

Tony Blair
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**EDUCATION AND
SECURITY**

*A Global Literature Review
on the Role of Education
in Countering Violent
Religious Extremism*

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This volume is published with the support of the *Education and Security: The Challenge of Religious Diversity* initiative at McGill University.

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EDUCATION AND SECURITY

A Global Literature Review on the Role of Education in Countering Violent Religious Extremism

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TABLE of CONTENTS

Executive Summary 5

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Context and background 8

The importance of education for security 11

Conclusion 14

CHAPTER 2: THE USE OF EDUCATION TO PROMOTE EXTREMIST WORLDVIEWS

Attacks on educational institutions 15

How education is used to promote violent extremism 16

Educational strategies for recruitment and promotion 16

Case studies of extremist groups 22

Educational backgrounds of extremists 30

Problems with other forms of education 32

Conclusion 33

CHAPTER 3: THE USE OF EDUCATION TO COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM

How education can counter violent extremism 34

Formal education for CVE 35

Non-formal education for CVE 45

Evaluation 54

Conclusion 54

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Major findings 56

Gaps and future priorities 60

Final remarks 62

Bibliography 63

ACRONYMS

AQAP: al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

AQI: al-Qaeda in Iraq

AQIM: al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb

CRF: Center for Religious Freedom, US

CVE: Counter Violent Extremism

EU: European Union

GSPC: Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat, also known as The Salafist Group for Preaching and Combatting in Algeria

GTD: Global Terrorism Database, of START, Maryland, US

HRW: Human Rights Watch, New York, US

HSI: The United States Homeland Security Institute, Washington, DC, US

ICG: International Crisis Group, Brussels, Belgium

ISIS: Islamic State in Iraq and Syria or Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, where al-Sham is the Arabic name for Greater Syria. It is also known as ISIL (Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant), IS (Islamic State) and Daesh.

ITIC: The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, Israel

IWPR: Institute for War and Peace Reporting, London, UK

KAICIID: King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, Vienna, Austria

MIS: UK Military Intelligence, Sector 5 (domestic security)

n.d.: no date

NCTb: National Curriculum and Textbook Board, Bangladesh

NGO: Non-governmental organisation

OSCE: Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

RSS: Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, India

START: The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, University of Maryland, US

TBFF: Tony Blair Faith Foundation, UK

UIS: UNESCO Institute for Statistics

UK: United Kingdom

UN: United Nations

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Paris, France

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund, New York, US

UNO: University of Nebraska, Omaha, US

US: United States of America

USAID: US Agency for International Development, Washington, DC, US

USCIRF: United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, Washington, DC, US

USD: United States Dollar

USIP: United States Institute of Peace, Washington, DC, US

WWB: Women Without Borders, Vienna, Austria

Executive Summary

In July 2014, an expert roundtable convened by the Tony Blair Faith Foundation and the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee's Executive Directorate (UNCTED) identified the need for better cognisance of the research and understanding that has been developed to date on the relationship between education and extremism.

The relationship between education and extremism is seemingly paradoxical, it being used both in aid of, and to combat, extremism. Gaining clarity of global understanding and of practice in the field is an urgent priority. The Faith Foundation therefore commissioned this review from McGill University in order to gain that high-level perspective. The review's purpose is to give a better picture of what is currently understood across disciplines, to assess whether education should be a priority concern in combatting extremism, and to identify knowledge gaps that need filling.

The authors consider three core areas within the review's scope. The first, 'Is education important?', is to explore the paradoxical nature of education in relation to extremism. The authors look at evidence on both the use of education by extremists, including case studies of different extremist groups, and reasons why education should also be important in preventing extremism. The second area, 'What education helps counter violent extremism?', is to review the forms of education that might be able to prevent extremism. The authors investigate the assumption that general education alone is not enough, and that extremists, especially in leadership positions, often have good educational levels, including case studies of the educational background of extremists. Finally the third area, 'How does education help?', is to consider current evidence for how education contributes to combatting extremism. The authors map existing evaluation, programmes and cases to show the kind of education being promoted and why these programmes are effective, if they consider them to be so.

SUMMARY

This review demonstrates that the impact of the worldwide proliferation of violent attacks motivated by religious ex-

tremism threatens both national and personal security irrespective of location or faith. Education has been particularly damaged by direct attacks on institutions, by the removal of educational opportunity, and by the use of education to indoctrinate and recruit young people.

Yet current government responses to counter violent extremism (CVE) have largely been to develop extensive and costly counter-terrorism measures at national and international levels. This is done mainly through hard power – coercive and aggressive measures that include military and security strategy and tactics. These measures continue to be reactive to terrorist acts after they are planned and/or committed rather than being preventive. Whilst critical to combatting extremism, they do not prevent the initial development of violent extremist ideologies leading to radicalisation and terrorism.

Despite tremendous investment and efforts towards countering terrorism, terrorist attacks have increased. This review suggests that more young people today are being radicalised through soft power – extremist ideas, ideology, narratives and propaganda. It questions whether this can be met adequately by hard power responses, as these methods appeal directly to the psychological, intellectual and emotional states of young people.

The review finds that social institutions, like schools and universities, have not been sufficiently supported to effectively foster resilience in students to resist the pull of extremist ideology and narratives. Since universal education implies that all young people spend approximately 16 years of their lives in schools, education is an obvious tool with which to develop resilience and offer a counter-narrative.

Indeed, this review concludes that the use of education is an indispensable component for CVE. Education can increase the sustainability of CVE projects, complementing surveillance and intelligence measures. Yet the type of education is important. This review suggests that vocational training alone is not enough and highlights that education must instil critical thinking, respect for diversity, and values for citizen-

ship if it is to successfully prevent extremism. Moreover, teachers need to be well prepared and resourced for this to be effective.

The review also advises that CVE programmes that include the role of education are largely underreported. Governments, especially those in Scandinavia, Western Europe, and parts of Southeast Asia, have established educational programmes in schools and prisons to prevent young people from being radicalised. In addition, numerous non-governmental organisations have well-established programmes to engage members of the greater community in countering violent extremism. However, the review notes that evaluation of CVE is still difficult and imprecise, one reason being that it is difficult to measure what has been prevented, and more needs to be done to improve this area.

KEY FINDINGS

This review makes the following findings. Further details on these can be found in Chapter 4.

- Education is a double-edged sword used by both extremists and for CVE. Formulated or conducted improperly, education can indoctrinate and develop a fear of others, as well as reinforcing attitudes that predispose people to accept monochrome understandings of the world. However, if prepared and properly led, education can instil in young people the ability to critically assess, engage and rebut extremist ideas.
- The radicalisation pathways of young people vary and are dictated by their level of education. In poverty stricken or ill-educated areas, manipulative narratives are more likely to take root, and simple monetary incentives might sway individuals. Where education levels are higher, extremists appeal to emotional and intellectual grievance narratives of inequality and injustice.
- Education *in general* will not prevent extremism. Training – gaining knowledge and skills for a career or on a topic – is different to an holistic education that develops critical thinking, values for citizenship and respect for diversity. Specific teaching aimed at these latter aspects is vital for CVE.
- More CVE educational programmes have been deployed in informal settings than formal education settings. This highlights the necessity for more organised educational efforts. However, extremist groups have been increasingly dependent on informal education, such as social media. Governments need to learn about, and support, informal and non-governmental initiatives further.
- Open education systems have been more effectively contributing to CVE than closed educational systems, where national curricula may actually exacerbate the situation. The education systems in secular states are not necessarily better. Open and critical pedagogy is paramount. Learning must be student-centred and

should encourage identity development and foster critical thinking and appraisal.

- The role of women in CVE has become increasingly prominent and their education should be equally so. As mothers are core pillars of communities they are instrumental in creating environments conducive to preventing radicalisation and extremism.
- Evaluation of preventive methods remains difficult due to the imprecise nature of establishing long-term success. The most established programmes are also located in conflict zones with a high concentration of religious extremism. As such, up-to-date and detailed reporting on their initiatives, efforts and success is difficult to gather.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The authors of this review make the following three recommendations. A breakdown of these recommendations can be found in Chapter 4.

1 GOVERNMENTS NEED TO IMPROVE THE WAY IN WHICH THEY USE EDUCATION TO COUNTER EXTREMISM

Education provides a sustainable and effective response to extremist ideology and a means to build resilience amongst at-risk communities. It is key to preventing radicalisation in both the short- and long-term. It is cost-effective and has an holistic impact as it also seeks to improve citizenship and attainment. It provides an efficient, complementary strategy to military and security intervention by cutting off extremists' recruitment base.

To date far more has been done in this area by NGOs in informal education spaces, as it has been difficult for organisations to break into formal education systems. Governments need to learn rapidly from current best practice, and from non-governmental programmes that are impactful and well established.

Governments should:

- Develop funding streams for piloting educational initiatives in mainstream education and support initiatives, such as the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), which work to identify and fund high-impact grassroots initiatives in communities at risk of extremism.
- Give more emphasis to the role of informal education in family, community and social media spaces. Strong communities are central to CVE efforts, so community education initiatives that develop understanding, especially amongst women, will be critical. Given the use of social media by extremists, this too will be an important area. The use of social media to publicise extremist propaganda needs further investigation.

2 GOVERNMENTS NEED TO URGENTLY INVEST IN, AND IMPROVE, TEACHER TRAINING

Adequate and effective teacher training must be developed to support teachers in discussing sensitive, controversial and polarising issues in the classroom. Passive or ‘banking’ educational techniques that are teacher-centred can fail to build resilience amongst young people, and can often do more harm than good, being associated with indoctrination. Student-centred approaches that incorporate dialogical methods, critical pedagogy and co-operative learning should be fostered.

Implementing effective pedagogy is important, as this review finds that it is the methods used by education initiatives that determine their success and impact.

Governments and teacher training institutions should:

- Learn from the best practice of current education programmes for CVE, such as those in Sweden and some strategies in the UK, and those run by NGOs. Training design, applicability and sufficiency should be developed from a teacher’s perspective.
- Ensure that critical discussions around social justice are included in schools, and that teachers are prepared for them. Experiences of discrimination, alienation and marginalisation, whether against oneself or against others, can lead to the radicalisation of young people. Having these discussions in schools is important because unless they are addressed these ‘pulls’ will remain active and a significant hook for extremist narratives.

3 GOVERNMENTS MUST INVEST IN EVALUATION TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND ASSESS ANY POSSIBLE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THESE PROGRAMMES

It is very difficult to assess programmes that are preventive as evaluation is based on the measurement of something that is omitted. It is also challenging to isolate a single factor towards success when there may be multiple contributing factors. Developing a better understanding of the impact of education programmes for CVE must be a priority in order that best practice can be replicated and comprehensive strategies developed.

It is also necessary to recognise that preventive education programmes on other child protection measures, such as drug and gang awareness programmes, have on occasion had reverse effects. Introducing these topics to young people may make them inquisitive and lead them to find out more, actually leading them into risk.

Governments, NGOs and researchers should:

- Determine what preventive education initiatives should aim to deliver by way of improving evaluation.
- Develop and promote evaluation best practice for CVE

to improve assessment and therefore understanding of what works.

- Fund long-term evaluation to assess sustainable impact.
- Be aware of the risks that these strategies can bring. Special attention should be paid to how the information from initiatives is processed and applied when peer and other pressures are exercised on young people. Research to identify the indirect and latent effects of CVE programmes and how these might be overcome will be necessary.
- CVE education programmes should be carefully designed and delivered with these risks in mind. It is important that they have a long-term aim to avoid providing short, sharp interventions that can be absorbed quickly but then misconstrued.

Introduction

1.1 CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

1.1.1 VIOLENT RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM: A GLOBAL SECURITY CONCERN

One of the greatest contemporary threats to global security is the worldwide phenomenon of religious extremism that can lead to violence and terrorism, and which can permeate all sovereign borders. The worldwide proliferation of violent attacks motivated by religious extremism is raising concerns across the globe, as their impact not only threatens personal security but also has severe local, national and international implications.

Extremism and terrorism are neither confined to religious ideologies (for example, political terrorism in Latin America) nor to one religion, as this review will show. However, the most pressing contemporary security concern is violent religious extremism that stems from Islamist ideology, and therefore the principal focus of this review is Islamist extremism arising from Salafi and Wahhabi Islam. This review is focused on formal and non-formal educational measures for countering violent extremism. In particular, these educational measures might prove useful in countering Islamist ideologies that have been able to attract young people worldwide, facilitated by globalisation, international migration, and the displacement of populations. Of particular note is the flow of foreign fighters to Syria and Iraq to join the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS).

Since the start of the Syrian civil war in 2011, several thousand jihadis¹ from across the Muslim World have joined the rebels. In the first half of 2013 alone, more than 600 foreign fighters were killed in Syria. They came from countries ranging from Morocco at the western periphery of the Islamic World to Xinjiang, China. In addition, hundreds of

Muslims from Europe, the US and Turkey have joined the rebels (Zenn, 2013).

These jihadis are from many countries, where, for them, there may be conflict between local political ties and global religious ties (Tan, 2007). From mid-2014 to March 2015, it is estimated that the number of foreign fighters increased by 71 per cent (Solyom, 2015). There are now approximately 25,000 ISIS foreign fighters from 100 countries. As of April 2015, over 6000 Europeans have become jihadis fighting in Syria (“About 6,000 Europeans,” 2015). The reasons for this are complex. For example, Boubekour (2008) suggests that the social conflicts, social exclusion and higher unemployment rates, that multicultural and integration policies have failed to address for over 30 years, could have led to extremist tendencies among European Muslims. Elsewhere, by 2015, 300 North Americans (“Edmonton man Omar,” 2015; Martosco, 2015) and 70 Australians (Wroe, 2014) had left their countries to join jihadi extremist groups abroad. Foreign fighters include both committed believers and new converts who have taken up jihadi ideology. Both these types of jihadis have been through the school systems of their countries.

Current government responses to CVE have been to develop extensive and costly counter-terrorism measures at national and international levels. Up until 2015, the total price of fighting Islamist terrorism is estimated to be up to five trillion US dollars (Biglan, 2015). According to US Defense Department data, as of 2016, the conflict against ISIS is costing the US USD11 million per day. The US has already spent USD5.5 billion since August 2014 (Pawlyk, 2016). These measures continue to be reactive since they use military force and surveillance only after terrorist acts are planned and/or committed rather than being proactive at preventing the initial development of violent extremist ideologies. This “intervention-at-a-later-stage” has a distinct disadvantage, because it does not prevent the development of radicalism and extremism (Samuel, 2012, p. 34).

Despite such investment and effort towards countering terrorism, terrorist attacks grew by more than 200 per cent between 2007 and 2013 (Biglan, 2015). Increasingly,

1 Jihadis are individuals who take-up the Islamic concept of jihad, which refers to a holy struggle in order “to live in the path or course of Allah”. The inner jihad is a personal struggle to adhere to this path of Allah. The outer jihad is a struggle with those who do not follow the path of Allah. Per the *Quran* and *Hadith* (Islamic holy texts) Muslims are called to take up a jihad. Today, several religious extremist organisations have called Muslims to take up a violent form of jihad despite violence not being a necessary aspect of the concept in the first place (Morgan, 2010).

more young people are being radicalised through soft power – considered to be extremist narratives and ideas. These narratives and ideas appeal directly to the psychological, intellectual, and emotional states of young people (usually 15–25 years of age) by winning their “sympathy, support, and admiration” (Samuel, 2012, p. 5). As such, it is naïve to assume that this soft power, used to enlist both males and females, can be met adequately with hard power – coercive and aggressive measures that include military and security tactics and strategies.

As we discuss the use of education as a soft power for CVE, it is important to clarify that the focus of this global literature review is on violent religious extremism or more specifically violent extremism in the name of religion. This distinction is significant because religious extremism is often used as a political tool. The remainder of this chapter introduces the key terms used in this review that frame the discussion on why education as a soft power is an indispensable component that has potential for sustainably countering violent extremism, especially as young people are a target group for extremist recruiters.

1.1.2 DEFINING KEY TERMS

Defining terms on such a topic can be challenging given the inconsistency in their use and understanding. To begin with, there is no consensus as to who is an extremist or a terrorist. One person’s extremist may be another person’s hero, and while all extremists do not become terrorists, all terrorists are most certainly extremists (Davies, 2009). Concepts related to violent extremism are especially problematic because they are politically and emotionally charged human phenomena (Braniff, 2012) in which “people of every race, culture and creed have used violence to forward their political interests” (Barnes, 2012). Nevertheless, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the concepts in order to suggest what kind of education would be most effective in CVE.

Countering Violent Extremism

Although terrorist acts have existed throughout history, the terrorist attacks in the US on September 11, 2001 (henceforth referred to as 9/11), was a turning point in counter terrorism policy (Bolechów, 2005). The dramatic nature of those attacks and the response from the American government created an ‘us versus them’ dichotomy, which led other Western governments to join in a counter terrorism effort. Since violent extremism is a precondition of terrorism, counter terrorism efforts aim to decrease violent extremism.

Our understanding of CVE is “a broad-ranging term that describes initiatives to reduce the spread of violent extremist ideologies” (Mirahmadi, Ziad, Farooq and Lamb, 2015, p. 2). Most CVE programmes use several hard power strategies and methods to combat and reduce violent religious

extremist groups. The interface of education and security studies has received relatively little attention thus far (Gearon, 2014). Therefore, the scope of this review strictly focuses on education, both as a means to counter violent extremism as well as its use for extremist purposes.

Education

The concept of education has changed from a process of transferring knowledge from the teacher to the student (a ‘banking’ system²), to learning as the construction of knowledge by the student (student-centred). Education involves the acquisition of knowledge, skills, beliefs, values and the culture of a given society. The contemporary Western understanding of education is as a life-long process of learning that is facilitated in organised ways that include both formal (such as schools and universities) and non-formal settings (such as community environments and the media), as well as in unorganised ways or informal places. However, it should be noted that education is more than vocational training because it is not confined to skills development.

Education is always political and ideological. That is because educational practices do not take place in a vacuum. They reflect the ideologies or worldviews of the dominant groups of a society and are shaped by their values. Education that involves the construction and dissemination of knowledge and values through dialogue is an *open system* because it allows for the freedom to question, negotiate and relate one’s personal experiences to the learned concepts. On the other hand, a *closed system* of education is when knowledge is transmitted to learners through practices such as rote learning, which implies indoctrination because there is no opportunity to question or challenge ideas. Although all education is embedded with ideology, the issue here is with violent extremist ideologies as opposed to democratic worldviews. However, from a security perspective, education is like a double-edged sword: it can be used to counter violent extremism as well as promote extremist ideologies.

BOX 1 INFORMAL EDUCATION

Informal education is the process of learning that occurs outside of formal and non-formal educational settings, such as learning through religious institutions, television programmes, newspapers, books, magazines, social media, and the communication of knowledge between research and academic institutions. While this is a massive source of education across various spheres of society, it should be noted that this form of education falls outside the scope of this review.

² Education in most parts of the world is still imparted through what Freire (1970) called “banking education”, a metaphor in which information is deposited into the minds of passive students.

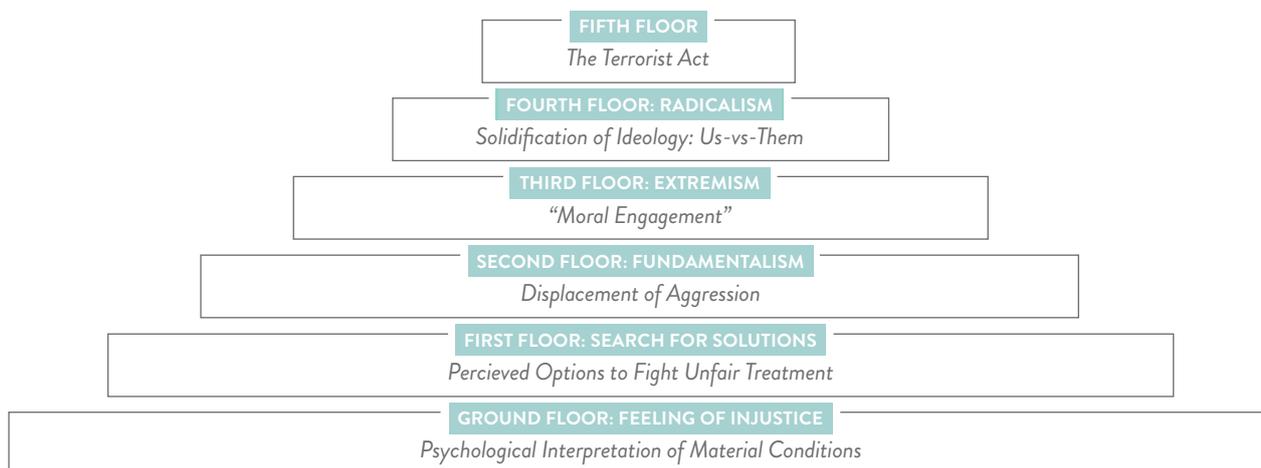
Fundamentalism

The contemporary Western understanding of fundamentalism often attaches negative assumptions about a return to the fundamentals of a particular belief system. Fundamentalism is not necessarily a negative form of religious identity. Religious fundamentalism is not confined to any one religious tradition, as there are fundamentalists among Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists. In recent times, religious fundamentalists are taking a progressively stronger stance to their way of life and beliefs; this includes a literal interpretation of religious texts and a commitment to conservative values. The increasingly pluralistic and secular nature of modern societies seemingly excludes religion from the public sphere. In response to this, some fundamentalists have self-segregated from mainstream so-

cieties, such as certain evangelical Christian groups in the US, while others have chosen to stay in the public sphere to address this concern through political means. The latter group has created concerns in some areas of the world because of the link between fundamentalism, extremism and terrorism (Neumann, 2009). Appleby (2011) highlights the distinct religious logic of fundamentalism by identifying the two characteristics to which Islamic fundamentalists react: (1) ‘Westoxification’ or the degradation of people brought about by the indulgent lifestyle of the West; and (2) women’s liberation and freedom, which fundamentalists blame for perceived increases in divorce rates, sexual depravity and crime. Some educators have argued that religious fundamentalism needs to be addressed in schools, which are important sites for the development of multiple values, attitudes and perspectives (Ghosh, 2014).

BOX 2 THE STAIRCASE TO TERRORISM

With regards to the concepts of fundamentalism, extremism, radicalism and terrorism, the staircase to terrorism (Moghaddam, 2005) indicates a transformative process in which “the development of novel personal belief systems are provoked by specific triggering factors” (Wilner and Dubouloz, 2010, p. 33). These steps to terrorism assume that violent extremism and radicalisation are stages before a terrorist act occurs.



Based on the profiles that are provided throughout this review, we have found that every terrorist has undergone a process of radicalisation before carrying out a terrorist plot. With Islamist extremism, it is true that in some cases the Islamic faith has little to do with the contemporary jihadi movement, as some young people seek out adventure or hope to develop their identities. But these factors that push individuals towards violence propel them into radicalism. This is especially so in the case of some Westerners who know very little about Islam when deciding to join the jihad, as seen when two young British Muslims boarded a plane to Syria with copies of *The Koran for Dummies* (2004) or *Islam for Dummies* (2003) in hand (Hasan, 2015a).

John G. Horgan, Professor and Director of the Center for Terrorism and Security Studies at the University of Massachusetts, has a very different take on terrorism: “The idea that radicalisation causes terrorism is perhaps the greatest myth alive today in terrorism research ... [T]he overwhelming majority of people who hold radical beliefs do not engage in violence. And... there is increasing evidence that people who engage in terrorism don’t necessarily hold radical beliefs” (Knefel, 2013). The tension may lie in the understanding of the terms extremism and radicalisation.

We argue that while there are many factors that may eventually lead to terrorism, they all push young people through a radicalisation process that is a precursor to carrying out a terrorist act. Beyer’s study on homegrown radicalism in the West, specifically in Canada, suggests that religion can serve to combat extremist dogma rather than indoctrinate individuals towards radicalisation (Beyer, 2014). The contradictory roles of religion and education are discussed in the following chapters.

To clarify the progression from fundamentalism, to extremism, to radicalisation and finally terrorism, we look to Moghaddam’s model above as a theoretical basis for the discussion in this review.

Extremism

There is some debate in the literature as to what the word ‘extreme’ means because determining what is extreme is a subjective exercise. For the purposes of this review, extremism is the *rejection of other perspectives*, when one’s own views are thought to be exclusive (Davies, 2009). However, it does not simply “refer to a rejection of liberal values” or anti-democratic views (Kundnani, 2015, p. 26). Nevertheless, there are two attributes that are important when talking about extremism: (1) the political beliefs of extremists are not widely shared even within their own societies; and (2) extremists lack the means or power to obtain their goals on their own. Both traits are important in understanding their choice of strategy (Lake, 2002, p. 18). That is why extremist violence is used as a “form of communication that interacts with other forms of social and political communication” (Crelinsten, 2010, p. 77). *Violent extremism* therefore is defined “as those activities and beliefs which are used to advocate, engage in, prepare, or otherwise support ideologically-motivated violence to further socio-economic and political objectives” (Mirahmadi et al., 2015, p. 2). This leads to radicalisation when it forms a moral hierarchy, in which extreme positions are justified on moral grounds.

Radicalism

For the purposes of this review, radicalisation is the process of *adopting an extremist belief system*, including the willingness to use, support, or facilitate violence as a method to affect societal change (The Homeland Security Institute (HSI), 2009). The result is the state of radicalism. A highly common trait of contemporary radicals is ideological intolerance, which depicts a belief system that refuses to “tolerate the practices, beliefs, and/or tenets of other individuals or groups. It encompasses bigotry and the demonstration of bitterness and/or enmity towards those who dissent or disagree with one’s belief systems” (Salaam, 2013). Most importantly, ideological intolerance can be present among those practising the same religion but who may hold different ideological views. When these views are promoted through violence, such acts could be regarded as terrorism.

Terrorism

There is no single definition for terrorism in international law or among scholars (Neumann, 2009). However, to simplify the discussion for this review, we conceptualise terrorism as “the use of indiscriminate violence against non-combatants by non-state actors with the purpose of generating fear in order to signal and advance particular socio-political objectives... [which also aims] to intimidate a larger audience beyond those directly targeted with violence” (Wilner and Dubouloz, 2010, p. 33). Most definitions such as this consider terrorism as violence committed by non-state actors (see the Global Terrorism Index, 2014). However, many scholars recognise the reality that governments also insti-

gate terrorism when they carry out military attacks with the knowledge that civilians will be harmed (Kundnani, 2015; Naim and James, 2005). While we acknowledge this perspective, our review focuses primarily on violence carried out by non-state actors attempting to undermine governments.

It is important to note that terrorists may also work for what they imagine to be a common good or a moral cause. Terrorism is set apart from other kinds of violence by the terrorist’s belief in their moral superiority (Davies, 2009). Therefore, “since they often target civilians, terrorists lack moral strictures against the use of violence” (Lake, 2002, p. 17). Spaces of terror are not limited to a momentary act of political violence like a car or suicide bombing where there is the destruction of property or loss of life (Ayinde, 2009). The act of a single terrorist can have a wide impact with long-term effects.

1.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION FOR SECURITY

We use the term education to mean the development of cognitive skills as well as democratic and universal ethical values, as outlined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is this values component that distinguishes our perspective of education from vocational and professional training, which focuses on developing skills over values. Educational development could also involve the transmission of indoctrinating ideologies. However, we see the primary goal of education as instilling values of engaged ethical and critical citizenship, in which citizens actively participate in societal matters based on an analytical understanding of democratic values.

The purpose of education is much more than just the cultivation of knowledge, understanding and skills. Education ought to instil values of engaged citizenship at the societal level and strive to reduce inequality at the individual level to achieve a just and politically stable society. The making of resilient communities is intrinsic to maintaining public safety and security. For example, unequal access to education leads to an uneven attainment of resources and opportunities, which increases the likelihood of conflict (Burde, 2015). Nobel Peace Prize winner Desmond Tutu stressed the importance of education for children in conflict zones declaring that, “[n]othing can be more unjust than denying children their right to education. If we want genuine peace, there is no question at all that you must have justice. And how can we expect children to learn to be just, to be fair, to be tolerant with one another, if not in school?” (Save the Children, 2009).

Yet certain groups continue to be denied the right to education by the state. For example, in Myanmar the Muslim Rohingya minority continues to be deprived of a wide

range of rights by the Buddhist majority government, including access to education, making Rohingya youth easy prey for religious extremists (Bashar, 2015). While a lack of education at the individual and societal levels can create a breeding ground for indoctrination, on the other hand, accessible education is also used to promote extremist ideologies. In countries where universal education is widely accessible, increasing numbers of young people are falling prey to extremist messages for various reasons. Extremist organisations have created successful educational narratives to attract both schooled and unschooled young people and implicate them in violence. As globalisation facilitates accessibility to various educational settings, including cyberspace, these organisations have increasingly used moral and psychological inducements to appeal to the vulnerabilities of young people, such as fighting poverty and injustice thereby offering a purpose in life, and the opportunity to lead a dutiful and religious life assuring a place in heaven.

Counter-extremism strategies have yet to offer an opposing narrative to challenge such propaganda and extremist dogma since they have not focused on the psychological and moral aspects that extremists use to exploit and manipulate young people (Samuel, 2012). Yet a brief review of the recent history of education in Afghanistan during and after the Taliban regime leads Kristof and WuDunn (2010) to the powerful conclusion that investment in education is the best long-term counter-extremism strategy available.³

Given its reach and potential, we believe that education can offer an ethical alternative and the necessary counter-narrative to complement existing CVE strategies. Although education cannot offer one meta-narrative that applies to all countries and contexts, it can, nevertheless, impart values and skills that make students resilient to extremist tendencies and any other violent ideologies through critical pedagogy and dialogical methods of teaching which involve questioning, inquiry, reflexive practices, and relevance to their lives.

BOX 3 ACCESS TO BASIC EDUCATION IS ESSENTIAL FOR COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN EDUCATION

It is important to consider that in several conflict-affected areas around the globe, CVE education cannot and will not be a priority within formal educational settings given that provision of basic access to education at primary and secondary levels is in and of itself challenging.

Such is the case in Nigeria, the country with the highest number of unschooled young people in the world. With 59 million primary school age children not in school worldwide, Nigeria

³ While the purpose of this review limits the opportunity to elaborate on their ideas, we encourage further exploration into Kristof and WuDunn's findings on the Afghan context in their book *Half The Sky: How to Change the World* (2010).

accounts for 15 per cent (UIS, 2015). One in five Nigerian children are out of school, with the northern region (where the extremist group Boko Haram is the most active) recording the lowest school attendance rate in the country, especially for girls (Education for All, 2012). The ratio of schooled children by sex can range from 1 girl to 2 boys or even 1 to 3 in some regions of the country (UNICEF, n.d.).

With children under the age of 18 years accounting for 50 per cent of Nigeria's population (UNICEF, 2015), the burden of education in the country has become overwhelming as resources are spread thinly. In addition to deterrents like the monetary cost of textbooks and uniforms and the potential loss of labour to either help at home or bring additional income to a household, factors, such as distance to the nearest school and a lack of electricity and/or adequate sanitation in schools, all contribute to poor school attendance. It is also common for classes to consist of 100 students per teacher or for classes to be held under trees because of the lack of classroom space. These examples, and low performances in core subjects, demonstrate the lack of quality education in Nigeria (UNICEF, n.d.).

In northern Nigeria low levels of school enrolment is directly the result of cultural bias and the insecurity brought about by Boko Haram. In a predominately Muslim region of the country, public school systems introduced to Nigeria by Christian missionaries in the mid-nineteenth century have not been widely accepted and most parents prefer sending their children to al-majiri (Islamic) schools rather than formal schools (Economic Section, 2012; UNICEF, n.d.). Boko Haram's systematic targeting of schools across the country has displaced thousands, making it challenging and unsafe for students and staff to come to school ("NIGERIA: School Attendance", 2012).

By understanding the circumstances of countries like Nigeria and other nations that have limited access to education, such as Iraq and Pakistan, this review recognises that the basic building blocks for formal education systems have not been developed in many areas; however, given the global push for 'Education for All', CVE must form an integral part of all developing educational systems.

1.2.1 YOUNG PEOPLE AND SECURITY

The next generation of citizens are the young people of today. Since young people spend a substantial number of hours each day in schools, education is a natural place to develop an understanding of global citizenship, co-existence, and transformative action. Schools are also the place to create a counter-narrative because the most important ideological beliefs are acquired during childhood (Barreto, 2005). Thus, the role of schools in the development of peaceful and inclusive societies is significant.

Young people continue to be the most susceptible to adopting extremist religious ideologies given that they are at a

developmental age seeking to realise their own identity, bolster their self-confidence and find meaning in their lives (Manuel, 2014). Samuel (2012) points out: “[i]f we do not get the young people the terrorists will” (p. 26). Extremist organisations target young people to ensure continuity (HSI, 2009), and for use in acts of terror as young people do not often raise suspicion and can successfully circumvent security measures (Kellerhals, 2007). In the case of Syrian children, those who have mental health problems are specifically recruited as suicide bombers because they are generally more easily convinced and their behaviour is less likely to arouse suspicion (Nebehay, 2015).

Another increasing trend is the recruitment of Western youth from schools and universities for possible attacks in Western countries simply because they would not attract attention and “would not elicit any notice whatsoever...if they were standing next to you in the airport line” (Hayden, 2009). Among a number of reasons, Western youth who leave their home countries to join extremist groups might be attracted by a sense of adventure and excitement, or manipulated by the rhetoric of injustices happening in other parts of the world. They succumb to taking up the struggle for a ‘noble and worthy’ cause and believe that violence is the only alternative. There are those who cannot resolve the conflict between their national affiliation and their allegiance to a transnational religious movement (Samuel, 2012).

Significantly, violent extremists have caused a paradigm shift by making violence seem possible and morally acceptable (Samuel, 2012). By doing so, they teach recruits to see the world from a very narrow binary worldview, that is, an ‘us versus them’ mentality (p. 24). This is done through so-

cial categorisation in which out-group members, including civilians (so that they can be legitimately targeted), are seen as enemies, and distanced psychologically by exaggerating the difference between in-group and out-group members (Brown and Gaertner, 2001).

Young people are manipulated into believing that violence is not only morally justifiable but also tactically superior and the right thing to do. The educational narrative that challenges violence as the only solution needs to analyse the ethical issues involved in the indiscriminate use of violence, and explore how oppressed people, on whose behalf the violence is carried out, have been affected by such actions. Most importantly, it must critique the objectives of extremist groups and the impact of extremism and terrorism on innocent victims in all parts of the world who are terrorised by their actions (such as indiscriminate bombings, beheadings of prisoners, killing of civilians, and suicide attacks) (Samuel, 2012).

Education must not only challenge the myths created by extremists, it must offer an alternative to violence in order to fight injustice through means such as protest and persuasion, non-co-operation, and intervention (Samuel, 2012). There are several very successful historical examples of achieving change through non-violence. The problem remains however, that “people try nonviolence for a week and when it ‘doesn’t work’ they go back to violence which hasn’t worked for centuries” (Roszak, as quoted in Stoner, 2011).

Society must recognise that education is a non-violent measure that can address the individual and societal concerns of young people that push and pull them towards ex-

BOX 4 PUSH AND PULL FACTORS THAT ATTRACT YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETAL LEVEL

	INDIVIDUAL LEVEL	SOCIETAL LEVEL
PUSH FACTOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat to individual and collective identity (Seul, 1999; Taylor, 1994) • Looking for meaning in life: depression; loss of significance; search for identity (Bhui, 2014; Euer et al., 2014; Taylor, 1994) • Personal tragedy (Saunders, 2012) • Boredom: seeking excitement in life (Bhui, 2014; Dugan, 2014) • Looking for revenge against perceived wrong: believe murder is just (Samuel, 2012) • Displacement or immigration without family members (Saunders, 2012) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marginalisation from mainstream society (social and economic) (Taylor, 1994; Euer et al., 2014) • Ideological necessity: sacred duty to take revenge against those seen as enemies (Zalman, 2015) • Politically/religiously motivated: religion used as a socio-political guide (Roy, 2004) • Globalisation with Information and Communications Technology (Ştibli, 2010)
PULL FACTORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer group (Tharoor, 2015) • Criminals in prisons (Samuel, 2012; Saunders, 2012) • Self-radicalisation through exposure to online material (Wu, 2008) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enticing media stories and messages evoking sympathy and affiliation via social media and the Internet (NCTb, n.d.) • Recruiters on or offline and social media (Braniff, 2015) • Radicalised religious or community leaders (Duffy and Harley 2015; Bergen, 2015)

tremism. There are several push and pull factors that trigger and entice young people specifically (STRESAVIORA, 2014; Euer, van Vossle, Groenen and Van Bouchaute, 2014) to move up Moghaddam's (2005) staircase from fundamentalism to extremism/violent extremism, to radicalism, and then to terrorism (see box 4).

Education's role is proactive, aiming to prevent rather than merely react to pre-existing extremist ideologies. Also, in comparison to other forms of interventions, such as increased surveillance and combative roles (and the latter has not been credited with reducing terrorism), education is significantly less expensive. Although education may be a long-term process, it has longer-lasting outcomes (Ghosh, Manuel, Chan and Dilimulati, 2015).

1.3 CONCLUSION

Fundamentalists and extremists have used education throughout history as a tool to promote political and religious ideologies. The contemporary preoccupation with Islamist extremism, however, is new in its worldwide impact for several reasons. Globalisation and international migration, along with advances in technology and communication have facilitated the flow of people and information, making media platforms an important tool for extremist propaganda. The movement of people beyond nation states creates a potential conflict in citizens whose patriotic commitment to their new country and transnational loyalty to a religious group are not easy to resolve.

This is one of several factors that push and pull young people to the ideologies of religious extremism. The appeal of the sophisticated narratives of extremist groups has also enticed disaffected Western youth, some of whom are not Muslim but who convert to Islam before leaving to join jihadi groups. Those who remain within, or return to, their country are a potential security threat. Governments have responded to countering the dangers of terrorist attacks with surveillance and policing which are expensive and reactive measures. Education offers an opportunity to prevent the radicalisation of young people through the development of critical thinking and values of ethical and engaged citizenship. Counter extremism should be a multi-faceted and co-ordinated effort by schools, communities and government agencies.

This review examines education's paradoxical role in both promoting and countering violent extremism. In Chapter 2, we present examples of how extremist groups use education to spread their ideology. In Chapter 3, we present a selection of educational initiatives worldwide that aim to counter violent extremism through formal and non-formal educational programmes. In Chapter 4, we conclude the literature review with the major findings and suggest some future priorities for policy and programme development in countering violent extremism through the use of education.

The Use of Education to Promote Extremist Worldviews

The paradox of education is that it has tremendous potential for both good and bad dependent on its use and implementation. Extremist groups are very effectively using education as a weapon to indoctrinate young people at all levels of education and by recruiting young people from many countries to join them in their terrorist activities. Additionally, extremist groups use violence to both attack public and private educational institutions as well as promote their own ideologies through religious and other educational systems that they control.

This chapter will show how these groups have stepped up attacks on educational institutions especially primary and secondary schools because they have undoubtedly recognised their potential. The following section explains how some formal systems of education leave young people more vulnerable to recruitment by extremists. Following that, case studies examine the multiple modes of education extremist groups use to promote their ideologies. The last section presents the educational background of a few global extremists to initiate discussions on the use of education as a recruitment tool. As education can be a source of recruitment, this section will not deal with the recruitment process per se, but rather how education is used to recruit.

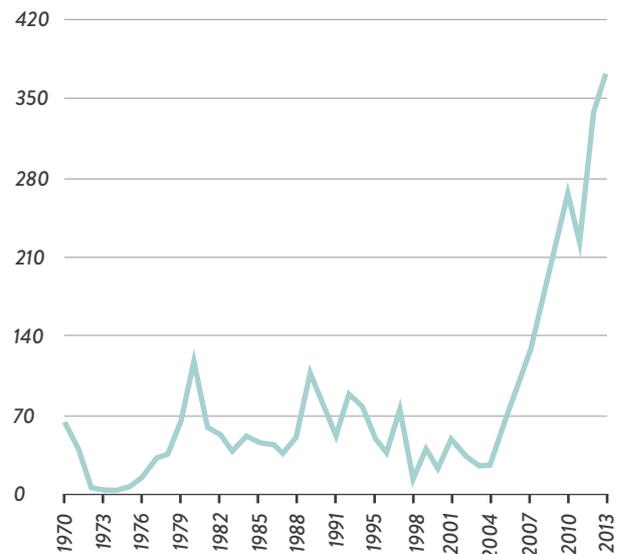
2.1 ATTACKS ON EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Education is both a target and a tool for religious extremists. Between 1970 and 2013 there were more than 3,400 terrorist attacks targeting educational institutions across 110 countries (Marsh, 2015, START, 2013). Between 2004 and 2013, there was an increase in attacks each year from under 70 to over 350, as documented by the US National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism's (START) Global Terrorism Database (GTD) (2013) (Figure 1). According to the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) (2014) Report, Afghanistan, Colombia, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan and Syria were worst affected between 2009 and 2012. In contexts such as Pakistan from 1990 to 2013, terrorist attacks on educational institutions occurred at a much higher rate (88

per cent) than those worldwide (69 per cent). In neighbouring Bangladesh, 10 per cent of all terrorist attacks in the country from 2004 to 2013 targeted educational institutions, totalling 31 incidents (Miller, 2014). These trends and the insecurity brought about by groups like Nigeria's Boko Haram⁴, whose name translates from Hausa into 'Western education is sinful' (Zenn, 2014b), reveals extremist organisations' understanding of the power of education.

FIG 1 GLOBAL TREND OF ATTACKS ON EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, 1970-2013

Source: START, 2013



The rise in recent school attacks in Pakistan and many other Muslim countries indicates that religious extremists have realised the threat education can pose to their missions. The Taliban, an Islamist extremist group in Afghanistan and Pakistan, is a good example of this. The shooting of Malala Yousafzai because of her active involvement in promoting education for Pakistani girls, is a powerful proof that the Taliban do not want people, especially girls, to receive critical values education. Rather they seek to indoctrinate and inculcate very narrow and extreme values that align with their interpretation of Islam. For example, the Taliban in Afghani-

⁴ *Haram* is an Islamic term describing the prohibition of an item or act.

stan are using madrassas to recruit females to promote their particular interpretation of Islam (“Afghanistan: Taliban forces”, 2009). Malala is advocating education as a powerful tool that should be used to defeat the Taliban ideology and propaganda (Yousafzai and Lamb, 2013). As Malala explains: “The extremists are afraid of books and pens. The power of education frightens them” (“The Full Text,” 2013).

The Peshawar school attack in December 2014 that killed more than 140 people, and the Bacha Khan University Attack in January 2016 which claimed at least 20 lives, again proved that the Taliban indeed regard education as a threat to their existence and sustainability, and recognise the significant terror impact created by an attack on a school. The Taliban destroyed over 830 schools between 2009 and 2013 alone (Choudhury, 2014). As Rahim (2014) says, “the militants understand that education is an essential part of creating an enlightened, healthy and tolerant society, which in turn is vital for sustaining a vibrant economy and eradicating ignorance and poverty”. This is important as ignorance and poverty can be the breeding ground of religious extremism and terrorism (Mirahmadi, Farooq and Ziad, 2012). In turn, religious extremists attack educational institutions to hinder the acquisition of knowledge and information that they deem detrimental to their ideology. At the same time, they utilise the power of education as they promote their extremist ideologies through radical madrassas and some non-formal educational means, which will be discussed in detail in the next section.

2.2 HOW EDUCATION IS USED TO PROMOTE VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Formal educational spaces are being used by extremist organisations to indoctrinate and recruit young people. While education has been used as a tool throughout history to promote state and religiously sanctioned ideologies, extremists today actively seek to create educational cultures that foster divisive violent religious worldviews and encourage violent extremism (Jamison, 2014). Examples of this divisive ideology in educational textbooks occurred in Pakistani madrassas⁵ during the dictatorship of Zia and in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation when the financial and political support of American and British governments attempted to counter communist regimes. “This in turn provided a foundation for extreme religious fundamentalism that now perceives the Western world as its enemy” (Volkan and Kayatekin, 2008, p. 44).

⁵ Madrassa is an Arabic word to describe any type of educational institution, whether secular or religious. Because the roots of education in Arabic speaking countries revolved around religious education, there is a general misconception that madrassas only convey religious education. Internationally, some madrassas have continued to teach only religious education, while other madrassas teach various disciplines without a central focus on religion. Also, some madrassas are public institutions and state-run, while others are private. Different global contexts conceptualise the term differently, but this review conceptualises madrassas based on the connotation from the initial Arabic word. Madrassas that only offer religious education in this review are context specific and have been articulated clearly in discussions about those countries.

A concern over textbooks continues in other parts of the world, such as Saudi Arabia where Stuart Levey, America’s former senior financial counter-terrorism official, found a strong link between education promoting extremist ideologies and support for groups like al-Qaeda. In a 2010 *Washington Post* article, he stated that “we must focus on educational reform in key locations to ensure that intolerance has no place in curricula and textbooks...[U]nless the next generation of children is taught to reject violent extremism, we will forever be faced with the challenge of disrupting the next group of terrorist facilitators and supporters” (Shea, 2011, p. 8). In a review of Saudi textbooks, which are distributed across various Muslim countries, King Abdullah’s (at that time the Crown Prince) expert panel on Saudi religious studies found that the existing curriculum “encourages violence towards others, and misguides the pupils into believing that in order to safeguard their own religion, they must violently repress and even physically eliminate the ‘other’” (Shea, 2011 p.8). Nina Shea (2011) of the Hudson Institute’s Center for Religious Freedom found that despite this, Saudi textbooks continue to include narratives of violence and extremism.

2.3 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES AND STRATEGIES FOR RECRUITMENT TO, AND PROMOTION OF, EXTREMIST WORLDVIEWS

2.3.1 RECRUITMENT TO EXTREMIST ORGANISATIONS

Terrorist organisations have used schools as a recruitment venue in many locations throughout the world, utilising the education system to transmit group ideologies as well as provide mental and physical training and indoctrination (HSI, 2009, p. 2).

Globally, young people have been targeted as potential recruits for extremist activities through the formal educational curriculum and environment. In November 2007, the United Kingdom’s MI5 Chief, Jonathan Evans, stated that people as young as 15 years of age were suspected to be involved in terrorist activities. In March 2009, the UK’s Association of Chief Police Officers reported that local community members - including parents, imams, and teachers - found approximately 200 young people, as young as 13 years of age, were at risk of extremism or of being “groomed by radicals” (HSI, 2009, p. 2).

In Canada, Raheel Raza (2013) found that principals and teachers propagated extreme Muslim ideologies across various independent Islamic schools in the Greater Toronto Area. In June 2014, Syed Soharwardy (2014), a prominent imam in Calgary from the Islamic Supreme Council of Canada, stated that recruitment for extremist groups was also occurring in universities in Calgary through informal means. Education is used to promote extremist worldviews in formal (i.e. schools and universities) and non-formal settings

(i.e. community environments and the media). The following examples offer more details on the problematic state of education systems and how extremist groups are infiltrating formal and informal educational spaces.

2.3.2 FORMAL EDUCATIONAL SPACES

Bangladesh

The growing threats in Bangladesh are extremism, terrorism, and ethnic and religious intolerance. With over 50 Islamist militant-extremist groups as of 2011, and 10 religious-based political parties many of which have student wings (Hoque, 2014), Bangladesh is in a vulnerable position. An examination of textbooks in both the mainstream educational sectors, namely the madrasa and general public education, revealed that extremism is not directly addressed. While issues such as dowry and population problems are mentioned as concerns, there is nothing in the textbooks to raise awareness among students for countering extremism or ethnic or religious intolerance. This indicates that controversial topics are avoided, although a study shows that a large majority of people acknowledge these as problems in the country (Hoque, 2014).

India

Compared to its neighbours Pakistan and Bangladesh, India has a huge population and considerable military and economic strength. At Independence in 1947, secularism was enshrined in the Constitution by the Congress Party in power and declared to be a pillar of Indian democracy through which religious diversity could not only be managed but also legitimised. The centuries-old diversity of the population, in terms of religion, culture, language and customs, depends on communal harmony and respect for other religions and cultures. Since national unity is of utmost importance, secularism in the Indian case is not an absence of religion, but rather a pluralistic ideology implying equality of, and respect for, all religions and not their eradication (as for example in China during the Cultural Revolution). Education is a 'concurrent subject' that means that both Central and State governments have jurisdiction over schools and both focus on the goals of secularism and national unity in different but complementary ways. Religion is separated from the state to provide religious liberty and allow all religions to flourish. For example, several states have Madrasa School Boards, which are exclusively Islamic schools, but there has been widespread controversy over government funding for the modernisation of madrasahs in India (Sikand, 2005).

The Congress party, which has been in power for most of the 68 years since Independence, focused on secularisation, especially in education. During this time, Hindu fundamentalists (who have considerable political and demographic weight in India) resisted policies that provide special treatment and educational facilities to minority religious groups.

During two periods when the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was in power, the saffronisation⁶ of the education system was part of a far-reaching agenda to spread extremist fundamentalist ideologies (Gohain, 2002).

Chandra (2001) suggests that the communal interpretation of history is at the core of communal ideology in India (p. 15). Given this perspective, the BJP has attempted to transform history into a narrative of Hindu religious nationalism. In the short period when the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) came to power with the BJP in 1998-2004, the National Curriculum Framework 2000 (NCF-2000) was revised according to saffron ideology, and history textbooks maligned medieval India and glorified the history of Ancient India (a detailed Index of Errors was published by the Indian History Congress). Sharma (2001) has emphasised the importance of what was being taught at the primary and secondary levels, and cautioned that this approach would destroy the very fabric of secular India and lead to the disintegration of the Indian nation (Anamika, 2014).

With the coming to power of the BJP in 2014 for the third time, religious conservatives have been put in powerful positions in the Ministry of Human Resources that oversees education. Saffronisation is actively being pursued through the formal public education system. New educational policies have been formulated for implementation in 2016. Textbooks are being rewritten with particular emphasis on the glorification of Hindu identity; one state has already made the *Bhagavad Gita* (a Hindu holy book) compulsory as a school subject for all students, irrespective of their religion. There are also proposals to eliminate English as a compulsory subject and to introduce mathematics and science as done in the Vedic era (Gahlot, 2015).

Islamist extremism, madrasahs and higher education

The increase of religious extremism and intolerance in South Asia has been linked to the growth of the madrasa education system in elementary and secondary levels (Ahmed, 2005; Lintner, 2002; Stern, 2000). In Bangladesh for example, the rise in the number of unregulated private madrasahs is a matter of great concern as several Islamist extremists who engage in terrorist activities are affiliated with these institutions (Asadullah, Chaudhry and Josh, 2009). Madrasahs and Islamic institutions of religious learning are both state regulated (which provide general education) and privately funded (which specialise in religious education) (Asadullah et al., 2009). This was reported in a World Bank study that also found "a strong correlation between local area poverty and (the) concentration of madrasahs in the locality" (Asadullah et al., 2009, p. 16).

⁶ Named after the saffron-coloured robes worn by Hindu holy men, the word 'saffronisation' is a neologism used to refer to the right-wing policies of Hindu nationalists (Hindutva) that aim to glorify ancient Hindu cultural history. In education this implies a 'Hindu perspective' throughout the school curriculum including subjects like mathematics and science.

Around the world, universities and higher education institutions have become recruiting centres for extremists as well. For example, establishments such as the University of Westminster in London, Liverpool John Moores University (Tharoor, 2015; Taylor, Joshua 2015), Colorado State University, and George Washington University, among others, have been identified as hotbeds of radicalisation and recruitment for jihadis (“Anwar al-Awlaki Fast,” 2013; Bergen, 2015). In Indonesia and the Philippines there is a growing trend to recruit undergraduates who in turn become mentors to newer generations. Not only are student unions involved in this but also scholarships are provided to attract young people for study in schools and universities. Students are deceived into joining these educational institutions for general education but in reality are gradually radicalised and recruited for extremist activities – a process that can take about two years (Samuel, 2012). It is also possible that extremist groups target certain subjects, such as engineering or medicine, when recruiting, though individuals in these fields may just have a natural tendency to be attracted to extremist propaganda (Samuel, 2012; Rose, 2015).

Myanmar

In northwest Myanmar, the Rohingya population is targeted by an “ethnic cleansing package” which has led to more than 86,000 Rohingya people fleeing the country (Caroll, 2014). Not recognised by the Myanmar government as the Rohingya people but rather people of Bengali descent, the Rohingya are stripped of their citizenship, with various restrictions on their basic freedoms such as marriage, child-bearing and freedom of movement (“There’s no genocide,” 2015). They are denied access to schools for their children in most areas. Schools and universities across Myanmar have long been neglected, and the lack of textbooks and funding, along with rampant poverty, prevent the Rohingya people from getting any form of formal education. The teachers are predominantly Buddhist and shun the idea of working in Muslim dominated areas. Incited by extremist anti-Muslim Buddhist monks of the nationalist 969 Movement and partly supported by government officials, anti-Muslim hatred and violence erupted in mid-2012. Government authorities barred the Rohingya from getting university education, justifying the policy as a way to prevent violence (Murdoch, 2013). Their persecution has been described as an “unfolding genocide” by Andrea Gittleman, Programme Manager for The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum’s Simon-Skjodt Center for the Prevention of Genocide (Simon-Skjodt Center, 2015). The UN has called the Rohingya Muslims the “most persecuted people on earth” (“Burma’s Rohingya among,” 2015).

Pakistan

Beginning in the 1970s, the Pakistani education system started to impart an undefined Islamo-nationalist ideology that laid the foundation for widespread acceptance of ide-

ologically motivated violence. Especially during Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq’s regime, Pakistani education became highly Islamic in nature by making Islamic Studies a compulsory subject for all disciplines including engineering and medicine. Since then the Pakistani state has systematically introduced an exclusivist ideology that propagates jihad as part of its security policy in a strategic manner (Ahmed, 2013; Awan, 2012; Rumi, 2014). Although it cannot be stated that Pakistan’s state education upholds ultra-conservative forms of Islamic movements such as Wahhabism⁷ or Salafism⁸, the highly intolerant and exclusivist form of religious teaching the government has been promoting, consciously or unconsciously, has proved to be very problematic (Jamil, 2009; Ravichandran, 2015).

In 2011, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom conducted a review of more than 100 textbooks from grade one to grade 10 in four provinces of Pakistan. In February 2014, the research group visited 37 public schools and 19 madrassas (understood as religious Islamic schools in their report) and interviewed over 500 students and teachers from those schools. Their findings reveal that these textbooks foster prejudice and intolerance of religious minorities in Pakistan while unduly or excessively glorifying Islamic civilisation. Religious minorities are portrayed as inferior and as second-class citizens who should be grateful for living under “the generous Pakistani Muslims” (“Pakistan schools teach,” 2014). The textbooks also describe Hindus as extremists and eternal enemies of Islam and give a generally negative and incomplete picture of Christians. They offer a very limited space for the role of Hindus, Sikhs and Christians in the cultural, military and civic life of Pakistan, and also promote an imagined risk that Pakistan’s Islamic identity is under constant threat. Islamic teachings have become a norm in compulsory schoolbooks and are being taught to religious minority students as well.

Both public school and madrasa teachers have very limited understanding and knowledge about religious minorities and a great number of their pupils in this study could not identify these minorities as Pakistani citizens (“Pakistan schools teach,” 2014; USCIRF, 2013). Thus, given the role of the state, to regard madrasa education alone as the main source of radicalisation is unreasonable (Rumi, 2014). However, the recent studies on Pakistani education have mostly focused on madrassas, while neglecting the problematic state education system. Hence, this review also largely presents the literature on madrassas while highlighting the urgency of investigating the Pakistani mainstream public education system.

7 Wahhabism is an “ultra-conservative” branch of Sunni Islam (Morgan, 2010).

8 Salafism is “an extremist Sunni political-religious movement within Islam that seeks to restore the golden era of the dawn of Islam (the time of the Prophet Mohammad and the early Caliphs who followed him). That is to be done, according to Salafi jihadi ideology, by jihad against both internal and external enemies. Jihad, according to Salafi jihadism, is the personal duty of every Muslim. Al-Qaeda and the global jihad organisations (of which ISIS is one) sprang from Salafi jihadism.” (See Erlich, 2014 for more details).

With respect to Pakistani madrassa education, there were more than 13,000 madrassas of which 97 per cent belonged to the private sector with an enrolment of 1.759 million students in 2012. The main teaching contents of these madrassas are Islamic knowledge, while the majority of them also teach formal education subjects (Amin et al., 2013). The dynamics of madrassa education in the Pakistani context has been greatly influenced by its neighbouring nations and geopolitical history. Upon the nation's independence in 1947, it is believed that some radical *ulema* (Islamic clerics) from Deoband, India moved to Pakistan and established madrassas which have since spread extreme ideology (Burki 2005, cited in Ahmed Zahid Shahab, 2009).

Since 9/11, studies increasingly focus on madrassa education and many scholars have found a strong link between an increased number of madrassas and Islamist militancy, extremism, or terrorism (Ahmed Zahid Shahab, 2009; Andrabi et al., 2009; Blanchard, 2008; Borchgrevink, 2011; ICG Asia Report, 2004; Puri, 2010; Rumi, 2014; Winthrop and Graff, 2010). In 2001, it was estimated that already around 10 to 15 per cent of Pakistani madrassas were espousing extremist ideologies (Singer, 2001). Most recent reports indicate that small but significant numbers of Pakistani madrassas are still indoctrinating young people with Islamist ideologies (Graig, 2015).

In 2009, Gulab Mangal the Governor of Helmand Province of Afghanistan said: "Pakistani madrassas brainwash students and teach them religious extremism, armed Jihad and hatred against the government in Afghanistan (seen as an enemy of the Taliban) and the West" ("Afghanistan: Taliban forces," 2009). Sadly, Pakistani radical militant groups have long been directly recruiting young children into their radical madrassas in regions of Pakistan where they have some degree of control despite the state efforts to curb them ("Pakistani parents forced," 2014). After the December 2014 Peshawar School Massacre, the Pakistani government has started to monitor the financial sources of the madrassas. However, this review of funding has been criticised as being ineffective by Imtiaz Gul, Executive Director at the Center for Research and Security Studies in Islamabad. "The government is flogging the wrong horse," he said. "The actual problem is what's taught in the madrassa, because that curriculum breeds hatred, violence and legitimises violence against non-Muslims" ("Pakistani grappling with," 2015). A 17-year-old student offers a glimpse of the curriculum that illustrates the ideology taught in his madrassa in Laghman province, Pakistan:

We were always being told that the Jews and Christians had attacked Muslim countries. They destroy the dignity and faith of Muslims. We were shown footage of the Americans searching people's homes and killing them... or killing civilians in bombardments... They showed us Israeli massacres in Palestine. Young people, even children, were

therefore prepared to wage jihad against the United States (IWPR, 2011).

The ideological content mentioned above may hold serious ramifications. A survey in 2000 revealed that Pakistani madrassa students were the most intolerant group among all students in Pakistan. They were highly supportive of violent jihad and strongly against non-Muslims and women having equal rights (Rahman, 2003). Even the madrassas that are considered to be moderate have been found to teach students to reject 'immoral' and materialistic Western culture (Haqqani, 2009). These teachings sow seeds of animosity towards the West. Together, these findings legitimise concerns over education in extremist madrassas.

Many terrorist attacks in Pakistan are carried out by militant activists affiliated to madrassas, thus the importance of the madrassa in terms of Pakistani security has been increasingly emphasised in recent years (Dateline, 2005). Transnationally also, madrassa education has attracted more attention, after it was confirmed that one of the perpetrators of the London bombings on July 7, 2005, had attended a madrassa in Pakistan (Borchgrevink, 2011). Chinese officials claim that radical forms of Islam have been infiltrating into the Xinjiang region of China through the Uighurs who receive Islamic education from radical madrassas, such as those found in Pakistan, which has resulted in deadly attacks on civilians in recent years (Page, 2014).

The most appealing material aspects of madrassas appear to be their offer of free education, and boarding and lodging, which attract the homeless and under-privileged children whose parents cannot afford the supplemental costs of state-run schools (Blanchard, 2008; ICG Asia Report, 2004). Due to various reasons including these financial incentives, Pakistani parents do not encourage their children to attend public education institutions, and this channels children towards the Taliban influenced schools (Hanif, 2012). Additionally, extremist groups in militant controlled regions have been forcing parents to send their children to extremist madrassas or pay high fines. Militant groups fund these madrassas and supply curricula and textbooks espousing radical propaganda (Mirahmadi et al., 2015).

Although the Pakistani government has been trying to monitor its religious institutions, specifically madrassas, the results have been unsatisfactory. In 2006, the Pakistani government pledged to reform the Islamic content of the textbooks, but this has yet to be realised ("Islamisation of school," 2014; USCIRF, 2013). These reasons demonstrate that the madrassa system has become 'a state within a state' (Bashardost, 2014).

In dealing with the various problems within the Pakistani education system, in recent years the US and UK governments have invested significantly in reforming Pakistan's current education system. As former US Ambassador to

Pakistan, Richard Olson (2013), indicated, education is one of the five pillars of the US assistance programme to Pakistan. However, international aid should focus not only on getting the children back to school, but also reform the ideological content of the school curriculum, which has been contributing to and exacerbating the ethnic conflict and violent extremism in the region (Rumi, 2014).

While the madrassa system is a domestic concern in Pakistan, it is also a concern for other nations as there is evidence that extremist organisations based in Pakistan attract students from foreign countries and that Pakistani students studying abroad have been linked to terrorist activity. Such is the case of a perpetrator of the London explosions in 2005 who attended a madrassa in Pakistan (Borchgrevink, 2014). In December 2015, Tashfeen Malik, also a graduate from a Pakistani madrassa, went on a deadly shooting spree in San Bernardino, California, killing 14 people (Graig, 2015). It is estimated that around one thousand citizens from Pattani province in southern Thailand have attended Pakistani madrassas. Thai Islamist terrorists have killed several Thai Buddhists in southern Thailand in recent years (Murdoch, 2015; Raman, 2005, cited in Walker, 2011).

Saudi Arabia

A study conducted by Shea (2011) at the Hudson Institute's Center for Religious Freedom, entitled *Ten years on: Saudi Arabia's Textbooks Still Promote Religious Violence*, found that Saudi textbooks from middle and high school grades included messages of violence and extremism. The textbooks that were examined were mostly from the government's religious curriculum, which can encompass up to four courses in the upper grades, and is a major focus of the Saudi school day. The following are excerpts from some of their textbooks.⁹

BOX 5 SAUDI ARABIAN TEXTBOOKS

- “The Jews and the Christians are enemies of the believers, and they cannot approve of Muslims.” *Hadith*¹⁰, Ninth Grade, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Education. 1431-1432; 2010-2011, p. 149. 2.
- “The struggle of this [Muslim] nation with the Jews and Christians has endured, and it will continue as long as God wills.” *Hadith*, Ninth Grade, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Education. 1431-1432; 2010-2011, p. 148.
- “Do not kill what God has forbidden killing such as the Muslim or the infidel between whom and the Muslims there is a covenant or under protection, unless for just cause such as unbelief after belief, just punishment or adultery.” *Tafsir, Shari’a and Arabic Studies Section*, Twelfth Grade, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of

Education. 1431-1432; 2010-2011, p. 70.

- “Worshiping God at the grave of a Good man is a way to major polytheism... And of the evils: decorating graves, ... and building domes, and putting curtains and hanging pictures on them, and to serve its visitors, ... and all of this is a means to polytheism.” [*Condemns Shia and Sufi practice*] *Monotheism, Eighth Grade, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Education*. 1431- 1432; 2010-2011, pp. 28 and 33.
- “The punishment of homosexuality is death.... Ibn Qudamah said: “The companions (of the Prophet) agreed unanimously on killing. Some of the Companions argued that he (a homosexual) is to be burned with fire. It has been said that he should be stoned, or thrown from a high place. Other things have also been said.” *Jurisprudence, Tenth Grade, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Education*. 1431- 1432; 2010-2011, pp. 100-101.
- “In Islamic law, (jihad) has two uses: 1. specific usage: which means: Exerting effort in fighting unbelievers and tyrants.” *Hadith and Islamic Culture: Management, Social, Natural, and Technical Sciences Section, Twelfth Grade, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Education*. 1431-1432; 2010-2011, p. 71.
- “The New Approach in the Crusader Wars: ...Proselytise [through]... The Establishment of Schools and Universities: They have founded many schools and universities in the countries of the Islamic world for the various educational levels. These include: *The American Universities in Beirut and Cairo, The Jesuit University, Robert College in Istanbul, and Gordon College in Khartoum.*” *Hadith and Islamic Culture: Shari’a and Arabic Studies Section, Eleventh Grade, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Education*. 1431-1432; 2010-2011, pp. 206- 207.
- “Lesson goals: The student notes some of the Jews’ condemnable qualities.” *Monotheism, Eighth Grade, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Education*. 1431-1432; 2010-2011, p. 42.
- “The Islamic world today faces the problem of Muslim minorities that are spread in non Islamic states. Muslim minorities in many countries of the world are subjected to the threat of genocide or threats of Christianisation and conversion from their religion or planting atheist ideas and destructive principles in their minds.” *Geography of the Islamic World, Eighth Grade, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Education*. p. 116.
- “The temptation of the sons of Israel remains in women for they have attempted in this era to corrupt women and get them out of their houses and make them a means for seduction and corruption.” *Hadith, Eighth Grade, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Education*. p. 36.

Unfortunately, the Jewish people and Israel continue to be a focus in the Saudi curriculum. The US report by the Center for Religious Freedom (CRF) states that, “Blood

9 Additional examples, across 30 pages of content, are available online: <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/testimony/386.pdf>

10 The *Hadith* are a collection of Islamic texts that describe the life and teachings (often by example) of the Prophet Mohammad.

11 Shiite Muslims are the followers of Shia Islam, a sect of Islam.

libel is used to advance Saudi politics. Israel is described as having “no benefit in the human world except sucking its (Arab countries) blood, bringing to life a parasitic perverted structure, giving from its waste, so that it retains in its veins some blood to suck and live on” (Shea, 2011, p. 11). A grade 10 history textbook also states:

For since the Jews were scattered sundries they never knew peace with a single nation because of their proclivity for deceit, lying and conspiracy. Nothing proves this more than the Muslims’ experience with them in Medina as the Prophet (PBUH) deported them and recommended that they be driven out from the Arabian Peninsula and as happened with them in other countries such as Germany, Poland, Spain and others (Shea, 2011, p. 11).

Undeniably, state sanctioned Saudi education does promote Wahhabi extremist ideology. Problematically, the textbooks are distributed across other Muslim communities internationally, are shared online, and used among Saudi international schools, such as 40 Saudi international schools within the UK (Shea, 2011). Despite several reviews of textbooks, in Saudi Arabia and internationally, “real textbook reform on the religious ‘other’ remains an unfulfilled promise” (Shea, 2011, p. 13).

Thailand

In southern Thailand, Sunai Phasuk, a political analyst at Human Rights Watch (HRW), reported that “Buddhist monks have been hacked to death, clubbed to death, bombed and burned to death” by extremist Muslim groups (Walker, 2015). Other attacks have occurred against teachers, Muslims who work for Thai institutions, Buddhist monks, and citizens (Walker, 2011, 2015).

Zachary Abuza, author of *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror* (2003), and a host of other written material, highlighted the role of madrassas (conceptualised specifically as Islamic schools in Thailand). He stated: “In their pursuit of the creation of Islamic states, many Southeast Asian jihadis established Islamic schools to indoctrinate, propagate, and recruit. The leaders of many militant groups in Southeast Asia, including the Laskar Jihad, Kampulan Mujahidin Malaysia, and Jemaah Islamiya, returned from Afghanistan and established a network of madrassas as the base of their operations and recruitment” (p. 13). Extremist ideology also stems from other neighbouring nations, as mentioned previously with respect to the Pattanis being educated in the Pakistani madrassas.

Yemen

Yemen is considered the educational hub for specific groups of Islamist extremists where radical Salafism is taught in

mosques and religious schools. The *Dar al-Hadith* school in a village in Sadah, established in the 1980s, is the “epicentre of Salafi activity” (Petouris, 2015) in Yemen. Additionally, the Islamic *al-Iman* University in Yemen’s capital of Sanaa is managed by Abd al-Majid al-Zindani, the militant cleric during Yemen’s North-South civil war in 1994, whose party initiated violence against the South (Petouris, 2015).

2.3.3 NON-FORMAL EDUCATIONAL SPACES

While the propagation of extremist ideology in formal education settings is well established in some countries, the teaching of extremist ideology in non-formal educational settings may be more prevalent. The use of public or private non-formal spaces, normally for daily socialisation, religious preaching, or *dawah* (proselytising or preaching of Islam), for disseminating religious extremist ideologies has only begun to be explored in the academic realm. Therefore, we emphasise the need for study in this area and provide examples of non-formal means of propagating extremist ideologies.

In the rural areas of Pakistan, women are still largely excluded from formal education so they can only obtain religious education, if any, at home. As this kind of education is mostly based on rote memorisation of religious texts, women are not assisted to develop critical thinking skills or exposed to a variety of religious interpretations. This may greatly increase their chance of being easily manipulated and radicalised by extremists (Noor and Hussein, 2010). This is all the more alarming as radicalised women are likely to pass on extremist interpretations of Islam to their children and other family members (Mirahmadi, 2014).

Sanchez (2014) highlights the reality that women in traditional Islamic countries have been progressively exposed to jihadi literature circulating on the Internet through various modes (for example, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter). In one study, Sanchez found that the Internet has been facilitating the radicalisation of Muslim women in many Muslim-majority nations, as this medium has created a very convenient condition for traditional homebound women to access and share the propaganda disseminated by jihadi groups.

The use of media is common in non-formal education, as it is more attractive to extremist groups because of its ability to infiltrate international borders and age groups. Extremist groups increasingly use various forms of media (for example, online, printed, visual, social, and audio media) to propagate their ideologies and recruit new members, including through educational content. Extremist groups use different media depending on their contexts but the Internet has become the most popular among them.

BOX 6 A PROFILE

Prominent jihadi ideologue, Anwar al-Awlaki, was educated at the Colorado State University earning a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering, a Master's degree in Education at San Diego State University, and was a Ph.D. student in the Human Resources programme at George Washington University ("Anwar al-Awlaki Fast," 2013).

Online Sermons

One of the most influential radical preachers is US-born Anwar al-Awlaki (see Box 6) who was killed in 2011 by the US army. Despite his death, his provocative online sermons continue to attract jihadi followers who end up involved in terrorist activities, such as Cherif Kouachi, one of the gunmen who attacked *Charlie Hebdo* magazine in January 2015. It is believed that his teachings also influenced the Tsarnaev brothers who detonated bombs at the 2013 Boston Marathon, and Major Nidal Hasan who killed 13 people in a shooting rampage at Fort Hood, Texas in 2009. Moreover, the so-called 'Toronto 18' terror cell listened to an al-Awlaki sermon at their training camp in Orillia, Canada according to evidence submitted at their trial. Damian Clairmont, a Canadian Nova Scotian-born ISIS recruit, said that hearing al-Awlaki preach was a "life-changing event." Canadian-born jihadi John Maguire's radicalisation path also began with listening to the online lectures of al-Awlaki (Duffy and Harley, 2015). Despite al-Awlaki's passing in 2011, Bergen (2015) highlights that al-Awlaki is the key instigator of all of these major terrorist attacks and plots of the past half-decade.

In addition to al-Awlaki, The IIm Centre, a UK based Islamic organisation with the mission of spreading Islamist propaganda all over the world via the Internet also offers radical Islamist lectures. They openly advocate *sharia* law for the whole world and accept ISIS as a legitimate state and Caliphate.¹²

2.4 CASE STUDIES OF EXTREMIST GROUPS

The following case studies of violent religious extremist groups will further exemplify how formal and non-formal education has been used to indoctrinate and teach extremist ideologies.

al-Qaeda

al-Qaeda is a radical Islamist group whose origins stem from the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan that initiated the anti-Soviet Jihad and instigated 10 years of Afghan civil war. The anti-Soviet Jihad led to the establishment of the Maktab al-Khidmat (MAK) in the mid-1980s, which was the

predecessor of *al-Qaeda*, led by Palestinian cleric Abdullah Azzam and funded by wealthy young Saudi, Osama bin Laden. The MAK sought fighters to join this jihad from various other radicalised Muslim groups worldwide and promoted a classical or defensive jihad that required the defence of any Muslim community that had been attacked around the world, not only in Afghanistan. This attracted a vast number of foreign fighters who were recruited and trained in Afghan MAK camps, which led already radicalised Islamist internationalists to believe that their domestic struggles were part of a bigger global fight against a global conspiracy to oppress Muslims and Islam. This engendered a core belief that national identity was secondary to religious identity. As the Soviet occupation ended, *al-Qaeda* was officially established in 1988 and became an umbrella network that inspired and supported various new global groups as the international recruits returned to their home countries. This ideology, structure and network continue today (Braniff, 2015).

Based on medieval interpretations of Sunni Islam¹³, *al-Qaeda* believes that modern interpretations of the *Quran* (the Islamic holy book) and *Hadith* (writings about the life and teachings of the Prophet Mohammad) have 'watered down' the faith. They believe in a maximalist interpretation of *tawhid* (the belief in one God) that there is only one way to worship God based on one interpretation, allowing them to decide who is a true Muslim and who is not. Additionally, they believe that the *taqlid* (a mandate to live in the manner of the Prophet Mohammad) should be lived out based on the prioritisation of specific passages as stipulated by *al-Qaeda*. Thus, according to *al-Qaeda*, Muslims who do not follow the "right" passages are not true Muslims. Moreover, *al-Qaeda* mandates a specific practice of *takfir* (to declare if someone is a Muslim or not) whereby "non-Muslims" are to be killed (Braniff, 2015).

With an overall goal to Islamicise the entire world (by converting the whole world to fundamentalist Islam), *al-Qaeda* has built a very elaborate and expansive global network. A core group exists, with several associated groups, such as *al-Qaeda* in the Arab Peninsula (AQAP), *al-Qaeda* in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), and *al-Qaeda* in Iraq (AQI), which has developed into ISIS. There are also groups that they have inspired, such as Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines that is named after the Afghan guerrilla leader. This network means that *al-Qaeda* is represented on every continent. MAK veterans inspired by Azzam who later returned to Pakistan established the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LT), for example. LT were used by the Pakistani state as a proxy militia to fight against Indian interests in Kashmir. With this expansive framework, *al-Qaeda* is able to utilise other organisations and "capitalise on different bits of ideology, or different bits of political grievance, which are appealing to different indi-

¹³ Sunni Islam is the largest Islamic sect globally. Sunni Muslims believe that Abu Bakr was the first Caliph after the Prophet Mohammad's death, whereas Shiite Muslims (the other major sect of Islam) believe that Ali was the first Caliph after his death. Sunni Muslims look to the *ulemas* for religious guidance and interpretation (Morgan, 2010).

¹² Further details at www.ilmcenre.org.

viduals or communities” (Braniff, 2015). In doing so, their general ideology is adapted to the concerns of other radicalised Muslim groups worldwide.

For example, bin Laden saw that an overarching problem in radicalised Muslim communities was that Western governments were supporting non-Western governments thereby strengthening the non-Western government against radicalised groups and minimising the potential for radicalised groups to make their claim. AQIM, for example, stemmed from the Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat (GSPC), pledging allegiance to al-Qaeda in 2006 with the purpose of countering the increased influence of Western governments in Algeria. In January 2016, AQIM continued to counter Western presence in Africa when they attacked a hotel in Burkina Faso killing 29 people (“Burkina Faso attack”, 2016). By targeting the US and Western powers from several angles transnationally, al-Qaeda hopes that they will retreat from supporting local leaders, allowing Islamist extremist groups to gain a stronger foothold in their regional spaces (Braniff, 2015).

Additionally strategic is al-Qaeda’s focus on the connection between historical and present day grievances and narratives based on people’s geographic contexts. It cleverly uses aggression from non-Muslim groups in its persecution narratives and blames internal weaknesses in the contemporary Muslim world (due to Islam not being the governing force of society) on external players. Extremist ideologues think Islamic governance may be the solution to questions such as: Why were the Mongols able to seize Baghdad in the middle of the 13th century? Why did the Ottomans start to lose ground to Western European nation-states? Why couldn’t the newly created Muslim majority nations provide economic opportunity, physical security and just governance after World War I? The first four Caliphs after the Prophet Mohammad, referred to as the *Rashidun*, were political, spiritual, and military leaders in one. During that time, the Muslim empire was the largest in the world so current Muslim radicals feel the same calibre of leaders need to be raised today for societal success. “Al-Qa’ida’s actions in the Muslim world are not a selling point, instead it’s this grand historical narrative and the genuine sense of grievance that Al-Qa’ida and their associated movement has been able to tap into, which gives them a credibility that their actions alone do not” (Braniff, 2015).

To educate adherents, al-Qaeda prohibited some international MAK veterans from returning to their home countries and sent them to other regions of the world to inspire new jihadis. These veterans, coupled with online resources, such as filmed lectures of bin Laden, in password-protected fora, began radicalising people, including Westerners. Examples prior to 9/11 include US citizens Daniel Patrick Boyd, who after returning from Afghanistan tried to plan attacks on the Quantico Marine base in Virginia, and Najubil Asazi who planned suicide bomb attacks in the New York City

metro system. The military response to 9/11 resulted in the destruction of much of al-Qaeda’s training camp infrastructure and led to one of its leaders, Abu Musab al-Suri, putting the training online. Much of al-Qaeda’s ideology continues to be disseminated online through its two media companies, *Al-Fajr* and the *Global Islamic Media Front*. They utilise social media tools such as ask.fm, Twitter, Facebook, Kik, Surespot and other media produced by al-Qaeda’s own media production department, *As-Sahab Media* (Braniff, 2015).

Cronin (2006) has documented this shift from a physical organisation to a virtual one and found that “[al-Qaeda] is compensating for its weakened operational capability [by] investing extensively in propaganda for attracting the wider Islamic community to join their fight. This group is now increasingly relying on non-military means such as mass media, especially the newest ones, to spread their ideologies” (Cronin, cited by Gunaratna, Acharya and Pengxin, 2010, p. 115-116).

BOX 7 SAMPLES OF AL-QAEDA FILMS

al-Qaeda Film on the First Anniversary of the London Bombings. 2006 (17 min) (<http://www.memritv.org/clip/en/0/0/0/0/0/215/1186.htm>) An example of the communicative use of the Internet by radicalised Muslims as they frame terrorist attacks as legitimate acts of martyrdom, committed by courageous Muslims in defence of their brothers and sisters in occupied Muslim lands (such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine).

al-Qaeda Leader in Iraq Abu Musab al-Zarqawi’s First Televised Interview. 2006 (17 min) (<http://www.memritv.org/clip/en/0/0/0/0/0/344/1118.htm>) Promoting the military capabilities of al-Qaeda, the video culminates in footage of al-Zarqawi with masked fighters, firing an automatic weapon, and ‘new missiles’ developed by ‘the brothers’.

With its international recruitment, al-Qaeda welcomes membership from all people, irrespective of ethnicity and nationality as long as one is willing to accept its extremist ideology (HSI, 2009). Abu Dujana al-Khorasani, a Jordanian doctor popular on the al-Qaeda forum for posting “really explicitly violent content”, is a well-known member of the group for having tricked the Jordanian Intelligence Service and detonating a bomb that killed several Jordanian Intelligence Service staff and CIA members (Braniff, 2015). Other attracted members include young people in the UK, where Jonathan Evans, the Director General of MI5 found that al-Qaeda is:

... methodologically and intentionally targeting young people and children in [the U.K.]. They are radicalising, indoctrinating and grooming young, vulnerable people to carry out acts of terrorism. Even school-aged young people understand al-Qaeda’s narrative and feel empowered by it.

Terrorism experts have found that some European youth see waging jihad as 'cool,' and as a way to express dissatisfaction with the power elites. These radical young people are expressing their dissatisfaction through violent means, and see an appeal in the narrative that allows them to avenge wrongs visited on the weak by the strong (HSI, 2009, p. 32).

To attract young people, al-Qaeda members have become frequent Internet users, regularly updating their website content during recent years. They are acutely conscious of the power of the Internet to widen and strengthen their ideology and following. Abu Yahya al-Libi, a key leader of al-Qaeda in Afghanistan praises the website designers, video editors, bloggers and other people who are supporting the online presence of al-Qaeda calling them 'mujahidin in the information frontline'. "May Allah bless you lions of the front for by Allah, the fruits of your combined efforts - sound, video and text - are more severe for the infidels and their lackeys than the falling of rockets and missiles on their heads" (Samuel 2012, p. 19).

BOX 8 EDUCATIONAL PROFILES OF AN AL-QAEDA LEADER AND OPERATIVE

Ayman Mohammed Rabie al-Zawahiri is the current leader of al-Qaeda. He was raised in an upper-class family and his father was a professor at Cairo University. al-Zawahiri graduated from Cairo University in 1974 and received his Master's degree in surgery in 1978 (Hertzberg, 2002; Hoffman, 2013).

Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, the al-Qaeda operative responsible for the kidnapping of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl in 2002, was educated at private schools in England and at the London School of Economics (Hertzberg, 2002; Hoffman, 2013).

Boko Haram

Boko Haram, a Hausa phrase meaning 'Western education is sinful', aims "to destroy schools that teach the sciences or English language, churches, and secular and democratic government institutions in Nigeria" (Zenn, 2014b) and its neighbouring nations. Located primarily in Nigeria, the only country in the world with such large, evenly split religious groups (of approximately 90 million Muslims and 90 million Christians), Boko Haram is the most pressing security threat domestically as it plays on this religious division (Miller, 2014).

Between 2008 and 2013, there were 92 terrorist attacks on educational institutions in Nigeria with 289 casualties and the targets have included schools at all levels including primary and secondary schools, colleges, universities and religious institutions. 46 per cent of all attacks on Nigerian

educational institutions were part of a co-ordinated effort in which multiple attacks were linked together, based on timing, location and perpetrator. Two examples of this occurred in 2012 and 2013, where Boko Haram burned eight different schools in one night and then in the following year simultaneously killed more than 40 people at a secondary school and an agricultural college. Boko Haram's practice of targeting schools gained even greater notoriety in 2014 when they kidnapped 276 students from a government-run secondary school for girls in Chibok (northeast Nigeria) and carried out an additional 10 attacks targeting educational institutions (Miller, 2014). It has thus become all the more clear that Boko Haram aims to deter students from studying anywhere but madrassas where the Salafi interpretation of the *Quran* can be taught, staying clear of 'infidel' concepts such as science, maths or English (Zenn, 2014c).

Boko Haram first emerged between 2001 and 2002 when the doctrine of the Salafi organisation named *Jama'atu Ahl-usunnah Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad* (People Committed to the Prophet's Teachings for Propagation and Jihad, nicknamed the 'Nigerian Taliban') shifted as Mohammed Yusuf came to power as leader of the group. His new tenets strongly condemned Western education and civilisation as *taghut* (idolatry) that should be forbidden by every Muslim (Adibe, 2013; Salaam, 2013). In an interview with the *BBC*, Yusuf said that Western education "spoils the belief in one God" (Boyle, 2009). He went on to say:

There are prominent Islamic preachers who have seen and understood that the present Western-style education is mixed with issues that run contrary to our beliefs in Islam... like rain. We believe it is a creation of God rather than an evaporation caused by the sun that condenses and becomes rain. Like saying the world is a sphere. If it runs contrary to the teachings of Allah, we reject it. We also reject the theory of Darwinism (Boyle, 2009).

With this explicit hard-line approach, the group became popular under the name Boko Haram (Salaam, 2013). Yusuf then embarked on intense and widely successful membership recruitment, gaining over 500,000 members before his death in 2009 (Adibe, 2013). Yusuf drew young people to him through his preaching about excessive Nigerian government spending and his declarations of the evil that was linked to secular education. His preaching attracted young people from the Yobe and Borno states of northern Nigeria and gradually Boko Haram's numbers increased as students from various universities and technical institutes withdrew from school and joined the group for Quranic instruction (Pham, 2012). In 2004, the strength of Boko Haram became even more of a concern when post-secondary students from these two states withdrew from school, tore up their certificates and joined Boko Haram. Yusuf's teachings also led to the recruitment of young people from neighbour-

ing countries such as Cameroon, Chad and Niger (Onuoha, 2014). It has also been said that Yusuf established a religious complex that consisted of a mosque and school where destitute families from Nigeria and these neighbouring countries enrolled their children. However, it is important to note that under the leadership of Yusuf, there was general consensus that Boko Haram conducted its operations more or less peacefully (Adibe, 2013).

In retaliation for Yusuf's death in police custody, Boko Haram's new leader Abubakar Shekau pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda and launched a jihad in Nigeria forbidding Western education on religious grounds. With this new jihad, the focus of the group transferred from the more peaceful approach of educating about Salafi teachings into destroying all education that countered their perspectives (Zenn, 2014b). Boko Haram recruits former students of *al-majiri* schools. These schools are generally free and decentralised institutions that do not have government support, aimed to educate children from impoverished backgrounds about their religion. Students here are instructed to memorise the *Quran*, with literal interpretations, and teach nothing else (de Montclos, 2014). The pool of these students is estimated to be between 10 and 12 million (Campbell, 2014). However, *al-majiri* students are not necessarily predisposed to radicalisation, for many of them, especially young unemployed men, join Boko Haram because it offers financial compensation in a region with few economic opportunities (Mellgard, 2015). Several young suspects, ranged from ages nine to fifteen, who were released by the Nigerian military, claim that Boko Haram paid them to set schools on fire, spy on soldiers, traffic weapons, carry stolen items and hide weapons after attacks (Onuoha, 2014).

Many reports support the claim that poverty, unemployment, high levels of illiteracy and weak family structures are said to make young men more vulnerable to recruitment by Boko Haram (Global Terrorism Index, 2014; Mellgard, 2015; Onuoha, 2014). However, as of 2014, Boko Haram also began using female suicide bombers, some as young as 10 years of age, to carry out attacks against educational institutions in the country (Grossman, 2015). The fact that millions of school-age children across Nigeria, particularly in the north, are not enrolled in schools, exacerbates young people's vulnerability to manipulation by extremist groups (Onuoha, 2013). Evidence of a military training camp in northeastern Nigeria for child soldiers has emerged in 2015 where the images depict young girls and boys holding AK-47 assault rifles while others are holding cut outs of weapons. The use of child soldiers according to Max Abrahms, Professor of Political Science at Northeastern University and member at the US Council on Foreign Relations, is to boost membership numbers and educate children to establish the eternal Caliphate (Moore, 2015).

BOX 9 HOW EXTREMIST GROUPS INFORMALLY EDUCATE ONE ANOTHER

There is a tendency for emerging extremist groups to learn from and copy the tactics and/or strategies adopted by more established extremist organisations when trying to achieve their objectives or manage a problem. Such is the case of the relationship between ISIS and Boko Haram. Although until recently there has been little evidence to suggest that these two groups actually communicate with one another, their tactics clearly influence each other as they behead, kidnap, use shock and awe tactics and try to expand the territory which they have control over. With the increase of media reports on both organisations, they have the opportunity to inform and educate one another as to their tactics and strategies (O'Brien, Goldentahl, and Sturino, 2015).

Boko Haram's leader, Abubakar Shekau, expressed support for ISIS in July 2014 and since then, Boko Haram has adopted much of the semiotics of ISIS. Boko Haram has edited its own logo to feature the black flag of jihad, also used by ISIS, and placed the flag on top of its previous logo of crossed guns over the Quran. In a video released in October 2014, Boko Haram played the ISIS nasheed anthem "My Umma, Dawn Has Arrived"¹⁴ while Shekau declared Boko Haram's own Islamic state in northeastern Nigeria, referring to it as the Islamic State in West Africa. In November 2014, another video of Shekau was released where he praised ISIS leader al-Baghdadi's caliphate. The increasingly ISIS-style of Boko Haram becomes evident as the organisation mimics the international jihadi discourse of ISIS and copies ISIS choreography in their videos, such as staging, slow motion techniques and sound effects ("Is Islamic State," 2015; Zenn, 2015).

*In terms of both military and media-driven propaganda tactics, Boko Haram has been learning from various organisations. The use of suicide bombers and the co-ordinated use of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (IEDs) demonstrates this foreign influence given that these practices were little used in Africa until they were being used by AQIM (Pham, 2012). AQIM had also permitted Boko Haram to employ its media operation, al-Andalus (*The Vandals*), until mid-January 2015 when Boko Haram launched its own media wing named al-Urwha al-Wuqhta (*The Indissoluble Link*) following in the steps of al-Qaeda and ISIS (Pham, 2012). Influenced by ISIS, this wing publishes branded photographs of its militants and the areas under its control to illustrate its successes on the ground, and posts statements claiming that their operations are being carried out in a timely manner. Also, it shows films and videos having the same titles as those of ISIS series that are professionally crafted using designed graphics, high-quality opening sequences, various languages, and subtitles in multiple languages ("Is Islamic State," 2015).*

14 A version of the nasheed can be heard at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PVvLpFbxPE>.

Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS)

ISIS is a Salafi-jihadi Islamist group that was initiated in northern Iraq in 2002 by Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, and was initially named *Tawhid wal-Jihad*. As a Salafi group, it is eager to restore the golden era of the dawn of Islam during the life of the Prophet Mohammad. There is conflicting data as to whether al-Zarqawi was a member of al-Qaeda while he was in Afghanistan in the 1990s, but al-Zarqawi had a relationship with al-Qaeda leaders and his organisation was asked to join al-Qaeda in 2004. When his organisation joined al-Qaeda, his group was renamed al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) (Braniff, 2015).

Since the inception of their alliance, AQI disagreed with al-Qaeda's focus on the West instead of their enemies in the Middle East, such as local rulers and government leaders. From the other perspective, al-Qaeda was concerned with al-Zarqawi's sectarian approach as he gathered Sunnis and encouraged them into Sunni jihadi groups. AQI targeted Shia Muslims and religious minorities, "destabilising entire regimes through escalatory violence" (Braniff, 2015) rather than targeting Western 'occupiers' as al-Qaeda did. Despite this tension between the organisations, their symbiotic relationship was maintained as AQI benefited from its international affiliation with al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda profited from having a representative in Iraq through AQI.

However, upon al-Zarqawi's death in 2006 by a US drone attack (Burns, 2006), AQI and eight other Islamist insurgent groups gathered to establish the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) without consulting al-Qaeda. In 2010, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi became leader and "was quick to exploit" the weakening local political structure as the Syrian civil war commenced and the US left Iraq in 2011 (Welby, 2015). During that time, al-Baghdadi created a Syrian subsidiary, *Jabhat al-Nusra* (JN), of which he later tried to take back control in 2013 while creating the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). He failed. JN declared allegiance to al-Qaeda and are now ISIS's biggest rebel rivals in Syria.

While previously allies, al-Qaeda and ISIS are now rivals, which may lead to more violent events as they compete with al-Qaeda's proxies to occupy land both in Iraq and Syria and elsewhere such as Libya and the Sinai (Braniff, 2015). In 2014, al-Qaeda renounced ties with ISIS, after an ISIS spokesperson claimed that the al-Qaeda central leadership was sinful and weakening. Soon after, ISIS established its headquarters in Raqqa, Syria, and declared itself the 'State of the Islamic Caliphate' on June 29, 2014. That summer, ISIS spread to Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, and declared itself an Islamic caliphate. In March 2015, ISIS was "no longer a mere terrorist group, but an army that [could] hold and administer territory" (Welby, 2015).

As a self-proclaimed caliphate, ISIS believes that it should maintain the "*the khilafa 'ala minhaj al-nubuwwa*" (caliphate

in the prophetic method) and the practice of *siyasa shariyya* (Islamic concept of religiously legitimate governance). With a global agenda, al-Baghdadi demands all Muslims to offer him *bayah*, an oath among Muslims to declare their allegiance to a political, religious, or military leader, or all three, as a true Muslim leader is conceptualised to embody all three aspects, at least per al-Qaeda and Salafi beliefs. Boko Haram and 31 other extremist groups have already given *bayah* to ISIS (CRG, 2015a).

Several texts have been published by ISIS to state the "unavoidable obligation" of Muslims to establish a *sharia* state and restore the caliphate, promote the legitimacy of ISIS leaders, such as al-Baghdadi, and enforce the primacy of the *Quran* as legislation for the land. ISIS avoids replicating the perceived errors of current Islamic states by basing laws on their own interpretation of the *Quran* and requiring local judges to deliberate conflicts. These judges administer the occupied area through a well-established judiciary system that includes a 'Supreme Islamic Court' in Mosul (Braniff, 2015).

Locally, the structure of the state is legitimised by its state structures, formal and non-formal educational systems and regulations on citizenship, land, trade and war. Within its purview in Iraq and Syria, ISIS instructs that Muslim civilians and soldiers are the same. No distinction is made between the two and everyone will be judged on the same basis when necessary. However, Muslims and non-Muslims are to be treated differently. Christians and Jews are permitted to live and work in the caliphate as *dhimmi* citizens so long as they pay an annual *jizya* tax. Other groups, such as the Yazidis, an ethno-religious group residing in Iraq and Syria, are to be killed or turned into slaves because ISIS believes that they do not follow an Abrahamic faith (Mamouri, 2014a). This difference is indoctrinated through the educational and societal infrastructure to create a cultural revolution similar to that of China and Russia (Mamouri, 2014b).

Beginning from a young age, male and female children and teens are referred to as *ashbal* (lion cubs), expected to watch ISIS videos, and be responsible for distributing ISIS and religious materials at booths as part of their "Media Points campaign". They are indoctrinated and immersed in ISIS propaganda as they attend public executions by ISIS, re-enact ISIS events as play, such as the beheading of hostages, and participate in actual battles. ISIS portrays itself as "compassionate and humane" through their humanitarian services, especially to orphans (Khayat, 2014). This coercive recruitment through formal and non-formal education is offered as an "alternate curriculum" for children and orphans from war-torn countries that are easily influenced and have no other forms of education (Gallagher, 2015).

Education is spread through schools where boys study religion until the age of 14 before joining the military or the governing bodies of ISIS, and girls attend schools where

they study religion and home economics until the age of 18 (The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (ITIC), 2014). Schools are important to ISIS, both in recruiting fighters and also in prohibiting the use of contraceptives to try to increase the population (March and Revkin, 2015). Called “Diwan of Knowledge” (akin to “the Pursuit of Knowledge” in Persian), the ministries of education and higher education mandate education up to 14 years of age in Salafi ideology that includes gender segregation, removal of topics related to citizenship and patriotism, music, art, philosophy, sociology, psychology, history and the religions of religious minorities. The religious curriculum was influenced by existing curricula in Saudi Arabia. Other curricula include physics, chemistry, mathematics, English and Arabic languages, and “sharia sciences” which excludes ideology that conflicts with the Salafi ideology, such as Darwin’s theory of evolution (Mamouri, 2014b).

Children are undoubtedly central to ISIS (Khayat, 2014). As male youth reach the age of 14, they are channelled into becoming child soldiers and enter another form of education. From a report based on interviews with 25 children who were former child soldiers, four children said they were recruited in public forums by speeches and sermons given by ISIS group members. In an interview with Human Rights Watch (2014), Riad, a former ISIS child soldier in Syria said: “When ISIS came to my town...I liked what they are wearing, they were like one herd. They had a lot of weapons. So I spoke to them, and decided to go to their training camp in Kafr Hamra in Aleppo” (HRW, 2014, p. 21). He attended the training camp when he was 16 years old. “The leader of the camp said [ISIS] liked the younger ones better, ... He told me, ‘Tomorrow they’ll be a stronger leader or a stronger fighter’” (HRW, 2014, p. 21). Riad trained with 250 to 300 trainees that ranged from the ages of 12 to 18 for 15 days in Kafr Hamra, Aleppo. Riad said:

It was a very difficult camp. They gave us a very severe training. We would wake up, pray, after prayer maybe around 9 a.m. we did exercises, then rest in the room, then sharia courses, then military study, then more sharia courses, then some rest, prayer. [Between afternoon prayers], they didn’t let us sleep; they would come in our tent and fire into the sky and [send us] to guard a trench. Many times we fell asleep in this trench because we were so tired (Human Rights Watch Skype interview with Riad, location in Syria withheld, April 4, 2014; HRW, 2014, p. 22).

Unlike other extremist groups, ISIS has created a self-proclaimed state where it has established its own curriculum for those within its space. A plethora of additional educational material is produced by its media office, such as its magazine *Dabiq*, *nasheeds* (jihadi songs), and through its use of Twitter, YouTube videos, Instagram and several other forms of social media. However, these modes are used primarily for propa-

ganda and recruitment purposes so they have been excluded from this review (“Boko Haram largely,” 2015; Husick, 2014; ITIC, 2014; Marshall, 2014; Zenn, 2014a).

BOX 10 EDUCATIONAL PROFILES OF AN ISIS LEADER AND MEMBERS

ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi obtained a Master’s degree and a PhD in Islamic Studies from the Islamic University of Baghdad with a focus on Islamic culture, history, sharia, and jurisprudence (Chulov, 2014; Zelin, 2014). Other reports say that he earned a doctorate in education from the University of Baghdad (Beaumont, 2014).

Members:

- *John Maguire: Canadian-born Maguire (known as Yahya Maguire or Abu Anwar al-Kanadi) was an undergraduate student at the University of Ottawa who joined ISIS in 2014. He publically declared war against Canada and was killed in January 2015 (Pressault, 2015).*
- *Damian Clairmont: Canadian-born Clairmont (known as Mustafa al-Gharib) attempted to commit suicide on several occasions before leaving high school and joining ISIS in 2012. He was reportedly killed in 2014 (Bell, 2014).*
- *Numan Haider: A Muslim Australian of Afghan origin attended Lyndale Secondary College before studying electro engineering at a Technical And Further Education (TAFE) college in Dandenong, in Melbourne’s southeast. He posted a photo of himself with the ISIS flag on Facebook and wrote: “Let’s not put the focus on other things. The main message I’m sending with these statuses and photos is to the dogs of the Australian Federal Police and ASIO who are declaring war on Islam and Muslims.” He died in a local Melbourne car park after stabbing two police officers and being shot in September 2014 (Lillebuen, 2014).*
- *Shamima Begum, Kadiza Sultana, and a German girl, unnamed at the request of her family: Aged 15, 16, and 15 respectively, these three girls attended Bethnal Green Academy in East London. Aqsa Mahmood, 20, who received private education in Glasgow, is believed to have recruited Begum, who left to join ISIS in Syria in November 2013 and married a jihadi. The girls are reported to be in Syria (Sawer, Harley and Pasha, 2015).*
- *Ebrahim B: A German of Tunisian descent, Ebrahim attended Wolfsburg Gymnasium, the German equivalent of grammar school but had to transfer to a low-ranked state school as a result of poor grades. Yassin Ousaiiffi, a current ISIS sharia law ‘judge’ in Syria, recruited him to ISIS and he travelled to Syria to join the organisation. However, after being imprisoned in Syria, over accusations of being an international spy, he has since returned to Germany and surrendered himself to the German police, stating “I prefer jail in Germany to ‘freedom’ in Syria” (Paterson, 2015).*

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is a very prominent right wing Hindu nationalist (Atkins, 2004; Horowitz, 2001), educational, volunteer and non-governmental organisation in India. While it is concentrated in India and may not influence the greater global community to the same extent that other extremist organisations do, such as al-Qa-eda, the RSS should not be dismissed as its vast network and power have incited the killings of Muslims, Buddhists and Christians (Horowitz, 2004; Parashar, 2014). The RSS is a controversial organisation because of such events and its connection to the current Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, as it is generally seen to be the militant wing of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) (Mann, 2015). Their growing influence on the vast Indian diaspora is an international concern as RSS is propagating extremist Hindu nationalism as a dominant ideology among Hindu associations internationally as well as receiving funding from those organisations. In doing so, RSS devalues the secular foundation of India and the religiously diverse population of Indians in the sub-continent and the diaspora (Jaffrelot and Therwath, 2007).

Founded in 1925 to unite the Hindu communities, RSS aims to provide character training by upholding the values and culture of Indian civilisation. Drawing inspiration from Hitler's ideology of racial purity (Gregory and Pred, 2007), the founders supported the establishment of Israel and admired the Jews for preserving their culture and religion (Islam, 2006). In order to spread its ideology of Hindu nationalism or *Hindutva* (Hindu-ness) it established schools, clubs and charities throughout India (Atkins, 2004). It was banned during British rule and three times after India became independent, the first ban occurring in 1948 at the time of Mahatma Gandhi's assassination by one of its former members. The most recent ban was imposed in 1992 when the RSS was implicated in inciting, and being involved in, Hindu-Muslim riots. Along with its militant wing the *Bajramdal*, the RSS also has a history of inciting and organising violence against Christians and Muslims on several occasions (Horowitz, 2004; Parashar, 2014). Since its affiliated political wing, the BJP, came to power in India for the second time in 2014, the RSS has grown tremendously. The current Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, who represents the BJP, was a member of the RSS and has been denied a visa to enter the US due to this affiliation (Mann, 2015).

Structured hierarchically, the RSS has a national leader, a national executive and, regional leaders who oversee the local units, but it does not have a complicated structure and anyone can become a member of the organisation. It has basic units that are called *shakhas*, the Hindi word meaning branches. Because the RSS claims that it does not keep records, it is difficult to get precise information on its operations. With the coming to power of the BJP the number of branches grew by about 40,000 so that in 2014 there were 51,000 branches all over India (Bagchi, 2014; Jain, 2014).

Full time *pracharaks* (volunteers) run the branches, which meet for one hour in public places and transmit values of patriotism (taken to mean dedication to the Hindu 'nation'), community and social service through emphasis on physical fitness activities such as yoga and games, as well as rehabilitation through knowledge of first aid.

Two documentaries (Vachani, 1993, 2002) on the indoctrination of young Hindu boys by the RSS and the rise of its *Hindutva* ideology reveal the methods used to instil in boys (not girls) unquestioning obedience to elders, worship of the saffron flag, oath to the Hindu nation and religion. Boys as young as three years old were among the students who were lured by the playground and group games that taught them mental and physical discipline and gave a sense of community. This was done through an initiation ceremony, group recitation of sayings, and chanting answers to questions such as "Who owns Kashmir?" to which they had to shout: "We do, we do!" The RSS consider "foreigners" as enemies and believe that all groups who are not Hindus must stay totally subordinate to the majority Hindus. If these groups are in any way anti-national, Hindus should wage war on these enemies. Very subtle messages instruct boys that they should be ready to die for the RSS, that people join the organisation for love and are not forced to come to the branches. The classes shown are carried out in English, although Hindi is the language spoken during games.

On the whole the RSS is said to be a secretive organisation which creates a fear psychosis and fabricates information about other organisations (for example Jesuits) which is posted on their website.¹⁵ The films also point to the rumour mongering and reconversion of minority religious groups as policies of the organisation. The RSS creates an 'us versus them' binary and aims to sustain a hatred of Muslims. Currently, their National Awakening Programme is gaining popularity. The organisation has been working subtly for several years and is now present in almost every sector of government and society.

Founded by a medical doctor, the RSS does not seem to have highly educated people among its leadership, although members include journalists and people with experience who have now become leaders in different think tanks and government offices. However, the organisation offers many men, and only men, ideological classes for making them loyal members of RSS, as well as intensive physical training. Each time the BJP has come to power it has been behind the rewriting of textbooks (especially history books but also science content), changing the curricula and other aspects of the education system in India at the national level and some state levels which have a BJP party in power (Kanungo, 2003; Thakurta and Raghuraman, 2004).

¹⁵ See <http://www.rss.org/> for more details.

Taliban

The Taliban, literally meaning ‘students’ in Pashto, is an Islamist extremist political group that was largely supported and strengthened by Pakistan in 1994 and was in power from the mid-1990s until 2001 in Afghanistan (Hayes, Brunner and Rowen, 2007). While they were in power, they imposed a very narrow interpretation of *sharia* that abused the human rights of the Afghan people and especially those of women (Ahmed Houriya, 2009). The Taliban imposed hardline Islamist doctrine on all educational institutions in Afghanistan and forbade the education of girls older than 10. Initially, they totally banned music, TV, films, photography and alcohol, and closely censored literature, the arts and sciences, which they saw as incompatible with their ideology (Fayez, 2015). After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Taliban gained the world’s attention, accused of offering sanctuary to Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. They were thrown out of government and their military capacity was severely reduced by the US-led coalition in 2001. In recent years the Taliban have re-emerged in Afghanistan and become much stronger in Pakistan (“Why the Taliban,” 2014). Since its re-emergence, the group allow forms of media that they use for propaganda and recruitment purposes. It is believed that the group consists of multiple factions that do not necessarily hold the same perspectives (Burke, 2014).

Since the US Coalition left Afghanistan, the Taliban have been trying to revive their educational practice. Evidence shows that Taliban madrassas have been flourishing across the country, this time especially targeting young women. The madrassas are recruiting more and more young women and indoctrinating them in Taliban theology and ideology. In these schools, the young students do not learn anything other than the *Quran* and the teachings of the Prophet Mohammad. As of 2014 in Kunduz city alone these kinds of madrassas were teaching around 6,000 young women full time (Quraishi and Doran, 2014). Their aim is clear. “In the madrassa we were taught to sacrifice ourselves for jihad in Afghanistan and were told to do suicide attacks,” said a 14-year-old boy who quit the madrassa after his parents found it teaching radicalism in Lashkargah, the centre of Afghanistan’s insurgency-torn Helmand Province (“Afghanistan: Taliban forces”, 2009).

A member of the Taliban shadow administration describes the core ideology behind their teaching in their madrassas as follows:

Those who say these people are being deceived are puppets of the US. During their studies in Pakistani madrassas, people learn the path of virtue and jihad... They come to understand the reality that human beings are guests in this world for just a few days, and that they must do something for their religion and the next life. They learn the Islamic precepts in which jihad has high status, and thus

they arrive at practical action – they fight for the interests of Islam, they satisfy their God, and they bring illumination to the next life. (IWPR, 2011)

There is some evidence that Islamist jihadism in Afghanistan was to a great extent generated by the US during the twilight of the Cold War in the 1980s by encouraging the Afghan people to fight against Soviet occupation (Burke, 2015; Stephens and Ottaway, 2002; Tharoor, 2014). During the Soviet-Afghan war era, the US provided millions of school textbooks for young Afghan students. These textbooks were full of jihadi and anti-infidel propaganda and violent stories aimed at inciting action against Soviet forces. As a core part of the Afghan curriculum, the books (both arts and science books) were replete with jihadi stories, drawings of guns, bullets, soldiers and mines. These textbooks were developed and published by the University of Nebraska, Omaha (UNO) and its Center for Afghanistan under a US Agency for International Development (USAID) grant. Between 1984 and 1994, the agency spent USD51 million on UNO’s education programmes in Afghanistan. The *mujahidin*, the Arabic word to describe a group of individuals engaged in a jihad but also the name of the jihadis in Afghanistan at the time, widely used these textbooks to promote their own political propaganda and instil extreme Islamist ideology in young Afghan minds. These textbooks continued to be used by the Taliban after they took control of Afghanistan (Burke, 2015; Stephens and Ottaway, 2002; Tharoor, 2014).

Since the Taliban was ousted, the US has invested heavily to help the new Afghan government in building a modern education system. However, the Taliban is still using the UNO produced jihadi textbooks in the madrassas under their control for their propaganda. New York University professor Dana Burk notes that the anti-infidel messages in the textbooks can easily be used by the Taliban to indoctrinate young Afghans to fight against coalition forces (Crilly, 2014).

Aside from formal education, the Taliban have been active in using modern media to spread their extremist ideologies. Maulana Fazlullah, who was the Taliban cleric and commander in the Swat region, ran *Mullah Radio* in 2007-08. Through this radio channel he preached extremist Islamist sermons live across the region. Influenced by his sermons, some listeners threw their TV sets out describing them as ‘un-Islamic’. Many locals grew beards because of his sermons. This channel has since been stopped, but Maulana Fazlullah has never been caught. The Taliban militants still continue to broadcast their extremist propaganda from a number of radio stations (Maher, 2012).

The Taliban also have been disseminating battlefield videos, sermons, morale-boosting chants, and even jihadi ringtones in Pakistan. Recently the Pakistani authorities in Balochistan have cracked down on several bookstores and magazine

stalls in order to prevent Taliban propaganda. These operations have revealed that many young people have become addicted to such videos and messages and have serious intentions to join the Taliban (Miakhel and Siddique, 2015).

BOX 11 OTHER ORGANISATIONS

This chapter has highlighted the most prominent and radically violent religious groups in the world of the past few years. Several groups have existed within the past 50 years, but they have not been discussed in detail in this chapter because they have not raised global concerns or committed murderous atrocities to the degree of the organisations that have been mentioned above, despite their provocative nature. Examples include the American Christian fundamentalist groups of the Army of God, the Aryan Brotherhood (which exists largely in US prisons), and Stand Up America Now, led by Pastor Terry Jones who burned the Quran inciting violent retaliation from the global Muslim community.

More violent religious extremist groups exist globally, but little is documented about their use of education as a tactical tool in their approach to extremism. These groups include:

- *The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) located in Uganda;*
- *al-Shabaab (translated as Movement of Jihadi Youth) located in Somalia and Ethiopia;*
- *The 969 Movement of extremist Buddhists in Myanmar led by Buddhist monk Ashin Wirathu;*
- *al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) located mostly in Algeria but with members across Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Libya, Nigeria, and Tunisia;*
- *al-Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula (AQAP) located primarily in Yemen.*

2.4 EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUNDS OF EXTREMISTS

It is a fallacy to think of extremists and terrorists as poor, uneducated and unemployed people. There are several studies and reports on the profiles of extremist leaders and terrorists, and recent research indicates that they are generally better educated than the broader population (Burde, 2015; Choudhury, 2009; Krueger and Maleckova, 2003). Benard (2005) provides a description of profiles of jihadi terrorists in Europe and concludes, "that the search for one single terrorist personality or psychological profile is futile" (p.32). Wasielewski (2007) did a study of 172 known al-Qaeda terrorists and found that the mainstream norm was middle to upper class, highly educated men. According to research conducted by Russell and Miller (1983), more than 50 per cent of terrorists involved in terrorist activities in Europe, Asia, and Latin America from 1966 to 1976 were university graduates (Ekici, Akdogan, and Kapti, 2011). This is supported by research done by Sageman (2004) and Krueger (2007). Berrebi (2007) points out that 65 per cent of

suicide bombers in Gaza between the late 1980s and May 2002 had more than high school level education, compared to 15 per cent of the local population in Gaza. Professionals, such as journalists, professors, doctors and lawyers, generally fill leadership positions in extremist organisations (Sageman, 2004). The Arab newspaper *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* reported (December 26, 2014) that ISIS is using the Internet to recruit doctors, nurses, lawyers, engineers and accountants to set up state institutions and social services (ITIC, 2014).

In his book *Understanding Terrorist Networks* (2004) Sageman examined the biographies of 172 extremists and terrorists and found that most were not religiously educated in madrassas, and some with less education had petty criminal records but were not career criminals. According to Hoffman and Reinares (2014), one major problem fuelling terrorism is that individuals from various religious and educational backgrounds became radicalised in prisons. The Center for Strategic and International Studies (2012) however, indicates that in Europe, many extremists have come from impoverished and isolated communities (Leiken, 2005). In Europe, several researchers found that extremists who had been well integrated in European society were generally recruited by friends and relatives (Bakker, 2006; Ekici, Sozer and Atak, 2010; Sageman, 2004).

In the UK specifically, Bhui (2014) found that young people from wealthy and well-established families are more vulnerable to recruitment by radical propaganda than new immigrants when he interviewed more than 600 people from Muslim communities. Although these families are well settled economically and socially, many of these radicalised young people are depressed, socially isolated (lonely) and bored. The study found that loneliness can lead to escape through a fantasy world, and that the radicalised are not only often naïve, but tend to create romantic ideas about the caliphate – an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 2006) – before they leave for jihad.

According to Anderson "it is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (p. 49). He further explains that a community can be imagined if it is too large for face-to-face contact, and that communities are distinguished "not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (p. 49). In the past, the great sacred communities such as Christendom, the Islamic Ummah, and the Middle Kingdom were constructed through sacred language and written script (Anderson, 2006). Similarly, jihadi recruiters are using a specific interpretation of the global Islamic Ummah to lure recruits for their extremist agenda by offering a distinct vision of a life or afterlife.

According to Hassan (2001), extremist groups prefer single, educated and wealthy people for their activities. However,

more recent studies have found that the extremists tend to be married (Sageman, 2004; Wasielewski, 2007) and ISIS seems to be encouraging families to join. They offer salaries of up to USD 1,100 per month for each family plus electricity and food. Reports indicate that ISIS has even started a maternity hospital in the Syrian city of Raqqa, run by female doctors trained in Britain.

Distinct from this is the lone wolf terrorism phenomenon, political violence committed by individuals acting alone, which is not only different but also very diverse (Marlatt, 2015). The terrorist acts alone outside a command structure although they may be inspired by a movement. In the US, France, Canada and Australia, lone wolf terrorists have each caused a wide range of destruction. Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, for example, a newly converted Muslim Canadian national, shot and killed a Canadian soldier guarding the National War Memorial and attacked the Canadian Parliament (Solomon, 2015).

However, around the world homegrown terrorists have been posing another problem because of the number of people who are leaving to join ISIS. These jihadis are diverse and have a variety of educational, socioeconomic, ethnic, and family backgrounds. Education levels vary from high to low, some of them have criminal records and most of them are not well versed in the Islamic religion. Governments are extremely vigilant about young men and women leaving, but particularly about those that try to return as they present a threat to social security. MI5 in particular, believe that the 300 jihadis who have returned to the UK pose the greatest national threat. Linda, a UK mother who travelled to Syria to retrieve her 21-year old son, is also concerned about this threat as she describes returnees as a “walking time bomb” (Adesina and Chaudhary, 2015).

BOX 12 PROFILES OF EXTREMISTS

French-born Maxime Hauchard is from a white, middle class, Catholic family from Normandy. Although he was considered a good student who had many friends, he dropped out of high school and became radicalised via the Internet at the age of 17. After converting to Islam, he visited Mauritania in 2012 before leaving for Syria in 2013. In 2014, he was reported to have joined ISIS when his friends recognised him as the executioner in an online video in November 2014. Hauchard had no previous criminal activity and had never been imprisoned (“Les chiffres du,” 2014).

Salim Benghalem is one of the most wanted jihadis in the US and an international arrest warrant has been issued under his name. Born and raised in a Parisian suburb, Benghalem is the fourth of seven children in a Muslim family, although he grew up as a non-practicing Muslim. At the age of 17, he began to progressively minimise his studies and never completed any vocational training qualification nor did he hold any steady employment. Instead, he began enjoying clubs, girls, alcohol

and drugs and was sought by police for drug trafficking. In 2001, he fled France for Algeria. In 2002, he returned to France where he served a jail sentence and was radicalised by his cellmate, Mohamed el-Ayouni, who had previously fought for al-Qaeda. Granted parole in 2008, he was married but paid visits to el-Ayouni who connected him to el-Ayouni’s local affiliates from the gang ‘Group of Buttes Chaumont’. In 2010, he was released from jail. In 2012, he left his wife and two children for Syria to pursue “an ideal of justice”. Today, he is considered a designated ISIS executioner (Piquet, 2014).

Dutch-born Mohammed Bouyeri is considered the leader of the Hofstad Group (Islamist extremist organisation comprised mostly of young Dutch Muslims of North African descent) and supposedly the murderer of Theo van Gogh, the Dutch writer and filmmaker, in 2004. He was raised in Amsterdam and grew up in a low-income immigrant neighbourhood with his Moroccan parents. Growing up, he was timid, bright, but short tempered. Said to have been scholarly in high school, Bouyeri’s academic success led him to study at college, but he never completed a post-secondary degree as he dropped out after five years. Passionate about politics and affiliated with social networks, he was drawn into radicalisation. Western societies, their foreign policies and what he considered as government ‘terrorising of Islam’, evoked anger and disgust in him. He also held meetings at his home with other potential radicals, mentored by Abu Khaled from Syria, whom he invited to stay at his house in the Netherlands. Three major triggers, which led to his adopting radicalised Islam, include his mother’s death, confrontations with the police leading to his arrest and a three-month detention in prison, and the rejection of his ideas at a community centre where he volunteered. The final trigger for him was the provocative film Submission (2004) by Van Gogh, which displayed Quranic verses on the bodies of naked women (“Van Gogh killer,” 2005; Frankel, 2004; Gbadamassi, 2005).

Mohammad Siddique Khan was one of the four suicide bombers in the London bombings of 2005 that killed seven people and injured 100 others on the London Underground. Born in Leeds, UK into a Pakistani family and a low-income immigrant neighbourhood, Khan grew up feeling Western in his values and culture, as neither he nor his family were pious Muslims. He was quiet, studious and somewhat vulnerable, having been bullied at school. In 1996, he studied Business at Leeds Metropolitan University. In 2001, he married and had a daughter in 2004. He mentored young, deprived immigrants who looked up to him. He also discussed religion and politics at the local Iqra Islamic bookshop, a local boxing gym, and at the local Stratford Street Mosque. As he began focusing more on his faith, he wanted to change from his ‘partying lifestyle’, which involved fighting, alcohol and drugs, according to colleagues at work. However, he never expressed extremist religious beliefs. The British and American led ‘war on terror’ engendered his resentment towards Western powers whom he found responsible for the conflicts in the Muslim world and the resulting injustices. This resentment triggered Khan’s commitment to

2.5 PROBLEMS WITH OTHER FORMS OF EDUCATION

the London bombings. Khan's community contacts reinforced his own attitudes, influenced his transformation to fundamentalism and later extremism, and served to recruit others as well. Khan is alleged to have travelled to Pakistan and Afghanistan, where he is believed to have attended a military training camp. Khan's last trip to Pakistan in 2004 may have solidified his commitment to jihad, providing him the trigger to carry out terror in London ("Profile: Mohammad Sidique Khan," 2007; "Profile: Mohammad Sidique Khan," 2011; Chartier, 2004; Malik, 2007).

Shehzad Tanweer was another suicide bomber in the 2005 London Bombings. Born in the UK, he grew up in a Pakistani family and was a popular high school student and a great athlete. Described as calm and humble, he was well integrated into the dominant culture with friends and had a passionate interest for cricket. He was religious, tolerant of others, and seemed indifferent to political issues. Like the other London bombers, Tanweer frequently attended the Stratford Street Mosque, visited the Iqra bookshop, and the 'al-Qaeda gym'. He also attended the Hamara Youth Access where Mohammad Siddique Khan recruited potential radicals. Mentored by Khan whom he revered as a father figure, Tanweer was slowly radicalised through their lengthy conversations. In 2004 his radicalisation further developed as he participated in the hajj¹⁶ and later visited Khan in Pakistan. It is believed that during his time in Pakistan, Tanweer encountered al-Qaeda members. Their ideology is believed to have triggered his complete radicalisation ("Profile: Shehzad Tanweer", 2005; Laville and Aslam, 2005; Laville, Gillan and Aslam, 2005).

Jihadi John, whose real name is Mohammed Emwazi, is believed to be responsible for the much-advertised beheadings of over six hostages, including US and Japanese journalists, British aid workers, and an American hostage. In 1994, he immigrated to the UK at the age six from Kuwait as the eldest of a large Bedouin family, a marginalised group in Kuwaiti society. He was educated in North London and considered a good student. Although he was bullied in primary school, his teachers described him as a young man with academic aspirations. In adolescence, he was described as caring, responsible and quiet. It is reported that he was obsessed with the group al-Shabaab and injustice in Somalia. Also, a break up with his girlfriend, taken badly, resulted in drunken behaviour in public. He later graduated in computer science from the University of Westminster in 2009. He then left for Kuwait to work for three years in IT. His whereabouts were unclear from 2012-13, but video footage of beheadings carried out by him on social media confirmed his involvement in ISIS in 2014 and 2015 (Tharoor, 2015).

This chapter has given examples of many formal education systems that clearly push people towards extremism. But problems are not limited to these examples. As is clear from profiles in Boxes 6, 8, 10 and 12, Western and, globally, secular educational systems do not always succeed in safeguarding their students. Formal educational programmes reflect the values of each society. The interpretations given to these values vary across different contexts within each society. Given that alienation and marginalisation are caused by inequalities in society, educational systems that perpetuate these inequalities also feed into extremist ideologies and narratives. For example, interpreting equality as sameness is being blind to differences. In education, this would imply treating everyone the same. But human beings are deeply diverse not only in their inherent characteristics (for example ethnicity, religion, class, culture, gender, mental and physical health, sexual orientation) but also in their location (for example place of birth, socio-economic background) (Bhabha, 1994). These result in different experiences and opportunities. Studies indicate that how these differences are constructed has a great impact on student achievement and experiences in schools, as well as on students' formation of their own identities. In effect, blindness to difference is misrecognition that condones and perpetuates the privilege of certain groups. This is a form of oppression (Ghosh, 2011). Fairness, not blindness to difference, is a fundamental principle of justice (Appiah, 1996).

Systems of education that ignore differences in the name of equality, in fact, may be unjust and in-egalitarian (Ghosh, 2011). Inclusive education would imply equity rather than equality. Education systems, such as in France, which ignore differences among students, have alienated large numbers of minority students. Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, the French Education Minister, has warned that right-wing politicians have twisted secularism in France to marginalise and attack religious groups, especially Muslims (Chrisafis, 2016). That may explain why there are 1,132 French citizens implicated in Jihadi groups including 88 women and 10 minors. According to the French government in 2014, there was an 82 per cent increase in those who left to join the jihadi movement ("Les chiffres du jihad," 2014).

Many individuals who join ISIS from Western countries have high levels of education because they are professionals in various capacities, such as doctors, engineers and nurses. Several extremists and terrorists have obtained extensive education in state and private systems as well as abroad, John Maguire, Mohammad Siddique Khan and Jihadi John, mentioned in this chapter, are good examples. There is, however, a distinction between training in professional skills and an education that develops critical thinking and the values of engaged citizenship (Rose, 2015). The Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) (European Commission, 2014)

¹⁶ The hajj is an Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca; one of five pillars of Islam that each devout Muslim must accomplish at least once in their lifetime if they have the financial means and physical ability to do so.

regards both the education and training, and youth work sectors to be the best place to help young people develop critical thinking skills. Davies (2009) argues that formal education currently has little effect in preventing young people from joining extremist groups or enabling them to critically analyse fundamentalism. This means conventional education is far from enough to be able to combat violent extremism. She contends that it is particularly important to incorporate political literacy, critical global citizenship and human rights into formal education, as well as to provide key skills to analyse the media and political or religious messages. As the school systems of various countries show even when subjects like values and moral education are taught in schools, students are more often than not denied the opportunity to relate these to their lives and ask critical questions.

2.6 CONCLUSION

Extremist ideologies have shaped human history but the extent to which violent extremism has penetrated various societies through all forms of contemporary education is unprecedented. Formal and non-formal educational spaces have been used by extremist organisations for two main purposes: to recruit young people and to indoctrinate them into violent extremist ideologies and worldviews. On one hand, in some parts of the world poverty, unemployment, high levels of illiteracy and weak family structures exacerbate young people's vulnerability to manipulation by extremist groups.

On the other hand, it is a fallacy to think of all extremists and terrorists as simply poor, uneducated and unemployed people. The sophisticated use of technology and media is targeting young and bright boys and girls and highly trained individuals from all over the world. The dramatic shift from physical organisation to a virtual one to recruit young people has penetrated every corner of the borderless world through technology with tremendous success. The messages rely on moral and psychological narratives that appeal to emotions and affect hearts and minds to the extent that previously non-violent individuals may justify the killing of innocent civilians as necessary to create a better world.

This violent ideology clashes severely with the ideology of a peaceful and just society. The case studies and profiles discussed above indicate that the leaders of extremist organisations tend to be from among the ranks of the highly trained but that they recruit globally from the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, as well as professional institutions (such as for engineers and doctors). They also target poor children and train them in their religious schools, which are becoming more militaristic, thereby promoting their violent ideology.

The Use of Education to Counter Violent Extremism

Assuming that education is a moral enterprise that develops and shapes minds (Nord and Haynes, 1998), any transformation of students' beliefs systems towards those reflecting extreme religious ideologies should be of utmost concern to educators. Some scholars suggest that such challenges fall outside the scope of schools in which formal education takes place, and in doing so they deny the political significance of this very important social institution (Bascaramurty, 2011). While schools should not have to be burdened with society's political concerns (Gearon, 2014), the reality is that these dilemmas surface within classrooms (Gereluk, 2012) and there is a strong likelihood that these topics will be discussed (Quartermaine, 2014). Not only do students in countries with universal education spend much of their youth in schools, but also the profiles of extremists indicate that many of them have earned high qualifications, implying that they spend a considerable amount of time in educational institutions. This provides educators with a long-term opportunity to educate students to become resilient citizens.

In this chapter we discuss literature that suggest ways in which education can counter violent extremism (CVE). The major part of the chapter is devoted to formal educational systems in countries around the world where CVE is directly or indirectly part of the curriculum, as well as non-formal systems that focus on CVE through educational programmes aimed at different groups. A few deradicalisation programmes that attempt to rehabilitate individuals who have been extremists or terrorists are briefly discussed.

3.1 HOW EDUCATION CAN COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Educational strategies are not only long-term, but aim to accomplish long-lasting objectives. Targeting the root causes that can trigger an individual to turn to extremist ideologies – like alienation, marginalisation, search for identity and the failure to understand the historical development of discrimination and other global inequalities – requires developing values and understanding over time (Euer, Vossole, Groenen, and Van Bouchaute, 2014). However, one consistent shortcoming among them is the difficulty in evaluating their

effectiveness. The effectiveness of preventive policies is particularly challenging to assess considering that success means the absence of something – a non-event (Romaniuk and Fink, 2012). Furthermore, it is difficult to establish a causal relationship between educational programmes and a decline in extremist and terrorist incidents since military force, surveillance and other policing measures are also actively involved.

In his study on African schools, Lelo (2011) suggests that education is one of four ways to counter terrorism. Within education, he identifies five cornerstone approaches. The first cornerstone is to improve the general level of education for the whole population in order to tackle unemployment among young people, as being unemployed can frustrate and discourage people to the point at which they choose to engage in terrorist activities. Second, schools can foster critical thinking so that students adopt civic values in order to make sound decisions. Schools can also create an environment where children “learn about terrorism, how to prevent it, its negative effects, how to face it and how to avoid being caught or recruited by terrorist organisations” (p. 225). Young people can be made aware that they are vulnerable to fall prey to extremist manipulation within the classroom as well. Educating children to prevent and combat terrorism should be “part of the normal teaching programmes in every African school” (p. 225) and should prepare the next generation to be vigilant about terrorist organisations. Third, students can learn how to combat terrorism by analysing media and recognising proponents of extremist messages. Fourth, it is important to educate children on how to use and understand electronic intelligence and cyber security. Fifth, security personnel should be educated in a similar manner. Lelo (2011) concludes: “for African countries, counter terrorism should focus on actions providing short, medium and long term results and that includes education. Putting education at the core of counter terrorism campaigns will provide sustainable security in African countries and also in the rest of the world” (p. 260).

In addition, “education is a critical way to help prevent vio-

lent conflict from becoming deadly,” (USIP, n.d.) especially training based on lessons learned.¹⁷ Education can demystify the stereotypes that exist towards religious minority groups, which is a priority of The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism’s (START) online course.¹⁸ Critical thinking skills in education can also be used to present multiple perspectives to students in order to avoid an ethnocentric interpretation of knowledge. For the Muslim community in particular, education and dialogue can address the grievances and foreign policy concerns that might encourage individuals towards Islamist extremist actions (Khan, 2015a).

Robert Jackson’s interpretive approach for teaching about religions is one method by which this can be achieved. This approach invites students and teachers to discuss the personal representation and overarching representation of a religion, the interpretation of these ideas, and the reflection of personal biases, perspectives and thoughts about these representations. In doing so, the interpretive approach encourages inquiry, dialogue, understanding and development among teachers and students alike for the purpose of social cohesion (Jackson, 1997, 2004). This expectation for teachers to interpret and reflect alongside their students promotes a means to counter violent extremism for teachers as well as future generations.

3.2 FORMAL EDUCATION FOR CVE

While countries may not have tailor-made programmes in the formal school system to directly challenge extremist ideologies, several countries globally have curricula that include values that should inculcate good citizenship. These values may be in the form of courses on multiculturalism (inclusive, diversity, and anti-racist education), human rights, moral and/or religious education, and so on. Regarding religious education, Grimmitt (2012) emphasises that current theories and practice in religious education need to be updated for all religions, especially given the emergence of ‘globalised and politicised religion’ (p. 10). While these courses indirectly instil values of engaged critical citizenship, the causes that motivate an individual towards a counter-culture span a wide variety of socio-historical, political, religious, and economic factors. The role of education is thus to respond to those multidimensional factors that fall within the purview of the classroom.

In countries around the globe, there are various examples of specific CVE programmes that exist within formal educational settings as well as school programmes that use more subtle approaches to CVE education. Although indirectly dealing with CVE from an educational standpoint is important, it must be acknowledged that these cases fail to con-

front extremist ideologies head on. In this section, we present CVE efforts in formal educational spaces. While most of them make reference to extremism, some refer to radicalism or terrorism. Despite the differences in these concepts we have incorporated them in this section, as well as in the non-formal education section following this, because of the relevance these programmes hold for CVE.

3.2.2 AFRICA

Given the plethora of identities and cultures across the continent, African conflicts related to religious extremism differ in each context. As such, each country has a different approach to CVE in its formal educational systems.

Egypt

In March 2015, the Egyptian Ministry of Education removed curriculum content that was deemed to incite violence and extremism or promote political or religious radicalism for children age 6 in the first grade, right through to 16 year olds in the third secondary grade. Specifically, controversial historical Islamic figures from Arabic language classes and some Quranic and religious provisions from the Islamic curriculum were removed. While the Ministry aims to review textbooks and curricula in private schools, Nivine Shehata, the Ministry’s spokesperson clarified that, “[t]he main goal was to shift the educational curriculum’s focus on the values of tolerance in Islam and Christianity, calling for love and rejecting violence and extremism” (Aman, 2015).

Kenya

American CVE efforts in Kenya have mainly focused on education and youth programmes. In 2004, USAID, through funds from the USD100 million US-financed East Africa Counter-Terrorism Initiative (EACTI), launched its *Education for Marginalised Children in Kenya* programme that concentrates on the predominantly Muslim northeastern and coastal provinces, which have the lowest educational attainment statistics in the country. School infrastructure projects were a part of the programme.

In 2008, USAID also began supporting a *Higher Education Scholarship Programme* alongside the Ministry of Education, which focused on improving access to Kenya’s public universities for students from the Northeastern province. In 2009, the US government allocated USD11 million to a programme designed to empower young people in the northeastern city of Garissa and the Nairobi suburb of Eastleigh (Ploch, 2010).

Morocco

Since 2006, Morocco’s state-governed Mursheeda (or *Murshidāt*) programme trains imams and female religious

¹⁷ See USIP’s ‘Education and Training’ page for details: <http://www.usip.org/training-education>.

¹⁸ Details about the START MOOC is available at <https://www.coursera.org/course/understandingterror>.

leaders and scholars, with around 150 imams and 50 women graduating every year. This programme is notable because of its training of women. Through a 45-week training programme, women are taught psychology, law, history, communication and religion. Upon graduation, they work within mosque and family settings, as well as public institutions such as schools, hospitals and prisons counselling community members in matters pertaining to family and religion (El Haitami, 2013). In 2009, the State Department hailed it as a “pioneering effort in Morocco’s approach to combat violent interpretations of Islam” (Mirahmadi, 2014, p. 5). While this initiative appears to promote equality, several critics raise concerns with its affiliation to and supervision by the state. Moroccan and international scholars consider it another form of state surveillance on their religious movements, especially the Islamist movement. However, “They [the women] have proven to be more accepted by the masses because they represent the voice of moderate Moroccan Islam and have easier access to different settings due to their official status.” (El Haitami, 2013, p. 136)

Tanzania

Post 9/11, President Bush’s *Muslim Education Initiative* was developed to train Tanzanian teachers and produce teaching materials for Zanzibar’s madrassas, nursery schools and mosques. The programme introduced a new religious education curriculum for Islamic studies and Bible studies to be taught in schools through the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. According to reports in at least one local Tanzanian newspaper, the US had demanded that Muslim educational authorities change their curricula to teach a form of Islam that focused on modernity, trying to transform developing societies to be more like the West. Many Muslims felt that the new curriculum was a deliberate effort to promote an American brand of Islam that watered down the faith (Smith, 2010).

BOX 13 A TUNISIAN PROFILE

In Tunisia, the number of young people who have joined jihadi groups in Syria, Iraq and Libya is expected to exceed 5,000, 2,000 of whom are estimated to be dead. It is reported that 60 per cent of these individuals left to fight for jihad shortly before graduating from university. With the exception of some that recently became devout Muslims, several turned to drinking and drugs, only to become religious zealots mere months before leaving Tunisia to fight. Most of these people lived in the coastal, wealthy Tunisian areas. As a result, the ‘jihad in Syria’ phenomenon was fed by the total collapse of the economic, social and educational constructs, as well as the lack of values inherited from the previous regime (al-Amin, 2014).

3.2.3 ASIA

ISIS’s narrative has been increasingly targeted towards Southeast Asia and there are many individuals leaving from the countries in that region to fight in Syria and Iraq. Recent propaganda videos from ISIS include those specially targeted at Southeast Asia in which the glorification of violence and idolisation of life under the Islamic State are the two important messages. But, in response to the Western claim of a ‘lost generation’ of children the videos focus on the education of boys and the indoctrination of the future generation of Islamist fighters (CRG, 2015b). In addition to schools, recruitment among undergraduates is posing a real threat in countries like Indonesia and the Philippines.

Afghanistan

Since the new Afghan government took over from the Taliban in 2001, there has been huge improvement in religious freedom. Yet, serious problems in terms of the religious rights of minorities, women’s rights, and protecting people from the harm done by the Taliban, still exist (USCIRF, 2013). In the field of education however, the enrolment rate has risen from less than 50 per cent to 68 per cent for boys, and from just three per cent to 42 per cent for girls in the period from 2001 to 2008 (Coleman, 2012). By 2011 the overall enrolment rate in primary schools reached 97 per cent (“Why the Taliban,” 2014). By 2014, a total of 8,183,000 children had enrolled in primary and secondary education (Education Policy and Data Center, 2014). These statistics show the dramatic improvement of the education system in Afghanistan that is a positive move towards its goal of eradicating negative elements such as religious extremism in the society left by the Taliban regime.

In the late 1990s, UNICEF and Save the Children carefully launched a new programme to supply Afghan classrooms with new textbooks that aimed to teach basic competencies in order to mitigate the harms of the Taliban education system. This small initiative was seen as a huge step towards the better future of the Afghan educational system (Rugh, 2012; Stephen and Ottaway, 2002). However, the jihadi textbooks initially designed to counter Soviet occupation (see ‘Taliban’ in Chapter 2) continued to be widely used until the end of the Taliban regime as the international efforts to replace them were largely fruitless. Ironically, when Afghan children were able to go back to schools in 2002, they were given new textbooks that were published by the same publisher (the Center for Afghanistan Studies, UNO), which had previously received funding for writing the jihadi textbooks. The centre received USD6.5 million in funding from the US government. This time, the textbooks were produced with the promise of excluding all war related content (The National, 2002; “Back to school,” 2004). In 2002 and 2003, 15 million new textbooks reached Afghan schools. Since then the Center has been also training teachers, school administrators, and providing scholarships for

Afghan students studying in the US.¹⁹

In 2006, the Afghanistan Ministry of Education (MoE) was finally able to issue the new textbooks countrywide, after years of internal instability and conflicts. Since then, these textbooks have been widely used by mainstream schools as well as community-based institutions sponsored by various NGOs. Burde (2015) found them “strikingly inclusive and tolerant” (p. 149). She takes several excerpts from the textbooks to highlight the drastic differences from the earlier jihadi textbooks extensively used during the 1990s. Although these current textbooks still contain religious content, they generally advocate peace and tolerance rather than violence. Thus these textbooks possess a great potential to contribute to peace building processes in Afghan society (Burde, 2015).

Between 2006 and 2011, more than 100,000 students (over 65 per cent female) in remote village areas of Afghanistan were able to attend primary and secondary schools using new MoE textbooks with support from USAID (2014). This shows that at the state education level, the Afghan state has outperformed neighbouring Pakistan in terms of reforming its educational curricula for the goal of peace building and combating violent religious extremism. At the local madrassa education level, however, the situation does not seem to be much better than in Pakistan. Recently the Taliban madrassas have been reviving rapidly in various parts of Afghanistan (Quraishi and Doran, 2014). Also, the Taliban is believed to have been widely using the UNO jihadi textbooks in their madrassas (Crilly, 2014). This indicates more effort is needed to eradicate the jihadi legacy of school materials left over from its recent past.

Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, according to the last census in 2005 (BAN-BEIS, 2006), about 33 per cent of the registered secondary schools were recognised as Islamic schools or *Aliya* madrassas. Despite being private they are regulated by the state and follow the state curriculum. The *Quomi* madrassas, religious schools that are outside the state sector are a matter of concern not only because of the poor quality of education but also because they may not promote civic values (Asadullah, 2009). So, most schools follow the national curriculum both at the primary and secondary levels and an examination of the subjects indicate that they start teaching about each religion (Islam, Hinduism, Christianity and Buddhism) from class 3 through to class 10. From classes 8 to 10, civics and citizenship is also taught. There is no explicit counter radicalisation programme.

Compulsory primary education in Bangladesh is for ages six to 10, for which the National Education Policy 2009 states

¹⁹ Visit the Center for Afghanistan Studies, UNO for more details at <http://www.unomaha.edu/international-studies-and-programmes/center-for-afghanistan-studies/about-us/mission-and-history.php#f>.

that the main purpose of education is to “build mindful, rational and moral citizens who have respect for their own and other religions, and are open-minded, tolerant of others’ opinion, secular, patriotic and productive” (MoE, 2009). The national curriculum requires that the overall curricula teach certain values through various subjects. At the primary level students must be taught moral and spiritual values like the idea of justice, a sense of duty, discipline and etiquette, non-communalism, human rights, accommodative attitudes toward corporate living, curiosity, friendliness and perseverance, and are also encouraged to acquire scientific, cultural and human values and to shun superstitions. The secondary curriculum must also make efforts to mitigate discriminations among various secondary educational institutions and among various socio-economic and ethnic groups.

Analysing values education in the primary curriculum Tajin et al. (n.d.) suggest that students have no opportunity to discuss the values, which are not made explicit in the curriculum, and that teaching is didactic and prescriptive. Therefore students do not internalise these values or relate them to their own contexts. There have been some efforts to curb this poor practice in the non-formal and NGO sectors of education (for example BRAC²⁰), which run as a parallel system to the public education system in Bangladesh, but mainly target vulnerable populations. However, in practice the didactic and prescriptive system, solely based on rote memorisation, continues to have a strong hold on the way education is practiced in both primary and secondary schools in Bangladesh. This is a contrast to the general purpose of education in Bangladesh, which aims to impart, but in practice fails to instil, creativity and mindfulness in the students.

China

China has built a secular, highly centralised and comprehensive education system to reshape the perceptions of state power and create hope and opportunity in society; it has used education as an effective socialisation tool to counter insurgencies, including violent extremism and terrorism (Wayne, 2008). However, the large Muslim population in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region has been severely restricted from religious expression in various social spaces, including educational settings, through several state policies in recent years (Armijo, 2007; “China’s Xinjiang schools,” 2014; “China Registering the Religious,” 2013; Kanat, 2015; Morelos, 2014;).

Apart from the conventional approaches to tackle social instability and insurgencies through strict policies mentioned above, in recent years Chinese authorities have also been trying to benefit from centralising religious education for future imams (for the purpose of CVE) at the only Islamic institute in the capital city Urumqi in Xinjiang (Peng,

²⁰ For more information see <http://www.brac.net/>

2015). The Islamic Institute of Xinjiang was established in 1986 for training imams for the mosques in the region and its importance has become more salient in the last decade. Since its founding, the total number of graduates has been only around 700. However, according to the President of the Institute, Abudulekep Tumniaz, an expanded new campus will be completed by 2017 and the number of students will be increased to 1,000. This means that over 200 imams will graduate every year as high-level religious leaders. The President of the institute affirms that religious extremism can be effectively solved through imparting official religious education in this way (Peng, 2015).

The Chinese government has been increasingly using its centralised religious education for CVE goals. This initiative is accompanied by strict control of all other religious teachings in private settings, which can face heavy legal punishments. The authorities have also started to be deeply involved in advocating specific interpretations of religious texts. Some critics argue that the increasingly tight rules and surveillance on religious ideologies and practices in Xinjiang have been pushing some Uyghur people to adopt religious extremism in various forms to express their resistance to the central or local governments (“China losing battle,” 2015). This indicates that it may be very difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the highly centralised religious education as well as strict religious policies in combating violent religious extremism in the context of Xinjiang. The future developments of such initiatives may also produce more complicated and controversial situations.

India

In India there is no specific course on countering violent extremism and terrorist attacks have been both politically and religiously motivated. However, indirectly, school curricula address values issues through courses on morality, civics, citizenship and human rights education. The basic values in the curriculum are to promote social cohesion, national integration and secularism, although a single model for values education is not thought to be justifiable in a multicultural society like India (The National Council on Educational Research and Training, NCERT). Civics, citizenship and human rights education in India is integrated into various subjects at the primary and secondary levels, giving it a multidisciplinary approach and making it an integral part of education (Panda, 2001). At the national level, the NCERT has developed both material and a model of human rights and citizenship education for all levels of the school curriculum. In addition, given that education is a concurrent subject in the Indian constitution, which means that both state and central governments have jurisdiction over education, some state governments have introduced human rights education in the schools that follow the State board exams. What is unfortunate, however, is that what is taught in the “legitimate” curriculum in schools remains unrelated from the subjective

realities of the students’ (and teachers’) lives. Controversial topics are not discussed (and have been explicitly avoided) in the texts, so that students are not given the opportunity to express anxiety or reflect on societal events (Jain, 2004).

However, at the higher education level the University Grants Commission (UGC) provides incentives to universities and colleges to introduce human rights courses and it is estimated that about 100 universities and colleges have taken advantage of this offer. In addition, the Curriculum Development Committee has developed a model curriculum and a human rights specialisation has been introduced within the higher education curriculum (Jain and Kakarala, 2005). The Indian Institute of Human Rights (IIHR) also provides specialised education in human rights through a two-year distance learning diploma course at undergraduate and graduate levels for students throughout India as well as abroad (Bajaj, 2011). This course is taken by many people who work in the field of human rights and is therefore increasing knowledge of rights through several non-governmental organisations.

Five States in India (out of a total of 29) have Madrasa School Boards and their certificates are recognised as equivalent to the certificates issued by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), which indicates that they follow the state curricula (“Madrasa certificates issued,” 2014). There are many private madrasahs in several parts of India that are mostly funded by donations and in which the curriculum varies, although all of them focus on religious teaching. Madrasahs in India are for both boys and girls. The private madrasahs largely cater to the poor and even provide them with food and shelter. The madrasah schools have been the subject of much debate since the rise of Islamist militancy and have been sensationalised in the mass media as there have been allegations of them being training grounds for terrorists. Sikand (2005) points out that this may not be fair given that madrasahs vary greatly in quality but this focus has at least one positive outcome because the generally conservative theology taught in most madrasahs (although there are vast regional variations) is not suited to a modern, pluralistic democracy and it will induce much needed curricula and administrative reforms.

Indonesia

Through a long-established partnership, the Australian government has been supporting the Indonesian government in several capacities, such as education (Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015). Focused on building primary schools in remote areas in Indonesia, the Australian government is also helping to improve the quality of education in Indonesian Islamic madrasahs by ensuring the national standard of education is met, as 72 per cent of madrasahs are not accredited by the government (Australian Aid, 2015). The effectiveness of the programme, with respect to CVE and an increased

quality of critical education, is not documented. However, a former member of the defunct militant group Darul Islam said that funding for these initiatives and partnerships must be prioritised: “[t]he main problem in Indonesia is critical thinking for students. The reason why some of the young get involved in political violence or extremism [is] because they do not ask questions to the recruiter” (Salna, 2011). A video released by ISIS in mid-2014 “reflects the growing attraction that the Sunni extremist group holds for the most militant jihadis from Indonesia” said Time magazine in a lead article on ISIS fighters who openly solicit funds in Indonesia, the country with the largest Muslim population in the world (Kwok, 2014). An ISIS recruit named Bahrin Naim is believed to have carried out the deadly attack in Jakarta in January 2016, killing at least two and injuring 24 other people (Botelho, Quiano & Watson, 2016).

Malaysia

It is estimated that between 60-150 people from Malaysia are in the Middle East fighting with ISIS, and there are serious attempts by extremist organisations to radicalise military personnel, with as many as 70 implicated. Moreover, returning fighters have set up terror cells in the country (Brennan, 2015). The government’s response is an integrated approach of Total Defence (referred to as HANRUH). Of its five components, Psychological Integrity and Consolidation and Unity of Malaysians include teaching values such as patriotism, caring, tolerance and respect for religious diversity that can be taught in schools but there is no formal programme in the school curriculum to tackle religious extremism.

Pakistan

As mentioned earlier, the Pakistani formal education system became highly nationalistic and religious in the early 1980s (Ahmed, 2013; Awan, 2012; Rumi, 2014) and the initiatives to change the problematic national curricula have always been unsatisfactory (“Islamisation of school,” 2014; USCIRF, 2013). Despite the picture set out in Chapter 2, recent reforms in the Pakistani education system show some positive shifts. For example, through the reform process launched in 2006, the Textbook Board of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province has effectively eliminated the content of primary and secondary school curricula that promoted violence, hate and sectarianism, and replaced them with messages of peace and tolerance. Until 2011, the Pakistani tertiary level had been highly centralised so that the provinces had little power to reform their higher education system. The 18th Amendment offered such power to provinces and the same province again started to reform the problematic curricula in its colleges and universities. “My motto was peace,” the former chairman of the Board, Fazal Rahim Marwat, says about his initiative, “for example, on the front or back pages of textbooks I printed slogans that we wanted peace. We tried to minimise the hate material and sectari-

anism. We introduced local Pashtun heroes, instead of Arab heroes, and introduced local culture” (Bezhan, 2013). However the newly elected provincial government and its coalition partner, the Jamaat-e Islami (JI) party have expressed their intention to restore the violent jihadi content in school textbooks (Bezhan, 2013; “Islamization of school,” 2014).

Qureshi (2015) highlights the faith Pakistani parents have in education that will save their children from the repeated cycle of poverty and ignorance which makes them easy victims of fundamentalism. She also emphasises the importance of “a good education and educator,” and illustrates the point by giving the example of how Muslim students who did not share cups with Hindu students eventually began mingling with them once they were taught that discrimination was wrong.

In the private sector, there have been some effective programmes introduced for promoting peace-building processes in conflict-affected areas in Pakistan. One typical example is the Qadims Lumiere School and College in Peshawar.²¹ The school has developed and established a peace education curriculum that introduces students to cultural and religious diversity with a focus on compassion and tolerance. Through this curriculum, students have formed a group called “Peace Angels” that conducts hospital field trips to visit victims of violent extremism and terrorism. The programme is reported to help students understand that violence cannot solve conflict (Mirahmadi, Farooq and Ziad, 2012). Although details about the programme are lacking online, the existence of this programme and the student engagement it has spurred are encouraging for potential long-term changes in the school’s local context.

Initiatives for promoting peacebuilding in the public school system in Pakistan seem to be very limited. Compared to state education, madrasa education, which largely belongs to the private sector, seems to have been doing a better job. According to the report by Mirahmadi, Farooq and Ziad (2012), moderate madrasahs have been effectively defending themselves from the radicalism that is largely propagated through extremist madrasahs across Pakistan. For example, Pir Arshad Kazmi, a revered Islamic scholar, has opened hundreds of moderate madrasahs to recruit poor children. These poor children are targeted by radical madrasahs for whom they are a major source of recruitment. “I realised that if we didn’t build these schools, our children would grow up with religious intolerance and a narrow, destructive worldview,” says Pir Kazmi. The authors also found during their interviews of the local community leaders that the mere presence of moderate madrasahs can play a strong defensive role against radicalisation (Mirahmadi, Farooq and Ziad, 2012).

The 2006 initiative to reform public school curricula, in

21 For more details visit <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Qadims-Lumiere-School-and-College/563363130399665>

terms of its radical content, has been partly deterred by Pakistan's Islamist and right-wing polity that is against making any changes to the current curriculum ("Pakistan schools teach", 2014). Thus, the vicious cycle of reproduction of intolerant and radical students appears to be continuing with very limited success stories. Some moderate madrassas and their teachers, on the other hand, have been working towards peacebuilding through their counter-narratives. This highlights the importance of moderate madrassas in countering violent religious extremism where the state public education has been contributing to the inter-group hatred and religious extremism with no serious intention to reform its curriculum.

Singapore

Singapore emphasises deradicalisation and rehabilitation programmes rather than directly addressing the issue of religious extremism in schools. Moral education is a means for nation-building and social cohesion with the aim of peaceful coexistence among the four major ethnic and cultural communities. According to Wei (2006), morality in Singapore has been seen pragmatically in two broad ways: first, to forge a common bond among the cultural groups which were polarised at the time of independence from Britain in 1963, and second, when it became a Republic and separated from Malaysia in 1965, the focus was to forge a Singaporean national identity with some traditional Asian values. With four distinct ethnic groups representing four distinct religions and languages (in addition to smaller others), Singapore's main concern has been to craft a Singaporean identity and keep harmony in the island state. In the education system, the teaching of mother tongues is emphasised although English is the language of instruction in schools. Religion is also part of the 'cultural curriculum', but religion is adjusted to the state ideology and homogenises religion by focusing on their common shared values. The focus is on teaching about religions and is highly descriptive. The Civics and Moral Education (CME) goals are, however, geared more towards developing pragmatic values for economic growth and political stability than towards moral considerations (Tan, 2007).

The Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act (1989), which forbids religious groups to be involved in political activity, was reinforced in 2003 with the Declaration of Religious Harmony, so as to maintain religious harmony in society. Citizenship education has been characterised by 'religious pragmatism' and 'civic republicanism' which emphasised the duties rather than the rights of citizens. According to this model, good citizenship is "just socialisation into a particular state-sanctioned set of values and views" (Tan, 2007, p. 24) so that students are trained for "passive, responsible, rule following citizenship" (Gopinath and Sharpe, 2004) and strictly follow the political leadership (Koh and Ooi, 2002). Furthermore, citizenship education has been criticised because the multi-cultural and multi-racial nature of the soci-

ety is de-politicised by keeping differences such as race and religion in the private sphere as opposed to the public sphere. A need to review the citizenship education programme in schools was felt necessary in order to consider a more active form of citizenship that takes into account the "multiplicity, complexity and intersection of religion and citizenship" (Tan, 2007, p. 33). Tan cites a survey done by Chew (2005) who found a general lack of religious understanding among students, and a need to maintain religious harmony through fear rather than an understanding of different faiths. Tan suggests going beyond the superficial treatment of religion and discussing extremist teachings directly and openly.

With increasing extremist Islamist activity in the Southeast Asia region (for example, the Bali bombings in 2002 and 2005, and the arrests of several suspected extremists in 2001 and 2002), the threat of terrorism has become serious in Singapore. Moreover, a Muslim (mainly Malay) population that forms about 15 per cent of the population, and the feelings of sympathy noted towards the extremist group Jemaah Islamiah by a few Islamic religious teachers at that time (Yaacob, 2006), made the need for a more proactive citizenship education more urgent.

In 2014 the Ministry introduced Character and Citizenship Education (CCE). This was first announced in 2011 and has now begun to be implemented. An important part of the programme is for parents to be actively involved with their children's education.

Muslim leaders have taken active steps to engage Muslim students in understanding religious teachings and exploring their Singaporean identity. A book entitled *Muslim, Moderate, Singaporean* (2003) sets out guidelines for ideological analysis. In 2003, the government formed the Religious Rehabilitation Group to counsel suspected terrorists and provide counter-extremist material for public information and education against extremism. The rehabilitation programmes in Singapore are elaborate and deal with psychological, vocational, social and family, creative arts, religious and recreational rehabilitation phases. The attempt is to build resilience through community engagement.

3.2.4 EUROPE

Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US, the European Union (EU) introduced an Action Plan on terrorism in 2002. This Action Plan provided a model for European countries to develop their own counter-terrorism policies. Among most Scandinavian countries, this spurred the development of CVE initiatives that acknowledged the importance of education and focused on the causes thought to push individuals towards extremist ideology. This was revised in 2005 as the EU's Counter Terrorism Strategy, which was introduced as a framework to combat terrorism. This framework includes four pillars to address terrorist activities: prevent individuals from turning to terrorism; protect citizens

and infrastructure; pursue terrorist support networks; and respond to manage the consequences of attacks (European Commission, 2005).

In Denmark, students in high schools, universities and youth clubs discuss Danish foreign policy in their classrooms and are presented with materials on Danish democracy and civic education (Vidino and Brandon, 2012). In Norway, the “Action Plan to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism,” was introduced in 2010. As part of this plan, the Ministry of Education and Research “ensure(s) that more young people complete their secondary school education as a general preventive measure” (Vidino and Brandon, 2012, p. 61). This Action Plan aims to increase institutional understanding of radicalisation and encourage faster integration of immigrant groups so as to avoid students from becoming disaffected. In Belgium, the government developed the “Action Plan Radicalisation”, to limit the impact of violent extremist messaging (Lozano, n.d., p.8). The Austrian Education System does not specifically focus on radicalisation but teaches anti-bias and tolerance as part of their long-standing Holocaust Education, and the introduction of civic education also focuses on human rights and minority rights (Lozano, n.d.). The following are examples from countries with other established programmes.

France

The French public school system is highly centralised. *Laïcité* (a French form of secularism) is one of its main principles. Among the seven competencies that the primary and secondary level schools are expected to promote, the sixth competency is related to social and civic values and all children are obliged to learn about the Republic’s values. Education is compulsory up to the age of 16. In France, secularism means absence of religion and in 2004 the French government banned all “conspicuous religious symbols” from public institutions, including primary and secondary schools. Being home to Europe’s largest Muslim population outside of Turkey, turning a blind eye to disaffected Muslim youth and what is seen as targeting Muslims through banning the *hijab* or the veil under the guise of upholding the Republic’s values of a closed secularism has not worked in creating a peaceful society.

Until 2015 the French system did not recognise differences among people in terms of ethnicity, culture or even religion because of their motto ‘all are equal before the law’. There was no recognition of differences ethnically or ideologically, no data on ethnic minorities, and no catering for their needs (“The war of,” 2004). At the most, measures such as offering adult vocational training for “older immigrants and/or minorities who never attended French schools” were thought to be sufficient to counter radicalisation (Terrorism and Radicalisation, 2014, p. 28). In September 2014, the new Education Minister, Moroccan-born Najat Val-laud-Belkacem, initiated changes in education. However, it

was after the January 2015 attack on *Charlie Hebdo*, that Prime Minister Valls acknowledged “a territorial, social and ethnic apartheid” in France (Ganley and Corbet, 2015). It is “...rare for a French leader, even from the ruling Socialists, to paint a picture of inequality in such strong terms” (Irish and Pineau, 2015). According to Valls, the terror attacks by French Islamist extremists should force the country to look inward; fighting hatred, anti-Semitism and racism in the country is an urgent priority, notably in France’s impoverished suburbs that house sizable immigrant communities. Valls compared the recent attack on the *Charlie Hebdo* offices in Paris to the three weeks of riots by disaffected youths in 2005 that shook France (Corbet and Hinnant, 2015). After the November 2015 Paris attacks that killed 130 people, the French government has started to question its implementation of *laïcité*, and to consider reforming how secularism and civic values are taught to young French citizens (Chrisafis, 2016).

In 2015, *L’Éducation Nationale* proposed policies and reforms to reflect an understanding of differences amongst students. In February 2015, the French Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research launched the *Grande Mobilisation de l’École pour les valeurs de la République* to combat the radicalisation of young people through the promotion of egalitarian values and citizenship. This programme prioritises secularism and republican values and aims to work towards social cohesion by inculcating a sense of belonging to the Republic. The programme’s objectives are a radical departure from the French tradition because they are an admission of the reality of diversity. This programme will also engage higher education and research in a national effort to prevent the radicalisation of young people. Its success will depend on whether it recognises religious, ethno-cultural, linguistic, class and other differences among individuals.

During March and April 2015, 1,000 teachers undertook training on secularism, memory, morals and values of the Republic. By the end of the year, according to the Ministry of Education, 300,000 teachers were to have been trained. Some teachers will be designated academic referents for media education and information at school. They will work closely with *Centre de liaison de l’enseignement et des médias d’information* (CLEMI), associated with the Ministry of Education. Together they will help build school blogs and journals to help create a sense of community at school.

Future teachers going through *École Supérieure du Professorat de l’Éducation* (ESPE) will address secularism and teaching. The core curriculum of the teacher-training programme was reviewed in September 2015 to ensure that a common culture, including secularism and the secular teaching of religion, is present. The competitive selection for teachers includes values and secularism as a theme of the oral admission test. The organisations associated with *Collectif des Associations Partenaires de l’École* (CAPE) propose discovery and training courses on several themes: partnership, rela-

tions with parents, innovation and discovery of new pedagogies. After the Paris attacks of November 2015, further initiatives are being considered to prepare teachers, students, and children for extremist acts as well (France to overhaul, 2016).

Germany

Germany has many programmes to counter violent extremism, most of which are non-formal. Within formal education, the German Council of Science and Humanities has recognised the role of teachers and faith leaders in promoting integration in Germany. The Ministry of the Interior's counter-terrorism policy includes addressing radicalisation through civic education to reinforce fundamental egalitarian and democratic values and to promote dialogue between state and religion. It includes broader policies as well, aimed at improving a sense of belonging within German society. This strategy also involves efforts to counter and negate radical ideologies. Many of the methods used to deradicalise right-wing groups have been transformed to address the issues of religious extremism (Hussain and Tuck, n.d.).

The Islamic Council for the Federal Republic of Germany, which has around 30 member associations representing over 400 mosques, is involved in introducing Islamic studies (in German) as a standard subject in schools and as an academic discipline at German universities for the training of Islamic scholars and faith leaders. Religious seminars and courses are also offered for the council's members.

The Netherlands

In 2006, a Dutch Action Plan was established that requires primary and secondary schools to develop curricula that includes citizenship education and social integration, confirming the government's understanding of education as a means to counter violent extremism and integrate Dutch minorities. While a primary goal of the programme is to support educational institutions in identifying vulnerable young people, it shares information about radicalisation on institutional websites, encourages active citizenship and social integration of students, and helps establish an expert centre on social tensions and radicalisation with the purpose of detecting early radicalisation.

Some specific programmes of the Dutch Action Plan support young people through their frustrating experiences in which high school students are asked to write about their sources of anger and their perceived ideal society. In addition to essay writing, students participate in class discussions and debate controversial issues. Further courses focus on topics such as democracy, multicultural society and Dutch foreign policy. These courses aim to stimulate a constructive discussion against stereotypes and misconceptions through promoting critical thinking. Well-performing Muslim students compose the majority of these courses because they

are frustrated with their position in society (Vidino and Brandon, 2012).

The Dutch counter radicalisation programme has several advantages. First, the smaller Dutch population and the fact that the country has not been subjected to a serious terrorist attack has made it easier for the authorities at the local level to carry out initiatives based on relatively solid research with clear goals in mind, such as the funding of religious organisations and partnering with non-violent Islamists. Second, Dutch authorities have focused on the connection between municipalities with small communities, migration and the social research community allowing for a more comprehensive approach. Yet the true breadth and depth of the Plan is unclear, as a thorough assessment of its programmes has not been undertaken (Vidino and Brandon, 2012).

At the local level, three elementary schools (a Christian, a Muslim, and a secular state school) in the Bijlmer region of Amsterdam have gathered to create an initiative and teaching method for their student body that consists of 70 different ethnic groups and 20 different religious denominations. In team meetings called the 'Bijlmer Conversation' teachers and parents from all three schools gather to 'learn in difference' for the purpose of social cohesion. As religion is an undeniable aspect of their society, teachers incorporate an understanding of religious worldviews into their class discussions (a pedagogical practice referred to as the 'Bijlmer Approach') and consider it a crucial component of peace and citizenship education. This combination of religious and/or worldview education within citizenship education is a philosophy of education posited by Siebren Miedema, which is heavily influenced by his Dutch culture and the experience of growing up in the religiously-segregated Netherlands of his childhood (de Muijnck, Miedema, and ter Avest, 2014; Miedema, 2012).

Sweden

In 2011, the Swedish government launched an Action Plan to counter violent extremism, raise awareness of the values of a democratic society and increase the knowledge of the causes, signs and consequences of violence-promoting extremism among authorities, municipalities, organisations and other segments of society. The Plan aims to develop mechanisms and structures to allow various sectors of society to co-operate more on preventing individuals from joining violent extremist groups. Passus²² and Exit are two programmes that have been designed to help young people who have been involved in extremist activities. The main focus of Exit is for school staff to ensure that the participants' parents engage in adequate communication with their children (Government Offices of Sweden, 2011). Branching

22 One of the projects offered by Fryshuset, which means "cold store" in Swedish, founded in 1984. The Swedish Passus project was started in 2010. See for full details: <http://www.european-network-of-deradicalisation.eu/profiles/62-exit-fryshuset>

from these programmes there are several other initiatives. The “Together for Sweden,” programme promotes religious dialogue and religious tolerance among Muslim imams, Christian priests, and Jewish rabbis to prevent sectarian stereotyping (QIAs, 2012). The Tolerance Project provides opportunities for young people to participate in educational projects at school. It includes “splitting activities” where individuals are given meaningful activities in their spare time to support less privileged students; teaching programmes where “Focus on the Future” aims to help individuals visualise a successful future for themselves (an imagined community) and “re-socialising activities” aimed at helping individuals cultivate functional social strategies in groups that they have not done so before.

The United Kingdom

The UK is perhaps one of the very few countries where CVE has been introduced in the formal education system. Launched in 2003, the government’s counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST²³ is a strategy that works based on four areas, three of which are similar to the EU’s framework, namely *prevent*, *protect*, *pursue*, and *prepare* rather than *respond* (HM Government, 2011a).

As an area of CONTEST, the Prevent Strategy is the UK government’s plan to eliminate the support and recruitment for, and participation in, extremism and/or terrorist activities. The Strategy responds to the ideological challenges of terrorism and extremism. It aims to divert individuals from extremism by offering practical support and advice, and by working alongside health, religious, criminal justice and school systems, as well as in online spaces. Specifically, it intends to avert instances of extremist activities that UK educators have identified. In one instance, a 15-year-old boy was recruited by school contacts into an extremist group and engaged in three al-Qaeda-related operations from 2003-2006. Other similar examples involve students from 15 to 19 years old.

In 2015, the Prevent Strategy was revised to become the *Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales*.²⁴ This new release includes laws and guidance material that requires the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to contribute by taking “into account the need to identify and divert those involved in or vulnerable to radicalisation” (HM Government 2015, p. 20), as well as guidance for schools.

The Prevent Strategy mandates that schools provide advice and support that equip students with the knowledge and skills to challenge extremist narratives. In higher education, student unions are expected to spot extremists on campus

and ensure that their views are countered and/or balanced with critical perspectives (HM Government, 2011b). The Prevent Strategy also requires that schools be safe spaces where children and young people “can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas” (HM Government, 2015, p. 11). Instead of limiting discussions on sensitive issues, schools should “be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues” (HM Government, 2015, p. 11).

In practice, UK authorities and policy makers collaborate with educational institutions that provide them with strategies to resist violent extremist ideologies. These schools teach subjects that promote intercultural understanding and citizenship education. As an example, in 2014, the Bishopshalt School hosted Prevent Training for other secondary schools, to showcase their traditional, broad and balanced curriculum which includes: democracy, global citizenship, diversity and respect, sex and relationships education, health education, drugs education, social issues and Religious Studies with a focus on all faiths and Christianity and Hinduism in particular. The ‘Trojan Horse Affair’ can be mentioned as a recent example of how the Prevent Strategy is applied in schools. The so-called ‘Operation Trojan Horse’ was discovered in March 2014 in a letter which detailed how Islamist or Salafi ideologies were being introduced in several schools in Birmingham and how Islamists were working on controlling schools and expanding their domain to other cities (Clarke, 2014; Wintour, 2014). The affair has become contentious with details of what actually happened remaining unclear.

As a response to this incidence, the Education Minister at that time, Michael Gove, announced that British values should take centre stage in British schools, particularly in independent schools. The definition of British values was adapted from those in the Prevent Strategy and includes democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance between those of different faiths and beliefs. This new requirement to promote British values, introduced in September 2014, is the most comprehensive measure taken by the Department of Education, including maintained schools,²⁵ academies, independent schools and nurseries (Stuart, 2015; Taylor, 2015).

Several smaller programmes stem from the Prevent Strategy. For example, the police-led Prevent initiatives have targeted schools with the aim of creating awareness of the danger of extremism and break down the negative attitudes towards the police. Another initiative called “From one extreme to the other” is a theatre production to teach children about the dangers of extremism and terrorism, which has

23 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorism-strategy-contest>

24 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445977/3799_Revised_Prevent_Duty_Guidance__England_Wales_V2-Interactive.pdf

25 In the UK, maintained schools refer to schools maintained by local authorities. Several types of maintained schools are community schools, special schools, voluntary aided schools, voluntary controlled schools, voluntary aided special schools, voluntary controlled special schools and foundation schools.

reached over 50,000 school children so far. These children are often from the highly segregated and deprived communities in England (Vidino and Brandon, 2012). The United Kingdom is well aware of the role of schools and other educational institutions in the development of a resilient community that can promote values of non-violent co-existence of diverse cultures, and values of peace and tolerance through education. In this regard, most authorities work closely with schools and universities at all levels to better equip them to resist the impact and ideology of violent extremism though this has not happened universally. Schools are required to teach subjects that promote intercultural understanding and citizenship.

In January 2016, the Department of Education launched an online resource for teachers, school leaders and parents, titled 'Educating against hate'. The website aims to offer practical advice to "protect children from the dangers of extremism."²⁶ The Department of Education, the Home Office and five other domestic organisations that support children, parents and media literacy, support the initiative.

England and Wales

While CONTEST and the principles of Prevent are UK-wide, the implementation of, and guidance for, Prevent is sub-national and is different for Scotland and Northern Ireland. By 2015, around 8 million children were in the educational system in England, attending around 23,000 publicly funded schools and around 2,400 independent or privately funded schools (HM Government, 2015). Independent schools include a large number of faiths schools, mainly funded by fees paid by parents. In Wales, over 450,000 children attend Local Authority maintained schools. There are also 70 independent schools, which set their own curriculum, but comply with Independent Schools Standards made by the Welsh Ministers (HM Government, 2015).

In 2011, two-thirds of those who attended publicly funded schools learned about their faith outside of the classroom in non-formal and informal settings. Among Muslims, around 100,000 children in England attended Muslim supplementary schools called madrassas, but the exact numbers are unknown as no formal regulation or registration process for madrassas exists. A voluntary code of conduct to regulate teaching in madrassas in Britain was expected to be announced in 2014, but the plan has not yet come to fruition (Morries, 2015). Additionally, the current number of madrassas in the UK is not known, but between 700-2000 madrassas were estimated to be active in the country in 2011 (HM Government, 2011b). In terms of independent schools or privately funded religious schools overall, a report released by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) in 2009, documents examples of incorrect and biased teaching materials about re-

ligions. An example includes some madrassas that promoted extremist views against non-Muslims, using textbooks with homophobic messages (HM Government, 2011b).

This has led the Department of Education to engage in several Prevent-related initiatives and collaborations to address these problems. A toolkit and workbook were published to help schools both prevent, and raise awareness about, the dangers of violent extremism, and to provide advice on how to develop an inclusive environment that promotes democratic values and human rights. Despite these activities, resources have been poorly funded and circulated by the Government. The Islam and Citizenship Education project (ICE) was designed to help young Muslims in 300 madrassas and 100 independent Muslim faith schools explore and understand their faith with regard to the society's citizenship values. This was poorly received and funding was pulled. The Young Muslims Advisory group (YMAG) was designed to help young Muslims with challenges that include discrimination or extremist ideologies. However, this group remains contentious. The Channel Programme was developed for 'at risk' students to be sent to learn about and investigate topics associated with extremism, and undertake deradicalisation mentoring. The REsilience project assists religious education teachers to discuss controversial issues such as extremism. Finally, the "Prevent, Police, and Schools" programme helps police officers collaborate with teachers and school staff in countering radicalisation (HM Government, 2011b). The Prevent project also emphasises the significance of artistic intervention through theatre or drama in preventing the young people from being radicalised (Home Office, 2008).

However, while the Prevent Strategy may be the most forward state counter-extremism programme to recognise the role of education, the Strategy raises several concerns. Prevent is not concerned with whether education is the correct medium for CVE, or with *preventing* children from becoming radicalised. Rather, it offers strategies to support schools in identifying 'at risk' or already radicalised students and in helping "young people to challenge extremism and the ideology of terrorism" (HM Government 2011b, p. 64). However, this might create confusion about the aims of the Prevent Strategy since "it is unclear exactly why counter-terrorism measures are necessary within the education system if it is not to prevent radicalisation" (Quartermaine, 2014, p. 6). Quartermaine argues that this confusion could be cleared up "if the aims of Prevent are divided into three categories: to safeguard children, to challenge those ideologies that are condemned by the state, and to improve community relations" (p. 6).

Also, in recent years, the Strategy has been severely criticised for focusing on the Muslim community as a "suspect" group in its attempt to curb extremism (Awan, 2012). By targeting Muslims, the very idea of societal inclusiveness is at stake. This not only gives rise to Islamophobia, but also degrades and falsely victimises all Muslim students and the

²⁶ See <http://educateagainsthate.com/info/>.

overwhelming majority of them have no connection with radical ideology. Moreover, it fails to recognise the negative impact on the identities and self-concept of Muslims by profiling the whole group based on their religious affiliation. In fact, profiling may push students towards radicalism by segregating and labelling them. Thus, a rigorous evaluation of the Prevent portion of the strategy is extremely important. Kundnani (2015) severely criticises the Prevent Strategy for targeting Muslims and calls on the government to end this policy, in order to “avoid nurturing a new generation of antagonised and disenfranchised citizens” (p. 7). The revised version of the *Prevent Duty Guidance* (2015) has removed all mention of madrassas, perhaps in hopes of addressing this critique and clarifying that extremist ideologies within England and Wales are not solely associated with Islam.

3.2.5 NORTH AMERICA

While multicultural/intercultural/diversity and inclusive education, values education and human rights concepts, and anti-racist education in a few instances increasingly permeate the curriculum, religious education is not a staple in North American public schools, there are two contexts in Canada and the United States that hold an exception.

Canada

Across the province of Quebec, all public and private schools are required to offer the *Ethics and Religious Culture* (ERC) programme to every elementary and secondary level student. With goals to pursue the common good, recognise and understand the other, and engage in dialogue, students are taught about ways to reflect on ethical questions and demonstrate an understanding of religion as a component of human identity. Unique in Canada, this programme attempts to contribute indirectly (Morris, 2011) to countering violent extremism in formal education.²⁷

United States

Although religious discussion remains contentious across American public schools, the Modesto City School District in California has established a mandatory *World Geography and World Religions* course for all Grade Nine students in the district since 2000. With two weeks of focus on character education, this programme has been lauded by the *California Assembly Committee on Education* for its success in acknowledging students’ religious identity in light of anti-Sikh bullying incidents that have been reported in California (California Assembly Committee on Education, 2014). Additionally, research in this programme has shown that students’ level of tolerance towards their ‘least-liked’ religious group increased as a result of taking the course (Lester, 2005).

27 Being a fairly new programme there is no research evidence of its success but the ERC curriculum details, goals, and competencies can be seen here: <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/ethics-and-religious-culture-program/>

BOX 14 NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS

Despite high levels of extremism and terrorism in many South American countries, formal education to counter violent religious extremism does not exist because terrorism is generally based on political issues. Additionally, local governments do not recognise violent religious extremism when it occurs; thus, initiatives to address such acts are not established. Likewise, governments in Thailand and Myanmar do not acknowledge this form of extremism or terrorism despite the murder of, and attacks on, local Muslim populations by extremist Buddhist monks.

3.3 NON-FORMAL EDUCATION FOR CVE

While formal education in traditional educational institutions is important, the crucial role families and community members play in creating resilient communities to counter violent extremism must be recognised. In a December 2013 international workshop hosted by Hedayah and the Global Center on Cooperative Security, representatives from Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Indonesia, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and the United States, among others, discussed the “Roles of Families and Communities in Strengthening Community Resilience against Violent Extremism” (Bhulai, Fink and Zeiger, 2014). The workshop recognised that young people, victims and survivors of extremism, cultural religious leaders, and family members have a crucial role in offsetting violent religious extremism. To this we would add that women, policy makers, educators, academics at research institutions, and the general public should also be considered as key players in the wider society in order to foster a resilient community overall.

For each group of individuals, we acknowledge that non-formal forms of CVE education can include citizenship education, civic education, confessional education, ethics education, global education, history education, intercultural education, intercultural citizenship education, interfaith education, multi-faith education, and religious education, which are organised outside the school curriculum (KATICIID, 2013). The following is a select sample of notable non-formal education that is occurring globally.

This section offers global examples of existing initiatives that have understood and utilised these vital and definitive relationships towards CVE efforts.²⁸

28 In educating such a diverse group of individuals, the workshop attendees highlighted the role of sports, art and culture and community oriented policing as ways to engage everyone in CVE efforts (Bhulai, Fink and Zeiger, 2014). While we do not offer a specific section in this review that features these methods of CVE, we have incorporated examples of this under non-formal education.

3.3.1 ENGAGING WOMEN

Davies (2008b) highlights the special relationship between women and conflict and the role of women in peacebuilding processes. Women influence their children in very important ways. Globally there are CVE programmes that focus specifically on women's pivotal role as salient agents for countering violent extremism. But they have also been known to be players in violent extremism when they indoctrinate their children and induce other women's groups towards terrorist activity when they become extremists. To address this specific concern, a two-day seminar was held in June 2013 by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) Transnational Threats Department/Action against Terrorism Unit (TNTD/ATU) and the OSCE Tajikistan office focusing on the role of women and extremist radicalisation. It discussed women and terrorist radicalisation and brought together 26 civil society representatives including 16 women from around Tajikistan. As a follow-up to a roundtable meeting in 2011, this seminar continued to seek ways to harness the crucial role of women in CVE (OSCE, 2013). Some ways that were explored were looking for potential early warning signs, the first responder role of women in their families and communities, the need to improve women's access to information, and religious education in order to be able to identify extremist narratives and challenge narratives that deny freedom of expression and gender equality (OSCE, 2013).

CVE programmes for women focus on the positive role women can play. Since women have a significant role in the socialisation of the young, their perspectives in countering violent extremism are vital. As Ibanga and Hawaja (the Nigerian founders of the Women Without Walls Initiative²⁹) say:

We want to do away with the walls that divide and separate us, whether it's the walls of social class or the walls of ethnicity or the walls of religion... We really cannot join the politicians in this fight. We are mothers. We are life givers and we are solution bearers. And we think that we should bring solutions to the table, rather than dwell on the problem. (Hackel, 2015)

Women Without Borders

There are examples of groups that have successfully expanded their organisation with a focus on women such as Women Without Borders (WWB) with their initiative Sisters Against Violent Extremism (SAVE). SAVE has launched a Mothers' Schools project, a Witness in History project, and a "Mothers MOVE!" (Mothers opposing violent extremism) campaign in various countries in order to support and enhance

²⁹ Ibanga and Hawaja are Nigerian Christian and Muslim female religious leaders, respectively, fighting against Boko Haram. They are the co-founders of the Women Without Walls Initiative (Hackel, 2015).

mothers' agency skills so that they can better protect their children against radicalisation. Since its launch in 2008, the Mothers' Schools project has yielded great success in strengthening women's resilience, power and confidence in dealing with radicalisation issues in their own families and communities.

As of 2013, the team had opened their schools in Pakistan, Kashmir, India, Tajikistan, Austria, Zanzibar and Tanzania. In each of these schools, mothers have been guided to realise their own strengths, qualities and inherent abilities in being a mother, such as multi-tasking. As a mother in Mevat, India stated: "I don't need to have power to have authority; a mother who is aware of her own qualities will be able to appreciate her child for his or her qualities" (WWB, 2013). Through 12 modules, mothers strengthen their own self-confidence and participate in activities and dialogues to understand the psycho-social development of children, communication techniques with teenagers, conflict resolution, and the role of mothers in reducing violence and promoting empathy.

Another main component of the programme is to provide mothers with the skills to detect early warning signs of radicalisation leading to violent extremism in their children and what to do.³⁰ The programme is often established in remote areas where women and females are usually undermined and the discussion of extremism and radicalisation is taboo. The project utilises the educational role of the mother in transforming mothers' levels of self-confidence and instilling applicable skills for mothers, who wish to protect their children from crime, radicalisation, and extremism. The Mothers Schools project continues to expand, with the most recent having opened in Austria in March 2015 (WWB, 2015).

In their Witness of History project, SAVE collects the narratives of those who have experienced or witnessed violent extremism in order to offer different role models for young people to consider. It is an on-going project and the campaign, entitled *SAVE Global Counter-Extremism Education Campaign*, is led by mothers, journalists, educators and activists. It aims to document eyewitness reports but also find ways to better understand the most recent extremist events in order to analyse the problems. It is an innovative approach that aims to act swiftly at the height of a terrorist threat, but its success depends on the distribution of narratives, and how the experiences may be applied in the creation of solutions. So far, no details of dissemination or knowledge mobilisation are shared online.

³⁰ Canadian Muslim convert and ISIS fighter Damian Clairmont's mother, Christianne Boudreau, talks about the importance of education in spotting the warning signs of religious extremism. She vehemently regrets that she lacked the knowledge and information about radicalisation, and that was why she missed the warning signs Damian was showing before he went to Syria to join ISIS. "You don't know that there is anything to be warned against, where are you gonna pick up? ... Knowing what I know now? Looking back, there were tons, tons of warning signs. But you don't know, you are not aware, you are not educated to begin with, you don't even know how to look for any. So I didn't" (Extreme Dialogue, 2015).

In the “Mothers MOVE!” campaign, SAVE collaborates with existing mothers’ groups or creates new groups in order for women to participate in income-generation and anti-extremism workshops. Using SAVE-developed manuals, women participate in workshops on confidence-building, presentation and speaking exercises to build their effectiveness in debate, benefits of moderation, and signs of radicalism in young people (WWB, 2015). Although no information about the workshops is posted online, it is very international in scope already as it spans across Yemen, Indonesia, Pakistan, India, Palestine, Israel, Egypt, Nigeria, the UK and Ireland.

USIP has been working alongside SAVE for a project in Nigeria that emphasises the importance of women’s roles in their communities and how to build upon local practices to counter trends toward extremism. Specifically in the Jos-Plateau region, female Christian and Muslim religious leaders work as mentors in their communities. With the training they received, they have expanded their roles to both monitor and provide counselling and guidance to vulnerable young people (Byrd, 2014).

While other organisations also focus on the role of women, such as a workshop held by the Syrian’s Women League to network and train Syrian women activists for peace, several initiatives worldwide aim to garner the influence women have in the home and society as well (Gambale, 2014). As Edit Schlaffer (2014), the Founder and Executive Director of SAVE states:

[W]e created a platform for the women who are ready to read the early warning signals, who are ready to protect their children, who are ready to speak up and speak out... first teacher being the mother - used as a strategy; a lot of women do not know/realise that they have this power or the amount of influence they have to shape and form their children... women [learn] that they have power and should use it... to feel comfortable having dialogue with their kids, especially boys.

Some organisations working for women do not explicitly focus on CVE, but their initiatives can be seen as greatly contributing to CVE through various forms of educational practices. Two very typical organisations among them could be mentioned as following.

Malala Fund

The Malala Fund, founded by Malala Yousafzai and her father Ziauddin Yousafzai, has been working to break the cycle of poverty and empower girls through education.³¹ Since its establishment in 2012 the Fund has been investing in and promoting the education of adolescent girls who are living in

³¹ For more details visit <http://www.malala.org/#main/home/>

violent religious extremism and conflict affected countries such as Pakistan, Nigeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Sierra Leone and Kenya and calling for the initiations of girls’ education campaigns around the globe. The Fund also partners with the George Washington University to offer a teacher resource guide that includes material about women and Islam, and religion and religious extremism.³²

Noor Educational and Capacity Development Organisation (NECDO)

NECDO was established in 2001 primarily to help and support Afghan women, and also young people and children during Afghanistan’s transitional period.³³ Since then the organisation has been offering literacy courses and training and awareness programmes for women on the topics such as gender and Islam, Islam and Human Rights, Child Rights Conventions, psychosocial and peace education, elimination of violence against women, finance, databases, computer applications and small business trainings.

Several of the organisations below also reference the influential role of women, even though women may not be their focal group.

3.3.2 ENGAGING THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Government based

The Australian Government has created a website entitled “Living Safe Together: Building community resilience to violent extremism” that helps Australians understand the phenomenon of violent extremism, shares international resources for countering violent extremism for individuals and communities, and informs them of CVE initiatives led by local governments to support Australians. It lists provincial projects and invites readers to find budding local initiatives to participate in through non-formal programmes such as Aussie Youth Connect and the Somali Youth Project that engages marginalised Somali youth in New South Wales.³⁴ It is a great central hub for Australians to visit in order to understand CVE specifically in the Australian context.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s (RCMP) Terrorism Prevention Programme (TPP), previously named the Countering Violent Extremism programme has two specific phases: before an individual can be radicalised and before an imprisoned radicalised individual re-enters society. In the first phase, the RCMP visits teachers, parents and community members across Canada to share presentation packages at high schools and communities on phishing, cyber-bullying, and recognising signs of recruitment and radicalism. In the second phase, the RCMP trains probation officers to pre-

³² For more details visit <http://malala.gwu.edu/>

³³ For more information visit <http://necdo.org.af/?p=236>

³⁴ For more details and a list of projects visit <http://www.livingsafetogether.gov.au/getinvolved/Pages/current-projects.aspx>.

vent people from re-engaging in criminal extremist activities. Although the programme has started, the details are not yet available online (Dhanoa, 2015).

In Denmark the Integration Plan aims to offer good education to children and young people, counter neighbourhood ghettoization, and prevent and combat extremism and crime. The programme has introduced new rules that will strengthen parental responsibility by offering parents the programmes that will help them support their children's education (Danish Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs, 2005).

Non-government based

Islamic Networks Group (ING) located in California has a mission to “[educate] for cultural literacy and mutual respect”.³⁵ It addresses discrimination towards Muslim Americans by educating the general public, students, and teachers about the role of Muslims throughout American history and the problem of bullying of Muslim Americans. In addition to seminars and speakers, its K-12 and post-secondary curriculum material is available online for the general public. Through these resources, it presents a strong, applicable and relevant approach to CVE for the American public.

The University of Maryland's National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) has conducted much research on terrorism and offers findings through their Global Terrorism Database (GTD), newsletter, and course offerings, such as their 8-week long massive online open course (MOOC) entitled “Understanding Terrorism and the Terrorist Threat”.³⁶ This presents theoretical knowledge to engender practical change globally, and it has reached 19,000 students across 180 countries (Taylor, 2015). Currently, START offers a grant that encourages curriculum development for ages 3-18, undergraduate, graduate and professional development education related to counter-terrorism, thereby including education for CVE. Much of it is still in development but there is the potential for this type of applicable resource from the consortium in the near future.

The RecoRa Institute was created within a European Funded Project to examine the issue of violent extremism from the perspective of front-line workers and community activists. It offers master classes and two-day programmes integrating perspectives drawn from the following RecoRa modules: Violent extremism in the name of Christianity; Searching for the Radical – research and practice in identifying early warning signs of violence; Safeguarding children and young people; Designing and assessing interventions for commis-

35 See www.ing.org for more details.

36 The MOOC “Understanding Terrorism and the Terrorist Threat”, from The University of Maryland's National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) can be found at <https://www.coursera.org/course/understandingterrorism>.

sioners; Safeguarding against violence for schools; Mentoring skills for responding to radicalisation, among others. It also offers specialist courses for workers and mentors who are engaged in confronting groups or individuals who promote or are vulnerable to support extremist ideology.

The 9/11 Tribute Center aims to commemorate those who died at the New York City World Trade Center in 2001 and the public service workers who died in saving them. In doing so, the Center offers resources to help the general public understand the existence of terrorism today, and primary sources and a classroom toolkit that can be used by educators teaching about the 9/11 attacks.³⁷

3.3.3 ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE

Government based

In 2015, Erasmus+, the European Commission's programme for Education, Training, Youth, and Sport for 2014-2020, made a specific commitment to target radicalisation (European Commission, 2015a). The Commission has budgeted 10 million Euros to fund programmes to counter extremism through education and youth action across Europe. Through this funding, a training course in Serbia is preparing participants for youth inclusion, social cohesion and entrepreneurship. Across several European countries, the Team Up for NEETs programme addresses youth employment specifically by working with young Europeans who are not in education, employment or training (NEETS). In a response to the fear and racism that arose with the arrival of refugees in 2015, Erasmus+ also supports programmes that have been initiated by higher education institutions. Two examples include the development of more modules and programmes on cultural diversity, global citizenship and peace education at UHasselt, in the Netherlands, and the training of teachers to adopt inclusive practices when working with young refugees and migrants at Ludwigsburg University of Education, Germany (European Commission, 2015b). Many more projects will continue to be funded in the next five years.

The US Department of Defense Education Activity's (DoDEA) Office of Safety and Security (OSS) has a Student Anti-terrorism Awareness website sharing tips specifically for DoDEA students who attend DoDEA schools. DoDEA's schools serve the children of military service members and Department of Defense (DoD) civilian employees throughout the world, including those who reside in the US. Students attending DoDEA schools are given an anti-terrorism response/awareness lesson at least once a year, although no details about this lesson is posted online. The purpose of the website content is to test and maintain students' knowledge of “how to stay secure and recognise danger signs.” It states: “On this site, you'll find cool stuff to help you stay

37 See <http://tributewtc.org/education/resources/classroom-toolkit> and <http://tributewtc.org/education/resources/primary-sources-research/understanding-terrorism>.

alert and ruin a terrorist's day!"³⁸ Resources include videos for elementary to high school students, personal security activities for home and travel, online games to test their knowledge (such as games called "The basics of 'blending in'", and "Shiver me timbers! Strangers dead ahead"), and extra credit resources (such as content grouped by themes of cyber security, personal security and protective actions and anti-terrorism). The educational content is prepared for any American student living in the US or abroad who attends schools specifically set aside for children whose parents serve in the American military or DoD.

The approach of the content is problematic at the elementary school level, as it seems to project a binary us-versus-them perspective. Terrorists are portrayed very broadly to include any "bad people" and bullies. Although the video is titled "Anti-terrorism Awareness Training" the video shares very general knowledge suitable for any individual who is travelling or living abroad for short periods of time. As a result, it projects an image that US military families and DoDEA schools are potentially under constant threat. The video for the secondary school is much more specific and introduces students to terrorists as any person who uses violence or the threat of violence to project their view, discusses why it is important for teens to be familiar with violent extremism and terrorism, and it shares an overview of violent extremist and terrorist tactics and deployment strategies, and actions to take in case students are ever kidnapped or taken hostage. This video for secondary students is more comprehensive, direct, and specific for CVE efforts but should be offered to all American students whether they are from military families or not.

Since 1994, the Office of Transitions Initiatives (OTI), which is part of USAID, actively operates in various parts of the world including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Syria, and many other conflict-affected areas and promotes peace and democracy through its innovative programmes (OTI, 2015). The organisation also provides recreational activities and vocational training to local young people to reduce the possibilities of militants recruiting the young people into their radical groups (Mirahmadi et al., 2015).

The Belgian programme Strengthening Resilience Against Violent Radicalisation (STRESAVIORA) is co-ordinated by the Belgian Ministry of the Interior. It aims to contribute to the prevention of violent radicalisation through the development of training modules, and to build resilience amongst vulnerable young people in the European Union. Participants are invited to attend a European conference called BOUNCE, aimed also at frontline workers and parents, which showcases the training modules and provides skills to help them build the resilience of young people against radicalisation. It also provides educational courses to promote social cohesion, intercultural communication, interreligious

understanding, religious literacy, human rights education and multicultural or intercultural education that counter radicalisation and extremism (Euer, et al., 2014).

Non-government based

Arigatou International is a "global, faith-based NGO committed to building a better world for children". Rooted in the three initiatives of its Global Network for Religions for Children (GNRC),³⁹ Ethics Education, Prayer and Action, and End Child Poverty, the organisation has worked with numerous groups worldwide to complete countless success stories. Each project has encouraged children to respect diversity and work with one another as well as acknowledge the inherent capabilities and value of all children and peoples, such as the Massa-Massar programme created to encourage dialogue between Jewish and Palestinian youth.⁴⁰

The United Religions Initiative (URI) was created in 1995 to gather religious leaders to solve global concerns similar to the gathering of nations in the United Nations. Through initiatives with young people and women, it "promote[s] enduring, daily interfaith co-operation to end religiously motivated violence and to create cultures of peace, justice and healing for the earth and all living beings."⁴¹ With young people, they offer several annual programmes such as the Youth Leaders Programme that welcomes young people to participate in interfaith dialogue and foster the skills needed to design and develop projects relevant to URI goals, and the Youth and Radicalisation and Integration Seminar. This latter project invited 100 Somali young men from the UK, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland to play football and receive peace training in Helsinki in April 2015 (Rautionmaa, 2015).

Face to Faith (F2F) is an international programme from the Tony Blair Faith Foundation that offers students the opportunity to meet other students of differing faiths and contexts online. As a resource available for all secondary school teachers globally, it promotes dialogue and helps prevent religious conflict and extremism. Through online forums, blogs, and videoconferencing, teachers support students in asking one another questions about their religion, as well as considering social justice concerns such as women's day, peace day, and wealth, poverty, and charity in the online community. The *Essentials of Dialogue*⁴² resource pack provides teachers with an adaptable set of resources that can be used to develop a range of critical skills for young people.

39 GNRC is a vast network with GNRC teams worldwide. To read about specific teams and projects, see <https://gnrc.net/en/>.

40 The Massa-Massar programme, and many other valuable non-formal programmes used in school settings, such as the Learning to Live Together (LTLT) Programme, can be reviewed here: <https://ethicseducationforchildren.org/en/knowledge-center/documents/65>.

41 Background information about URI can be found here: [http://www.uri.org/files/resource_files/URI%20for%20College%20Students%20\(Update\).pdf](http://www.uri.org/files/resource_files/URI%20for%20College%20Students%20(Update).pdf).

42 <http://tonyblairfaithfoundation.org/projects/supporting-next-generation/supporting-next-generation-essentials-dialogue-0>.

38 For a list of the supplementary resources see <http://www.dodea.edu/Offices/Safety/antiterrorism.cfm>.

Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC) is an American organisation run by Eboo Patel, an advisory counsellor to US President Obama on faith-based neighbourhood partnerships. IFYC is an initiative that mobilises and targets American college students to engage in interfaith discussions and be leaders in promoting interfaith dialogue. Annual sessions at Interfaith Leadership Institutes (ILIs) are held, similar to conferences, which “equip undergraduate students, staff and faculty with the skills to engage diverse religious and non-religious identities to build the interfaith movement on their campuses.”⁴³

Established in 1997, Bargad is an organisation led and founded by young people working for youth development in Pakistan with more than 1,000 volunteers over 54 universities (Ahmed, 2011). In 2012, their joint programme with the USIP, “Tackling Youth Extremism in Pakistan”, provided young people with training, media design, and skills to create hubs against extremism and intolerance across universities. As a result, Bargad has mobilised students against the radicalisation of young people through seminars on “Engaging Elected Officials in Youth Campaigns” and “Tackling Youth Extremism” (Moore, 2012).

Since 2011, Eastleighwood Youth Forum, a non-profit organisation, has helped young people in the Eastleighwood neighbourhood of Kenya, often referred to as ‘Little Mogadishu’ since it is a predominantly Somali neighbourhood, find constructive outlets for their abilities (Sperber, 2015). The Forum runs youth-centred programmes intended to support young people, who lack education and employment opportunities, promote peace through talent-development, media production, arts, sports and culture. As of February 2014, the organisation was able to support and reach at least 200 young people every month free of charge through these non-formal educational programmes (Eastleighwood Youth Forum, n.d.).

Also at the end of every month, the Forum hosts a ‘Peace Forum’ to encourage undereducated, unemployed and apathetic young people abstain from petty crimes that could lead them to pick up work for al-Shabaab. The Peace Forums involve discussions with young people about terrorist activities and radicalisation in the hope of countering the rapid increase in the radicalisation of young people in the Horn of Africa, particularly in Kenya and Somalia. An average of 400 young people attend each Peace Forum (Sperber, 2015).

Given the sheer number of participants in the Eastleighwood Youth Forum since its establishment, the wide array of programmes and activities, and the multiple ways in which they engage young people, it is clear that the Forum has been fairly successful. As most trainers come from universities and colleges, many have faced death threats by al-Shabaab because of their counter-extremism work (Eastleighwood

Youth Forum, n.d.; Sperber, 2015).

A Nigerian non-profit, the Peace Initiative Network (PIN), inaugurated the Peace Club project on May 27, 2006, Children’s Day in Nigeria. It aims to promote tolerance, dialogue and understanding through peace education and team sports between young people from diverse communities and backgrounds in northern Nigeria, including Muslims, Christians, indigenous and settlers. As of 2013, the Club had over 8,000 members from 60 high schools and colleges across Kano, Kaduna, Plateau, and Gombe, the four northern Nigerian states. The Peace Club has been designed to: “1) promote interaction between young [girls and boys] from disparate backgrounds to ease ethno-religious tensions; 2) strengthen a peaceful society in Nigeria; and 3) help members develop leadership, collaborative problem solving, and cross-cultural relationship-building skills” (Sodipo, 2013, p. 4). These goals are all the more important considering most schools in Kano are separated by gender and ethnicity.

USIP’s Global Peacebuilding Center aims to reach young people and educators through multimedia exhibits and activities, educational programmes and online resources. The Peacebuilding Toolkit for Educators is a resource for middle school and high school levels and is organised in three themes in international conflict management: conflict is an inherent part of the human condition; violent conflict can be prevented; and that there are many ways to be a peace builder. The toolkits are available in English, Spanish, French and Arabic.⁴⁴ A concern about the toolkit is that it is too Western-centric in its approach to student engagement. It is more appropriate for Western educators who have easier access to certain technological resources, like computers.

The UK Strategy to Reach, Empower and Educate Teenagers (STREET) programme was launched in 2006. Run by members of the Muslim community in South London, the programme helps at-risk young people to get diverted from antisocial behaviour and move toward more productive and positive lives through a ‘holistic approach’. The programme has attracted great attention from the media, academia and government organisations for its successful work with young people at risk of jihadi radicalisation and mentoring convicted individuals under the UK terrorism legislation. However, STREET has been criticised for spending a lot of the government’s money and despite their claim of being successful, the effectiveness of its work is not well documented (Casiani, 2011).

COEXIST is an international programme that approaches students, teachers and community members and “works in communities with a history of conflict to repair the divides caused by prejudice, hate and violence. By creating opportunities for people to work and learn together, we help build

43 See <http://www.ifyc.org/leadership-institutes> for more details on IFYC.

44 The Peacebuilding Toolkit for Educators can be referenced here <http://www.buildingpeace.org/train-resources/educators/peacebuilding-toolkit-educators>.

relationships, knowledge and a common purpose to advance coexistence.” It has five programmes of: Global Citizenship Education, Collaborative Action, Sites of Coexistence, Amplifying Voices, and Schools Across Divides. The last programme is powerful as it gathers students in conflict areas to build understanding, such as the Abayudaya Schools in Uganda that enrolls Christian, Muslim and Jewish students in an area of religious conflict. The organisation has several ad-hoc and on-going projects but it is unfortunate that the impacts of the projects are not clearly articulated or documented in detail for the public to see. Based on the organisation’s reach, we can only speculate its rate of success despite its relevance.

BOX 15 AN EXAMPLE OF INFORMAL EDUCATION

Globally, several examples of informal education for countering violent extremism exist that use media and social networks. This is an example:

Salam Shabab (Peace Youth) is an Iraqi reality TV show created to empower Iraqi youth. It has been awarded the UNESCO Prize for Intercultural Dialogue at the children’s programming competition, Prix Jeunesse, in March of 2012.⁴⁵ With 140 Iraqi youth participating in peace building competitions to become Iraq’s “Ambassadors of Peace”, a USIP (2011) report found that the programme not only addressed the desires for local young people to be heard by political and civil leaders, but it guided the young people to realise that their hopes for a unified nation and community was possible through their own means. This girl shared her feelings after participating in the show:

I now know I have the power to create change. I have my own style. I am good with speeches and good at talking. But now I will seek more information and find out the truth before going into a discussion. I will have evidence before talking with my brother. (Girl, 16, Baghdad; USIP, 2011, p. 1)

Although more recent videos are not posted, we hope this programme has continued for the Iraqi youth.⁴⁶

3.3.4 ENGAGING EDUCATORS

Government based

Kazakhstan’s national Counter-Terrorism and Anti-Extremism Strategy has an approach for religious educators, which began in 2013 and will continue into 2017. It aims to educate the community through various means, such as embedding information about the dangers of religious extremism on

45 See <http://www.usip.org/programmes/projects/salam-shabab-peace-media-iraqi-youth>.

46 Videos can be seen with English subtitles at <http://salamshabab.com/videos/?playlist=13>.

utility bills in Atyrau, and publicising videos of former terrorists expressing remorse for their terrorist acts (McDermott, 2013). It plans to implement the professionalisation of religious educators as many citizens are lured towards ISIS through websites and imams in unregulated mosques, or after studying at Salafi institutions abroad (Zenn, 2014a). Others moved to Syria and Iraq to seek a new life in a “pure Islamic State,” void of Kazakhstan’s economic struggles. Several hundred have joined ISIS (Zenn, 2014a). Despite the specificity of this strategy, there is limited information detailing its current implementation or successes.

The Global Counter-terrorism Forum (GCTF)⁴⁷ is co-chaired by Turkey and the United States and includes several working groups such as Countering Violent Extremism (United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom). GCTF organises expert workshops, training sessions and activities with a focus of the role of education in CVE.

The National Foundation for Educational Research (NERF) in England and Wales conducted a literature review of ten case studies and proposed a list of fundamental components for preventing religious extremism. NERF argues for the need to “make a connection through good design and a young-person centred approach; facilitate a safe space for dialogue and positive interaction; and equip young people with appropriate capabilities – skills, knowledge, understanding and awareness.”⁴⁸ In 2008, the UK Department for Children, Schools and Families produced ‘Learning together to be safe: A toolkit to help schools contribute to the prevention of violent extremism’ aiming to provide practical advice on preventing violent religious extremism especially in the education context.⁴⁹ In 2010, the same institution published ‘Religious Education in English Schools: Non-Statutory guidance 2010’ to provide clear and non-statutory guidance about religious education in the curriculum, and the roles of those who have a responsibility for, or involvement or interest in, the related subject.⁵⁰ In 2011, the UK Department for Education produced the Research Report DFE-RR119 titled ‘Teaching Approaches that Help to Build Resilience to Extremism Among Young People’.⁵¹ In January 2016, the Department for Education launched an online resource for teachers, school leaders and parents, titled ‘Educating against hate’ to help them protect children from the dangers of extremism.

47 See <https://www.thegctf.org/web/guest>.

48 See <https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/OPXZ02/OPXZ02.pdf>.

49 See http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/8396/1/DCSF-Learning%20Together_bkmk.pdf.

50 See https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190260/DCSF-00114-2010.pdf.

51 See https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/182675/DFE-RR119.pdf.

Non-government based

USIP's Religion and Peacebuilding Center offers many programmes for peace education globally:

- In Pakistan: an Urdu textbook on peace studies based on Islamic principles that can be used in religious and secular schools.
- In Pakistan: mediation training for senior and mid-level Sufi leaders.
- In Iraq: conferences and workshops for imams on religious peace building.
- In Myanmar: Buddhist peace education and training, in collaboration with the local religious leaders and institutions.
- In Nigeria: the Center has been conducting a study to evaluate the introduction of vocational and peace education in state Quranic schools.

The Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI) houses the Wachman Center which has resources for teachers, students, and the general public towards improving international and civic literacy. The FPRI's Butcher History Institute within the Wachman Center strives to achieve these goals by teaching history education during weekend conferences. As a resource for indirect materials to counter violent extremism, the Institute also includes a Center on Terrorism and Counter-terrorism, which is currently preparing curriculum resources for teachers on Islam and terrorism.

Founded in 1997, Interfaith Centre New York (ICNY) is an NGO affiliated to the United Nations Department of Public Information (UN/DPI). It works with local religious leaders, judges, teachers, social workers, and grassroots organisations to promote the understanding of religious diversity in New York State. It also hosts an annual workshop that welcomes teachers across the US to the ICNY office in New York city where they are trained and engaged in interfaith dialogue and trips to various religious sites. Locally, ICNY works with teachers in New York city to prepare programmes and resources for their students. These have included panel discussions with local religious leaders, visits to sacred sites, and ways to facilitate class discussions after such sessions. Overall, their on-going programmes suggest a very successful localised and long-term approach to CVE.

The American Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding and Teaching Tolerance offers a series of webinars on religious diversity, social justice and inclusive education, such as the inclusive education training offered by the Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding in 2012 in Afghanistan, Indonesia, and Nigeria.⁵² They consistently develop training to support teachers, employees in the workplace, and the greater public in order to promote

52 Available for reference at <https://tanenbaum.org/peacemakers-in-action-network/peacemaker-projects/2012-inclusive-education-trainings-in-afghanistan-indonesia-and-nigeria/>.

understanding of religious diversity. One such offering for educators is the "Religious Diversity in the Classroom" webinar series for elementary, middle school and high school teachers.⁵³ In addition, the Center began offering free resources on a monthly basis to counter religious extremism.⁵⁴

The Human Security Report Project (HSRP)⁵⁵ is an independent research centre affiliated with Simon Fraser University (SFU) in Vancouver, Canada. HSRP conducts research on global and regional trends in political violence and explores their causes and consequences. The findings of their research are then accessible to the policy and research communities, educators, and the media. The HSRP's research findings are published in the *Human Security Report*, the *Human Security Brief* series, and the *Human Security Gateway*. It also produces online data, research and news resources dealing with a broad range of global security issues.

The Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV)⁵⁶ at the University of St. Andrews in the UK was founded in 1994 and is Europe's oldest centre for the study of terrorism. CSTPV is actively involved in research projects and teaching work as the result of donation received from the Japanese philanthropist Dr Haruhisa Handa. The Handa Centre for the Study of Terrorism offers courses in terrorism and political violence at universities. At the University of Saint Andrews, Scotland, a postgraduate programme is offered to help students understand the latest ideas on terrorism. CSTPV also offers several e-learning programmes on theory and practice of counter-terrorism strategies and techniques.

3.3.5 ENGAGING POLICY MAKERS

The Centre of Excellence Defence Against Terrorism (COE-DAT) in Ankara, Turkey, is NATO-certified as of August 2006. COE-DAT has offered a variety of courses for international policy makers and academics around CVE efforts since 2005.⁵⁷ Some of the most recent courses include "Learn from Yesterday, Gain for Tomorrow: NATO's Counter-Terrorism Experience in Afghanistan" Workshop (2014), "NATO Strategic Communications: Counter Narrative Implications for Counter-Terrorism" Workshop (2014), and "Counter Radicalisation Capacity Building", a UN Sponsored Workshop (2013). Courses discuss extremist groups' use of the Internet, their recruitment practices, resilience training for communities and personnel, legality around CVE concerns, and the financial dimension of CVE.

53 See <https://tanenbaum.org/programmes/education/religious-diversity-in-the-classroom-webinar-series/>.

54 See the full list of resources since September 2015 at <https://tanenbaum.org/combat-extremism/>.

55 See <http://www.hsrgroup.org/about-hsrp/about-us.aspx>.

56 See <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/~wwwir/research/cstpv>.

57 See http://www.coedat.nato.int/conducted_activity.html for a full list of course offerings.

One COE-DAT course that has been reviewed and discussed is the COE-DAT IED (Improvised Explosive Device) course that was held in 2008. With an understanding of the process needed to prepare and detonate an IED, COE-DAT offers a IED Defeat Strategy with three areas of focus: “defeating the system, defeating the device, and providing good doctrine, education and training for all security forces and information for the general public” (Charvat, 2011, p. 49). This strategic focus confirms the need to educate all local populations in any matter related to extremism and highlights the fact that CVE requires a communal approach. Although it is only one review of COE-DAT’s course offerings, we can surmise that other courses have similar levels of rigour and understanding for the necessity of education in every sector of society for CVE to be successful.

3.3.6 ENGAGING THE RADICALISED: DE-RADICALISATION AND REHABILITATION

Some countries are focusing on deradicalisation and rehabilitation programmes. For example, Southeast Asia has very strong deradicalisation programmes in Singapore, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka that try to reintegrate people in society through education in both literacy and vocational skills. Yemen has one of the earliest programmes alongside Libya and Egypt, although the latter two are now non-operational (Hettiarachchi, 2013).

Germany

‘EXIT-Germany’ is a deradicalisation programme that aims to encourage young people to leave extremist groups and provides support for them online and offline. This outreach work helps individuals leave extreme movements using a campaign approach with events, music, advertising on clothing, and social media. EXIT has accumulated a vast amount of primary and secondary material on right-wing extremism in both German and English, and makes this archive available to the general public. A task force including former neo-Nazis and private companies working with social media add to maximising the reach to potentially radicalised young people. A very strong element in this programme is the use of former radicals to assist in the deradicalisation of others. Over 500 individual cases have been successfully rehabilitated with only three per cent rate of re-offence, since 2000.

‘EXIT-Germany’ organises workshops by former right-wing extremists in schools on topics such as music, groups, entry and exit processes. Students meet the former radicalised individuals and hear their stories. Teachers are trained and given special knowledge about ideologies and radicalisation processes. ‘EXIT-Germany’ focuses on the psychology of extremist ideologies and groups to establish effective preventive methods (EXIT-Germany, 2014).

The Violence Prevention Network in Germany works with

individuals in prisons convicted of violent crimes linked to extremism. It encourages these individuals to follow a new pathway, away from extremism and religious radicalisation. What makes this 23-week programme unique is the combination of social work with civic education in order to deconstruct the anger that drives the radicalised and to re-educate them to a democratic way of life. It is essential to address the anger in the radicalised first before gradually demolishing the ideology and introducing civic values through education so as not to leave a vacuum in terms of a meaning in their lives or self-worth. Gaining trust is important. Programme workers take the individuals and their ideas seriously. This programme suggests democratic alternatives to the prisoners’ needs in an attempt to redirect radical ideologies, serving to ‘re-educate’ them. The Violence Prevention Network works with families and social networks to prepare for the social rehabilitation of the individual; however, they note that this is the ‘most challenging aspect’ of the programme. The role of mentors in preventing recruitment and supporting those who are attracted to extremist ideologies is seen as central to the project of countering radicalisation. Therefore, training of mentors is a significant aspect of this programme. Maintaining continuity and stability with the same person, inside and outside of prison, builds a solid and trusting relationship for deradicalisation (Buck and Tuck, n.d.).

Pakistan

Currently six main deradicalisation centres are operating successfully in Mishal, Sabaoon, Sparley, Rastoon, Pythom and Heila (Khan Selina Adam, 2015). Many of them were established by Pakistan’s military after operations against the Taliban (Mirahmadi et al, 2015). In the following section two of them are briefly introduced.

The Mishal Rehabilitation Centre, an army-run rehabilitation centre in Swat, Pakistan, has been helping young jihadis to rectify their misguided ideologies and is teaching them vocational skills. The Centre aims to help the radicalised young people return to their families and be productive members of society (Rana, 2011; Temple-Raston, 2013). The deradicalisation rate of the jihadi youths who attended the centre has been so high that a total of 1,189 former jihadi militants out of 1,196 have been successfully rehabilitated since the launch of the centre since its establishment in 2009 (“Rehabilitation programme: Mishal,” 2013).

Since its establishment in 2009, the Sabaoon Rehabilitation Centre in Swat, Pakistan, has been offering a deradicalisation programme for radicalised young people aged 12-18 to rehabilitate them through various educational programmes including lectures, psychological counselling, knowledge enhancement, ethics and vocational training. The result of these programmes has been very encouraging, as many youngsters who were subjected to Taliban indoctrination and recruitment have been successfully reintegrated into healthy and mainstream life (Rafi, 2015; Leghari, 2013;

Rana, 2011; Peracha et al, 2015). The team consists of psychologists, social workers and military advisers who have so far re-educated 188 young ex-Taliban boy soldiers, and the results have been very optimistic (Coughlin, 2012; Horgan, 2013; McCarthy, 2011). According to eyewitnesses, the Mishal and Sabaoon centres have significantly contributed to CVE in Pakistan (Abbot, 2011; Temple-Raston, 2013).

BOX 16 MUSLIM GROUPS OFFERING A COUNTER-NARRATIVE TO EXTREMIST INTERPRETATIONS OF THE QURAN AND TERRORISM

Various sources of informal and non-formal education that promote extremist ideology are available online and in-person. While our review does not focus specifically on informal education through websites, Twitter, YouTube and other platforms, we recognise that informal education is a massive source of information for many who are self-radicalising at home (Wu, 2008). This is particularly alarming as extremist groups have strategically shifted their recruitment tactics to include the use of social media networks and because approximately 90 per cent of extremist activities are being carried out through social media (Weimann, 2014). ISIS has used an estimated 46,000 Twitter accounts alone (Casciani, 2015). As a counter-narrative, many Muslim group initiatives present their opposition to violent extremist ideology by articulating their interpretation of teachings from the Quran and the Hadith. Examples include:

Online forums and websites by Muslims and non-Muslims to debate interpretations of Islam today, as a counter-narrative to radical ideology – such as the website New Age Islam, a global community posting articles by journalists and online community members,⁵⁸ and the social media strategy initiated by Jordanian e-Muftis (state-appointed Islamic scholars who interprets Islamic teachings for daily life and responds to inquiries from other Muslims through electronic means) who are using Twitter, Facebook and websites to attack ISIS.⁵⁹

The Global Muslim Women’s Shura Council’s ‘Jihad against violence’ project states that all forms of violence are connected and focus specifically on domestic violence and violent extremism. Their online campaign aims to dispel the support of violence by those who claim to be Muslims. As a group consisting of international scholars, activists and specialists, the Council has published several resources and handouts for the general public.⁶⁰

Since, 1985, the An-Nisa Society, has been promoting a positive British Muslim identity by offering training, workshops to raise awareness against Islamophobia, and speaking against

58 See <http://www.newageislam.com/NewAgeIslamAboutEditor.aspx>.

59 The e-Muftis have a broad approach in their electronic strategy. Details and links to their digital outlets can be found here: <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-32697424>.

60 Visit these sites for details: [http://www.wisemuslimwomen.org/pdfs/Jihad_against_Violence_Digest_\(ASMA\).pdf](http://www.wisemuslimwomen.org/pdfs/Jihad_against_Violence_Digest_(ASMA).pdf); http://www.wisemuslimwomen.org/pdfs/Violent_Extremism_Handout.pdf.

forced marriage, teenage pregnancies and antiterrorism.⁶¹ The programme Stop the CRISIS is run by Ahmadiyya Muslim students across Canadian university campuses. Although it is not clearly articulated in their approach, it appears they hope to counteract the campus recruitment efforts of ISIS by presenting their conception of Islamic teachings for Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

3.4 EVALUATION

A major problem is the lack of programme evaluations that would indicate the success of educational programmes and could identify effective practices. Unfortunately, even the programmes for tackling radicalisation that exist are not adequately evaluated. Biglan (2015) identifies two studies that assess programmes on radicalisation. One of a few studies to assess what interventions work best in relation to tackling extremism, particularly extremism in the name of religion is a study done in the UK in 2010 by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG). Looking at community interventions the review found that the two most successful interventions with young people were “capacity building or empowering young people” and interventions which “challenged ideology that focused on theology and used education or training” (Pratchett et al, 2010, p.21). Education and training in theology was also found to be successful in preventing religious violent extremism for Muslim women, although interventions that allowed women to debate and discuss theological issues were more successful.

3.5 CONCLUSION

While CVE programmes in formal education are developing in various countries in response to increasing threats from violent Islamist extremism, CVE is more common globally in non-formal than in formal educational settings. This is problematic because non-formal programmes do not systematically reach all individuals, as would formal educational programmes. Nevertheless, they do reach a greater breadth of communities, young people and adults alike, and community engagement is important to promote empowerment and CVE education (Sinke, 2015). They also reach women and can help to build their confidence and understanding of CVE which is vital, as, “(g)iven women’s central role in families and in communities, they are uniquely positioned to intervene in the radicalisation of their children since they are most likely to spot changes in their children’s behaviour, but may not have the confidence or access to police [in order] to share these concerns” (Mirahmadi, 2014, p.3). This is especially important in places where women do not have easy access to education, or only to religious education which can be dangerous because they can be manipulated to become radicalised and pass their values on to their children. This approach is recognised by the White House, which claimed in

61 Visit their website for more information: <http://www.fbrn.org.uk/project%20profiles/nisa-society>.

2011 that, “the best defences against violent extremist ideologies are well-informed and equipped families, local communities, and local institutions” (Sinke, 2015, p. 2).

Some countries put greater focus on deradicalisation and rehabilitation, which is a reactive approach compared to educational programmes that aim at early intervention to prevent the development of extremist ideas. By understanding and preventing the first phase of intolerance and rejection of the views of others, education may minimise societal and economic expenditure on hard power CVE efforts overall.

A difficulty that arises is that CVE programmes have not been empirically reviewed for their effectiveness. Given varying degrees of economic and educational levels at the global level, and that ideologies and contexts differ even among neighbouring countries, let alone open and closed systems of education, best practices cannot be easily identified. However, comparative studies can bring unique perspectives and contribute to a greater understanding of the role and function of CVE programmes in education.

Findings and Recommendations

Throughout history all religions have had fundamentalist and extremist practices. In the contemporary world, religious extremism is a growing concern as it becomes increasingly violent even amongst groups that have been relatively peaceful in the past. Despite the prevalence of religious extremism across various religious groups, the principal focus in this review has been on Islamist extremism based on Salafi and Wahhabi Islam, since this has become a worldwide security threat.

The response of governments to this violence has focused on hard power military intervention and surveillance of the tactical and operational aspects of extremism and terrorism rather than soft power responses to their ideological aspects (Ramli, 2011). Not only is hard power reactive and costly, but also it is less effective in preventing ideological radicalisation, as it does not address abstract ideas. Moreover, this hard power has not been effective in limiting the violence. The increasing surveillance measures not only curb the rights of citizens but can have unintended consequences, sometimes actually pushing people into extremism, even if they are not initially attracted by religious ideology (“Australia’s Jihadis”, 2015; Samuel, 2012).

Extremist organisations increasingly attract individuals through emotionally appealing narratives and ideas that trigger their sympathy and sense of responsibility. This is the use of soft power. Although there is no single factor that pushes people towards extremism and radicalisation, this transformation in belief systems could take place either through self-radicalisation, via exposure to jihadi discourse online, or from peer groups and recruitment by foreign or domestic operatives through regional or global extremist organisations (Wu, 2008). Social institutions, like education, have not been supported to effectively foster resilience in young people to thwart the pull of enticing extremist narratives. Since universal education implies that all young people spend approximately 16 years of their lives in schools, education is an obvious tool with which to develop resilience on the one hand and offer a counter-narrative on the other.

4.1 MAJOR FINDINGS

4.1.1 CVE MUST BE A COMPREHENSIVE EFFORT

Internationally, formal and non-formal programmes are recognising the power and need for a concerted effort in countering violent extremism. While most CVE programmes focus on education specifically in school, community or government groups, some comprehensive programmes attempt to educate several groups in society (for example, the Canadian Terrorism Prevention programme and the Australian ‘Living Safe Together: Building community resilience to violent extremism’ website). In doing so, governments (for example, the UK government through the Prevent Strategy) and organisations (for example, COEXIST) are seeing an increasing need for dialogue, a common sense of awareness, and a unified narrative so that the pervasive threat of extremism can be countered comprehensively.

4.1.2 YOUNG PEOPLE ARE THE PRIME TARGET OF EXTREMIST RECRUITERS

Young people have been targeted by extremist groups specifically (for example ‘lion cubs’ of ISIS⁶²), not only because they are vulnerable, but also because they form a significant portion of the world’s population and there is a need to ensure the succession of the next generation of extremists. Since this group spends a large part of their time in educational institutions, many CVE programmes also focus on educating this population in particular. However, young people are not a homogenous group and they have a diverse range of needs and interests. As they move from childhood to adulthood they experience various psychosocial, emotional and identity issues and concerns (Tien, 2011). Thus, some young people who feel insecure are more easily manipulated by the enticing appeal of the imagined and ‘better’ community that extremists portray.

The growth of grievances has led to the present situation

⁶² See Chapter 2 for details on the ‘lion cubs’ of ISIS.

where young people are joining extremist organisations to defend those whom they deem to be victims of injustice. They are responding to the question: “Who is defending Muslims from injustice?” The extremist response to perceived or real global injustice against Muslims worldwide, and on occasion domestic injustices, is violence and terrorism. To prevent young people from being attracted to such imagery, education is beginning to and must offer a counter-narrative that invites young people to consider another type of imagined community, and provide quality education to foster resilient citizens. This is an objective of the current Swedish programme.

Other factors for targeting young people range from vulnerabilities due to identification with transnational religious ideology, to a perception of an urgent need to fight the West in order to have an Islamic caliphate, or personal reasons. For some, loneliness, the search for an identity and meaning in life can lead to escape through a fantasy world. This spurs them to look for adventure and in their naivety they tend to create romantic ideas about a new world order, or even a beautiful afterlife. This is done through a process of transformation in belief systems along the staircase from fundamentalism to extremism/violent extremism, to radicalism, and terrorism (Moghaddam, 2005). Push and pull factors at individual and societal levels, ultimately lead to a profound change in ideology of an ‘us versus them’ binary and a sense of moral superiority. This demonises those who are not ‘us’ and enables an average young person to accept with ease the need to indiscriminately kill civilians in order to achieve their ends.

4.1.3 EDUCATION IS A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD USED BY BOTH EXTREMISTS AND FOR CVE

As Chapter 2 indicates, extremists use formal and non-formal education very effectively to spread their ideologies, recruit new members and keep their members loyal and subservient. However, as is evident from Chapter 3, formal and non-formal education is also used to counter these violent extremist ideologies. Based on our review, education that promotes violent extremism focuses on propagating exclusivist ideologies, extreme religious views and the use of violent responses. On the other hand, education to counter violent extremism is centred on the values of tolerance, respect, human rights, engaged citizenship, and the fostering of skills for critical thinking.

For example, ISIS’s educational system is designed to coerce and indoctrinate students to their extremist ideology through military training and rote learning of religious scripture, which does not allow or equip students to critique received information. The UK’s Prevent Strategy, on the other hand, intentionally aims to prepare students to critique extremist ideologies.

Thus, education is seen as a powerful tool to promote ide-

ologies and values from both extremist and CVE perspectives.

4.1.4 THE METHOD OF RECRUITMENT IS DICTATED BY AN INDIVIDUALS’ LEVEL OF EDUCATION

In regions with limited access to education, due, for instance, to widespread poverty, recruitment tends to be a product of rote learning and indoctrination through the control of education by extremists. Poverty makes people vulnerable and easy recruits for free schooling and funding (such as that which is offered by the radical madrassas in Pakistan and Afghanistan), where students are taught to unquestioningly accept extremist ideologies. When individuals’ basic needs are not met they can easily fall prey to narratives that offer a better life and a glorious afterlife. Furthermore, when there is a lack of education, CVE programmes cannot be effectively developed as extremist narratives skilfully use religion and moral justification to validate their ideologies.

In countries where access to education is universal, extremists reach out to the emotions of young people by “appealing directly to the spiritual, intellectual and emotional spheres... [which wins] their hearts and minds through engaging and inspiring narratives” (Samuel, 2012, p. 5). They develop grievance narratives that play on perceptions of more subtle forms of inequality that the educated are more able to comprehend. They also thrive on a lack of critical thinking and analysis. Hence, while universal education is important, the quality of education is crucial as summarised in the following points.

4.1.5 EDUCATION IN GENERAL WILL NOT PREVENT EXTREMISM

As discussed in Chapter 1, training and education are very different. Training involves knowledge and understanding but not necessarily values of critical citizenship such as respect for diversity. As such, the varying levels of schooling among extremist leaders and operatives have proved to be ineffective in deterring them from adopting extremist ideologies, most likely due to their lack of critical thinking and internalisation of the contents of citizenship education and ethical values education.

According to Jackson (2014), knowledge and understanding are necessary but not sufficient conditions for genuinely removing prejudice. Even religious education that sets out only to promote tolerance and social cohesion is inadequate since it assumes that understanding and knowledge necessarily foster tolerance. Respect for the other is an important value in a diverse society. Education that includes knowledge of the other involves a moral and ethical position and is not merely a cognitive function. The opportunity to question and challenge through dialogue, and to relate learning to lived experiences, are essential for

developing empathy. This form of education, along with the promotion of a counter-narrative, can prepare students to develop the ability to critique extremist ideologies and refrain from succumbing to its sway. Training alone fails to do this.

4.1.6 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES BOTH DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY IMPACT CVE

We have found that education is used to develop resilience in citizens through critical citizenship and ethical values, resulting in social cohesion, and civic and economic well-being at the individual and societal levels. These programmes help to counter violent extremism by developing intercultural skills for harmonious living and peaceful societies. While there are several interpretations of multiculturalism, they all generally attempt to develop an appreciation and respect for differences amongst people and their cultures, ethnicity, religions, gender and sexual orientation, class and other markers. Courses on Peace Education focus on causes of inequities and means of resolving conflicts, while Human Rights courses look at legal provisions at the global and local levels that provide people with rights and duties. Citizenship education aims at developing critical, active citizens who are caring and responsible and work together towards a peaceful life at the local, national and global levels. These and several other courses have been advancing a global narrative that promotes peaceful ways to create a just society. If taught through dialogue and critical education these programmes may be considered a means to counter violent extremism.

There are very few programmes that directly address CVE through education. These are limited to the UK and a few Northern European countries. The European Action Plan has a detailed recommendation for addressing the issue of violent extremism through education.

The research on CVE indicates that a few CVE programmes are attempting to raise awareness about the devastating impact of violence at the individual and societal levels. This is done through showing the questions associated with the narratives of imagined communities that the extremist groups propagate (for example, the narratives from ‘extremedialogue.org’, see footnote 29). Thus, education not only has a role in offering a narrative about extremism, but also a role in posing a counter-narrative to extremist ideology.

4.1.7 THERE ARE MORE NON-FORMAL THAN FORMAL PROGRAMMES IN EDUCATION FOR CVE

Formal educational settings have incorporated CVE to varying degrees either directly through addressing extremism (for example, in the UK and some other European countries) or indirectly through values education and other courses (for example, in North America). Non-formal

educational programmes have proliferated across the globe and many of them have been successful in prevention, deradicalisation and rehabilitation. While non-formal programmes are an excellent means of raising awareness regarding violent extremism, the problem is that they do not systematically reach all individuals despite their general ability to reach adults at the community level. Formal educational CVE programmes as part of mandatory schooling would be the most efficient means to reach as many young people as possible.

4.1.8 OPEN SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION ARE MORE CONDUCTIVE TO CVE THAN CLOSED SYSTEMS

Open systems provide space for engaging students and challenging violent extremism whereas closed systems of education alienate and indoctrinate students. Evident from our discussion, systems of education differ to the extent to which they are open or closed. This is directly related to the degree of social integration - inclusion and exclusion of religions and cultural groups; school and classroom environment which are democratic (open) or rigid and hierarchical (closed); and methods of teaching (student-centred versus teacher-centred). For example, Singapore’s citizenship programme has much potential but is less effective because there is little opportunity for engagement and dialogue in the classroom about social and political issues as it focuses on maintaining societal harmony (Tan, 2007).

Religion versus secularism

Educational institutions that teach mostly the texts of one religion or content sifted through a particular religious ideology are part of a closed system. That is because other perspectives are not even considered. That does not mean that all secular systems are open. As shown through various examples in Chapters 2 and 3, even secularism in social institutions can be closed. Secularism and religion are ways of seeing and conceptualising the world. As an ideology that requires separation of religion from the state (as well as other areas of public life) secularism does not necessarily mean exclusion of religion. Secularism could imply opposition to religion (closed system) but it could also mean neutrality towards religion (mostly open system).

As discussed in Chapter 2, the centuries-old deep diversity of the population in India, and the secularism declared at India’s Independence promote a pluralistic ideology implying equality of, and respect for all religions (open system). This does not alienate individuals or groups on the basis of religion. However as shown in Chapter 2, this diversity and ideology has not necessarily been seen in practice. On the other hand, in France, which derives its national identity from secularism or *laïcité*, the separation of the church and state is interpreted as oppositional to religion and all religious symbols (closed system). This has developed into opposition to immigrants in general, and the practices of

Islam as a religion in particular. As detailed in Chapter 3, despite France's deep *laïcité*, the recent announcement of the French plan to combat radicalisation and a series of measures including education to prevent recourse to violence is a positive, if flawed step in the right direction.

Thus, the consideration of teaching methods, curriculum, and the open or closed nature of an educational system must be studied in measuring the success of a CVE programme.

Pedagogical methods

In formal education, the construction of knowledge by students and the methods of teaching must not only be student-centred but also be relevant to students' life experiences. In certain global contexts, teaching methods, such as lecturing and rote learning that discourage student participation and critical thinking work against developing engaged citizens. That is why teaching morals and values, citizenship, human rights and multicultural education using ineffective pedagogical methods does not have the desired effect of promoting social inclusion and building resilience to extremism.

General education can inadvertently close minds if it is uncritical in nature and feeds into extremist thinking through rote learning methods. Education in most parts of the world is still imparted through what Freire (1970) called 'banking education' – a metaphor in which information is deposited into the minds of passive students. This reinforces a lack of critical thinking and inhibits the processing of content that is necessary for constructing knowledge and discovering its relevance to students' lived experiences. The literature in Chapter 3 highlights the importance of critical pedagogy and teacher training to ensure that specific forms of political education, critical media education, engaged and active citizenship education, and critical and comparative religious education are taught effectively and safely (Davies, 2008a, 2009). In terms of religious education, contemporary international situations will necessarily gear the purpose of such education towards political and security interests (Gearon, 2013).

For countering violent extremism the main tasks of educational institutions are summed up in the words of Davies (n.d.): "one, to give children a secure, but hybrid sense of identity, so that they are less likely to be drawn to 'membership' of single-identity, single-issue, ends-justify-the-means groups; two, to demonstrate and act out fair and non-violent ways of achieving justice; and three to give skills in critical appraisal, critical values and critical action" (p. 20).

4.1.9 WOMEN ARE KEY PLAYERS IN CVE

The awareness of the role of women in CVE is growing as

they are increasingly seen as key players in violent extremism when they indoctrinate their children and induce other women's groups towards extremist activity. This is particularly recognised in societies where women have limited access to education and are only offered religious education within the confines of their home. To address this specific concern, international groups such as WWB SAVE are actively engaging women in CVE. Hanan Ibrahim (2012) describes: "when a woman is educated, she is an informed mother and she can transmit her knowledge to her children. It is important to invest in women. They are the backbone of society" (WWB, 2012). As this shift in the key players in CVE progresses, Kristoff (2010) adds that girls' schools in particular are "just about the best long-term counter-terrorism investment available" (Mirahmadi, 2014, p. 4). While SAVE's many initiatives are leaders in working with women, as discussed in Chapter 3, a considerable number of organisations are beginning to engage the familial and communal role of women as well.

4.1.10 THERE ARE CHALLENGES IN IDENTIFYING BEST PRACTICES IN EDUCATION PROGRAMMES FOR CVE

Just as education cannot offer a meta-narrative for all contexts and countries, we cannot single out CVE programmes in education that could be considered the best models for all milieus. Differences exist between countries and within countries. Furthermore evaluating education-based prevention methods is difficult given imprecise data about their long-term effectiveness. It would be inappropriate to attempt to identify best practices as one size does not fit all. However, a select array of programmes stands out among the rest from our review. As novel or well-established programmes within their local contexts, we showcase them here for other communities to consider adapting based on their own societal dynamics.

Among the programmes we have seen worldwide, the UK and Sweden are among the first to create programmes explicitly for CVE, so they should be commended for their proactive approach to prevent radicalisation through education across so many grade levels. However, it should be noted that these programmes are still evolving which makes it difficult to diagnose their degree of success.

Many countries, however, have programmes that indirectly counter extremism through courses on values, civic and citizenship education, human rights education, and multicultural and multireligious education as in Canada, US, Australia, and the Netherlands. Among the most promising indirect programmes, the *Ethics and Religious Culture* (ERC) programme in public and private schools in Quebec, Canada, and the *Bijlmer* approach in the Netherlands may be seen as exemplars to consider. The ERC programme is avant-garde in its scope and subject matter focus. Preliminary findings indicate its effectiveness (Morris, 2011) but

being a fairly new programme it has not been adequately evaluated. The Bijlmer approach is innovative in building teacher and parent relationships in order to provide religious and/or worldview citizenship education for social cohesion. With a coherent focus on plurality, respect and tolerance across three schools, the programme has been highlighted on several occasions for its effectiveness and relevance to the school communities (Miedema, 2012). As the consistent dialogue is embedded into the approach in order to adapt to the changes of the community, the approach continues to develop and evolve. As such, the encompassing effectiveness of the programme has yet to be documented.

While formal educational settings have incorporated CVE to varying degrees, either directly through addressing extremism, or indirectly through values education and other courses, non-formal educational programmes have been successful in prevention, deradicalisation and rehabilitation. Several exemplary programmes exist but the three following programmes in particular offer encouraging approaches based on the interaction they have with those who are most affected, the structure of these initiatives, and the sustainability of the programmes.

The first programme to highlight is the WWB SAVE initiative that trains women in CVE efforts specifically. Through their Mothers Schools project, Witness of History project, and “Mothers MOVE!” campaign, the initiative engages women in localised workshops across Asia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East. They create new programmes that incorporate existing women groups within the communities they support. In doing so, women are educated and become informed mothers who can advise their children as well.

The second compelling initiative to showcase is the Eastleighwood Youth Forum in Kenya. The Forum focuses on offering constructive outlets for local young people, who lack educational and employment opportunities, harnessing and encouraging their talent-development through media production, arts, sports and culture for free. Their ability to sustain their regular programmes and Peace Forum that attract hundreds of young people, speaks to their success and commitment to young people, especially since workers continue to persist in their service despite receiving death threats from extremists. Their focus on addressing the push and pull factors towards extremism and radicalism is exemplary.

The third commendable initiative is that of the rehabilitation centres in Pakistan, especially the Mishal and Sabaon centres. These centres have been able to potently address local concerns and prepare deradicalised young people for re-entry into their immediate society. While over 1,000 young people have been deradicalised in Mishal, almost 200 have been deradicalised in Sabaon as well. Such deradicalisation programmes cannot be overlooked, as the

role of education is important at all levels of the staircase to terrorism.

4.1.11 SUMMARY

Despite the salient role of non-formal educational programmes in CVE, the need for more formal programmes should be emphasised. Formal educational programmes can learn from the community-based initiatives offered in non-formal education and incorporate aspects in their approaches so as to ensure the resiliency of all stakeholders within the community.

The search for ‘best practices’ in countering violent extremism through education has been daunting. Our analysis has shown that push and pull factors across the world differ for individuals based on regional commonalities and access to opportunities and resources people may have. CVE programmes in education cannot be characterised or understood by a single model. Since they reflect their varying locations in geographical, socio-economic, and political contexts, homogenisation cannot be effective. As each context is unique in its struggles for educational resources and power dynamics, we suggest decentralised, organic development of localised CVE educational programmes in formal and non-formal settings.

4.2 GAPS AND FUTURE PRIORITIES

While our review uncovered numerous progressive initiatives in countering violent extremism through education, we have also found that ideas have been omitted and certain objectives require further development.

4.2.1 EDUCATION SHOULD BE INCORPORATED AS A MEANS OF CVE

Evidently, while many countries have established CVE programmes in formal and non-formal educational settings, numerous countries and contexts have yet to consider education as a formal CVE tool. Additionally, educators, community members, and policy makers have shown scepticism and lack of understanding of the effectiveness of education with regard to national security issues.

As this review has shown education is an obvious tool to address extremist ideologies and offers a sustainable and effective response. It is not only cost-effective, but also long lasting, because it aims to develop critical thinking, values and an ethical consciousness which are at the core of the individual. Education is an important soft-power method to complement hard-power initiatives and undermine extremists and cut off their future recruitment base. Thus, education should be included as a means for CVE as a future priority in counter-extremism policies and national curricula.

4.2.2 MORE EMPHASIS SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE ROLE OF INFORMAL EDUCATION IN FAMILY, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL MEDIA SPACES

Informal educational opportunities abound in an individual's daily life. For young people, informal education comes through their family, community and social media in particular. Although the family and community members are heavily involved in many of the CVE initiatives we shared, we understand that educational programmes for CVE on the whole remain a small percentage of the CVE programmes that currently exist as most efforts use hard power. The programmes that do exist have shown the importance of incorporating the family and community in their approach, as in the case of the education provided by the Moroccan female religious leaders of the Mursheeda programme who traverse across public and private spaces to educate and support their community members. More policy work needs to be done to encourage healthy familial and communal relationships such as these. As we have discussed, countering violent extremism requires a holistic approach that includes the family and community.

An additional area that requires much further research is that of informal education via social media, especially among young people. Extremists increasingly rely on this medium to recruit young people. While it has been deliberately omitted from this review (as this form of informal education would require another review on its own due to the plethora of extremist education available in social media), we want to underscore the amount of information that exists about this but requires further research.

CVE programmes, such as the Kenyan Eastleighwood Youth Forum and the Iraqi reality TV show Salam Shabab, currently incorporate extracurricular activities such as sports, clubs, theatre and music to assist in preventing violent extremism. Their success would suggest that this should be expanded. However, more research should be conducted to learn about and from the effectiveness of these programmes in formal and non-formal educational settings.

4.2.3 CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE ARE NEEDED TO ADDRESS THE ISSUES OF INJUSTICE LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY

While some individuals experience discrimination, alienation and marginalisation, which can lead to the development of radicalisation, many who do not experience such injustices may sympathise with people who suffer inequalities globally. This dissatisfaction can arise from real or perceived global transgressions learned through social media networks and local community members as well. In seeking justice for these wrongdoings towards themselves or others, individuals, without proper critical understanding, are imprudently adopting violent extremist ideology as an

outlet for their angst towards local and global grievances. For example, in Australia, it has been noted that racism provokes violent extremism as local injustices and discrimination fuel more extremist tendencies (“Australia’s Jihadis,” 2015). Unless these injustices are addressed in society through soft power, such local and global inequalities will continue to propagate the progression of radicalism.

From our review, education that promotes greater equality for individuals (through teaching respect and tolerance and opportunity for economic sustenance) appears to be the essence of effective CVE educational programmes, such as the anti-bias and tolerance component of Austrian civic education. The specific form of education (based on method of teaching, curriculum and the open or closed nature of the educational system) is also highly important.

4.2.4 THERE IS AN URGENT NEED FOR TEACHER EDUCATION IN CRITICAL AND INTERPRETIVE PEDAGOGICAL METHODS

Teachers typically avoid discussing controversial issues in the classroom, and countering violent religious extremism is no exception. This is often because it involves too much difficulty and risk requiring teachers to have well thought-out and thorough lesson plans that can successfully deliver sophisticated information to the students, rather than merely ‘classroom wizardry’ (Hess, 2002, p. 38). In order to prepare teachers for such a sensitive polarising and contentious issue, adequate and effective training must be developed to support them. Training for current CVE programmes (such as those in the UK and Sweden), should be examined for their design, applicability and sufficiency from a teacher’s perspective. We have found that it is the methods used by the education programmes that determine their effectiveness.

Despite the rich curricula that aim to foster critical citizenship, our analysis has found that specific teaching methods can create a link between the curricula and the students’ environment. For instance, Banisadr (2014) has found that due to the passive educational techniques, “schools and universities often fail to educate young people about the dangers that extremist cults pose to young Muslims and [how they] use mind manipulation techniques to alter young people’s personalities [turning] them into virtual slaves and potential suicide bombers.”

Robert Jackson’s interpretive approach is particularly constructive. His incorporation of dialogical methods, critical pedagogy, and co-operative learning highlights the importance of the lived experience, context and the way in which the curricula can inform this understanding but not dictate it (Jackson, 1997, 2004). This approach helps students develop more comprehensive understanding of the issues related to religious extremism and engage more critically with those complex questions (Miller, 2013).

There is an attempt in several places within North American school systems to use critical pedagogy through questioning and dialogical methods as well as in recognition of its ability to empower students and enhance their capabilities for civic and economic engagement (for example, the dialogical approaches of Quebec's *Ethics and Religious Culture* programme and Modesto, California's *World Geography and World Religions* course). We encourage further research into these approaches and how teacher education for these programmes may enable teachers to address concerns about violent extremism and avoid the development of passive students reflecting passive teaching techniques.

4.2.5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CVE PROGRAMMES IS UNKNOWN DUE TO LACK OF ASSESSMENT

It is difficult to assess programmes that are preventive as evaluation is based on the measurement of something that has been omitted: How does one measure something that is not there? Also, it is challenging to isolate a single factor towards a success when there may be several contributions towards the achievement of an objective (for example, the simultaneous use of soft and hard power in CVE). However, it is important to measure the success of all initiatives in order for other programmes to replicate or adapt key strategies for their own contexts.

As the study conducted by the UK Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) indicates, CVE programmes can be assessed, albeit with difficulty, but more work needs to be done to learn from the methodology used by DCLG for their assessment. Since CVE research and initiatives are relatively new, we hope to see more studies such as this to offer examples on how assessment can be conducted. With sound assessment, we can better understand and learn about the impact of the CVE programmes in education.

4.2.6 IT IS NECESSARY TO BE CAUTIOUS OF THE POTENTIAL NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF CVE PROGRAMMES

While this review argues for the potential benefits of educational programmes for CVE, we would like to draw attention to the possibility of negative effects that may arise from programmes that are superficial and aimed at awareness. As a report for Hedayah indicates, gang and drug awareness programmes have on occasion had reverse effects by drawing attention to these issues which resulted in increased use of drug and gang violence (Zeiger, 2014). Also, international studies show that schools with anti-bullying programmes are more likely to express bullying incidents than those without anti-bullying programmes, because students acquire bullying slurs of which they were not previously aware (Jeong and Lee, 2013). Therefore, special attention should be paid to how the information from these campaigns are processed and applied when peer

group and other pressures are applied to young people.

For example, CVE education may expose students to extremist ideologies they have not known before. This process may have the potential to lead new learners to unintentionally explore those ideologies and fall prey to their enticing messages despite the effort of educators to prevent this from happening. In recognising this we encourage research in identifying these latent effects as well as exploring ways to overcome them. More importantly, the CVE educational programmes should be carefully designed and delivered so as to develop long term effects rather than aim at providing information to be absorbed quickly for short term ends.

4.3 FINAL REMARKS

This review has discussed the impact of education on the growth of violent religious extremism and efforts to counter it. Violent religious extremism is an undeniable threat to the international community, especially as extremist groups (for example Boko Haram and ISIS) are learning from one another. Thus, a concerted effort that includes hard and soft power must be considered to address this global security threat. Education will be a vital component of this effort.

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