SPdC

Interactive Dialogues on Countering Violent Extremism

The Composite Report

2020

SOCIAL POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

www.spdc.org.pk

SPdC

The Composite Report

Interactive Dialogues on Countering Violent Extremism

2020

Social Policy and Development Centre

The Team

Dr. Khalida Ghaus
Nazish Brohi
Muhammad Asif Iqbal

Sana Lokhandwala, *Editing Support*
Rizwanullah Khan, *Graphic Designing*

Contents

List of Acronyms

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CTD	Counter Terrorism Department
CVE	Countering violent extremism
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
ETA	Euskadi Ta Askatasuna
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FIF	Falahi Insaniyat Foundation
IDs	Interactive Dialogues
IRA	Irish Republican Army
ISPR	Inter-Services Public Relations
JuD	Jamat-ud-Dawa
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
NAB	National Accountability Bureau Ordinance
NACTA	National Counter Terrorism Authority
NAP	National Action Plan
NOC	No Objection Certificate
PE	Peace Education
PIPS	Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies
PRODA	Public and Representative Office Disqualification Act
SPDC	Social Policy and Development Center
TTP	Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VE	Violent Extremism

1 | **Introduction**

The Social Policy and Development Center (SPDC) recognizes violent extremism as a growing sociological, political and security concern in Sindh province. In the earlier years of the fight against terrorism, the focus was overwhelmingly on the northwestern and western parts of the country and Sindh remained off the radar, despite its history of sectarian strife and violent ethnic mobilization. Recently, there has been an increasing identification of the myriad ways extremism has manifested in Sindh in general and Karachi in particular.

SPDC is attempting to expand the knowledge base on violent extremism (VE). It aims to bridge the gap between practitioners who grapple with its everyday fallouts, and analysts who theorize societal trends. Such interactions provide the otherwise infrequent opportunity for civil society stakeholders to network and develop linkages for developing a shared understanding of issues. In this regard, SPDC conducted a series of informed and interactive dialogues (IDs) on various topics covering a range of the drivers of violent extremism (VE) in Pakistan. The interactive dialogues initiative dovetails into wider efforts to develop an informed conversation on local specificities of violent extremism and on how to process and respond to them collectively.

SPDC hopes to contribute to the provincial consensus-building process which precedes finding a way forward. As such, it intends to further the conversation around the search for solutions. It has separated four different aspects to approach the issue of CVE, and held dialogues on each, converging its findings into an online conference bringing together different facets and approaches.

- The dialogues were held and position papers were prepared on the following themes:
- Intolerance and violent extremism
- Unemployment, youth and violent extremism
- Governance failures and violent extremism
- Corruption, elite impunity and violent extremism

This composite report summarizes the findings and reflections discussed and debated in the process and ends with highlighting possible future directions for redress.

Purpose and Methodology

SPDC envisioned a consultative process for discussion and knowledge production on violent extremism particular to Sindh province. Recognizing the dearth of context-specific, localized research, it aimed for a series of dialogues as a first step; a rapid appraisal of the on-ground situation to flag which knowledge gaps exist and what the basic variations and similarities were with other VE contexts.

The Interactive Dialogue series was also meant to provide opportunities for developing linkages between government authorities and civil society stakeholders and providing a platform for interaction between policymakers, researchers, activists, and practitioners.

As an initial step, a comprehensive literature review was conducted around the four identified themes within the ambit of violent extremism, with a focus on Pakistan, and where possible, a concentration on Sindh province. The literature review helped shape the guiding questions for the dialogues, and presented the acquired collective learnings on the subject, included in each position paper.

Each of the four dialogues was led by three to four discussants who provided the initial observations and analysis, followed by intensive, free-flowing discussion. The guiding questions are listed in Annexure B. The ID groups were kept deliberately small in number, with twelve participants or less, to boost the time allocated for discussion and to raise the level of debate. After each of the four IDs, a follow-up session was conducted with a separate group representing the government and the civil society, where the discussion and findings of the previous group were presented, along with the identified future directions. This was done to fine-tune recommendations and get feedback on any major issues that might have been missed or any nuances lost.

In each event, participants were assured of confidentiality and encouraged to speak openly. In this report, as well as in the position papers, no quotes have been attributed to particular speakers, and no disclosures will be made about which participant said what.

There was however some deviation from the intended methodology after the first three IDs were conducted. This was due to the outbreak of Covid-19 and a consequent national and smart/ contained lockdowns. As a result, the fourth dialogue and the concluding webinar had to be held online via Zoom.

This composite report brings all the position papers and discussions together. It intends to provide a primer for all the debates and discussions that have been held in the four themes of violent extremism, both, through SPDC's Interactive Dialogue process, as well as through different writings of national and international scholars and practitioners reflected in the literature review. It hopes to prompt further discussions and research that can build nuanced understanding and move forward on redress. Its conclusions present recommendations for future directions.

Understanding Violent Extremism

At the outset, disparities in understanding have been an impediment to consensus building on violent extremism in Pakistan. There is no shared, collective understanding of how violent extremism is understood and perceived. The literature also shows varied understandings of the terms involved. The state apparatus and security discourse use the concept differently from how society does. Within society, lived experiences of the people and their encounters with VE also vary.

There is no agreed-upon definition of terrorism, terrorist, militant, extremism, extremist, radicalism, radical, Islamist, fundamentalist, or any other term deployed to understand the use of violence and religion. There is not even any shared understanding of aims and objectives of different groups (fighting to implement Sharia across the country, or for preserving enclaves for imposing their version of religion or using religion for other purposes, to topple the existing government, or to take over and install own government, or cause a civil war, or to kill all belonging to specific sects or groups, or throw foreign governments out of the region, or redraw the map of the country, etc.) Nor is there any shared understanding of how the use of violence for political purposes differs between different groups that use violence, whether based on ethnicity, secessionism, or religion.

What the majority may see as VE, certain communities may consider it differently. For instance, in urban areas, the Jirga or the Wadera system are seen as systemic and overt violence, but those living under it may consider it a survival imperative. Many people from the erstwhile FATA[1] region say joining the Taliban was also a survival compulsion for them.

Experts reiterated that over a decade into the VE problem and CVE initiatives in Pakistan, most are still working with broad brush strokes without localized, nuanced approaches. There is little appreciation that the solution in Karachi will not work in Balochistan and what works in Gilgit will not work in South Punjab.

The lack of agreed-upon definitions has influenced the terminologies and concepts used in this report.

2 | Literature Review

The following literature review was carried out to explicate how analysts, scholars, practitioners, and policymakers have understood the issue of violent extremism, assessed past experiences, and built intellectual capital on the issue. It reflects on dynamics that impact Pakistan in general and Sindh in particular. While violent extremism is a broad-ranging field with multiple themes, this review corresponds specifically to the themes of the interactive dialogues, namely: pathways to militancy; socio-economic root causes; impact of governance – including the criminal justice system, corruption and elite capture, and exit and reintegration possibilities for militants. It helps enhance a comprehensive understanding of the concerns around VE mobilization and disengagement.

A summary review of the post-2000 literature on extremism, terrorism, and militancy in Pakistan shows they share the same prominent gaps. There is a significant dearth of primary source analysis. The publications are almost entirely based on experts' analysis of issues, and none on what the perpetrators – which could mean radicals/ extremists/ militants/ terrorists – are saying themselves. Whether this is because of the lack of access to perpetrators or because researchers are not fieldwork specialists on the issue, most analyses are built on a speculative diagnosis. Additionally, there is no critique of such studies or their methodologies.

Most work on violent extremism usually only tracks religious extremism, whereas in Karachi for instance, the issue is more of secular forms of violence. Violence in Karachi usually pivots around i) issues of ethnicity, ii) issues of migrants, and iii) engineered by formal political parties. One major line of thought in the IDs was that there is no spontaneous violence in Karachi – that it was always organized, funded, and generated. A better understanding of who perpetuates violence and how needs to be developed. To understand why violence is a recurring phenomenon, a deeper understanding of the political economy of violence needs to be developed. Given the general environment of informality and resultant resource grabbing, and given that the local governance does not deliver for citizens and remains a site for political wrangling, violence becomes a way of mediating claims to scarce resources.

Pathways to Militancy

Possibly due to the above-mentioned gaps, the literature has not been able to establish causality for understanding why individuals take up violence as a mode of struggle. There are many factors that bear in which various publications identify, but no specific studies are available on tipping points which enable the transition from grief, frustration, aggravation, or anger into actual violence, nor on understanding why some make this transition while the majority do not.

The root causes of violent extremism are complex and multifaceted. After years of trying to isolate single-dimensional triggers that push people into VE, a holistic understanding has evolved that violent extremism is produced by a matrix of influences, and internal and external push and pull factors.

There are various approaches/ schools of thought on pathways to violent extremism. Some frameworks broadly summarized by the Counter Terrorism and Technology Centre[2] are:

- Rational Choice theory, where people turn to VE as a result of a cost-benefit analysis and see the end objective they fight for as a public good to be shared by all
- Social Movement theory, which posits that VE is a radical form of collective action which challenges the status quo – aggression becomes a means of negotiation
- Psychological theories focus on individuals involved in VE, examining personal inclinations, workings of the mind, and how their formative experiences shape their world view and actions
- Ideological approach theories examine ideological frameworks VE groups prescribe to, whether political or religious, and accept those as prime motives
- Socio-Economic Structures, an approach which diagnosis that poverty, inequality and economic conditions combined with helplessness make people susceptible, and VE actors step in to ameliorate situations

The interactive dialogues conducted by SPDC focused on variables under the last approach, on Socio-Economic Structures, and the composite report focuses on this framework.

Socio-Economic Root Causes

The common diagnosis in this framework refers to the 'greed versus grievance'[3] spectrum to explain the two most commonly posited motivations. 'Greed' refers to the benefits or rewards VE can offer such as money, power, status, deference, control over others, and over territory. 'Grievance' indicates that people turn to VE to assert or defend social identities, whether religious, ethnic or class.

Basit (2015)[4] maps a class analysis of the manifestations of VE, finding that in poor and low-income groups, radicalization is sectarian in nature, in middle-income groups it stems from political issues such as the occupation of Afghanistan and Indian-held Kashmir, whereas in the upper strata the motivation is pan-Islamist causes such as the revival of Islamic laws, setting up an Islamic state or restoring a caliphate. While this postulation is not presented with empirical data, it may well be valid. It may be possible to do a similar assessment for other forms of VE which are not based on religion, namely ethnic violence, gang violence, and various mafias.

Blair et. al (2013)[5] in a study on Pakistan found the poor suffer more as they live and work in densely populated urban areas targeted by militants, cannot move to more affluent and less violent areas, are more dependent on daily functioning economies of labour and trade, and more dependent on public health and infrastructure, concluding that poverty reduces support for militant groups. Vaillancourt and Boyd[6] dispute the causal relationship between poverty and extremism/terrorism arguing there are more poor people than there are terrorists or acts of terror.

Youth unemployment is widely regarded as a threat to social stability. Some studies show joining armed groups (whether on the government or opposition sides) can be an attractive option in the

absence of other opportunities (Justino 2010, Keen 1998, Walter 2004)[7]. However, Idris (2016)[8] concludes after a review, "While numerous reports and papers claim youth unemployment is a factor in youth participation in violence, few, if any, studies provide concrete proof of this."

Stewart (2015) studying post-conflict situations for UNDP makes the case that the link between employment and sustainable peace is not simply about creating jobs but about a) the distribution of formal sector jobs by groups in a way that horizontal inequalities in job distribution do not become a new or reiterated grievance, and b) the conditions of employment in the informal sector are improved, whereby work in the informal sector actually translates into livelihood opportunities. "Simply supporting job creation, without consideration for the distribution of jobs across groups and without improving informal sector livelihoods, is likely to do little for peacebuilding." [9]

There has not been enough empirical research done in Pakistan's context to establish whether there is a variation between those joining different kinds of VE groups (faith-based, organized mafias, street crime, gang wars, ethnopolitical violent groups) and education levels, and there is a dearth of comparative work. A World Bank study on violent extremists in the MENA region [10] found no evidence of higher education being a deterrent from joining VE groups, and instead found that different levels of education create different roles inside VE groups: administrators are likely to have tertiary education, suicide fighters likely to have secondary education and frontline fighters likely to have only primary education. They found religious knowledge to be low and present only in the more highly educated recruits. The effect of education, in this case, impacts the role and function individuals have in VE groups, and not on whether they join VE groups in the first place.

Also, a study (Ford, 2017) urges a precautionary note about 'weaponizing education'[11]. The near-universal focus on education as a panacea changes its purpose. Securitized education becomes fixed on 'transforming mindsets', blurs the distinction between the uneducated and the extremist, making uneducated people the frightening and threatening 'Other', while the ones getting educated get recast as soldiers fighting extremism, creating other sets of insecurities.

In Pakistan, several programs of peace education (PE) have been launched post 9/11. However, no comprehensive study has been conducted to assess the impact of such programs. A research study by Zahid Ahmed[12] attempted to fill this gap, and found that peace education was not institutionalized and limited to NGOs; constrained by the lack of capacity; implemented in ad hoc manner; missed targeting critical beneficiaries; remained led by westernized models; and further suffered by the government's increasing distrust of NGOs. It noted that while good pedagogical material has been developed in local languages, much of it is based on the western model of interpersonal conflict management and not on collective societal conflicts, and neither do they critically analyze wars to understand the financial and human costs of conflict, nor do they address disarmament, environmental security, and structural violence. Ahmed (2018) emphasizes the need to revamp and institutionalize peace education through curriculum reforms. This would overcome another barrier identified in this study; conflict-sensitive approaches limit and compromise the outreach of PE programs to safer areas, outside the control of VE actors and consequently beyond relevant target groups.

Schmid (2013) [13] includes economic conditions in socio-economic marginalization and political exclusion as a push factor, but places equal primacy on a) lack of future perspectives, b) reaction to prior experience of violence, c) anger on injustice and discrimination, and d) unresolved political conflicts. Schmid argues that ideological radicalization, where it happens at all, generally follows after individuals join VE groups.

Stewart (2015)[14] maps several factors that lead to radicalization, in which economic exclusion is one among many others. Listed factors are a) political exclusion, b) perceptions of injustice and discrimination, c) rejection of the current socio-economic and political system, d) weak state capacity and failing security, e) changing global culture/ globalization, and f) rejection of diversity. While there may be varying methodological approaches and different schools of thought on causality and linear connections, there is cross-board acceptance of the role governance plays in VE, whether as its trigger or as a means of responding to it.

Impact of Governance

The UNDP (2016) identifies connections between governance and VE, noting the two forms of governance failures particularly conducive to the spread of violent extremism: failure to deliver basic public services; and a breakdown in law, order, and justice. The UNDP report on preventing violent extremism in Pakistan notes, "Failures or inefficiencies in the justice dispensation mechanisms erodes trust in the state, and allows violent extremist groups to setup alternative options for dispensing justice; often through violence and miscarriages of justice principles. Similarly, the inability of a state to provide security and establish law and order creates the physical space for violent extremist groups to operate freely, impose their order, and incentivize individuals to join such groups as the most effective and powerful actor."[15]

The deficit of justice poised by issues of the judiciary clearly forms part of the landscape of dysfunctions. The SPDC 2010 report on the Social Impact of the Security Crisis notes, "The failure of the judicial system in strengthening the 'rule of law' in the country and its politicization such as political appointments of judges in the high courts and supreme courts caused a culture of power-confinement. As a result, the judicial system of Pakistan was unable to protect a large number of vulnerable and disenfranchised people."[16]

In a sharp critical analysis, Siddiqui (2011) notes the deep structural malaise, "The vital linkages and inter-dependencies between formal legal rights and actual economic and political conditions necessary for their actualization have been consistently ignored… As a result, this discourse [on judicial reform] is largely superficial; process-focused rather than engaging with substantive issues of justice; about foreground institutions rather than background norms; and, therefore, socially and politically de-contextualized."[17]

This has tangible, ubiquitous manifestations. The World Justice Project (2017)[18] in its survey on the rule of law in Pakistan found 82% of the respondents had experienced a legal problem in the preceding two years, of which only 14% turned to a third party to adjudicate, mediate or resolve the problem. This shows the low level of confidence people have in the justice institutions of Pakistan. In

assessing why the National Judicial Policy has not been implemented, Sara, Ansari and Jabeen (2018) [19] trace the issues down to "Lack of stakeholders' ownership, deficient political will, corruption at all levels, lack of proper implementation planning, lapses in evaluation, and apathetic corporate culture."

Researchers at RUSI [20] tested all prevalent hypothesis on violent extremism against empirical evidence and weighted the following hypotheses related to governance:

1. Government failure to provide basic services allows extremist groups to meet these needs and build support: They found this to have strong empirical support. Where VE groups deliver services like health, education and welfare, they gain support at the cost of state and government legitimacy. Government failure creates a vacuum which such groups fill, such as the LTTE in Sri Lanka, Hamas, Hezbollah and Gamaa Islamiyya in Egypt.

2. Failure of the state to provide security and justice and people's experience of predatory and oppressive security sector institutions are influential drivers towards extremism. This was found to have mixed evidence. Lack of state provision of justice and security was an influential but not necessary factor since VE groups also function in states which provide both effectively. On one hand, such deficits create grievances and delegitimize the state – for instance ensuring people's support for the Taliban in Afghanistan is interlinked to the context of insecurity that prevailed in the country before them. Experiencing humiliation and injustice by state forces helps extremists recruit members and attract sympathy. On the other hand, developed, stable democracies of the west have also experienced such groups, such as Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) in Spain and the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in the UK.

3. In the absence of peace and security, populations are often ready to accept any entity that offers stability. The researchers found strong evidence for this. In the anarchy and state failure, people turn to whoever offers stability, at least in the short term. Boko Haram in Nigeria and ISIS in Syria are clear examples of this, as is many people supporting warlords in Afghanistan.

The discussions in SPDC's Interactive Dialogue on governance mirrored the discussion held by the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) on governance issues in Punjab with reference to VE[21]. They found that the link between ill governance and extremism was not linear in that people did not take up arms against the state because the state neglected them. Instead, weak governance meant the state did not have the capacity to check the rise of militant groups or carry out effective de-weaponization, nor could it display a responsive criminal justice system that could deter extremists from violence. The PIPs deliberations concluded that areas 'excluded' from governance and outside the mainstream, whether erstwhile FATA or Balochistan's 'B Areas' or south Punjab, provided not just physical but also ideological havens.

Waseem (2019) documents the organizational limitations that the Karachi police operates within, citing "Political patronage, financial weaknesses, corruption, poor training, legal frameworks entrenched in colonial thought and practices, unimplemented reforms, and a general lack of faith in the courts,"[22] within the larger context of grave multiple security threats. According to open source data compiled by Waseem[23], in Karachi over 3,000 civilians were killed by the police in 'encounters'

between 2011 and 2018. In one particularly notorious case, Sindh's 'encounter specialist', SP Rao Anwar killed 444 people in 745 encounters in which not a single policeman was injured or killed – nor did the official in question face a single inquiry[24].

On the other hand, the police itself operates in a high-stress environment, weighed down by limitations. Over seven thousand policemen have been killed in the line of duty across the country[25]. In November 2014, BBC headlined Karachi as a 'City at War' where on average a police officer was killed every day[26].

The link between corruption and violent extremism is equally complex and global literature shows that the relationship is indicative rather than causal. An overview shows that while there is consensus on the presence and consequent problems of elite capture and elite impunity, the discussion on corruption is more varied and contested. Massarrat Abid and Zahra Shah (2011) reviewed all English language newspapers in Pakistan for their coverage of corruption over two years[27]. They found that the focus was primarily on financial corruption in the public sector and nothing on corruption in the private sector. Kaufmann (2005), on the other hand, posits that one of the 'myths' of the anti-corruption discourse is that the public sector is solely responsible for it. "A common fallacy is to focus solely on the failings of the public sector. The reality is much more complex since powerful private interests often exert undue influence in shaping public policy, institutions, and state legislation."[28]

The question of what gets categorized as corruption and what does not remains a recurring theme. Asad Sayeed (2010)[29] draws attention to institutionalized corruption such as tax breaks and legal lacunae through which black money can be laundered; land grants given to military personnel, covered as a legal entitlement; and covert security policy and secret security operations of which there is no account. This is further corroborated by Suddie (2011), cited by the UNDP Asia-Pacific report on Anti-Corruption Strategies, where it states, "The National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NAB), a relatively weak agency, was made a focal point for implementing the strategy. Moreover, exclusion of the armed forces and the judiciary from being accountable under the strategy made it defunct from the start as it resulted into lack of commitment from key stakeholders."[30]

Muhammad Ali Jan (2020)[31] points towards a Gallup poll in which Pakistanis were asked to identify the single biggest problem facing the country, where a mere 4% identified corruption as the main issue (less than those who identified Kashmir, and the dengue virus), while 76% thought inflation and unemployment were the biggest problems. What distinguishes developmental outcomes, according to him, "Is not the act, nor even the amount of such payments, but their predictability and the services that states are able to provide in return." Brohi (2017) suggests the ubiquity of corruption stems not as much from dysfunctional laws, but the difference between legality and legitimacy of corruption – where ordinary people accept it and practice it because they have no other choice, and this in effect normalizes it. "Corruption then is not an act per se, but a 'how-to' manual for managing encounters with modern administration, whether of state or urban informality."[32]

Scholars have also challenged the global corruption discourse. Harrison (2006) draws attention to the politics of who labels it, who draws attention to and who undertakes to fight it, referring to "The realities of power involved in the attribution of corruption"[33]; Dan Hough tracks the history of the

'anti-corruption industry' as a relatively new phenomenon and traces it back to an October 1996 speech by the head of World Bank James Wolfensohn[34] and its subsequent push to the development centre stage; and Farooq Suleria (2013) signals it as a deflection from global structural inequalities and neo-liberal productions such as the debt trap for third world countries[35].

Hussain (2019) concludes the elite controls the country's state and economy. He postulates that less than 2% of the population could steer state and markets for self-enrichment at a cost to the poor, and "The state which has to ensure equitable distribution of gains from economic growth is also controlled by the same elite that evades taxes and appropriates the public expenditures for its own benefits. Access to the institutions that deliver public goods and services is intermediated by the elite through a patronage-based system."[36]

Writing about the elite, Pasha (2018) points out whether their acquisition of wealth is intergenerational or recent, the rich and powerful are "Able to operate successfully within the existing framework of laws and institutions." He reiterates the process of state capture through the drafting and implementation of rules and laws which accord them special privileges. In recent years, the allocation of residential or commercial land has become a primary source of large capital gains, which Pasha traces to large landowners, the defence establishment, multinational companies, commercial banks, real estate developers, and elected politicians, in that specific order[37].

There is a body of work that questions the assumption of a unified or homogenous elite with synchronized interests. Umair Javed and Ijaz Nabi (2017)[38] trace regional and scalar challenges, positing the Pakistani state's 'Heterogeneous fragility'. Waseem (2011)[39] on the other hand, tracks the inter-elite contentions for power and privilege but shows how the state reinvents itself to accommodate these pressures into a new equilibrium. There is a plethora of literature on intra-institutional conflicts, ethnic mobilization by elites, and the centrifugal and centripetal forces through the civil-military divide.

Reintegration Possibilities

Looking into the question of the reintegration of militants in Pakistan, Basit (2017) compared the models used in Egypt and Indonesia to suggest urgent steps to reshape Pakistani policies. Like in the former two countries, judicial trials and prison sentences should precede the reintegration process, without which the legitimacy of the justice system will get undermined. Basit shows that authorities in both countries sought ideological transformation of militant groups and not just behavioral changes, and that the change be communicated downstream, by top leadership to lower cadres. However, in asking whether the VE actors in Pakistan would agree to these changes, he concludes that they most likely would not, as it would take away their legitimacy in the eyes of their followers. He cautions that "If the reintegration strategy is not carefully thought out, the reintegration of these militant groups will be fraught with dangers of bringing the extremist narrative into the mainstream."[40]

One expert on Pakistan's militants, Muhummad Amir Rana concludes his study on behaviours of militant groups finding little prospects of their reintegration and mainstreaming into society, though he suggests it is still worth exploring with conventional militant groups[41].

Bjorgo and Horgan (2009) [42] note what where DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration) are core elements in moving from civil war towards stability, these elements are usually absent from counterterrorism strategies and in research on terrorism. Noting the general lack of distinction between cognitive and behavioral aspects they point out what they consider a flawed assumption that changes in values precede changes in behavior, that people's values must be changed before their actions change. They find evidence that individuals do not always join extremist groups because they hold extremist views, but that joining groups for other reasons has a radicalizing effect. They posit that people readjust value systems to sync it with new patterns of behavior. They conclude that it is more important to change violent behavior than change radical attitudes.

Findings and Analysis through the Dialogue Process

This section is based on the observations, findings and learnings shared through the SDPC's Interactive Dialogues. They are based on confidential sharing between law enforcement personnel, government authorities, and civil society stakeholders, which included journalists, religious scholars, academics, peace activists, youth leaders, and practitioners.

Manifestations of Violent Extremism

Pakistan has been riven by violent extremism, causing immense damage to its social fabric, economy, and functioning of the state. It has seen a staggering loss of life, the tally between 2002 and 2017 being a loss of about 25,000 civilians and 7,700 security personnel. According to Pasha (2018)[43], the estimated total cost of terrorism to the country up to 2017- 18 is $251.8 billion. The devastation and suffering have cut across provincial boundaries, ethnicity, class, location, religion, and gender.

While violent extremism has become entrenched in many parts of the country, its local manifestations vary and are context-specific. Karachi is an important vantage point as a microcosm of the country, it shows religious extremism is just one of the forms of VE to contend with; ethnopolitical conflict, sectarian divisions, and organized crime networks have shaped the politics and societal dynamics of the city.

The joint military/ police security operations in Karachi in September 2013 onwards were successful in drastically reducing the incidents of violence, with murder rates down by 86% between 2012 and 2018, an estimated 145,000 arrests and 1,450 people, allegedly terrorists and gang members, killed by law enforcement agencies[44]. This demonstrated that the state has the capacity to act and deliver. However, experts believe the issues that led to violence still linger and may conflagrate again if left unaddressed.

The implications of such observations are more far-reaching than the violence itself. Polarization of society has contracted the sites for pluralism, diversity and co-existence, resulting in clustered ethnic and sect-based neighborhoods with little or no integration; restrictions on inter-marriages which have stunted social cohesion; discriminatory workplaces which differentiate in recruitment and promotions in jobs based on identities. The youth have limited options including in everyday struggles of finding accommodation, mentorship and socializing in a fragmented, divisive society which 'others' them. All these combine to create the impetus for grievance politics.

As one example, universities were noted to be increasingly vigilant about dissent and no form of public debate allowed except over issues in sync with state policies like on Kashmir or Palestine. Students have faced disciplinary repercussions for any collective action. Students need permission and NOCs to even celebrate cultural events and are refused permission to organize for book fairs. There are no new ideas and knowledge production, by either students or teachers. Academics point out that teaching has become mechanical where slide presentations are taught, not ideas. Without an

environment where people learn to deal with differences and dissent, the capacity to democratically resolve conflicts is diminishing and only coercive tools are left.

In another illustration, right-wing religious political parties and extremists in Sindh are addressing what the government cannot – they are providing money as stipends and forms of employment. While there is no longer overt recruitment for VE groups, many extremist organizations are attractive for people since they offer philanthropic services. For instance, Jamat-ud-Dawa (JuD) was reported to be running charitable and religious operations in the Thar desert area, where there is a high number of minorities and areas with no prior record of religious extremist presence[45]. As an illustration of policy confusion, in January 2015, the federal government froze the bank accounts of JuD under its UN obligations[46]. September 2018, the Supreme Court licensed JuD to carry on its social welfare activities, despite the federal government asking for them to be restrained[47]. Then in March 2019, the central government formally banned JuD and its charitable arm, FIF (Falahi Insaniyat Foundation) and the Sindh government took over 56 facilities run by JuD in Sindh[48]. It was announced that the services they provide would continue but be funded and managed by the provincial government.

Recruitment into Violent Extremist Groups

Based on interrogations of terrorists and their enablers, the Sindh police has separated push factors and pull factors for joining violent extremist groups. It finds the push factors are socio-economic conditions like poverty, unemployment, and a sense of deprivation. Socio-political factors include disenchantment and disconnect from political systems and lack of inclusiveness. Political systems such as a lack of legitimate political government and deteriorating law and order all propel people towards finding alternate solutions through violent extremism. These are acted upon by pull factors, like extremists offering financial incentives. They advertise this through their social media platforms. TTP for instance paid its members; ISIS also had a defined payment structure. Joining such groups becomes a pathway to power for ordinary men, and it also elevates their social status. The promise of heavenly rewards cinches it.

Experts noted the dearth of intra-country comparative research that analyses how factors vary not just geographically, but also in terms of determining which VE groups are joined. For instance, is there a difference between reasons people join banned sectarian groups versus other TTP splinter groups? How different are push factors towards ethnic militancy from those that propel people towards religious militancy? Are trends in Karachi consistent with those in the rest of Sindh? Are there similarities or differences between recruitment patterns in Upper and Lower Sindh?

Shared experiences and observations show that people will flock to whichever organization or institution can provide relief in times of acute distress. After the Taliban temporary takeover of Swat, their ability to provide quick and cheap justice was frequently cited as one of the reasons people turned to them. Police officials point out that it was not very different to people in Karachi turning to headquarters of a political party for the same – not for political solutions but because the party in question was known to use violence to resolve problems quickly and efficiently if and when they

wanted. The increasing number of unemployed people and the shrinking of income opportunities increase the attraction of organizations that provide relief.

Political observers point out that radicalism is not the domain of those with lower education levels because the mainstream education system was itself imbued with intolerant teachings. The regular curriculum also entrenched discrimination and extremist or regressive mindsets are perpetuated in the mainstream government education system. In the early years following the 'War on Terror', the focus remained on religious seminaries as a prime site for generating VE. While there is clear evidence linking certain madressahs to VE groups in Pakistan, it has not held as a paradigm for religious seminaries as a whole, and in any case, enrolment in madressahs is lesser than initially assumed. According to recent researches, the focus on the nexus between VE and madressahs was misplaced and overstated.[49]

Over the years, significant evidence has emerged that VE recruits also emerge from institutions of higher education. Extremists have been found in students of professional colleges and university teachers. Banned groups, Hizb-ul-Tahrir and Ansarul-Sharia reportedly targeted campuses and well educated young men for recruitment. VE groups like TTP reportedly had a local cadre who completed intermediate education, could speak multiple languages, published their own magazines, and were social media savvy. One of the main forms of TTP propaganda circulation in the tribal belt was the production of pamphlets in Urdu, indicating they were reaching out to literate people who knew Urdu and not just the vernacular.

Exit from Violent Extremist Groups

The issue of the reintegration of VE actors has not been publically debated. The reintegration of militants represents a specific challenge. Many VE actors were able to re-brand themselves to appear neutral and philanthropic and manage to contest local and national elections.

In Swat, there are de-radicalizing centers for religious militants, but in the rest of the country, mainstreaming is initiated without de-radicalizing. In Landhi (Karachi) there is a rehabilitation center for extremists, but there are too many and not enough places. Many VE actors have exited political or Islamist group formations but have not exited criminality. In the case of Lyari, experts pointed towards signs that drug mafias were now enmeshed in mosque ownership politics in the area. Those associated with 'enforcement wings' of political parties have become mercenaries. As VE groups splinter, there is no organized passage for followers to adjust back into society.

Participants of the IDs were of the view that reintegration is not an ultimatum and not a binary, that they must either be jailed or killed or alternately given law-making positions. They can be integrated into society by giving them livelihood options, but without giving them positions or space to influence and shape the lives of others and change the wider society.

A wider political and social debate is required to discuss and identify a strategy to facilitate an exit from VE. There has been no national-level political discussion or consensus of what to do with those who attempt to or are made to exit VE groups. It has not been debated in parliament or assemblies,

and hence has no political ownership or even involvement – the issue remains securely in the ambit of the military's discretion. Currently, there is no program for rehabilitation. A high number of men in lower cadres of VE groups have now become a social burden - the extremist label becomes their entire identity with no reintegration possibilities. De-radicalization, which requires time and money, has been done on a small scale and there is not enough research on its efficacy either.

The experts added that reintegration should not focus only on those leaving militant groups but those on the furthest margins of urban society must be considered as well – street children, homeless orphans, undocumented migrants, youth with no economic prospects, all form a pool which can be manipulated into adopting violence.

Youth and Unemployment

Pakistan has a remarkable youth bulge with about 27% of the population between the age of 15 to 30 years[50]. An economically active youth population becomes an economic asset, and liability if not. It has been widely observed that unemployed youth are frequently targeted for recruitment into VE groups. There are varied interpretations of this – some suggest that those without economic opportunities have fewer stakes in the system and rebel against the status quo, some say they are free to use their time without incurring an opportunity cost, while others believe it fuels their anger and feelings of injustice at being blocked out of paths to progress.

Experts questioned whether unemployment was a responsive metric for understanding productive economic participation in Pakistan's context. Exclusionary labor markets consist of not just unemployment but also – more pervasively in Pakistan – underemployment. With the majority of employment in the informal sector, the underemployed do not earn livable wages with menial and part-time jobs without any labor-based safety nets. There are usually no contracts, arbitrary hiring and firing, high turnovers, all characteristic of labor surplus societies. Employment in these cases is therefore not a safeguard against poverty and deprivation.

The question of whether unemployment or underemployment provides a causality or a vulnerability cannot be resolved without adequate primary research with VE group actors in local contexts but both have different implications. Without it, most current analyses remain speculative.

Another important economic indicator related to employment is the level of investment. In Pakistan, investment to GDP ratio remained, on average, 16% during the past two decades. In contrast, other similarly situated countries have an investment to GDP ratio of about 30%[51]. Hence the basic condition of job creation is not being met. Supply-side efforts need to be in tandem with job creation and demand enhancement, and hence cannot be kept outside macroeconomic considerations. And where such efforts are instituted, it is critical to focus on who avails opportunities and who benefits, in order to ensure grievances are not strengthened and horizontal inequality is not reproduced and perpetuated.

Law enforcement experts also pointed out that some VE actors are gainfully employed and accepted members of communities and societies, and some even hold high positions especially in engineering

and IT related fields. As a caveat, many well-employed people participate in VE groups in planning and not frequently in the execution of terrorist attacks, or alternately, provide them funding. The donations and funding phenomenon has not been closely studied for its reasons and causes, and has been dealt with as a law and order problem to be dealt through terrorism funding laws and regulations.

Governance and Violent Extremism

Through the War against Terrorism, Pakistan state, its army, and its government remained a solid on-ground presence even when under severe attack. The country did not become a 'failed state' as was predicted by some and did not degenerate into anarchy. However, people listed their grievances against the state, including the lack of justice and inadequate provision of services. Discrimination by authorities between various demographic groups, arbitrary use of laws and selective implementation, heavy-handed security responses, piled up grievances with authorities, and lack of redress mechanisms foster resentment and create a disconnect between the governed and the governors and erode trust in public institutions. Extremist groups can thrive in such asymmetric and unjust landscapes.

The discussions in SPDC's Interactive Dialogue on governance observed that the link between ill governance and extremism was not linear in that people did not take up arms against the state because the state neglected them. Instead, weak governance meant the state did not have the capacity to check the rise of militant groups or carry out effective de-weaponization, nor could it display a responsive criminal justice system that could deter extremists from violence.

Policing Violent Extremism

Police is a critical institution for governance, hence was a main focus in the Interactive Dialogue on governance. On one hand, the police represent a coercive force for people. Some participants were of the view that the law enforcement apparatus has lost its credibility before people. Stories about their corruption are legion. On the other hand, the police itself operates in a high-stress environment, weighed down by limitations. Over seven thousand policemen have been killed in the line of duty across the country[52].

A former police officer while sharing his experiences stated that almost half of the police force has medical problems such as high blood pressure. They are overworked with 12 hour-long shifts, severely stressed and underpaid. Additionally, they have to contend with a perpetually hostile media. The conflicting signals given by the rest of the security apparatus and from elected governments were also cited as a problem. As a result, local police stations do not monitor mosques and leave hate speech surveillance to the Special Branch. Instead of making police stations the nerve centre of anti-VE actions, parallel forces were created through policy decisions, such as the Dolphin force, Counter Terrorism Department, and so on. The need for streamlining operations becomes all the more important in the context of violent extremism.

The National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) was held up by experts as an illustration of how good ideas and initiatives get stalled and rendered ineffective because of systemic barriers. After Pakistan enlisted in the US-led War on Terror in 2001, it took seven years to form NACTA (2008), and twelve years for the National Counter Terrorism Authority Act to be passed in 2013. In 2014, a ruling by the Islamabad High Court placed NACTA's command directly under the Prime Minister, yet it continued to function under the Ministry of Interior. There is no National Registry at NACTA where the details of 4th Schedulers could be passed on to. No quarterly meetings were held as envisioned and no chief coordinator appointed. NACTA does not have legal powers to compel the police Counter Terrorism Departments (CTDs) to act. Prime Minister Imran Khan in 2018 expressed dissatisfaction with the "Incapacitated" institution while chairing the first-ever meeting of the Board of Governors of NACTA and formed a special committee to make it functional[53]. In 2019, Imran Khan approved an amendment to the NACTA Act to formally place it back under the Interior Ministry and increased its budget allocation by over 60%.

Judiciary and Violent Extremism

The judicial system has not been a deterrent to VE, in fact, in many cases has provided a buffer. There is no certainty of punishment, loopholes and escape clauses allow militants to go free, who in turn become a threat to the arresting officers. Power wielders also intervene and get cases squashed by personal contacts; witnesses can be terrified into silence; bail can be arranged; prosecution collapse can be engineered; judges can refuse to convict based on lack of evidence, or be too scared to announce punishment.

The point of introducing military courts with a sunset clause was to give the judicial system two years to fix its issues, clear backlogs, create safeguards for trials of VE actors and develop witness protection programs – however, none of these were instituted, and now military courts have lapsed. Power brokers can assure VE recruits that they can provide them safe passage. Experts observed that it is generally the poor and resource-less who stay within institutional boundaries and get punished by the criminal justice system because they have no protectors.

Recently, there have been streamlining efforts spearheaded by the judiciary itself. In November 2019, the Supreme Court launched a mobile phone app that enables the users for searching information about cases, judgments, personalized cause lists, and roster. A call center has also been established that provides query service for the same. The Sindh High Court has made all this material available on its website in English, Urdu and Sindhi, including developing a case flow management system down to district level. While these efforts need to be tracked and evaluated, they should not eclipse the larger context of everyday struggles for justice.

State Narratives on Countering Violent Extremism

Recognition of the need for integrated approaches resulted in the National Action Plan (NAP), outlined as a comprehensive program for eliminating terrorism. There were germane problems from its conceptualization – experts pointed out that it was not an action plan in the first place, but more of action points or guideline for general directions. NAP had no apportioned budget or allocations for

specific issues, no timelines and next steps, no strategies or nodes for intelligence gathering. Experts concluded that it was more of an accumulation of good intentions. For example, although hate speech was included in the National Action Plan, efforts to clamp down were uneven from the start, and now have increasingly tapered off, illustrated in the lag of implementation of the Fourth Schedule. The necessity of the state having its own narrative, framework, and the ability to communicate it, remains critical.

The Pakistani state has in the recent past attempted to contest and create narratives. *Paigham-e-Pakistan* was a milestone document signed in January 2018 by over eighteen hundred religious scholars (*Ulema*) belonging to all mainstream sects in the country. It declared suicide attacks, sectarianism, spreading anarchy, using force to impose Sharia, and issuing a call to jihad without state consent to be un-Islamic[54]. A previous such attempt was made in 2015 when 200 *Ulema* issued a decree against suicide bombings, but the recent initiative was more wide-ranging. In a conference at Air University in Islamabad, a joint session of *Ulema* and Vice Chancellors agreed to incorporate key points of the *Paigham-e-Pakistan* document in the curricula and syllabi of schools, colleges, and universities[55]. However, like the National Action Plan, this initiative seems to have run out of steam.

Part of the counter-narrative initiative has been the media wing of Pakistan's army – ISPR, moving into film production and financing. It is one of the largest media houses in Pakistan currently and has produced large budget cinematic releases. While some have done well at the box office and some have not, there has been no serious published assessment and analysis of its efficacy and impact of these beyond film reviews.

Beyond constructing narratives, participants of the interactive dialogue underscored that there must be wide-ranging communication between state institutions and citizens. Following Article 19A, people must be given real and timely information, which in effect builds trust in the state. Partial truths and fudging by the government on some issues lead to people distrusting the government on all issues. A lack of trust in government institutions was cited as a potential driver of violent extremism and remains a key challenge.

Dissent against some state policies at times is recast as a fundamental repudiation of the state itself. There is an alarmingly dangerous trend of accusing scholars of blasphemy in Sindh, as a way of silencing dissent and in a way that will make others practice self-censorship. Experts felt it was critical for state institutions to rise and tackle such divisive actors.

Experts in the dialogues underscored that certain problems stem from the nation-state model which prescribes that a single country having a single nation and a single identity. By not understanding Pakistan as a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural country, peace-building and nation-building became binaries, creating friction between two processes which should have converged instead of conflicting.

When deliberating conceptual issues, 'intolerance' was found to be a problematic term. It signals bearing or putting up with the presence of others. The term has an othering function and creates 'us/them' divisions. Experts suggested that '*rawadaari*' and '*hum aahangi*' were more preferable as they corresponded to co-existence and inclusion.

Corruption and Elite Impunity

The link between corruption, elite impunity and violent extremism is complex and indicative rather than causal. The pivot in the middle is governance. Conceptually, corruption and elite impunity impact governance directly and corrode it. Bad governance, in turn, is a determining factor for creating the environment in which people turn to violent extremism.

Pakistan has a history of decrying corruption and legislating for its erasure. It has had five anti-corruption laws starting from the inception of the country in 1947: Prevention of Corruption Act 1947, Public and Representative Office Disqualification Act 1949 (PRODA), Elected Bodies (Disqualification) Ordinance 1959, Ehtesab Act 1997, and the National Accountability Bureau Ordinance (NAB) 2000.

To go beyond populist rhetoric on rooting out corruption requires re-evaluating what is considered corruption and paving the way for a national consensus via political parties. Allegations of graft against political leadership are routine. Experts noted the lack of mass participation in political parties distorted their mandate of representation. Without regular registration and membership drives, without intra-party elections and without party workers contributing to decisions of awarding tickets for contesting elections, there is little space for next-tier political leadership to emerge organically. The cost of electoral politics is prohibitive – common people cannot mobilize such resources, and campaign finance systems are weak and mostly cannot sustain intra-party contestants who are not from the elite. Those who do contest are often motivated by agendas of personal gain, and also expect to earn returns on the money they invested in election campaigning. However, there have always been exceptions.

The state's own actions have at times been counter-productive for the state. The issue of violent extremism illustrates this paradox. The existence of VE groups challenges the state's monopoly of violence – the hallmark of the modern state.

The dialogue discussion found it was difficult to ascribe causality between violent extremism and either corruption or elite impunity. The rotten injustice of the system (*nizaam*) is a frequent feature in the rhetoric of VE leadership. The flawed system serving the elites against the common man is part of the usual diagnostics of VE leaders. A return to the religious order as interpreted by VE leaders is the usual prescription. Presumably, the dominance of a system of which they are locked out of, would play a role in influencing recruitment.

In conclusion, corruption and elite impunity erode public trust, a critical component for democracy, and for the social contract between citizens and state. It is both a cause and consequence of governance deficits. By increasing and strengthening inequalities, this creates fertile ground for distrust of systems and consequent conflict and violence, hence must be combatted.

4 Future Directions

It has become formulaic to suggest holistic thinking but interventions are needed to develop nuanced ideas on how to interweave structural analysis and take gradual steps towards dismantling systems that promote violent extremism.

The following key messages/recommendations are based on deliberations through the ID process. These distill and summarize the steps suggested by experts for long term resolution of issues related to violent extremism. Specific recommendations emerging from the interactive dialogues are provided in Annexure A.

Theme	Issue	Key message
Conscience-building higher education	Higher education institutes are best positioned to emphasize and strengthen the compact between state and citizens. Education should respond to the needs of a plural, democratic polity by institutionalizing critical thinking, conflict resolution, and peace-building. One way could be to introduce 'Civics' as a mandatory module for citizenship literacy, including constitutionalism. Another pathway could be teaching ancient history to draw on Sindh's plural past and multiple loci of identities.	Introduce civics and constitutionalism in higher education.
Dignified employment	Given the youth bulge and annual entrants into the workforce, quality livelihood remains a crucial challenge. The unemployment rate is a misleading metric as it does not factor in under-employment and unliveable wages. There is a tendency to focus on improving the supply side instead of also focusing on creation for jobs. Horizontal inequalities should be studied to ensure further grievances are not created or validated through the economic opportunities being created.	The government and private sector must work in sync for job creation that meets standards of minimum wage and dignified livelihoods.
Increasing political participation	Onus on political parties to bring internal, intra-party democracy: entrenched power brokers should accommodate change as a democratic imperative. Parties have to ensure new youth leadership can participate.	Political parties must hold internal elections.
	Local government elections must be held with corresponding fiscal devolution and empowered local decision-making authority. The citizenry oversight mechanisms envisioned in local governance systems must be instituted and ensure community representation, including the youth.	Strengthen local government system participation and oversight.

Theme	Issue	Key message
	Student unions should be restored to assure rights of association and right to free expression in universities and colleges. Students must be exposed to conflicting viewpoints, learn to consider them, debate them and then tolerate them in practice.	Student unions need to be urgently restored.
Rule of Law	Impartial public institutions and their enforceable writ are critical for democratic governance. Policing: Where some steps towards citizen participation have been taken, there is an urgent need for expanding dialogue on policing in Karachi, including revisiting the Police Order 2002.	Increase citizen involvement in policing policy decisions and monitoring, and demonstrate cases of police accountability.
	Judicial processes: As people increasingly turn to the state to resolve their problems and perceptions of justice change, citizen's grievances with the formal judicial process continue to intensify. Courts meanwhile are still beset with inordinate delays, backlogs, indecipherable legal system and regressive judgments, with little public attention directed towards lower courts. The Sindh judicial academy is an important institution for engagement.	Lower courts functioning should be legible to people and be made the focus of criminal justice reforms.
Ex-militants	Dialogue required to address the question of young men deeply or tangentially involved in violent extremism. There have been very limited de-radicalizing programs, with unknown success rates as they have not been independently assessed. Current approaches 'mainstream' them without a critical appraisal of consequences. In specific, instead of mainstreaming leading to the employability of ex-militants, it has led to them developing or their joining political parties and influencing policy.	Broaden public discussion on ex-militants as a sociological concern and collectively explore reintegration options and the consequences.
Pluralism	Analysts iterated that until we accept and incorporate plural approaches that create pathways of inclusion, rising intolerance cannot be reversed. Weaponizing of differences will continue and be used against those at a distance from state privileged identities. State structures must ensure they do not endorse one group over another and allow discrimination, based on differences of ethnicity, religion, language, sect and other such. This is critical to revoke the shelter extremist thoughts and actors find in narratives of national interest.	Equality of all citizens and equal opportunities for all, without state privilege or state discrimination.

Theme	Issue	Key message
Broadcast media	Media has a high level of outreach and influence but is confronted with two distinct sets of issues. In terms of content, almost all debates focus on the politics of government and revolve around personalities. Broadcast media must expand space for discussion on society, social crises and changing social dynamics as experienced by average citizens.	Broadcast media urged to include social issues and governance as experienced by average citizens.
	There is immense pressure, both overt and covert, from state institutions. Media faces an increasing level of censorship and attacks. The state must ensure that its public watchdog function and freedom of speech is not stifled, and ensure that media can fulfill its mandate of accurate reporting	Media freedoms must be upheld as a basic and fundamental democratic right.
The dearth of public culture	There are very few, if any, places for people to hear diverse viewpoints and meet diverse people. A civic culture requires such exchange, as well as involvement in public policy discussions like public hearings and town meetings. These interactions can be bolstered through the nascent trend of literature festivals; supporting writers and printing of books, including translations; building discourse around multiple identities and plural histories and expanding notions of tolerance towards co-existence.	Support public exchange that generates ideas and debate to strengthen diversity and deepen democracy.
Public trust	Low levels of or deficit of public trust compromise the health of democracy, lowers political capital and erodes democratic cultures. The inclination to suspect and brand people as foreign agents or anti-Pakistan is unhelpful and alienates people. Consensus building against violent extremism requires an honest appraisal and sharing of past mistakes to carve out a future path that does not play off citizens and state institutions against each other.	Citizens and state must accept that everyone is legitimately invested in a peaceful and prosperous Pakistan, even if their opinions on how to get there vary.

Endnotes

[1] Federally Administered Tribal Areas

[2] Nasser-Eddine, Garnham, Agostino and Caluya, Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Literature Review, Counter Terrorism and Security Technology Centre DSTO-TR-2522, Australian Government

[3] Collier and Hoeffer, Greed and Grievance in Civil War, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 2355, 2002

[4] Abdul Basit, Countering Violent Extremism: Evaluating Pakistan's Counter-Radicalization and De-radicalization Initiatives, IPRI Journal XV, no. 2, 2015

[5] Blair, Fair, Malhotra, and Shapiro, Poverty and Support for Militant Politics: Evidence from Pakistan, American Journal of Political Science Vol 57 No 1, 2013

[6] Vaillancourt, S., & Boyd, W. (2007). Protect! People, Economies and Infrastructure: East West Institute.

[7] Patricia, Justino (2010). "How Does Violent Conflict Impact on Individual Educational Outcomes? The Evidence So Far", Background paper prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2011 UNESCO; Keen, David (1998) The economic functions of violence in civil wars (special issue). Adelphi Papers, 38 (320). pp. 1-89. ISSN 0567-932X; Barbara F. Walter (2004), "Does Conflict Beget Conflict? Explaining Recurring Civil War", Journal of Peace Research, May 2004.

[8] Idris, Iffat (2016), "Youth, unemployment and violence: rapid literature review", GSDRC, Applied Knowledge Services, University of Birmingham, UK.

[9] Frances Stewart, 'Employment in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations, think piece for UNDP Human Development Report Office, 2015, at http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/stewart_hdr_2015_final.pdf

[10] Jelil, Bhatia, Brockmeyer, Do and Joubert, Unemployment and Violent Extremism: Evidence from Daesh Foreign Recruits, Development Research Group & Middle East and North Africa Region Office, World Bank 2018

[11] Kieran Ford, The Insecurities of Weaponised Education: A critical discourse analysis of the securitized education discourse in northwest Pakistan, Journal of Conflict, Security and Development, Vol 17 Issue 2, 2017

[12] Zahid Shahab Ahmed, A Critique of the Need and Application of Peace Education in Pakistan, Asian Journal of Peacebuilding Vol. 6 No. 1, 2018

[13] Alex Shmid, Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review, ICCT Research Paper, International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, 2019

14 Frances Stewart (2015), "Employment in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations", think piece for UNDP Human Development Report Office, 2015, at http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/stewart_hdr_2015_final.pdf.

[15] Development Advocate Pakistan: Preventing Violent Extremism, DAP Volume 3 Issue 1, UNDP 2016, at https://www.undp.org/content/dam/pakistan/docs/DevelopmentPolicy/DAP_Volume3-Issue1.pdf

[16] Social Impact of the Security Crisis, Social Development in Pakistan Annual Review 2009 – 2010, Social Policy Development Center, 2010

[17] Osama Siddiqui, Approaches to Legal and Judicial Reform in Pakistan: Post Colonial Inertia and the Paucity of Imagination in Times of Turmoil and Change, DPRC Working Paper 4, Development Policy Research Center, LUMS 2011

[18] The Rule of Law in Pakistan, Key Findings from the 2017 Extended General Population Poll & Justice Sector Survey, at https://worldjusticeproject.org/sites/default/files/documents/Pakistan_Report_2017_Final-Online%20Version-Reduced.pdf

[19] Sumayya Sara, Dr. Nighat Ansari and Dr. Nasira Jabeen, A Critical Analysis of Judicial Reforms: Through the Prism of National Judicial Policy 2009, Journal of Political Studies, Vol. 25, Issue - 2, 2018, 121:135

[20] Drivers of Violent Extremism: Hypotheses and Literature Review, Allan, Glazzard, Jesperson, Reddy-Tumu and Winterbotham, RUSI (Royal United Services Institute) 2015

[21] https://pakpips.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/PB_CVE5_Constitution_Citizenship_and_Governance.pdf

[22] Zoha Waseem, 'Encounter Killings' as a Method of Policing Karachi, RUSI 2019, https://shoc.rusi.org/informer/encounter-killings-method-policing-karachi

[23] Ibid.

[24] Fahim Zaman and Naziha Syed Ali, Rao Anwar and the Killing Fields of Karachi, 12th March 2019, Dawn, at https://www.dawn.com/news/1389761

[25] https://www.dawn.com/news/1349709

[26] Mobeen Azhar, City at War – Where a police officer is killed every day, 19th November 2014, BBC World Service, https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-30115827

[27] Representations of Corruption in the English Print Media in Pakistan, 2011 Massarrat Abid Zahra Shah*, Pakistan Vision Vol. 13 No. 2

http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/studies/PDF-FILES/Artical-3_V13_No2_2012.pdf

[28] Daniel Kaufmann, Myths and Realities of Governance and Corruption, National Resource Governance Institute, NRGI; The Brookings Institute, 2005

[29] Asad Sayeed, 'Contextualising Corruption in Pakistan', *Social Science and Policy Bulletin*, Volume 2, No. 1, 2010; http://www.researchcollective.org/Documents/Contextualising_Corruption_in_Pakistan.PDF

[30] Suddie, M. (2011). "Pakistan's National Anti-Corruption Strategy: Status and Challenges", 4th Asia-Pacific Integrity in Action (INTACT) Community of Practice Meeting, cited by UNDP in Anti-corruption Strategies: Understanding What Works, What doesn't and Why?, UNDP Asia Pacific office, file:///Users/user/Downloads/UNDP%20ACS%20Asia%20Pacific%20%20Anti-corruption%20Strategies.pdf

[31] https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/606912-the-variability-of-corruption

[32] Nazish Brohi, What festers below, Dawn 16th September 2017, https://www.dawn.com/news/1357876

[33] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/24085771_Unpacking_the_Anti-Corruption_Agenda_Dilemmas_for_Anthropologists

[34] https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9781137268716_2

[35] https://www.newageislam.com/current-affairs/by-blaming-under-development-on-corruption-alone,-the-anti-corruption-crusaders-at-world-bank-and-imf-do-not-want-to-look-at-the-structural-inequalities-globally-or-locally/d/34643

[36] Ishrat Husain, *Pakistan: The Economy of an Elitist State*, Oxford University Press, 2019.

[37] Hafiz A. Pasha, Growth and Inequality in Pakistan: An Agenda for reforms, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2018

[38] https://www.theigc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Pakistan-report.pdf

[39] https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/01_pakistan_waseem.pdf

[40] Abdul Basit, Reintegrating Pakistan's Banned Militant Groups: Pros and Cons, South Asian Voices, 2017, from https://southasianvoices.org/reintegrating-pakistans-banned-militant-groups-pros-cons/ accessed 1st Feb 2020.

[41] Muhammad Amir Rana, Pakistan-based militant groups & prospects of their reintegration: A Structural Analysis, Mantraya Occasional Paper #6, 2018

[42] Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement, (eds.) Bjorgo and Horgan, Political Violence series, Routledge, 2009

[43] Pasha, Hafiz. A (2018), Growth and Inequality in Pakistan: Agenda for Reforms, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Pakistan.
[44] https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/The-Big-Story/Can-a-revival-in-Karachi-spark-change-in-Pakistan

[45] Ali Bhutto, Shifting Sands of Thar, Newsline Magazine, Sept 2017, at https://newslinemagazine.com/magazine/shifting-sands-thar/

[46] https://www.dawn.com/news/1158691

[47] https://dailytimes.com.pk/296842/scp-licenses-jamat-ud-dawa-to-continue-welfare-activities/

[48] https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/440561-sindh-govt-takes-over-control-of-56-facilities-run-by-banned-jamat-ud-dawa-falah-e-insaniat

[49] See for example:
    a) Allan, Glazzard, Jesperson, Reddy-Tumu and Weatherbotham, Drivers of Violent Extremism: Hypoethesis and Literature Review, Royal United Services Institute, RUSI 2015;
    b) Bergen and Pandey, The Madressah Scapegoat, The Washington Quarterly Vol 29 Issue 2, 2006 accessed from www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1162/wash.2006.29.2.117;
    c) Nikhil Raymond Puri, The Pakistani Madressah and Terrorism: Made and unmade conclusions from literature, Perspectives on Terrorism Vol 4 Issue 4, accessed from https://www.jstor.org/stable/26298471?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.
[50] Pakistan Labour Force Survey 2017-18, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan.
[51] For instance, investment to GDP ratio in 2019 was 31% in India and Bangladesh and 28% in Sri Lanka. Source: IMF database <www.imf.org/external>.
[52] https://www.dawn.com/news/1349709

[53] Safdar Husain, 'National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) – A Critical Review,' Center for Research and Security Studies. https://crss.pk/national-counter-terrorism-authority-nacta-a-critical-review/
[54] https://www.dawn.com/news/1383642

[55] Farman Kakar, Contours of Counter-Narrative, The News on Sunday, 21st October 2018, https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/566527-contours-counter-narrative

ANNEXURE A

Key Messages and Recommendations

The participants of the webinar endorsed the following key messages and recommendations that emerged from the four interactive dialogues.

ID-1: Nexus Between Intolerance and Violent Extremism

Key Messages	Recommendations
Plural viewpoints and debate in the public should be promoted	• Constitution and constitutionalism should be formally taught at the college/university level • Restoration of student unions should be advocated for • Youth should be provided with platforms for intellectual debate • Broadcast media should be extensively engaged for promoting tolerance based messages

Key Messages	Recommendations
Diversity should be valued and not only tolerated	• Build discourse around diverse identities and plural histories • Raise awareness on the importance of tolerance among the public, youth, and political forums • Advocate for the utility of public spaces and public forums for dialogue and cultural events • Promote literature festivals, sports and other activities engaging youth

ID-2: Unemployment, Youth and Violent Extremism

Key Messages	Recommendations
Youth employment policies should aim at improving the quality of life rather than merely job creation	• Equal employment opportunities for youth should be guaranteed to ensure that grievances are not strengthened and inequalities are not reproduced • In addition to increasing employment opportunities, better working conditions and living wages should be ensured as well
Reintegration of youth who had engaged with violent groups needs to be addressed as a social concern	• The issue of reintegration should be debated in the parliament and provincial assemblies to develop and implement an actionable framework • Law enforcement agencies should work with provincial and local governments to create a surveillance mechanism to ensure there is no lapse back

| The education system should respond to the needs of young people for adapting to the plural and democratic polity and society | • Curriculum reforms should be introduced to institutionalize peace-building, conflict resolution, and critical thinking |
| | • Youth should be given civic education including a practical understanding of the constitution, legal rights responsibilities, and means of interface with state institutions |

ID-3: Governance Failure and Violent Extremism

Key Messages	Recommendations
Local governments need to be empowered and engaged for improved governance and effective service delivery	• Local governments should be given administrative and fiscal responsibility and authority as envisioned in the Constitution
	• Local governments need to have systems of accountability and transparency of budgets, monitored by the local residents of districts
There is an urgent need for wider dialogue on police reforms	• Police Order 2002 should be revisited to ensure its applicability and effectiveness
	• The debate should be encouraged on various policing options for large cities such as having police commissioners independent of the provincial system
	• Police operations for countering violent extremism should be more synchronized with other relevant agencies
The government should adopt a more open and effective communication strategy to gain people's trust	• Specialized institutions like Ombudsperson's office need broader publicity and accessibility for redressal of public issues
	• People must be given real and timely information by the government on all matters of public interest
	• State's narrative on countering violent extremism should consistently be promoted through all communication channels

ID-4: Corruption, Elite Impunity and Violent Extremism

Key Messages	Recommendations
Selective implementation of law undermines the legitimacy of the legal framework	• The practice of amnesty schemes should be abandoned
	• An appraisal should be conducted on why rule of law programs and reform initiatives have failed

Key Messages	Recommendations
Political parties should promote effective representation of people in the democratic system	• Political parties should hold transparent intra-party elections regularly • Public hearings should be promoted by ruling parties on issues of public interest for deepening democracy
Information technology should be used as a tool for increased transparency and accountability	• Activities in courts, police stations and assemblies should be broadcast through live-streaming technology • New technologies such as mobile apps should be used to facilitate the reporting of corruption

ANNEXURE B

Guiding Questions for the Interactive Dialogues

Intolerance and Violent Extremism

a) Have there been any changes in VE trends and actors in the past few years?
b) Do intolerant views result in VE? Does intolerance in one form lead to intolerance in others?
c) Do people have exposure to diversity? How do diversity and tolerance connect?
d) Is intolerance conformist or does it challenge the status quo?
e) What kind of tolerance-building can deter VE? Who would be considered 'authentic' propagators?

Youth, Unemployment and Violent Extremism

a) What are the correlations between education patterns and violent extremism?
b) What are the correlations between employment trends and violent extremism?
c) What new grievances result from economic changes and link with extremist group membership?
d) What are the politics of mainstreaming and what are the reintegration possibilities after involvement in violent extremism?

Governance Failures and Violent Extremism

a) Is there a link between crises of governance and people turning to VE? How should we understand it?
b) How have people's interactions with state institutions changed? Who are emerging actors brokering the interface?
c) Who are people turning to for resolving their problems with governance? What forms of redress are available?
d) Are there links between service gaps, criminal elements/ mafias and VE actors? (Such as housing/ land mafias, water, electricity connections, etc.)

Corruption, Elite Impunity and Violent Extremism

a) Is there a causal link between corruption, elite impunity and people turning to VE? How should we understand the relationship?
b) Is there synchronicity or disconnect between people's perception and state discourses on the issue? How do people experience it?
c) Does the connection between different segments of the elite strengthen the culture of impunity?
d) Does the nexus weaken the effectiveness of state institutions?

ANNEXURE C

List of Panelists and Participants of Interactive dialogues, Follow-up Meetings and Webinar

No.	Name	Designation	Organization
1.	Abdul Hafeez	Advocate	High Court Sindh
2.	Abdul Kabir Qazi	Managing Director	Sindh Education Foundation (SEF)
3.	Abdul Qadir	Reporter	Freelancer
4.	Abdul Rahim Moosvi	President	Lyari Community Development
5.	Allama Muhammad Ahsan Siddiqui	Chairman	Interfaith Commission for Peace and Harmony
6.	Anis Danish	Advisor	Legal Rights Forum
7.	Anjum Iqbal	Special Secretary	Culture, Tourism & Antiquities Department, Government of Sindh
8.	Arfana Mallah	Activist, Academician	University of Sindh
9.	Asad Gokal	Youth Activist	Civil Progressive Alliance Pakistan
10.	Asad Sayeed	Director	Collective for Social Science Research
11.	Asghar Soomro	Communication Specialist	P&D Department, Government of Sindh
12.	Ashraf Ali Nizamani	Rule of Law Initiative	Home Department, Government of Sindh
13.	Fahad Khan	Policy Analyst	UNDP, SDGs Unit Sindh
14.	Faizullah Korejo	Additional Director	FIA
15.	Farhat Parveen	Executive Director	National Organization for Working Communities
16.	Farooq Shaukat (Brig-R)	Security Analyst	
17.	Farooq Siddiqui	Project Director	Local Government and Rural Development
18	Fayaz Naich	Anchor Person/Analyst	Sindh TV
19.	Ghazi Salahuddin	Writer, Thinker	The News, Geo
20.	Habibullah Syed	Assistant Director	Sports and Youth Affairs Department, Sindh
21.	Hasham Usmani	Journalist	GNMI Online, (Media Baithak)
22.	Hina Khan	Professor	Department of History, University of Karachi
23.	Iqbal Detho	Human Rights lawyer	SPARC
24.	Israr Sheikh	Reporter	Express News
25.	Jami Chandio	Executive Director	Centre for Peace and Civil Society
26.	Jamil Ahmed Khan	Former Ambassador to UAE and former Security Advisor UNO	
27.	Javed Jabbar	Former Senator/Writer	
28.	Karamat Ali	Director	Pakistan Institute of Labour Education & Research (PILER)
29.	Kashif Ali	Director	Transparency International – Pakistan

No.	Name	Designation	Organization
30.	Mahtab Akbar Rashdi	Politician	
31.	Mairman Hameed	PO	Legal Rights Forum
32.	Masuma Hasan	Former Cabinet Secretary of Pakistan	Pakistan Institute of International Affairs
33.	Mohsin Naqvi	PhD Scholar	SZABIST University
34.	Manzoor Hussain Memon	Head of Research	Manzil Pakistan
35.	Mohsin Tejani	Executive Director	The School of Writing
36.	Muhammad Afzal Shaikh	Lead Coordinator, Sindh Rule of Law	Home Department, Government of Sindh
37.	Muhammad Ali Rasheed	Executive Member	SHEHRI
38.	Muhammad Jafar Khan	V. President	KEWO
39.	Muhammad Usman Chachar	Secretary	Home Department, Government of Sindh
40.	Naghma Iqtedar	Student/Political Activist	Democracy Reporting International
41.	Qudsia Qadri	Journalist	Former Incharge, Media Cell, NAB
42.	Ross Mehtani	Council Member	Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (Karachi)
43.	Saddam Siddiqui	Program Manager	I Am Karachi
44.	Sagheer Chandio	Reporter	KTN and Kawish
45.	Saqib Sagheer	Reporter	Daily Jang
46.	Sara Zaman	Aurat Foundation	
47.	Saud Ahmed Mirza	Former IG Police	
48.	Shahid Shakir Ahmed	PSP	
49.	Shahnaz Wazir Ali	President	SZABIST University
50.	Shams Kazmi	Producer documentaries	Freelancer
51.	Sindhu Abbasi	Journalist	Media Baithak
52.	Syed Arifulah Hussaini	President	Nation Building Initiative
53.	Syed Imtiaz Ali Shah	Secretary	Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Sindh
54.	Taj Haider	Politician	
55.	Waheed Rajpar	Reporter	Channel 92 News
56.	Zia-ur-Rehman	Journalist	The News, NYT
57.	Zulfiqar Shah	Joint Director	Pakistan Institute of Labour Education & Research

Social Policy and Development Centre (SPDC) is a policy research think tank. Since its establishment in 1995 as a private non-profit company, SPDC has made significant intellectual contribution in placing issues of pro-poor growth and social development on Pakistan's policy-making agenda. With a focus on issues related to poverty and inequality, governance, social service delivery, gender, and pro-poor macro-economic policy, it contributes to the national goal of social development through research, policy advice, and advocacy. Being an independent and non-partisan research organization, the centre collaborates and cooperates with organizations working on issues relevant to its mandate both at home and abroad. It determines its own agenda and has successfully maintained its independence and balance between responsive and proactive social sector research. SPDC is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors.