community engagement, and strategic communication campaigns aimed at countering the narrative environment for peace and security.

Challenges to Mainstreaming PCVE into Regional Strategy and Planning

- **Weak Institutional Framework and Corruption.**
- **Prevalence of Socioeconomic Inequalities and Youth Vulnerability.**
- **Inadequate Community Engagement.**
- **Misinformation and Propaganda.**

Mitigation Strategies

- Emphasis should be on establishing an integrated PCVE framework that fosters collaboration between government agencies, civil society, private sector actors, and traditional institutions.
- Government across all levels must prioritise adequate resourcing of empowerment programmes and investing on development projects that will create jobs, particularly for the youth.
- **Countering Misinformation:** Use social media campaigns and community networks to disseminate accurate information and promote peace. Engage local influencers and leaders to counter extremist narratives effectively.

Conclusion

- Mainstreaming PCVE into regional strategy and planning is essential to address the complex and evolving nature of violent extremism. However, several factors continue to impede the effective implementation of the strategy and planning for PCVE. Key challenges include weak institutional framework and corruption, Prevalence of socioeconomic inequalities and youth vulnerability. By addressing these challenges strategically, regional organizations can create a more coordinated and robust approach to countering violent extremism.

