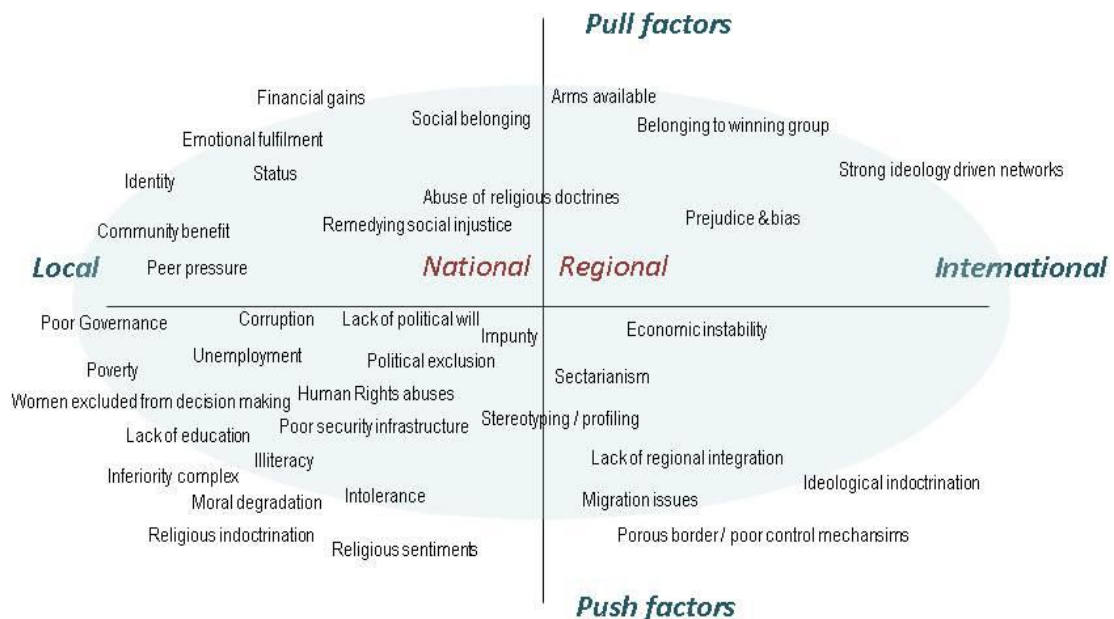


Radicalisation, especially amongst youth, leading to violent extremism (VE) has seen a rise in the MENA region, Sub Sahel Africa and also in many western European countries in the past few years. Violent extremist organisations take advantage of youth susceptibility, religious or otherwise, including socio/economic/political disenfranchisement in order to recruit sympathisers. Civil wars and violent conflicts further exacerbate the situation, with the spill-over risks to other regions being immense. While transnational security threats constitute among the greatest threats to human security today, conversely, it is an inclusive and comprehensive human security (HS) approach that can alleviate this threat, and help prevent VE.

Complex security threats require immediate stabilisation on the one hand (hard security), and, on the other, strengthening the rule of law (legal and institution building) and the addressing of structural conditions (soft security), simultaneously and over the long term. Addressing structural conditions calls for a context-specific, individual-focused human security strategy in order to combat the increasing polarisation in society and the spreading violence that has amplified the trust deficit between citizen and state.

Human Security Collective (HSC) carries out essential work across many regions of the MENA region and West and East Africa with local civil society groups to prevent VE, by privileging the voices of the people and operationalising the wider, long-term issues of global justice and sustainability. The human security approach recognises that solutions require long term and sustained engagement strategies between communities, civil society and the whole of government. Earlier research HSC carried out helped analyse the root causes of VE and map the push and pull factors that motivate people to step into VE. An overview of the results is shown below:



In Nigeria, for example, HSC has been involved since 2014 in a long-term project to counter the appeal of terrorism and build community resilience. Looking at radicalisation in Nigeria, it was noted that civil society organizations (CSOs) were uniquely placed to be effective partners for the project team and the government in countering the threat of extremism. Here, HSC works with the Office of the National Security Advisor (ONSA) of Nigeria, EUTANS/Civipol and the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) on a project which is start-funded by the United Nations' Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) with technical assistance provided by the EU(TANS) . Relevant government and non-government stakeholders are brought together to discuss areas of potential Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) engagement across society. The project includes practical CVE training. A network of CSOs and government representatives called the 'Partnership Against Violent Extremism' (PAVE) has resulted from the project, centred around a common agenda for peace, justice and security.

In North and East Africa, the Sahel and Maghreb regions, HSC has, again, been working with the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) as well as with the UN Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) to organize regional and national workshops on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1624 (2005) and 2178 (2014). Both resolutions call upon states to prohibit and prevent incitement and recruitment to commit terrorism by enhancing dialogue and bringing together different actors including governments and civil society. Various regional and national workshops have been conducted (Nairobi, Rabat, Algiers, Mombassa, Tunis) with multiple stakeholders in an effort to tease out the context-specific factors that lead to radicalisation and violent extremism, and find ways of combatting them to ensure human security in communities.