

Assessing Violent Extremism

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CVE Guides and Frameworks

1. USAID, "Conducting an Extremism or Terrorism Assessment: An Analytical Framework for Strategy and Program Development," 2008
2. USAID, "Guide to the Drivers of Violent Extremism," 2009
3. USAID, "Development Assistance and Counter-Extremism: A Guide to Programming," 2009
4. USAID, "The Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency Policy: Putting Principles into Practice," 2011
5. National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), "Countering Violent Extremism: A Guide for Practitioners and Analysts," 2014
6. US Department of State, Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations, "Working Draft Violent Extremism Analysis Framework: Supplemental Guidance to Interagency Conflict Analysis Framework (ICAF 2.0)" 2016
7. Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), "Countering Violent Extremism and Risk Reduction: A Guide to Programme Design and Evaluation," 2016
8. International Alert and UNDP. "Improving the impact of preventing violent extremism programming: A toolkit for design, monitoring and evaluation," 2018

Elements of a CVE Assessment

- Nature and scope of the threat
- Key actors
- At-risk populations
- Drivers
- Resiliencies
- Government and civil society responses
- Synthesis and programming recommendations

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

- State support for, or complicity in, violent extremist activities
- Domination, intimidation and coercion by violent extremist groups
- State fragility and weakness, ungoverned spaces
- Large scale corruption
- Inability of indigenous religious institutions to manage the redefinition of religion

DOMESTIC

DOMESTIC &
TRANSNATIONAL

PUSH FACTORS

- Desire for ordered lives
- Search for meaning
- Yearning for identity and belonging
- Desire for influence, adventure
- Inclination to think in black/white
- Frustration with society

INDIVIDUAL

VIOLENT EXTREMIST ORGANIZATION PULL FACTORS

- Material rewards and immediate gratification

PUSH FACTORS

- Imprisonment
- Peer influence

GROUP

VIOLENT EXTREMIST ORGANIZATION PULL FACTORS

- Active recruitment
- Bonds of loyalty and brotherhood
- Us vs. Them mentality
- Vicious cycle of rising social hostility

PUSH FACTORS

- Local conflicts
- Social Exclusion and marginality
- Systemic socioeconomic discrimination
- Perception that religion threatened
- Perceived inequalities of the international system
- Cultural dislocation and rapid social change

SOCIETAL

VIOLENT EXTREMIST ORGANIZATION PULL FACTORS

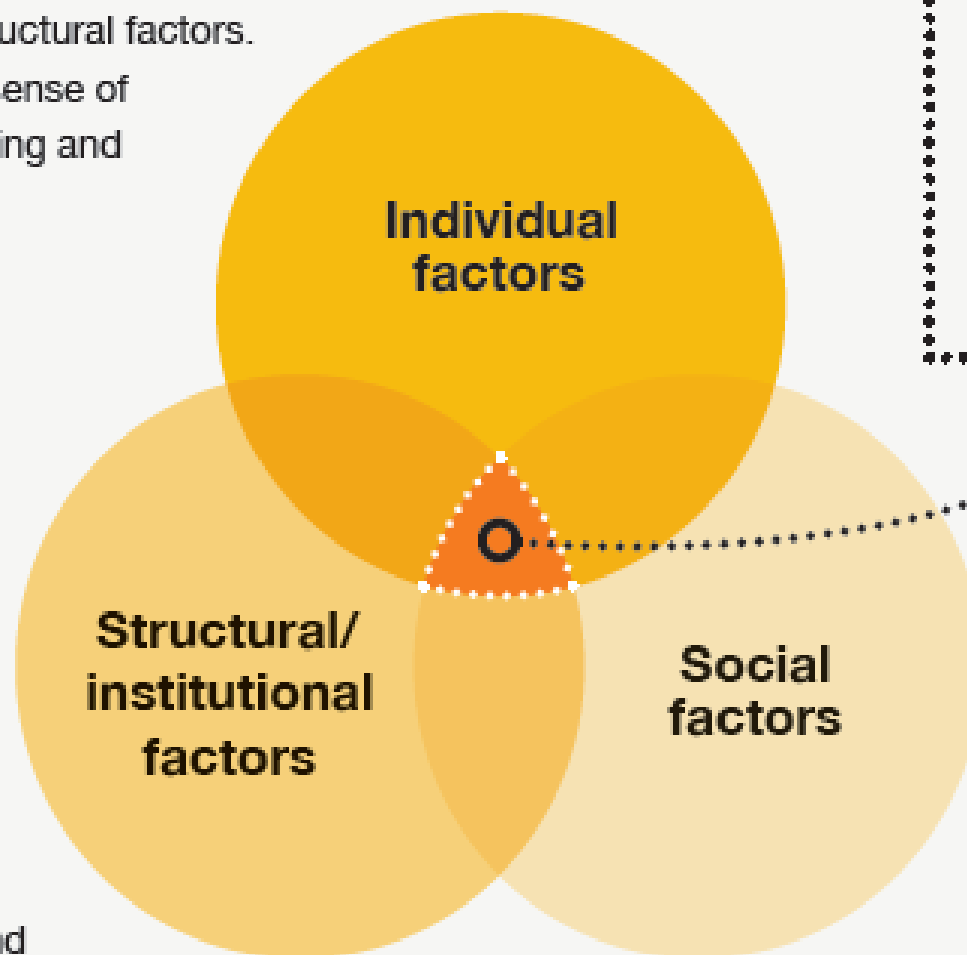
- VE service provision
- Role of VE social media
- Criminality-VE nexus
- Religious ideology

Individual factors: Motivations, incentives, grievances, attitudes, perceptions and psychological factors, response to societal and structural factors.

These include sense of agency, belonging and identity factors.



Key – understanding the nexus between personal/social/structural



**Structural/
Institutional factors:**

Causes of conflict and sources of resilience embedded within social, cultural and political systems. These include institutions' role in VE/PVE, such as the role of mandated bodies in PVE or the role corruption plays within state institutions.

Social factors

Social factors: Relationships with families, peers and communities (incl. inter-generational, relationships between men and women) and engagement in decision-making. This includes relationships between people and groups at local and national levels.

Vulnerability factors

Resilience factors

Structural/institutional

- High unemployment of young graduates (VE groups use financial incentives to recruit)
- Lack of political representation of the suburbs
- Lack of public and cultural spaces
- Abuses by security forces
- Lack of transparency in policy-making

- Adaptation to Arab spring – reforms happening despite being slow
- Burgeoning civil society and active youth role in this dynamic

Social

- Stigmatisation of specific groups (e.g. based on gender)
- Exclusion of groups in decision-making processes (formal and informal)
- Intergenerational tension

- Solidarity amongst community – source of strength
- Equal and inclusive gender relations (e.g. between men and women, different generations)

Individual

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Data Collection Methods

Literature Review

Key Informant Interviews

Focus Group Discussions

Surveys

Social Media Analysis

Personal Narratives



Assessment Findings

Low Activity

- no discernable/low VRE activity
- no or few VRE actors
- low penetration of VRE ideas
- significant sources of resiliency
- drivers are not powerful enough to create a sizable VRE threat.

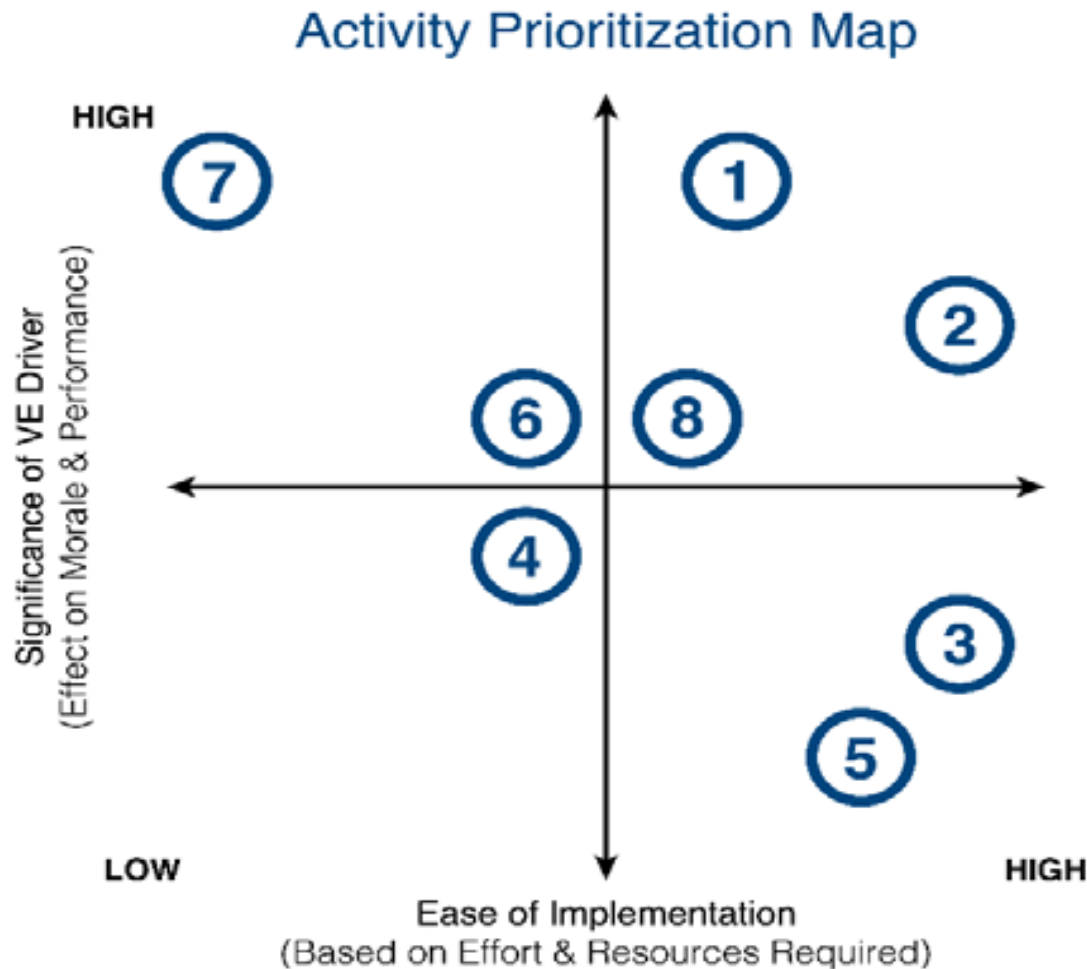
Moderate Activity

- VRE activity confined to certain areas
- active VRE actors with limited support
- some penetration of VRE ideas
- some sources of resiliency may have diminished or eroded
- VRE problem may be spreading unevenly or at a manageable pace

High Activity

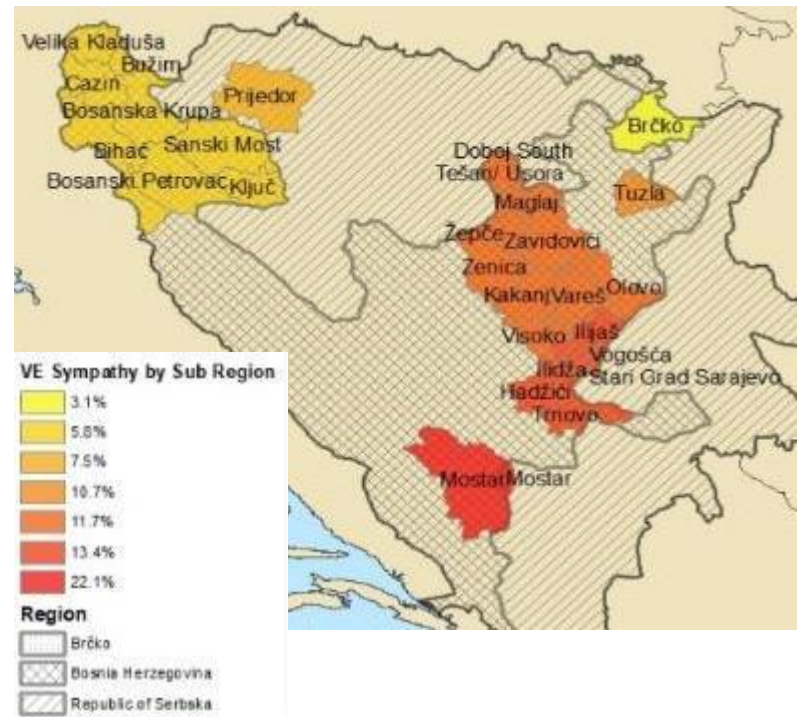
- visible and prevalent VRE activity
- VRE actors with significant societal support
- significant penetration of VRE ideas
- no or few VRE actors
- VRE threat rapidly escalating

From Assessment to Programming



Writing the Report

- Include executive summary
- Aim for a shareable document
- Incorporate tables and graphics
- Plan for updating the assessment



Map 1: Bosnia and Herzegovina VE Sympathy by Subregion

PUSH FACTORS

- Islamophobia
- Hate speech
- Lack of democratization
- Lack of education and critical thinking
- Ethnic and religious marginalization and intolerance
- Poverty
- Military operations by Western governments in Afghanistan and Iraq
- Feelings of victimhood and secondary trauma related to suffering of Muslims outside the region (Palestinians, refugees from Syria)
- Poor justice system
- Violence in the community

PULL FACTORS

- Political identity
- Cultural and religious identity
- Influence of media
- Feelings of victimhood
- Monetary incentives
- Idealization of former fighters from Afghanistan and other conflicts
- Idea of achieving a "pure Islam"
- Sense of adventure
- Feelings of power
- Opportunity of transformation and change for their communities