



Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs

Enhancing the capacity of Georgia in preventing violent extremism and radicalization



With the support of **the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway**, Georgian Center for Strategy and Development (GCSD) has launched a four-year (2020-2024) multi-tier programme entitled **Enhancing the capacity of Georgia in preventing violent extremism (VE) and radicalization**.

Georgia, a committed contributor to the international security, faces the risks arising from the destructive phenomena such as terrorism, violent extremism and violent radicalisation. Whilst these challenges are relatively new to Georgia's security agenda, they are incontestably critical. International practice shows that addressing these issues should not be interpreted as solely the responsibility of law enforcement agencies and should instead be dealt with by the society as a whole. The latter implies that every sector of the society should assume its share of responsibility.

It is with this conviction that GCSD designed a programme that will engage a multitude of stakeholders in an effort aimed at gradually increasing Georgia's capacity to prevent violent extremism and radicalisation. The project aims to enhance the capacity of Georgia to prevent all forms of violent extremism and radicalization as well as increase the resilience of the society against those phenomena through engaging the government and the civil society at large in a complex programme over the period of four years.

The project will create sustainable institutional knowledge for all relevant institutions directly or otherwise working on preventing violent extremism and radicalisation. The programme will empower civil society organisations to implement projects of relevance to the general framework aimed at understanding and diminishing the threat of violent extremism and radicalisation.

The project focuses on the following strategic levels: the policy dimension and community engagement. Through the lifespan of the project GCSD will engage several actors.

It will aim at two bulks of target groups: the state and the civil society.

The following state institutions will be gradually enhanced to build the capacity to withstand the challenges arising from VE and radicalisation:



Permanent Interagency Commission on Elaboration of the National Counterterrorism Strategy (CNCS):

The Commission established in mid-2018 serves as a body coordinating all state efforts as foreseen by the National Strategy on the Fight Against Terrorism 2019. The objective of the Commission is to set Georgia's unified policy in the field of counterterrorism, minimize and prevent existing threats facing the country, as well as, oversee and coordinate the actions of state authorities. The Commission is composed of line Ministries and is chaired by the deputy head of the State Security Service (SSG). GCSD will deliver tailored training sessions for key commission members. Prominent international experts will lead training sessions. Furthermore, study tours to partner countries will be organized for commission members to familiarize with international experience in implementing P/CVE and CT strategies.

Local government bodies – As the first state layer confronting the phenomenon of radicalization, local government institutions should factor into all and any state measures directed against it. GCSD's multi-layer approach will inevitably and most necessarily entail the local government level.

The Training Centre of the State Security Service of Georgia (SSG) –

The Centre trains employees of the State Security Service – the leading agency in the process of counterterrorism. With the help of top international experts GCSD will create a curriculum that will equip future and existing law-enforcement officers with the skills and knowledge imperative to the in-depth understanding of complex phenomena of radicalization and violent extremism. The curriculum will be presented to the Training Centre as well as the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA). Targeted training will be delivered to the Community Officers of the MIA.



The Parliament – As the newly adopted strategy moves on to the implementation process, the oversight of the legislative branch of the government will be crucial. Under the project, at the level of relevant committees MPs and staff members will be duly trained and equipped with necessary tools to have the awareness concerning violent extremism in general and its local specificities through workshops, seminars and study tours.

A broad range of civil society organisations will be targeted and equipped with needs-based tools to play their respective part in the process of countering and preventing violent extremism and radicalisation

Civic education teachers - in a multicultural, multi-ethnic society civic education is a cohesive tool that can weave different components of the population into the fabric of a society. Teachers specializing in this field are thus of crucial importance for fostering the sense of belonging and creating a shared national identity. GCSD will deliver intensive training sessions for educators from 5 regions (including Tbilisi). The topics will include and are not limited to: defining violent extremism and radicalization, introducing different driving factors of radicalization and violent extremism, radicalization and violent extremism in youth, the role of education in preventing violent extremism and radicalization, defining key partners and stakeholders.

Local civil society organizations- NGOs operating in the capital as well as the regions of Georgia will be given an opportunity to design and implement projects aimed at understanding and diminishing the threat of violent extremism and radicalisation. GCSD, through a sub-granting mechanism, will engage with local partners and deliver the projects oriented at social inclusion, improving the social dialogue, youth engagement and empowerment, study tours and youth camps. In total, GCSD aims to deliver 10 sub-grant projects.



Media

One simply cannot exaggerate the role of the media in relation to the processes of radicalization and violent extremism. The media creates opinions, spreads information and perpetuates attitudes. It reaches deep into the cognition of receptive audiences and can effectively manage their mind-sets. Media outlets and professionals in the field will be offered opportunities to deepen their knowledge of the phenomena of VE and radicalisation. To this end, GCSD will conduct 4 capacity building activities, including real-life simulations. Both international and local experts will lead the media-oriented activities.



Universities

Universities are the intellectual core of any society. They should be the first base where issues affecting the population are to be critically discussed and analysed. Their involvement is then crucial to make sure that the project has far-reaching results. GCSD will create lasting partnerships and sustainable opportunities whereby universities will be able to become the fora for exploring the concepts and practicalities of VE and radicalisation and raise future practitioners and scholars of the field.



Strategic communications in delivering alternative narratives

Under the newly adopted counter-terrorism strategy, overrunning the messages spread by violent extremist groups by delivering alternative narratives is of utmost importance. In partnership with relevant ministries engaged in the commission, GCSD will work on developing a comprehensive matrix of alternative narratives. It will focus both on dealing with narratives targeting potential Foreign Terrorist Fighters as well as right-wing/neo-Nazi groups. It will further help and support state institutions in delivering efficient strategic communications while countering violent ideas and hate campaigns waged by radical movements and groups. The Matrix will be developed by the GCSD's team in cooperation with communication experts, psychologists and experts in sociology.

Voice of the community

With an active social media campaign, GCSD will launch a 2 years long action, which will entail the promotion of success stories from areas prone to or marked by cases of radicalisation. It will further support the program and key stakeholders in strengthening the positive alternative narratives and addressing violent messages. The project expert team, composed of communication specialists and people from relevant backgrounds, will oversee the implementation of the social media campaign.



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Concluding Conference with the participation of international partners

GCSD will organize an international conference on “Countering Violent Extremism and the Process of De-Radicalization - Lessons Learned”. The Conference will serve as a platform to discuss best international practice as well as trends and tendencies observed throughout the projects.

