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PART I: LEARNING AND ADAPTATION STRATEGY

1. INTRODUCTION

The UN’s 2017-2020 Peacebuilding Priority Plan (PPP) for Kyrgyzstan consists of three projects which aim to deal with challenges arising from religious radicalization and violent extremism, and was approved by the UN Peacebuilding Fund in December 2017 for implementation by six UN agencies, namely UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNODC, OHCHR and UN Women. As the first comprehensive program to address violent extremism (VE) in Kyrgyzstan it is important that the program is as effective as it can from learning lessons from international and local experiences with PVE programming. Furthermore, it is essential that the program is able to carefully consider the program’s impact on the broader conflict context and able to learn from experience and adapt programme implementation to this learning. Learning and adaptation are particularly challenging since the program is to be implemented by a consortium where different UN agencies and partners are implementing different parts of the program.

In February 2018 a Conflict Sensitivity and Effectiveness of PVE programming workshop was held in Bishkek, which led to the agreement to develop a Learning and Adaptation Strategy, as an integral component of programme implementation. This Strategy presents the tools and templates for the preparatory work, and a Part III that presents tools and templates for the ongoing process of learning and adaptation.

The Learning and Adaptation Strategy aims to be a practical and easy-to-use guidance note for conducting effective learning and adaptation, tailored to the specific design and implementation modalities of the PPP of Kyrgyzstan. It draws heavily on the UNDP – International Alert toolkit for improving the impact of preventing violent extremism programming, which all readers of this guidance note are encouraged to use as a key reference.

2 RATIONALE FOR A LEARNING AND ADAPTATION STRATEGY

There are three main reasons why it is essential to have a strong learning and adaptation strategy for the PPP in Kyrgyzstan:

- Relatively weak evidence for certain ToCs
- High interaction with context - need to be adaptive
- Adaptive programming requires a systematic mechanism of reflection & learning as a basis for accountability and enhancing programme effectiveness

Firstly, as discussed above, this is the first comprehensive program to address violent extremism in Kyrgyzstan. Although there is considerable peacebuilding experience underpinning many of the activities that are currently implemented under the banner of PVE (be it PVE-relevant or specific) are still based on relatively weak evidence. As standards for M&E of PVE-related activities are still being developed and tested (PUT FOOTNOTE), it is also not very easy to determine the effectiveness of PVE-related activities. This, therefore, requires a significant investment in assessing the validity of these theories of change in a systematic manner.

Secondly, all activities to prevent violent extremism need to be highly contextualised. Due to the high specificity of drivers of violent extremism, even within geographic locations, activities need to be closely adapted to the local situation. Furthermore, the context may change over time, with implications for project implementation. Although some of the more structural factors are unlikely to change fast, the enabling factors may, for instance when a new channel of extremist propaganda comes online, or protests against government authorities start to get organised. The project implementation needs to be able to adjust quickly to such changing circumstances. This is particularly relevant considering the highly sensitive nature of PVE.

Thirdly, PVE programming requires a more flexible and adaptive type of programming, where a continuous adaptation to changing circumstances or progressive insight is necessary. This needs to be accompanied by a systematic process of learning and adaptation, which serves as an additional basis of accountability, as it provides a systematic justification of why project implementation may deviate from what was initially planned. PBF is a flexible donor, but will still require a record of what, why and how.

3 PREPARING THE GROUND FOR LEARNING AND ADAPTATION

In essence, learning and adaptation is about ensuring conflict sensitivity and enhancing the effectiveness of programming.

Learning and adaptation centres on four main questions:

1) What are the key changes in the context and does the project need to adapt itself to these?
2) What are the main risks for unintended consequences and are our risk mitigation strategies still valid?
3) How solid is our evidence for the validity of our theories of change, how can we strengthen the evidence and verify our assumptions?
4) In light of our progressive insight into above mentioned three questions, do we need to adjust anything in the project?

A conflict-sensitive lens allows a programme to continue its intervention, and dent that it is not having adverse effects on the context.

Using a conflict-sensitive lens leads to better development results and increased effectiveness.

Regular reflection, analysis and decision-making is necessary on these four dimensions. In order to reflect on these on a regular basis, a degree of preparatory work is necessary.

### 3.1 Context analysis

A context analysis for PVE programming will include both the overall conflict related analyses of Kyrgyzstan – that helps to gain an understanding of root causes, proximate causes and potential triggers of conflict – as well as a more VE-specific context analysis that looks at the specific vulnerabilities and resilience for VE.

During the process of learning and adaptation, there will be a continuous focus on whether important changes in the context occur on which the project may have a particular impact, or that may have an impact on the project. In order to do this effectively, there needs to be a solid understanding of the context ex-ante. This is therefore part of the preparatory work.

Guiding questions for the analysis of vulnerabilities and resilience are provided in annex I.

### 3.2 Conflict sensitivity and risk mitigation

To be conflict sensitive, one must have a strong understanding of the context in which it is operating, as well as how the project interventions may interact with this context, and how these could potentially do harm. Such negative unintended consequences can take the shape of increased risk of conflict or heightened tensions in society, for instance by exacerbating existing grievances. Not all unintended consequences increase the risk of conflict however, there are also other types of unintended consequences, which are the types of risks that are often described in log-frames, and are primarily intended to cover one’s back when implementation targets or deadlines are not met (e.g. lack of political will, deterioration in security, etc.).

#### 3.3 Relative strength of the Theories of Change

The key question here is the solidity of the evidence underpinning our Theories of Change, and how this evidence can be strengthened.

It is important to clearly define these ToCs, as they provide the foundation upon which to judge their plausibility and validity. The project prods do have an outcome level Theory of Change defined, but this is not yet the case at the output level.

In order to assess the validity of a Theory of Change, it needs to be clear what exactly is desired to be achieved. This desired result often goes beyond the very immediate result of the project activity, but relates to a behavioural change that is required. For instance, once certain skills are being transferred to security staff, one would also expect their behaviour to change accordingly, not simply for them to pass a test on the skills delivered.

This clearer articulation is essential preparatory work for two main reasons:

1.  It provides clarity on what is aimed to be achieved, which helps to identify the right indicators, which can further strengthen the M&E framework
2.  It helps to think through on what assumptions this ToC is based, and what some of the weaknesses are the ToC may suffer from.

As a further preparatory step, the assumptions and the weak points of the Theory of Change will be surfaced. This will help determining what additional testing (additional data collection, surveys, or even tailored research will be necessary to strengthen the validity of the ToC. See box # for an example of assumptions and weak points in a ToC.

#### Risks can be categorized as:

- **Strategic level risks**: potential unintended consequences of the program and projects related to their broader (political economy) context
- **Operational level risks**: potential unintended consequences related to the design and implementation of the projects

The strategic and operational level risks that were already identified during the Workshop are described in Annex #. To be clear, these are very different from programme implementation risks, which are the types of risks that are often described in log-frames, and are primarily intended to cover one’s back when implementation targets or deadlines are not met (e.g. lack of political will, deterioration in security, etc.).

During project implementation, there needs to be a close eye on these strategic and operational risks for unintended consequences, which is an essential component of the learning and adaptation process. In order to do this effectively, there needs to be a solid understanding of these risks ex-ante. When the main risks are known, risk mitigation strategies can be devised to minimize the potential negative impact. This is therefore part of the preparatory work.

#### PREPARATORY TASKS TO BE CONDUCTED

1.  Conflict related analyses & Distilling key risks for Doing Harm
   a)  Identify and share key conflict analysis studies
   b)  Analyse the extent to which these conflict analyses are still valid and update if necessary
2.  VE-specific context analysis
   a)  Country-wide analysis of vulnerabilities and resilience to VE
   b)  Strengthen analysis of issues of high relevance to PVE projects, if necessary
   c)  Localized analysis of vulnerabilities and resilience to VE (in project areas)

#### Outputs

1.  Conflict analyses validated by the L&A team
2.  Overview of main factors driving VE in the Kyrgyz context documented

#### PREPARATORY TASKS TO BE CONDUCTED

1.  Distilling key risks for unintended consequences
   a)  Identifying and agreeing on the key risks for unintended consequences from the context analysis
   b)  Review and update risks identified at the Workshop together with partners
2.  Develop risk mitigation strategies
   a)  Develop risk mitigation strategies (per outcome area)
   b)  Incorporate these risk mitigation strategies in the Project Implementation Plan
3.  Develop a risk monitoring strategy
   a)  Identify the information needed to determine whether a risk is playing out
   b)  Identify ways to collect this information, formally and informally

#### Output

1.  Short overview of main risks and risk mitigation strategies
2.  Risk monitoring matrix (a potential template is provided in annex #)
PART I: LEARNING AND ADAPTATION STRATEGY

Some guiding questions for identifying assumptions and weak points in the ToC are provided in annex #. The different ToCs will further be assessed for their relative strength. Those that are acknowledged as having the weakest assumptions or the weakest evidence base may require an additional strategy to strengthen its evidence base, and will receive additional attention in the learning and adaptation sessions.

4. ESTABLISHING THE MECHANISMS FOR LEARNING AND ADAPTATION

4.1 Different levels of learning and adaptation

Learning and adaptation will be conducted at different levels:

- at strategic, overarching level of Peacebuilding Priority Plan (3 Outcome projects)
- at operational level

Depending on the level, the adaptations to be made will be of a different nature, as the graph below shows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic level</th>
<th>Possible adaptations to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall strategic direction of programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation level</th>
<th>Possible adaptations to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project activities and operational approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Risk mitigation strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data to be collected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For learning and adaptation both levels are important, as important issues that may effect the conflict sensitivity and programme effectiveness can arise at both these levels. Learning and adaptation at both levels will therefore influence each other.

Generally however, it is expected that risks for unintended consequences are more likely to occur ‘where the rubber hits the road’, so at project implementation level. The reflections, analysis and suggested adaptations at the project implementation level will therefore serve as the key input to the learning and adaptation sessions at strategic level.

4.2 Learning and adaptation at regular intervals

Learning and Adaptation sessions will be held at regular intervals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic level</th>
<th>Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPP level:</td>
<td>every 6 months at the Joint Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development partners coordination meeting:</td>
<td>Every 3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation level:</td>
<td>Interval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All three Outcome projects jointly</td>
<td>Every 2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Outcome project</td>
<td>Every month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency specific project level</td>
<td>Every month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If applicable; per geographical target area</td>
<td>Every 2 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The timing of these sessions will be organized in such a way that the main findings from one session will feed into the session at a higher level.
4.4 Integration with existing coordination mechanisms

To the highest extent possible, the learning and adaptation sessions will be integrated into existing coordination mechanisms. The last session of any given coordination meeting will be devoted to learning and adaptation. These are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic level:</th>
<th>Interval</th>
<th>Coordination mechanism to link to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPP level - internal session</td>
<td>Every 6 months</td>
<td>UNCT meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP level - session with government partners</td>
<td>Every 6 months</td>
<td>JSC meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP level - session with development partners</td>
<td>Every 3 months</td>
<td>Development partners coordination meeting, self-organized or the one organized by State Commission on religious affairs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation level:</th>
<th>Interval</th>
<th>Coordination mechanism to link to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All three Outcome projects jointly</td>
<td>Every 2 months</td>
<td>Regular coordination meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Outcome project</td>
<td>Every month</td>
<td>Outcome coordination meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Agency together with implementing partners</td>
<td>Every month</td>
<td>Staff/Programme meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If applicable; per geographical target area</td>
<td>Every 2 months</td>
<td>Field team coordination meetings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 Conducting Learning and Adaptation

On-going learning and adaptation has a phase of joint reflection, a phase of analysis of the implications of this analysis, and finally a phase of making the necessary adaptations to the project and documenting these.

- Are there changes in the context that may interact with the project?
- Is our risk assessment still valid and are our risk mitigation strategies effective?
- What does our progressive insight tell us about the validity of our ToCs?
- What adaptations, if any, are necessary to:
  - Ensure conflict sensitivity
  - Optimize project effectiveness
5.1 Main principles of learning and adaptation
This reflection, analysis and adaptation will be done:
● on a regular basis
● jointly with the project staff, the implementing partners, and where possible and relevant other stakeholders, including beneficiaries.
● as participatory and consultative as possible
● as much as possible based on evidence – but also allowing for the ‘intuitive’

5.2 Conducting learning and adaptation sessions
On a regular basis, joint reflection, analysis and adaptation sessions will be held. These sessions will build further on the preparatory work that has been done, in relation to:
● context and conflict analysis
● risk analysis and risk mitigation strategies
● validity of ToC
The guiding questions for these learning and adaptation sessions are relatively simple and open-ended questions, such as described in the box on page 11. These are deliberately kept simple, as they allow for more open discussion and reflection. They are also deliberately kept the same for the strategic and operational level, as the content may differ but not the overall logic.
The analysis will - where possible - be built solidly on the data that was collected in the period preceding the learning and adaptation session. However, also more intuitive ‘hunch’ that the information collected does not provide all the necessary insight, will be encouraged to be shared and reflected upon, as this may need to new insights that may require further testing.

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION, ANALYSIS AND ADAPTATION

Context
Identification of key changes:
• What, if any, are important changes in the broader conflict context? How significant are these changes?
• What, if any, are important changes in the VE-specific context analysis? How significant are these changes?

Analysis:
• Potential effect of Project on Context: What (positive or negative) effects can our on-going or planned project activities have on these changes in the context?
• Potential effect of context on Project: How are these changes in the context likely to affect our on-going or planned project activities?

Adaptation:
• Do we need to adjust our on-going or planned activities?
• What adaptations can we already implement ourselves? What recommendations do we need to bring to the higher level of decision-making?

Risk monitoring
Key risks for negative unintended consequences:
• What were the key risks identified?
• Have we detected any new key risks that we had not identified ex-ante?

Analysis:
• Does the information we collected provide evidence or indications for unintended consequences?
• Do we have any sense that unintended consequences are taking place, but not captured by the information collected? What, anecdotal or hard, evidence exists for this ‘hunch’?
• In light of the above, are our mitigation strategies sufficient and still valid?

Adaptation:
• Do we need to adapt our mitigation strategies?
• Do we need to start collecting different information?
• Do we need to make changes to the way we implement the project?
• What adaptations can we already implement ourselves? What recommendations do we need to bring to the higher level of decision-making?

Validity of ToCs
Selection of weakest ToCs:
• What were the main ToCs identified as being weak?
• What were their main assumptions and weak points?

Analysis:
• What information have we collected in relation to these ToCs?
• To what extent does this validate or falsify our ToCs

Adaptation:
• Do we need to start collecting different information?
• Do we need to make changes to the way we implement the project?
• What changes can we already implement ourselves? What recommendations do we need to bring to the higher level of decision-making?
PART II: TOOLS AND TEMPLATES FOR PREPARATORY WORK

The following section provides tools and templates for the preparatory work. These tools and templates can be adjusted over time, to make them better fit for purpose.

I. CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Guiding questions for VE Vulnerability & Resilience analysis

Useful guiding questions can be found in the IA-UNDP toolkit, partially represented in the table below (page 41).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vulnerability factors</th>
<th>Resilience factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structural/institutional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the root/structural causes of VE?</td>
<td>What sources of resilience at a structural level can help prevent VE?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the role of institutions in VE?</td>
<td>How are institutions playing a role in PVE?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the state capacity and willingness to engage marginalised groups in decision-making?</td>
<td>To what extent are formal decision-making processes inclusive and support the involvement of a diverse range of actors in prevention?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do these underlying causes and factors of VE influence vulnerability or resilience of different groups (men, women, boys, girls, those who identify as other, different nationalities, ethnic, religious ...)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the other institutional/structural factors related (such as governance issues) to the broader context that interact with the VE factors listed above?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Social |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| What social factors exacerbate vulnerability? | What are the social factors that support resilience? |
| What tensions/conflicts exist between groups? | What are communities’ capacities for resolving conflicts? |
| Are specific groups stigmatised? | How strong are networks across social divides? |
| Do specific groups feel a sense of injustice? | How inclusive are social networks? |
| How is armed violence perceived within communities? | How strong is the rejection of violence (including armed violence and gender-based violence)? |
| What are attitudes towards gender-based violence? | How strong are pro-peace attitudes? |
| What are attitudes towards values such as diversity? | Do people have skills and/or mechanisms for resolving conflict without violence? |
| How do these factors differ amongst different groups (men, women, boys, girls, sexual and gender minorities, different nationalities...)? |

5.3 Documenting the analysis and adaptations

During the learning and adaptation session, the discussions can be quite open-ended and free flowing. However, at the end of the session the main conclusions will be captured and documented in a systematic manner, for instance in an Learning and Adaptation matrix. The filled matrix, and the minutes of the meeting, will serve:

- to show that effective learning and adaptation takes place
- to provide a paper trail and justification for adaptations that are made to the project
- as input into the validation workshop in March 2019, a mid-term evaluation and final evaluation

Part III provides the template for recording the analysis and adaptations.

6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The main responsibility for learning and adaptation lies with the project managers themselves, as they are the ones that need to ensure the right information is collected, their “antennas” are continuously scanning the environment for possible unintended consequences, and are critically reflecting on the impact of their activities on a daily basis. Learning and adaptation is a daily practice, not something that happens only when formal learning and adaptation sessions are held.

The formal responsibility for learning and adaptation lies in a Learning and Adaptation Team. The Learning and Adaptation team will:

Ensure the preparatory work gets done, through:

- Collecting documents, conducting analysis, and making recommendations to outcome teams (e.g. for clarifying ToCs)
- Encouraging outcome teams to conduct their part of the preparatory work and hold them accountable

Organising the learning and adaptation sessions, through:

- Organising learning and adaptation sessions or assigning project staff to do so (inviting actors, preparing agenda)

- Facilitating the learning and adaptation sessions, or mandating and equipping staff with the skills to do so

Ensuring the correct flow of information:

- Between the levels of learning and adaptation
- Ensuring proper file management
- Provide summaries of learning and adaptation, when necessary

Prepare for Learning and Adaptation Evaluation / Validation workshop

- Liaise with PBF and PeaceNexus on the ToR for the Learning and Adaptation Evaluation workshop
- Prepare documentation for the Learning and Adaptation workshop
- Conduct analysis on data collected as part of learning and adaptation, to present to the Learning and Adaptation workshop

The Learning and Adaptation team will be chaired by the PBF Secretariat.

Part III provides the template for recording the analysis and adaptations.
**PART II: TOOLS AND TEMPLATES FOR PREPARATORY WORK**

**PART II: TOOLS AND TEMPLATES FOR PREPARATORY WORK**

**Individual factors**

- What are the individual risk factors?
- What psychological factors are important in VE?
- How do broader issues around marginalisation, stigma, etc. play out at an individual level?
- What individual factors are important in prevention?
- How do individual perceptions vary based on gender, social/economic and other identity factors?
- What are the other individual factors related (such as governance issues) to the broader context that interact with the VE factors listed above?

Please note that this toolkit uses a slightly different categorisation of drivers of VE than used in the February workshop, but social factors are very similar to the concept of ‘enabling factors’, which was used in the workshop.

**Main drivers of VE identified during February Workshop**

The table below shows the main drivers of VE that were identified during the February workshop. The relative importance of each of these will need to be determined during the localized context analysis, as this may differ greatly per locality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structural motivators</th>
<th>Enabling factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Role of global and regional politics (sense of Western hypocrisy and meddling)</td>
<td>- Adventure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Horizontal inequalities, political exclusion &amp; mistreatment of minorities (notably Uzbeks)</td>
<td>- Belonging &amp; acceptance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Unemployment and limited opportunities for upward mobility</td>
<td>- Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Injustice &amp; corruption</td>
<td>- Material enticements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Rejection / dissatisfaction with the socio-economic and political system</td>
<td>- Social networks with VE associations, locally or abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Weak state capacity to provide basic services</td>
<td>- Unrealised potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lack of a common national identity</td>
<td>- Individual grievances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mistrust between secular and religious groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Fragmentation of religious community and weakness of traditional clergy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other human rights violations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**II. RISK MONITORING AND RISK MITIGATION**

There will be gendered differences in the risks and risk mitigation strategies, which will be taken on board.

**GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR IDENTIFYING KEY RISKS**

**Strategic risks:**

- What influence may the project activities have on state policies and responses?
- What influence may PVE programming have on other peacebuilding programming?
- Can PVE programming put the UN in a difficult position regarding its neutrality?
- Can PVE programming exacerbate tensions between communities?
- Can PVE programming unwillingly promote certain values?
- How may PVE programming be perceived by different communities?
- What can the effects of PVE programming be on gender relations?

**Operational risks:**

- How will different stakeholders perceive the programme?
- What resources does your project introduce? How might these affect relationships?
- Does the project touch on pre-existing power dynamics or introduce new ones? What might be the intended and unintended consequences of this?
- What security risks are involved for all stakeholders (project staff, implementing partners, other stakeholders, beneficiaries)?
- How may the influence of the project be different for different social groups? (especially youth and gender)
- How UN Agencies are coordinating their work between themselves and with other development partners to avoid duplication? What are the risks that emerge as a result of lack of this coordination?
### Main risks identified during February Workshop

#### Strategic risks
- Legitimating a certain political agenda
  - International and national security-type approaches → making PVE harder
  - Risk of unwillingly supporting the government’s strong agenda of secularization
  - Over-reliance on data provided by government / security services > risk of buying into their frame
  - The extent of the threat of violent extremism in Kyrgyzstan is debated and may well be exaggerated for the certain political agenda
  - There is a lack of understanding of the distinction between religiosity, radicalisation, extremism and violent extremism.
  - Other forms of extremism (e.g. extreme nationalist groups) are not receiving attention
- Over-emphasis on violent extremism vis-à-vis other peacebuilding issues
  - Over emphasis by government and donors on VE versus other conflict issues and peacebuilding opportunities
  - Focus on VE stifles public debate on issues of peacebuilding importance
  - Risk of losing momentum, not building on past experience (sustaining peace as bridge?)
  - Insufficient knowledge on what makes communities resilient may lead to ineffective approaches, that may even backfire
- Over-labelling and stigmatization
  - Labelling and stigmatizing a certain group and thereby reinforcing a sense of discrimination and unfair treatment > thus further driving extremism
  - Implying that religion is the main drivers, therefore risk of equating religiosity with extremism
  - Tendency by the security services to equate radicals/extremists with all forms on non-traditional Islam
- Unwillingly promoting certain values
  - PVE perceived as “Western meddling”
  - Program doesn’t have consensus on role of religion in addressing VE
  - Unwillingly promote values we don’t agree with because of our partners (e.g. sharia)
  - ‘Salafi mimicking Hanafi’ → risk of legitimizing extremist preachers who pretend to be moderate
  - Being pushed to take sides between different interpretations of Islam, e.g. to support traditional Islamic education

#### Operational risks
- Exacerbating tension between and within communities
- Stigmatizing group or individuals by labelling them as VE
- Stakeholder dissatisfaction with effectiveness or focus of PVE project
- Safety of local partners and beneficiaries
- Being pushed to work with extremist group → security risks
- Bringing external practice but may not be contextual/effective here

---

**Template for Risk Mitigation Strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main risks for unintended consequences</th>
<th>Risk mitigation strategies</th>
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**Template for Risk Mitigation Strategies – for entire PPP and per Project**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Risk mitigation strategies</th>
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**Main risks for unintended consequences**

- Exacerbating tension between and within communities
- Stigmatizing group or individuals by labelling them as VE
- Stakeholder dissatisfaction with effectiveness or focus of PVE project
- Safety of local partners and beneficiaries
- Being pushed to work with extremist group → security risks
- Bringing external practice but may not be contextual/effective here
III. CLARIFYING TOCS

Tentative formulations of outcome and project-level ToCs

Please note that the Alliance for Peacebuilding report ‘Assessing the evidence for key theories of change’ has collected evidence on a number of often-used Theories of Change, which can be helpful to use as a resource. The UNDP-IA toolkit has a good checklist for the quality of the ToC at page 58, which can also be helpful.

Outcome 1: Justice and security sector institutions, national and local authorities, civil society apply socially inclusive approaches and participatory decision-making in order to prevent violent extremism.

Current Outcome-level ToC:
IF state institutions, justice and security agencies are equipped with inclusive methodologies and expertise on PVE and if they are able to effectively implement participatory decision-making and legislative reforms in line with Human Rights and Rule of Law norms with the support of civil society representatives, THEN they will be able to engage in a more positive engagement with citizens leading to the reduction of potential drivers to violent extremism.

Suggested Output-level ToCs:
1) IF state authorities have expertise and capacity to design and implement socially inclusive, gender sensitive, human rights compliant policies and legislation applying participatory approaches reflecting the specific needs of women, men, girls and boys, THEN they will design and put into practice more inclusive and human-rights based policies that have the potential to reduce the drivers of VE.
2) IF law enforcement, judiciary have expertise and capacity to engage with stakeholders, including human rights organizations, experts and communities and learn about international human rights standards, THEN they will engage in a positive manner with citizens, in line with international human rights standards.
3) IF civil society actors with a special focus to youth and women are capacitated to actively engage in the field of prevention of violent extremism with duty bearers, THEN the duty bearers will take these perspectives into consideration and adapt their policies and practice accordingly.

Note
- It could perhaps be more clear in the ToC if the desired result is improved policies and practice, or also an increase in confidence in the state by citizens.
- The output-level ToCs could be more specific in relation to which state authorities and which policies they are referring to (e.g. are we talking about PVE policies? Or about a broader set of policies that can be considered PVE-relevant?"
- Please note that there are some strong assumptions underpinning these ToCs, which relate to the actual commitment and will of these authorities to engage positively with citizens and / or in line with international human rights standards. Just capacity is not sufficient.

Outcome 2: Penitentiary and probation officers, as well as police and forensic experts effectively prevent and address radicalization to violence by ensuring adequate safeguards in compliance with national and international standards

Current Outcome-level ToC:
IF sound forensic expertise is used to adjudicate terrorism and extremism related crimes, IF adequate measures for the prevention of radicalization to violence are applied in prisons and probation settings, violent extremist offenders are adequately assessed, confined and/or supervised according to the risks they present, AND
IF disengagement and social reintegration services are provided, THEN the forensic service, the prison and probation system, as well as the police and community services can effectively contribute to the prevention of radicalization to violence in Kyrgyzstan.

Suggested Output-level ToCs:

1) IF penitentiary staff enhance their expertise on addressing violent extremism in prisons by developing methodologies for the prevention of radicalization to violence in prisons as well as on disengagement interventions for violent extremist offenders, THEN adequate mechanisms for the prevention of radicalization to violence and disengagement interventions for violent extremist offenders will be developed and applied in prisons, which will prevent (further) radicalization in prison and reduce recidivism.

2) IF probation staff and police officers effectively facilitate the social reintegration of violent extremist offenders into the community and promote community partnerships to prevent violent extremism, THEN violent extremist offenders will be socially integrated into their communities and less attracted to violent extremism.

3) IF forensic experts provide high-quality expertise in terrorism and extremism related cases, THEN the adjudication of terrorism and extremism related crimes will be based on sound forensic evidence.

Current Outcome-level ToC:

IF women and men, boys and girls in the communities have critical thinking skills and are able to positively claim and exercise their rights through civic engagement, THEN they will become resilient to violent and manipulative ideologies, because they will have a sense of belonging to their communities and confidence in the State.

Suggested Outcome-level ToC:

IF youth, adolescents, women and men take a more critical stance on ideologies instigating violence, THEN they will be less inclined to support or engage in violent extremism.

Suggested Output-level ToCs:

1) IF youth, adolescents, women and men in target communities gain civic competencies in schools, homes and the community AND are able to positively claim and exercise their rights through civic engagement, THEN they will take a more critical stance on ideologies instigating violence.

2) IF youth and adolescents, women and men in target communities engage in collaborative measures to address local vulnerabilities leading to violent extremism; THEN they will feel empowered to and capable of addressing vulnerabilities in their communities, will have a stronger sense of belonging to their communities and confidence in local authorities, and will therefore be less inclined to support or engage in violent extremism.

3) IF the capacity of opinion leaders, civil society activists and religious leaders is strengthened to provide alternative and positive messages and build meaningful dialogue and exchange, THEN there will be less exposure to and willingness to believe in violent ideology by at-risk populations.

Note:

- Especially the first two ToCs are based on the assumption that the youth can indeed see the impact of their engagement and that their voices are being heard by the local authorities and the community. If not, it may actually increase their sense of disenfranchisement.

IV. UNCOVERING ASSUMPTIONS, WEAK POINTS AND RELATIVE STRENGTH OF TOCS

Guiding Questions

Main assumptions:

- Will these activities always lead to the desired result?
- Can you imagine ways in which these activities might not lead to the desired result?
- What else may need to happen for these activities to really lead to the desired result?

Weak points in ToC:

- How strong is the evidence underpinning this ToC?
- Where do we not feel very confident that we will achieve the desired result and why?
- Where do we feel that we've tried this so many times before and the desired result was not achieved?
- What are some of the largest concerns that we have with this ToC?
### PART III: TOOLS AND TEMPLATES FOR LEARNING AND ADAPTATION

The following section provides tools and templates for the actual learning and adaptation sessions. These tools and templates can also be adjusted over time, to make them better fit for purpose.

#### GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION, ANALYSIS AND ADAPTATION

Below are the basic guiding questions, as presented in the Learning and Adaptation Strategy. The UNDP-IA toolkit also provides guidance questions, which can be useful to jumpstart conversation or serve as additional inspiration. Please refer to page 93 and 96 of the UNDP-IA Toolkit.

**CONTEXT**

**Identification of key changes:**
- What, if any, are important changes in the broader conflict context? How significant are these changes?
- What, if any, are important changes in the VE-specific context analysis? How significant are these changes?

**Analysis:**
- Potential effect of Project on Context: What (positive or negative) effects can our on-going or planned project activities have on these changes in the context?
- Potential effect of context on project: How are these changes in the context likely to affect our on-going or planned project activities?

**Adaptation:**
- Do we need to adjust our on-going or planned activities?
- What adaptations can we already implement ourselves? What recommendations do we need to bring to the higher level of decision-making?

#### RISK MONITORING

**Key risks for negative unintended consequences:**
- What were the key risks identified?
- Have we detected any new key risks that we had not identified ex-ante?

**Analysis:**
- Does the information we collected provide evidence or indications for unintended consequences?
- Do we have any sense that unintended consequences are taking place, but not captured by the information collected? What, anecdotal or hard, evidence exists for this ‘hunch’?
- In light of the above, are our mitigation strategies sufficient and still valid?
Adaptation:
• Do we need to adapt our mitigation strategies?
• Do we need to start collecting different information?
• Do we need to make changes to the way we implement the project?
• What adaptations can we already implement ourselves? What recommendations do we need to bring to the higher level of decision-making?

VALIDITY OF TOCs

Selection of weakest ToCs:
• What were the main ToCs identified as being weak?
• What were their main assumptions and weak points?

Analysis:
• What information have we collected in relation to these ToCs?
• To what extent does this validate or falsify our ToCs?
• Are the assumptions still valid?

Adaptation:
• Do we need to start collecting different information?
• Do we need to make changes to the way we implement the project?
• What changes can we already implement ourselves? What recommendations do we need to bring to the higher level of decision-making?

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### Template for recording changes in context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key changes in context</th>
<th>Potential impact of these changes</th>
<th>Adaptations implemented</th>
<th>Recommendations for further adaptation – to be channeled to next level</th>
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### C. Template for recording changes in risk analysis and risk mitigation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key risks identified</th>
<th>Information collected (give summary here; present data as accompanying docs)</th>
<th>Adaptations implemented</th>
<th>Recommendations for further adaptations – to be channelled to next level</th>
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### D. Template for recording validity of ToC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weakest ToC identified</th>
<th>Weakest ToC identified and main weaknesses</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Adaptations implemented</th>
<th>Summary of information collected (give summary here; present data as accompanying docs)</th>
<th>Recommendations for further adaptations – to be channelled to next level</th>
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UN PEACEBUILDING FUND

The Peacebuilding Fund is the Secretary General’s Fund – launched in 2006 to support activities, actions, programmes and organisations that seek to build a lasting peace in countries emerging from conflict. The PBF constitutes an essential component of the enhanced UN architecture to provide for a more sustained engagement in support of countries or situations at risk of affected by violent conflict. It addresses critical gaps for sustaining peace before, during and after conflict. The Secretary-General has delegated overall management responsibility for the Peacebuilding fund to the Peacebuilding Support Office. The PBSO approves projects and programs and monitors implementation. The United Nations Development Programme’s Multi Partner Trust Fund Office administers the Fund. At the country level, management of the Fund is delegated to the Joint Steering Committee, co-chaired by the national Government and the United Nations with a broader membership representing national and international stakeholders.

UNITED NATIONS IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

The UN System in the Kyrgyz Republic, also called UN Family, is made up of UN affiliated programmes, funds, specialized agencies and other entities working in the Kyrgyz Republic. At present it consists of 27 members, 12 of which are non-residents.

The aim of the UN system in the Kyrgyz Republic is to assist the Country in implementing development reforms and provide support in the achievement of internationally agreed Development Goals, including the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals.

Each UN agency works in its own sphere according to its mandate. However, all its work contribute to the same cause adopted by the world leaders in United Nations.

PEACENEXUS FOUNDATION

PeaceNexus is a Swiss-based Foundation established in May 2009. The PeaceNexus core mission is to provide peacebuilding-relevant actors – multilateral organisations, governments, non-profit organisations and business actors – with expertise and advice on how they can make best use of their peacebuilding role and capacity to help stabilize and reconcile conflict-affected societies. PeaceNexus tailored advisory services and advocacy activities are complemented by a grant mechanism that promotes innovative ideas and organisational development for peacebuilding agents of change.

PeaceNexus specializes in identifying relevant and cutting-edge expertise, making it available to actors for peacebuilding, and structuring, sequencing and accompanying the advisory process.