

# Time to Engage with Youth at Centre Stage

The HSC Approach to Youth Leadership on  
Preventing Violent Extremism: A Handbook





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## Welcome to this handbook

## Preface

Welcome to this handbook, a guide for those seeking to familiarize themselves with our Human Security approach to Youth Leadership in the context of Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE). The idea for this handbook grew out of a programme developed and implemented simultaneously in the Netherlands and Tunisia by Human Security Collective (HSC) during 2016–18. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs evinced interest in an approach that prevents violent extremism, works with youth from marginalized communities and can be sustained by these communities. The geographic interest in Tunisia stemmed from the growing instability of Libya and its neighbouring countries, which gave terrorist networks ample opportunity to flourish, recruit and attract youth from the region to join terrorist movements. The interest in implementing the programme concurrently in the Netherlands arose from the notion that a large community of young people in the Netherlands feel excluded from Dutch society and are critical towards (Dutch) foreign policy in the Middle East. Some Dutch youth felt alienated enough to want to join violent extremist groups.

After having piloted our programme for two years, the time now felt right to pen down the rationale behind our approach, so organizations such as yours can adopt a programme which has proven to be successful and inspiring for the many youth involved.

The focus of this handbook lies in presenting the four components of our Human Security approach to PVE:

- ▶ Envisioning,
- ▶ Empowering,
- ▶ Engaging, and
- ▶ Exchange.

Besides providing the rationale behind these four components, the handbook provides links to useful exercises and to background reading, based on our experience in the Tunisian context. Furthermore, we share with you our methodological ground rules for the design of a workshop, and reflect on the role of a local organization supporting and coaching the young leaders involved. Moreover, this handbook contains a wealth of stories of inspiration as well as recommendations and best practice (tips and tops) from those involved: HSC facilitators, the Arab Institute for Human Rights (AIHR), with whom we partnered during 2017–18, and the group of Tunisian young leaders who participated in our joint programme. You will read stories from these young practitioners who, through their work, contribute to PVE in a variety of different ways. We trust their insights and creative practices will inspire you to conduct your own sessions, possibly in different contexts from ours, benefitting from the rich experience of these young leaders.





# Introduction

**This handbook offers you a practical approach to ensure youth living in marginalized communities are willing to engage in PVE on their terms and in their time. It offers practical advice on implementing our Human Security approach to Youth Leadership in PVE.**

This handbook is a result of our work on Youth Leadership which begun in 2013, the year HSC was founded. Based in the Netherlands, we at HSC believe that fostering Human Security is and should be at the core of the PVE agenda. Our foundation was established at a time when Counter Terrorism (CT) strategies being developed by the UN, EU and Member States were starting to open up to the role of civil society in the arena of prevention. One of our very first interventions on the multilateral stage was in 2011<sup>1</sup> when a plea was made at the UN for the recognition of the important role civil society plays in transforming Violent Extremism (VE). Back then, when we spoke about the need to create safe spaces for young people to express their grievances towards their own governments, it felt as if very few were listening, with many Member States turning a deaf ear. Often enough, we left these meetings feeling disheartened, as the call for more law enforcement, legal and judicial actors and institutions to play a key role outweighed a whole-of-society approach in which the role of civil society as an important piece of the puzzle in PVE was fully recognized.

The international discourse has come a long way since our first pleas for the importance and inclusion of civil society in PVE. In 2018, the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy and the UN PVE Plan of Action both underscored the need for a whole-of-society approach, whereby civil society, including women and youth-led organizations, plays a crucial role in addressing current global and local security challenges (UNGA, 2018).

The increased involvement of international development institutions such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank (WB) in PVE is telling. Whereas they were previously reluctant to engage in what

was perceived as a politicized and securitized agenda, development actors are now increasingly deploying development tools and resources to help address VE. Moreover, peacebuilders are also offering their expertise on conflict transformation and a neutral understanding of violence and its causes to the PVE discourse (Holmer, 2013). There are many overlapping principles between the Peacebuilding and Human Security approaches to PVE: the do-no-harm principle to ensure sustainability, an inclusive approach involving both men and women, the empowerment of citizens through local ownership and an acknowledgment of the important role of civil society. The Peacebuilding approach to PVE, however, tends to generally avoid engagement with sectors such as the security one in order to maintain a certain level of impartiality.

While we applaud the steps taken so far, we still see the need to advocate for more approaches that focus on the security of people, their protection as well as their empowerment to balance the approaches that mainly focus on the security of states. Also, when a National Action Plan on PVE is taken as a starting point in these more *state-centric* approaches, it runs the risk of young people feeling instrumentalized by governmental policies. What is lacking in this type of approach is the need to invest in the ownership of the process by young people, allowing them to arrive at their own analysis and develop their own initiatives to foster resilient communities. Such a process allows them to open up and start discussing their views on the drivers of VE, prior to engaging with security stakeholders on real and perceived grievances. We see the engagement with security stakeholders as a vital part of the Human Security approach to PVE.

As the progress study on *Youth, Peace and Security* (Simpson, 2018) pointed out, meaningful inclusion of young people remains a central demand. One should not underestimate the deeply-rooted mistrust between young people and their governments. This is why we find it key in our Human Security approach to Youth Leadership on PVE to start with investing in youth (aged 18–26) who can then mentor their younger peers (aged 12–16). They become skilled in analyzing the pressing Human Security needs in their communities, and are then supported in developing initiatives to address the needs they have identified. In the case of the Tunisian mentors this included, among others, verbal violence, irregular migration and violence between teenagers from different neighbourhoods. Whilst doing so, we believe it is essential to allow the mentors and mentees a safe space to express their grievances without judging their way of thinking or finding the need to immediately shut them down. In our view, these sticky conversations, which at times might seem challenging as a facilitator, allow for essential understanding of what young people perceive as the most pressing needs in their communities. If we do not start from their analyses and acknowledge their innovative solutions, we run the risk of missing out on an important stakeholder in the whole-of-society approach to PVE. Therefore, *time to engage with youth at centre stage*.

## How the manual is organized

The manual consists of four chapters. The first chapter briefly introduces the concepts of Human Security, Violent Extremism and Youth Leadership. Furthermore, it presents an overview of the interconnectedness that we see between the three concepts when applying

the Human Security principles in a Youth Leadership programme on PVE. Chapter two describes our approach to Youth Leadership on PVE by presenting its various components including, Envisioning, Empowering and Engaging, the three elements we think are essential to ensuring Youth Leadership on PVE. In addition, we also present a fourth component, Exchange, which allows for peer-to-peer learning between youth from different contexts. We believe this experience enriches participants' analyses, including of their own context, and their ideas for change. This component is optional, given it requires partnership with an organization doing similar work in another context.

For each component we shall make references to open source tools to help you design workshops to tackle a particular subject mentioned in this handbook. You can pick and choose the tools you find most suitable to your style and the needs of participants, as we have learnt that each group of participants requires a tailor-made approach. Sometimes participants may request for more in-depth training on certain elements, whilst others may benefit from more practice. In the third chapter, we explain the conditions needed to implement a Youth Leadership Programme like ours, such as partnership and the selection of youth. In chapter four, we discuss adaptive learning, and the kind of monitoring and evaluation we find needed for this type of programming. Towards the end of the handbook you will find references for further reading on Human Security, Youth Leadership and Violent Extremism in addition to the references made to open source methodologies to help you design your workshops.



# 1 Conceptual background

For those of you seeking more background information on the conceptual thinking behind the design of our Human Security approach to Youth Leadership on PVE, this chapter provides a brief explanation of our interpretation of all three concepts. If, however, you are more practically oriented, our advice is to skip this chapter and go straight to chapter two, which guides you through our approach.

The concepts of Human Security, Youth Leadership and PVE have been extensively researched and there are many publications to tap into. We provide some references on what we perceive to be insightful publications on these concepts towards the end of this handbook (page 87). In this chapter we have chosen to briefly explain our understanding of these three concepts, so as to explain the interconnectedness that resulted in the Human Security approach to Youth Leadership on PVE.







1.1 Human Security

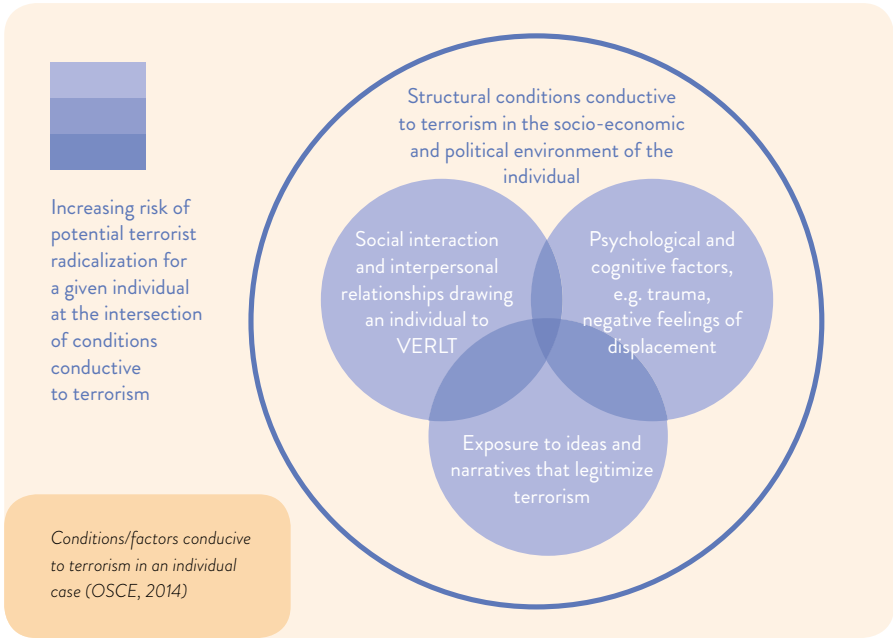
The concept, introduced in the UNDP Human Development Report of 1994 (UNDP, 1994: 22), moves away from traditional, state-centric approaches that mainly focus on the security of states to one that focuses on the security of people, their protection and empowerment. The concept was introduced in response to the complexity and the interrelatedness of both old and new security threats. From chronic poverty to ethnic violence, human trafficking, international terrorism and climate change, these threats move beyond traditional notions of security which focus on external military aggressions alone. Human Security acknowledges that the state alone cannot tackle these complex interrelated issues through conventional mechanisms as these threats cannot be seen or solved in isolation or merely in a top-down manner. Human Security, thus, brings together the domains of development, human rights and national security.

A Human Security approach sees risk as community-centred and context-specific, and something which can be mitigated by a variety of institutions and actors. Insecurity felt at the community level needs to be addressed by the market, by the family and by civil society, along with the state. Achieving Human Security, therefore, requires collective action based on citizens’ perceptions of vulnerability, needs and concerns. Addressing these concerns requires that communities are empowered to identify threats and are able to build the necessary resilience against these threats.

As an interdisciplinary concept, Human Security acknowledges the need for a dialogue between the security apparatus and citizens. On the one hand, this means citizens need to understand strategies, policies and programmes developed at the local, national, regional and international levels. On the other, it means that policymakers need to be kept well-informed by citizens on the issues that they perceive as contributing to their insecurity. Lack of safety in communities is not simply a security issue but has deep social and economic roots and consequences. A better understanding of these perceptions of safety often needs to be a facilitated process, given the critical need to rebuild trust between citizens and the government in many communities. Only by bridging this gap can we work towards a more effective approach to enhance safety in our communities.

1.2. Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE)

Knowledge on VE bears a debt to radicalization theories developed by social scientists. These theories explain ways in which individuals radicalize through an interplay between so-called push and pull factors. Drivers that push individuals to ultimately join violent extremist or terrorist groups include structural conditions such as poverty, and grievances, such as lack of access to justice or political processes. Individual psychological and emotional conditions, such as the need for belonging



and the validation of one’s identity, trauma or feelings of displacement can also be push factors. Additionally, the continuation of cycles of violence brought on by chronic conflict and the absence or failure of the state in addressing the underlying causes of conflict can also be push factors. Pull factors include the influence of socialization and the group dynamics of family, peers, schools and religious institutions and leaders, and exposure to charismatic recruiters and their extremist ideas and narratives. A visual in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) study on a community-policing approach to PVE (2014) (see above) explains the conditions that increase the risk of terrorist radicalization. The overlapping circles imply that the risk increases when an individual struggles with a variety of social and psychological factors, and is exposed to ideas that legitimize terrorism at the same time.

Additionally, criminologists have, for years, worked on analyzing the push and pull factors leading to the joining of criminal networks. “Human psychology thus plays a role in understanding the dynamics of radicalization. Some scholars point out that there is no direct causal relationship between radical ideas and extremist violence and that not all violent extremists are radical in their belief systems. Some have only a superficial understanding” of the ideas and narratives that legitimize terrorism (HSC, 2018: 9).

In the international discourse on PVE there is increased awareness that complex issues such as addressing VE

require a whole-of-society approach. As there is no single profile in terms of who is vulnerable to VE, or a clear-cut pathway to VE, or even a consistent set of factors driving people to VE, different sectors of public policy such as education, health, and economic and social development need to be engaged. In addition to those governmental actors, civil society plays a crucial role as it is often the more credible actor and also usually more knowledgeable on local dynamics. Civil society can help identify and address grievances as well as help bridge the gap between government authorities and communities, bringing different parts of the whole system together. The complex and context-specific nature of the drivers to VE also reinforce the important role of community members who may be difficult to reach. Their unique insights into their communities are vital in understanding and overcoming grievances.

The different schools of thought and practices underpinning development in fragile and marginalized communities and contexts, and those associated with PVE have gradually been connected through the efforts of development, Human Security and PVE practitioners and thinkers.

In our approach to PVE, we emphasize the need to take into account, as an entry point, the perceptions and analysis of community members themselves on grievances and structural conditions that may be conducive to VE. We also stress the need to strengthen the resilience of young people so they are less vulnerable to VE messaging.

1.3. Youth Leadership

The recognition and inclusion of youth is a crucial part of our philosophy to building sustainable Human Security within communities. Young people often have in-depth knowledge of the issues at stake in their communities, yet are poorly involved in the design of policies and in practice to tackle root causes that lead to violence, such as a sense of alienation or a lack of future prospects. A Human Security approach is participatory in nature and starts from the assumption that youth are capable of bringing about positive change. It recognizes youth as a valuable ally and therefore includes them as stakeholders in the design, development and implementation of our programmes. Youth have an unique and important outlook on the issues at stake in their communities which is critical for policymakers to understand, in order to build more resilient communities. They often have better access to and credibility in the eyes of their peers, especially those that are hard-to-reach for public authorities. They also have specific knowledge and expertise, such as knowledge of the dynamics, customs and cultural references of a group/community. They can act as an intermediary or bridge for communication and dialogue between public officials, and individuals/groups reluctant to engage with, or hostile to, for instance, the police. Our assumption is that, further understanding of why young people are willing to take the path of VE is perhaps something young people living in marginalized communities understand best.

1.4. Applying Human Security principles to a Youth Leadership programme on PVE

Based on the above, a Human Security approach to Youth Leadership in PVE acknowledges that VE is a **context-specific** phenomenon, as is the prevention of VE. There is no single profile of person vulnerable to VE, meaning there are no clear-cut linear pathways determining vulnerability but rather a variety of factors combining in a unique way depending on context and the individual. A Human Security approach is **people-centred**, beginning at the grassroots, starting with individuals in

communities and garnering their perceptions on the drivers of VE. It allows for a **comprehensive** viewpoint on the drivers of VE and may include aspects that security stakeholders do not acknowledge as having a direct causal relationship to VE. Our Human Security Approach to Youth Leadership on PVE seeks to strengthen communities to overcome systemic drivers of polarization, marginalization and disenfranchisement so as to **prevent** people from taking the path that leads to VE. It acknowledges that youth, women and communities are an asset when it comes to analyzing and identifying solutions to overcome the drivers of VE. It highlights the fact that young people are equal partners, and that it is about working *with* young people not working *on* them. It takes into consideration the contexts and experiences needed to work with youth effectively. It is therefore useful to bear in mind that the entry point is to work on the local conditions that young people from the neighbourhood themselves identify as possible push and pull factors, and that they themselves are passionate about changing. It recognizes young people in their capacity to contribute to human security and youth resilience in their neighbourhood.

Preventing VE necessarily requires a **multi-sectoral** approach, including a broad range of stakeholders that goes beyond the state, and includes the family, community, businesses and civil society. Women and men in the community, young leaders, religious leaders and community leaders play a crucial role. It acknowledges the need for local ownership and for strengthening the lines of communication between a state-centric, top-down approach to security and a more bottom-up Human Security approach – bridging the gap between people and security, between local Human Security and national/global security.

On the following page, we introduce the four HSC components, Envisioning, Empowering, Engaging and Exchange, in an overview which summarizes the Human Security approach to Youth Leadership on PVE.

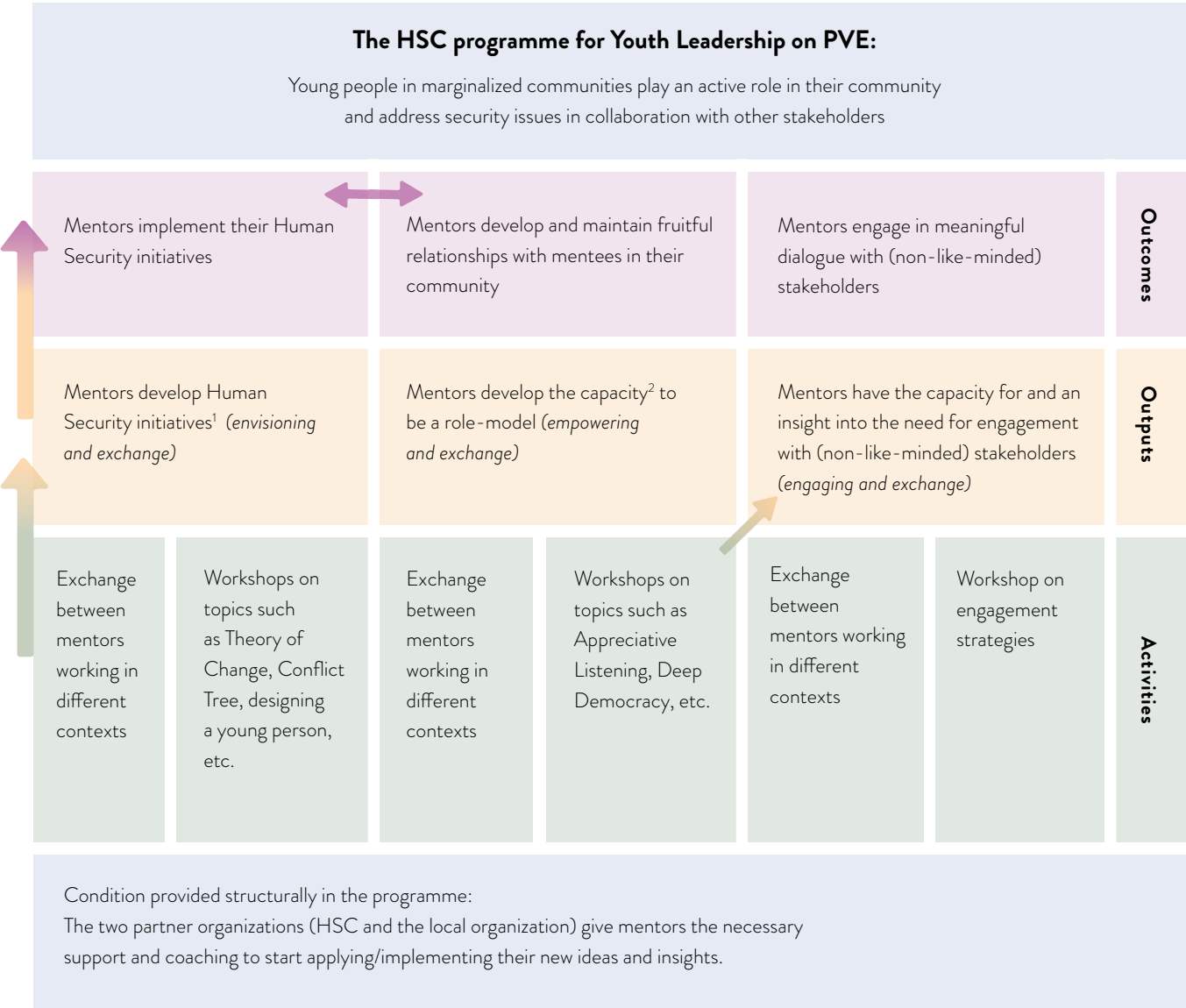
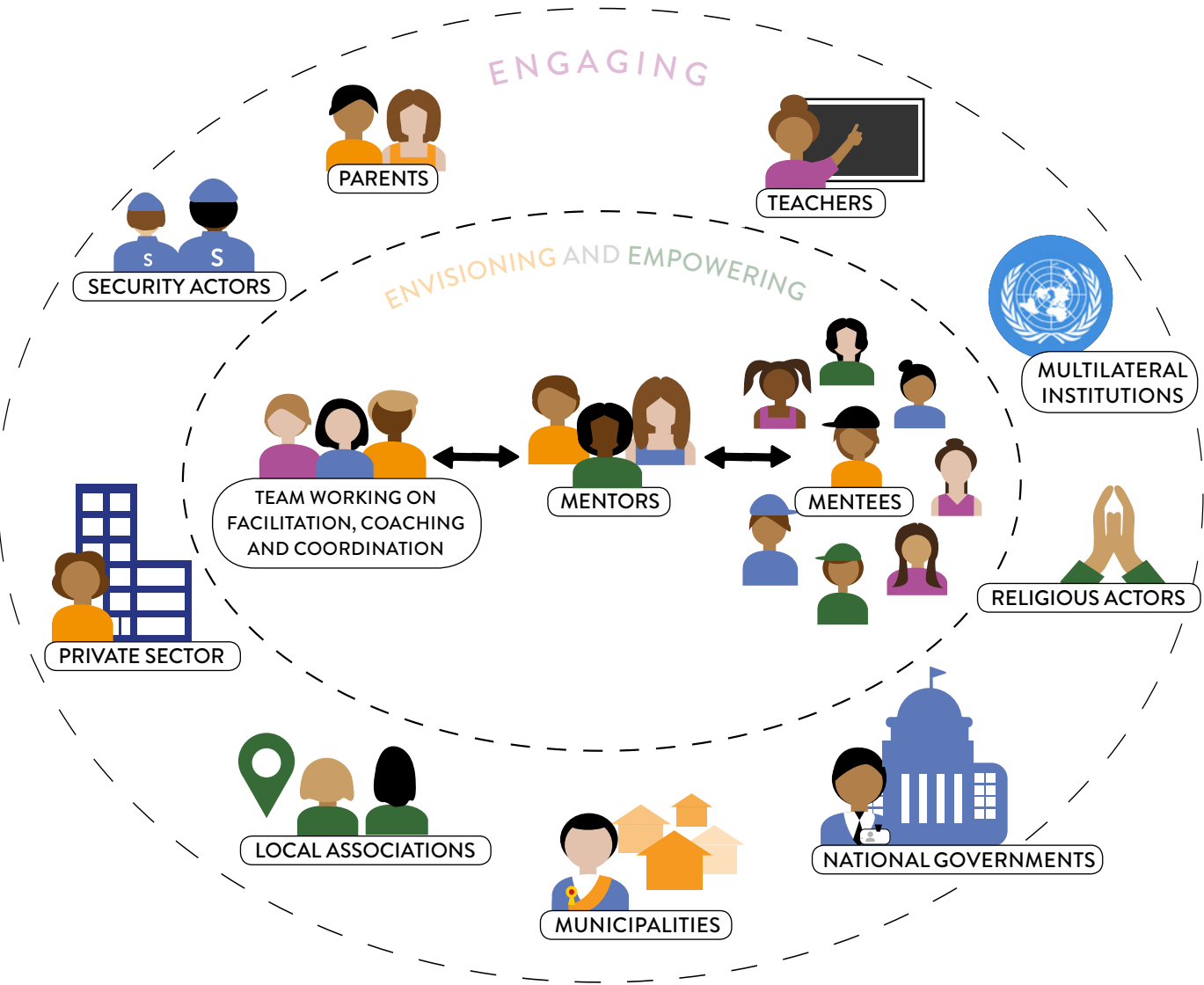
HSC components	Human Security principle	Youth Leadership programme on PVE
EXCHANGE	ENVISIONING	<b>Prevention-oriented</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identifies risks and threats perceived by youth and allows youth to address these root causes, building on a community-centred analysis of Human Security needs as the entry point</li><li>Focusses on prevention through an empowerment approach for youth</li><li>Creates basic conditions for collective action by youth leaders</li><li>Emphasizes alternatives to VE, including social cohesion, social justice and equality, economic development, employment, civic and peaceful political engagement</li><li>Seeks to empower young men and women to overcome systemic drivers of polarization, marginalization and disenfranchisement</li></ul>
		<b>Context-specific</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Analyzes, in depth, the concrete needs of young people</li><li>Takes into account local, national, regional and global dimensions of (P)VE</li><li>Recognizes that perceptions of safety differ per context</li></ul>
		<b>Comprehensive</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Addresses a wide spectrum of (perceived) threats, vulnerabilities and capacities</li><li>Addresses a broad range of contextual conditions conducive to the spread of VE, including socio-economic and political factors</li><li>Addresses, where appropriate, the fact that insecurity spills across borders and regions (internal and external)</li><li>Recognizes the complexity of (P)VE</li></ul>
	EMPOWERING	<b>People-centred</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Embraces an inclusive approach; young men and women from marginalized communities are considered agents of positive change who analyze safety in their communities and are strengthened to prevent the threats they have identified</li><li>Empowers young people to communicate their grievances</li><li>Focusses on gender and on fostering respect and equality among people; embraces diversity and pluralist identities</li><li>Focusses on the role of young people as role-models for their peers at risk.</li><li>Focusses on local ownership and the empowerment of young people to work on PVE</li><li>Rooted in human rights and human development</li></ul>
		<b>Multi-sectoral</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Embraces engagement between young leaders and key actors from different sectors, including security stakeholders</li><li>Studies national and local policies and measures for PVE, so that youth are able to address any inconsistencies between policy and practice in communities</li><li>Creates safe spaces to communicate grievances and for the building of better relationships between state institutions, especially the police, and young people in marginalized communities</li><li>Embraces the whole-of-society approach in PVE</li><li>Seeks multi-actor partnerships on PVE at the community level</li><li>Advocates for space for civil society to work on PVE (financial resources, and laws and regulations)</li></ul>
	ENGAGING	

1.5 The Human Security Collective programme on Youth leadership on PVE

Based on our viewpoint on how to apply Human Security principles to a Youth Leadership programme on PVE, we formulated the following aim for the programme we embarked on in 2016:

'to empower young leaders (aged 18–26) (mentors) in marginalized communities in the Netherlands and Tunisia to become role-models for their younger peers (aged 12–16) (mentees)'. These mentors are skilled in designing and implementing initiatives to improve safety in their neighbourhoods (**Envisioning**). They also receive training to improve their communication skills to both listen empathetically and discuss their (perceived) grievances with others (**Empowering**). Mentors are also empowered to engage in meaningful conversations with government representatives at the local, national and international

levels (**Engaging**).  
Apart from the three HSC components (envisioning, empowering and engaging) mentioned above, we view exchange and peer-to-peer learning as a fourth important crosscutting component. An exchange between youth (and other stakeholders) from different contexts helps youth reflect anew on their own context and to gain insight into different perceptions on security as well as into a diversity of approaches to PVE (**Exchange**). The overall objective is reached by providing the young leaders/mentors with workshops along with the relevant support from and coaching by a local organization. Participants increase their knowledge and skills in workshops that in turn prepare them for their role as mentors, as implementers of Human Security initiatives



<sup>1</sup> For more information on Human Security Initiatives, see paragraph 2.1.5–2.1.7 of this handbook.  
<sup>2</sup> By capacity we refer to the knowledge, skills and attitude that young people need in order to become a role-model/ mentor and to engage with non-like-minded stakeholders.

and in their engagement with security stakeholders. Through a local organization, participants receive ongoing support and coaching in their role as mentors to their younger peers, and are provided with further guidance on the implementation of their initiatives and their engagement with security stakeholders. Furthermore, this local support role provides an organizational framework which aids the work of the mentors.  
In the next chapter, we shall unwrap the four components of the Human Security approach to Youth Leadership on PVE, and provide methodologies that are well-suited to conducting sessions with participants.



# 2 The HSC components to Youth Leadership on PVE

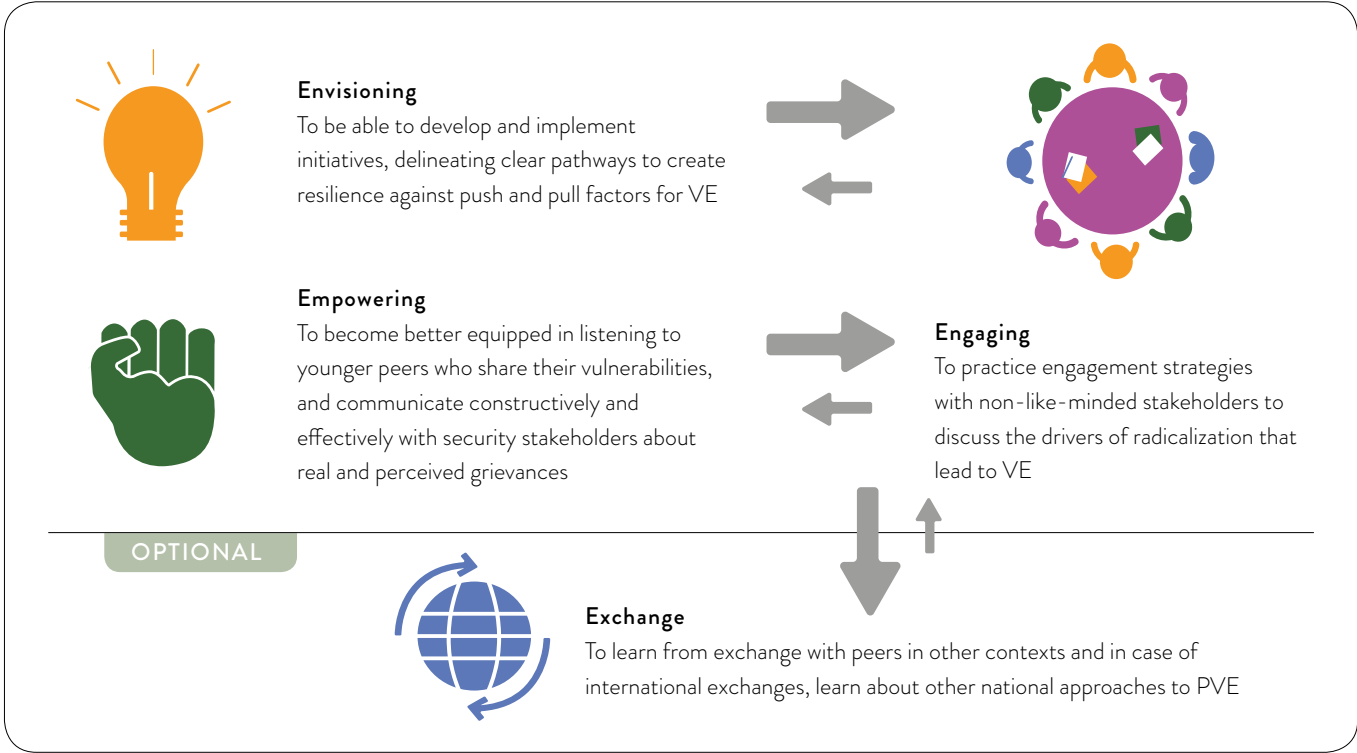
This chapter describes our approach to Youth Leadership on PVE by presenting its various components including, Envisioning, Empowering and Engaging, the three elements we think are essential to ensuring Youth Leadership on PVE. In addition, we also present a fourth component, Exchange, which allows for peer-to-peer learning between youth from different contexts. For each component we shall make references to open source tools to help you design tailor-made workshops.

The programme kicks off with the **Envisioning** component, which takes into account the experiences and perceptions of young people as the starting point to describe and analyze insecurity. It is the youth who formulate possible solutions for the improvement of Human Security in their neighbourhoods. The second component is that of **Empowering**, a parallel process to Envisioning, in which the mentors are capacitated to become role-models to the teenagers they are mentoring in order to strengthen their resilience and lessen their vulnerability to VE messaging. This, in addition to building their communication skills in a collaborative way. We recommend that the third component, **Engagement**, only come in after the Envisioning and Empowering stages. During this phase, we work with the young people to facilitate processes for their engagement with community members such as parents, teachers, social workers, as well as with local authorities and security institutions such as the police, in order that meaningful conversations can take place. We also find this step crucial in seeking government support for the continuation of youth-led, grassroots, peer-to-peer initiatives that help build

resilient communities. In our approach, having a fruitful conversation with security stakeholders can only take place after youth have envisioned for themselves what is required in their neighbourhoods. This necessitates preparation because it is not easy to talk with security stakeholders about (perceived) grievances. And this takes time, given the need to build trust and empower youth to address their grievances in a way that creates a safe space to have a meaningful conversation.

Besides facilitating engagement with key stakeholders in their community, a fourth crosscutting component is **Exchange**, which invests in intercultural peer-to-peer learning by organizing exchange visits between countries. Through these exchange visits, young leaders learn more about other contexts, which often then also helps them better understand their own context. In this handbook, we have suggested options both for in-country exchanges, regional exchanges as well as for international exchanges, because even though they are different, all kinds of exchange can be useful for participants, making this component more accessible for organizations to facilitate.





2.1 Envisioning

Envisioning involves creating the spaces and providing the tools for participants to develop their vision on security in their neighbourhood. This vision entails ideas about the future one foresees and how one would get there. Key questions in this process are: How do young people experience their environment? What do they feel happy about in their neighbourhood, and what are their concerns? What are issues they would like to see changing, and how do they foresee change? In this chapter, we will shed light on how you can create the space for mentors to formulate answers to these questions and to develop their vision, referring to some useful tools that can be used in the process.

2.1.1 Sharing of personal perception

One of the first steps in this component is to start asking participants to share their own stories on security. A way to facilitate this is to ask them to prepare a (written) personal story related to security. Make sure participants understand what is meant by security by introducing the topic of Human Security and its varied components, including the personal, community and political security ones, explaining what these mean making use of the “Seven components of Human Security” table on page 25.

Seven components of Human Security<sup>2</sup>

Economic Security	Requires a stable basic income from work or, as a last resort, a (publicly financed) safety net. Examples of threats: economic crisis, unemployment; lack of a safety net.
Food Security	Requires people to have economic and physical access to basic food at all times. Examples of threats: poverty, lack of distribution of food, famines.
Health Security	Requires people to live in a safe environment and to have access to safe and sufficient nutrition as well as to health services. Examples of threats: no access to health services, unsafe nutrition, epidemics.
Environmental Security	Requires a healthy physical and safe environment. Examples of threats: pollution, loss of land, natural disasters.
Personal Security	Requires security from physical violence. Examples of threats: war, domestic violence, sexual violence, street/criminal violence, terrorism, etc.
Community Security	Requires security of groups, and the individual as part of the group, within the wider society. Examples of threats: ethnic violence, discrimination, oppressive practices within groups.
Political Security	Requires people to live in societies that honour their basic human rights. Examples of threats: political repression, police violence, torture.

Encourage participants to think of an experience related to one of those components, and then put up the stories for all to read. Make sure that participants know in advance that their stories will be shared with the other participants.

The aim of this sharing of personal stories is two-fold. On the one hand, the objective is to provide participants with a chance to start thinking about their own experiences and concerns in relation to security, and on the other, it provides participants a chance to become aware of the diverse experiences and perceptions in the room. They might recognize themselves in others’ stories, but there might also be experiences that they had not imagined before.

These stories of young people about what makes them feel secure or insecure in their communities are the starting point to identify together the kinds of perceptions there are in the room as well as the issues that are at stake and that the participants feel passionate about addressing in their initiatives. The process of envisioning starts at this individual level but a key part of it is that the process also gradually becomes collective in the moment that

Personal story on Security:

I don’t feel safe in the neighbourhood, especially at a personal level, for a lot of people experience violence and are beaten up by governmental representatives as well as neighbours. There is no respect. I don’t feel safe at a cultural level; we can observe the lack of means for entertainment which leads to a majority of youth criminalizing. We also observe that relationships and traditions are being lost.

Personal story on Security

Extremist thoughts about appearance is what our society suffers from. For me, I have witnessed discrimination because of my hijab. My family refused to let me wear a hijab. Some of them thought I was too young to cover myself up. Others thought I would face harassment because of my hijab, at school or when looking for employment. To this day they still think this way.

participants start becoming aware of others' perceptions on security. This is also the moment they start recognizing similarities and differences, both of which are important to highlight.

### 2.1.2 Collective brainstorming

The next step in this envisioning component, is to bring all these stories together through a collective brainstorming process on perceptions of safety in one's community. A useful methodology for a collective brainstorm session is to conduct a mind mapping exercise (Weisbord and Janoff, 2010), with the aim of getting that 'all around picture' on security incorporating the

different perspectives in the room. This is crucial as it will form the basis for mentors to develop their vision on security in the neighbourhood. Developing a mind map on security trends will help the brainstorming process and is about creating a rich picture on the different issues at stake from the perspectives of all participants. The brainstorming enables participants to learn about other security trends in their neighbourhood as well as to freely express themselves in front of others. The facilitator of the mind map has an important role in sharing clear instructions and making sure that everyone who wants to contribute gets a chance to mention a trend and is permitted to do so without starting a debate. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that

After having developed a mind map themselves, mentors decided to also facilitate the mind map exercise with their mentees. This is how it was experienced, and how it was useful:



the purpose of the exercise is not to start a debate about whether something is important or not. Make sure the facilitator manages that well as you do not want to divert from the brainstorming aspect and turn it into a heated debate. Large Scale Interventions (2005) offers further instructions for this exercise.

After all the brainstorming has occurred, instruct participants to prioritize the trends. A good way of doing this is to share about three small, round and coloured stickers with each participant and ask them to (individually) identify what, according to them, the priorities are, and to identify those by putting their stickers on that trend. By doing this, they own the mind map as individuals, while also enabling them to see what the most important issues are for the group as a whole.

An important idea behind the mind map and the prioritizing of the trends is that people experience security differently, and therefore one cannot see the whole without hearing other people's perspectives. This awareness is crucial when developing one's vision, including one's ideas for change in the community. To underline this point in a playful manner, it could be combined with reading the story of the 'The Blind Men and an Elephant' (Saxe, 1816:87) from which the same lesson can be drawn. This helps participants understand the importance of gaining insight into other perspectives. It is then easier to arrive at the understanding that in order to develop solutions to tackle the complex issue of VE and understand the whole picture, it is necessary to work with other stakeholders.

### 2.1.3 Defining Violent Extremism (VE)

It is important for participants to have a common understanding of the problem addressed by this programme. Developing a common understanding of the term ‘violent extremism’ is therefore necessary for participants in order to enable them to analyze the issue and identify solutions together. It should be noted however that there is no universally-accepted definition either of ‘terrorism’ or of VE. As stated in the UN Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism, “Violent extremism is a diverse phenomenon, without clear definition. It is neither new nor exclusive to any region, nationality or system of belief.” (UNGA, 2015:1). Keeping this complexity surrounding the definition in mind, we recommend that you ask participants to think

One group of mentors worked out the following definition of **Violent Extremism**: *Radicalization that leads to Violent Extremism (RLVE) is the taking on of radical ideas, whether political, social or religious, leading to a refusing of the other to the extent of excluding them and using moral and physical violence. The causes of RLVE are psychological problems, which are caused essentially by a deteriorating social and economic situation, and by repression and marginalization.*

about their own definition of VE: one that is relevant in their context. It becomes interesting when they start developing the definition together. This can be facilitated by starting the participants off in twos, then bringing them together in fours, and finally, having them bring their definitions together to find one common definition. They should take the time to present what they have to each other, before discussing the definitions and bringing them together. This not only facilitates a process of mentors thinking actively about how they understand VE, it also helps them start understanding how others understand VE which, in turn, helps them gain insight into the complexity of the phenomenon.

After having done this exercise, it is important to also introduce some existing definitions used by intergovernmental organizations or national governments. Acquaint them with both internationally-used as well as local definitions. For example, look up (or ask participants to do so) the definition used by the national government in that particular context. Give mentors the space to compare such existing definitions with their own definitions, and to share their thoughts and feelings about the existing definitions.



**Examples of some international definitions:**

**USAID:** “Violent extremism refers to advocating, engaging in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social, economic and political objectives”. (USAID Policy, 2011:2)

**OSCE:** Radicalization that leads to terrorism is “the dynamic process whereby an individual comes to accept terrorist violence as a possible, perhaps even legitimate, course of action. This may eventually, but not necessarily, lead this person to advocate, act in support of, or to engage in terrorism.” (OSCE, 2014: 15)

**The UN Country Team developed a definition relevant for the Tunisian context:** “VE is [t]he activity of individuals and groups which advocate or justify violence for economic, social or political reasons and reject the universal values of democracy, a State of Law and human rights by disseminating a message of religious, cultural and social intolerance.” (in UNDP and International Alert, 2018: 16)

## 2.1.4 Human Rights in relation to PVE

Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is essential to a Human Security approach to PVE, and should be taken into account when participants envision their initiatives. This is important given that human rights are an essential pillar of Human Security, and have been impacted by both VE and terror, as well as by the measures to counter VE and terrorism. Human rights violations such as brutality by police officers, extra-judicial killings and discrimination can trigger (more) violence (Amnesty International, 2017). Respect for human rights is therefore essential for a sustainable approach to security. With this background in mind, it is important to discuss human rights in relation to PVE with the participants, for them to be able to gain insight into the relationship and take into account the respect for human rights when envisioning their initiatives. This section provides ideas on how to conduct a brainstorming session on what human rights mean to participants and how they could prioritize them in relation to security. What are the inherent tensions and how do participants feel about these tensions? What are the dilemmas governments face and how does one become more aware of these dilemmas when tackling the issue of VE?

As a start, participants should warm up by brainstorming about the meaning of human rights, citing examples of human rights. This does not need to take long, it is about having all participants understand what human rights are and being able to cite examples<sup>3</sup>. To clarify and have participants on the same page, follow up with a short introduction on what human rights are. An example of a definition is provided below:

*“Human rights are universal legal guarantees protecting individuals and groups against actions and omissions that interfere with fundamental freedoms, entitlements and human dignity. Human rights law obliges Governments (principally) and other duty-bearers to do certain things and prevents them from doing others.” (UN OHCHR, 2006: 1)*

Then, ask participants to think about which human rights they think are most impacted by VE as well as by security measures to address VE, and have them write those down on sticky notes. Stick a card saying ‘(Countering) Violent Extremism’ on the wall and ask participants to stick their notes around it. Then ask participants to explain the relationship they identify between the human rights they named on the sticky notes and ‘(Countering) Violent Extremism’.

Follow up with a discussion on this relationship in which participants are enabled to explore how they feel about respect for human rights in relation to security measures. To facilitate this, make use of a tool such as “spectrum lines” (Seeds for Change, 2010: 6), in which participants need to position themselves along a line (with agreement at one end and disagreement on the other) with regards to a certain statement, sharing the reason why with each other. Use statements that bring out the tensions and dilemmas between human rights and (countering) VE. Examples of such statements are:

- ▶ Foreign fighters should not be permitted to return to their communities
- ▶ More CCTV cameras should be put up in places where youth hang out

In conclusion, it is important that the facilitator wraps up this session by stating that participants should be aware of the dilemmas governments face whilst tackling the issue of VE. Equally important is the need for participants to take human rights into consideration whilst developing their initiatives.



## 2.1.5 Designing initiatives

Based on the mind map, the issues of greatest concern to the group are identified. Participants are then encouraged to step into the thinking phase, trying to design initiatives that tackle some of the Human Security issues they have mapped out and are passionate about. Exercises to further analyze the context and start designing initiatives are part of this process of envisioning.

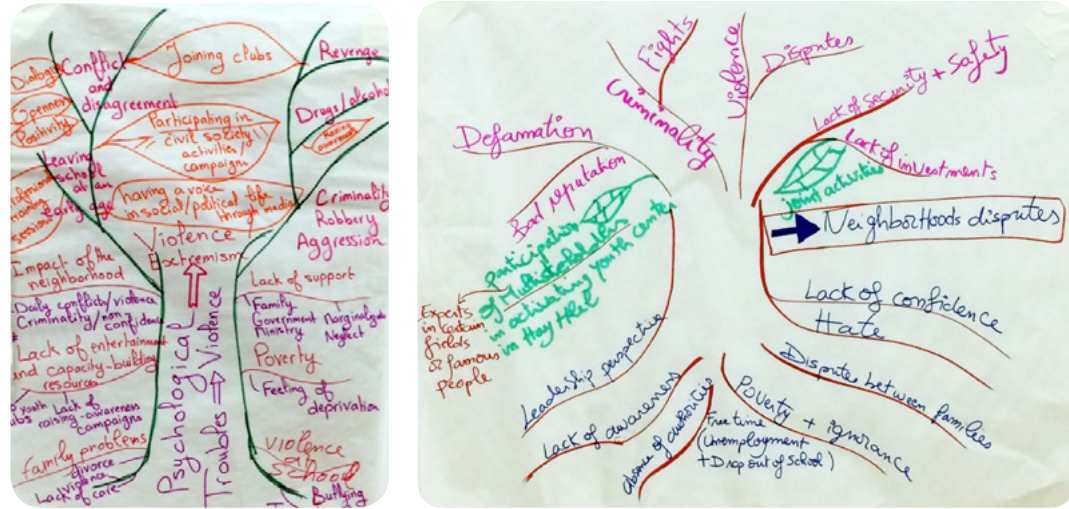
### Designing a young person

A playful way of analyzing the neighbourhood and thinking about what goes on in the minds of their younger peers is the ‘designing a young person’ exercise. The most important purpose of this exercise is for participants to empathize with their peers. It ties into the learning about acknowledging that young people close to us and in our communities can also be vulnerable.

When designing a young person, participants imagine, in visual terms, what is going on in the life and in the heads of teenagers in their neighbourhood: what do they

look like?, what are they feeling?, what are they thinking of?, what music are they listening to?, etc. The exercise allows young people to draw a person in their community and focus on the particular contextual/gendered/cultural aspects of that young person. Make sure that different groups are doing the assignment, so that they can present their drawings and then have a debrief about what is observed. Allow plenty of time for participants to explain their drawings as, based on our experience, this is the moment when participants start opening up. If you spot any stereotyping (gender, ethnic background, etc.), address it in a way that allows participants to benefit from the learnings. This can be done by asking other participants in the group whether they agree – there is, often, a lot of wisdom in the group itself which will help counter this type of stereotyping without you having to state the obvious upfront. If not, this might be a good opportunity to point out the need to embrace diversity in society, and that the person being stereotyped is also an important stakeholder in the PVE process.





**Mentor:** The Conflict Tree was the most helpful exercise to me because I feel that through this method you deal with the origins of the problems and so you try to understand why a problem exists, who is affected by it, who are the people that can help in resolving it and what are the possible solutions. Afterwards you can use this information to create a plan.

### Conflict Tree

The Conflict Tree is a tool suitable for identifying core issues, the root causes of those issues and the effects of those issue, as well as for identifying possible solutions.

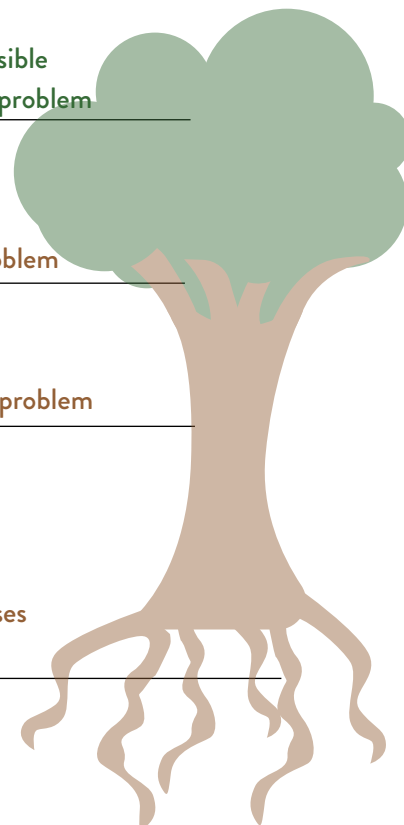
Through its visual presentation, the Conflict Tree helps participants focus on a conflict or problem they identify as an issue they would like to work on. It is well-suited to motivate group discussion about causes and effects and to stimulate participants to start thinking about possible initiatives. This helps them advance in their process of envisioning. If participants do not yet have a concrete idea to focus on, they could make several conflict trees with different core issues to explore further. Make sure that this exercise is conducted in pairs, to ensure fruitful discussions about cause and effect. It is good to organize presentations afterwards so everyone gets a sense of the issues that are starting to emerge from the previous brainstorming sessions.

**Leaves:** formulate possible solutions for the core problem

**Branches:** name the effects of the core problem

**Trunk:** name the core problem

**Roots:** name root causes of the core problem



### Dealing with complexity

Having gained insight into the complex issue of VE – by drawing a mind map, defining VE and discussing its relation with human rights, as well as by further analyzing the context – it is now time to gain some insight into how to deal with such a complex issue.

First, remind participants of this complexity: how do you understand why people radicalize to the extent that they start engaging in VE, and how do you predict who would? Explain that this is impossible to do. You may refer to the Venn diagram highlighted in chapter one (page 17) to elaborate further. There is no single profile that encompasses all people engaging in VE. Nor is there a single, clear-cut pathway that leads individuals to engage in VE. Drivers of radicalization that lead to terrorism, from the socio-economic to the religious to the psychological, are diverse and complex, and combine in a unique manner in each case. Furthermore, VE cannot be seen in isolation from the context and time in which it occurs.

To enable participants to work with the fact that different stakeholders are needed in order to arrive at an understanding of the problem as well as to offer the various parts of the solution, we recommend that participants experience ‘complexity’. There are many fun ways to deepen participants’ understanding of

‘complexity’. One is to have participants play ‘The Systems Game’ (REOS, 2011), in which one part of the group will be part of a ‘complex system’ and the other is tasked with finding out how the system works. The ‘game’ helps participants gain an insight into how to deal with complex situations which, in this case, are complex security issues. Some of the insights that can come out of the debrief include:

- ▶ This system cannot be understood or controlled from the outside. One must step into the system and engage with those involved to see the whole.
- ▶ To understand the behaviour of a system, one has to watch it in action over time. A single snapshot will not help.
- ▶ Every group or community has its own dynamics. One cannot immediately understand what is happening and present a solution from the outside.
- ▶ One needs to consult people from the inside.





Developing a long-term vision and designing a project

In this part of the envisioning component, we move away from the issues at stake and analyzing them further, towards imagining a different future. A structured way for doing so is the Theory of Change (ToC) method. Anderson (2009) offers a very useful guide explaining the ToC process.

The ToC method helps participants focus on their long-term goal while developing their initiatives for change. The process of developing a ToC allows for the creation of strategic and innovative initiatives. This is done through a ‘backward planning’ process: participants start with identifying their long-term goal and from there go on to identify what the intermediate changes at multiple levels need to be in order to get there.

There is a lot of material available on this topic, which one should spell out depending on the participant group.

Some participants are interested in knowing all the ins and outs, whereas others want to plan an initiative straight away. It is not necessary to know ‘everything’ about the ToC to come up with a ToC. Relevant references can be shared with participants to give them a chance to delve into the topic should they wish to do so, without making it a pre-condition for developing a ToC.

It is possible to explain the concept of the ToC in a fun and simple manner, and to make clear the distinctions between the long-term goal, the outcomes, the outputs and the activities. Participants can then practice developing the basics of a ToC pathway themselves, from the long-term goal to the outcome (s), to the output(s) to the activities. This also helps them think critically through their ideas on the change they envisage and how that is likely to happen. On the next page you will find some examples developed by the Tunisian mentors.



Long-term Goal	The use of verbal violence among youth is reduced in the neighbourhoods	
Outcomes	Mentees organize structured conversational processes in an informal setting in their own neighbourhoods	
Outputs	Mentees are empowered with communication skills	Mentees have the knowledge and skills to facilitate conversational processes
Activities	Training of Trainers of mentees in facilitation of structured conversational processes in an informal setting	

Long-term Goal	The desire to migrate irregularly to Europe is reduced among the youth in the neighbourhoods	
Outcomes	Youth /mentees are proud of their neighbourhood	
Outputs	The neighbourhood is clean	The neighbourhood has nicely decorated areas /is embellished
Activities	Cleaning campaign	Painting the stairs

Long-term Goal	Co-existence among youth from the two different neighbourhoods	
Outcomes	Youth from both neighbourhoods start interacting with each other	
Outputs	Youth/mentees from both neighbourhoods have gained insight that they are alike	Youth /mentees from both neighbourhoods have gained insight that they live like each other
Activities	- Developing a video with the mentees - Broadcasting the video during an event for the mentees from both neighborhoods	

**Mentor:** The Theory of Change helped me and my colleague to dream of a long-term goal. It was about co-existence in the neighbourhood, which of course is an impossible goal to attain within the lifetime of this project. Then we thought about what we wanted to achieve as an outcome, a goal which is realistic to obtain within the lifetime of this project. We gave it some thought and then we wrote: ‘to build communication between teenagers from the two neighbourhoods’.

**Mentor:** When we were doing the workshop, I found the theory and the concepts of outcome and output difficult to understand. But in the practical phase, it became easier. We defined what our aim was and what we wanted to achieve and developed the steps that we had to undertake.

**Mentor:** What I learned from the ToC exercise was logical thinking, that the cause of a problem could be the consequence of something else. So you have to have a whole chain that you take into account in order to attain your short-term goal.



The ToC is a very open process in which different pathways towards the long-term goal can be identified (edX, 2018). This allows mentors to take into consideration that they are part of a larger picture, in which other stakeholders and factors may influence the long-term goal. This brings us to another important exercise with regards to designing initiatives: the stakeholder analysis.

**Mentor:** What I learnt is that there should be coordination between us and likeminded stakeholders because we could both be working to achieve the same aim, but each one of us is working by himself. And if we would work together we could achieve the aim more quickly and with better results.

**Stakeholder analysis**

At this stage of developing initiatives it is important to introduce the need to conduct a stakeholder analysis to make participants more aware of the fact that they need to think of building partnerships with key stakeholders in their community as well as to identify stakeholders who might be possible spoilers. Force Field Analysis (FFA)<sup>4</sup> is a good way of carrying out such a stakeholder analysis. Another exercise<sup>5</sup>, which might be combined with FFA, enables participants to think about the differences between their ‘circle of concern’, their ‘circle of influence’ and their ‘circle of control’. This exercise helps them place the initiative being designed within their circle of influence. Furthermore, the tool can help participants reflect on how they can increase their circle of influence by engaging other stakeholders.

Prevention-oriented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- How is your initiative empowering teenagers?</li><li>- How is your initiative addressing drivers that create vulnerabilities to violent extremism?</li></ul>
Context-specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- How is your initiative addressing the needs of local young people?</li><li>- How is your initiative design taking into account the perceptions of security that are specific for the context you are working in?</li></ul>
Comprehensive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- How have different types of security concerns (community security, political security, economic security etc.) been taken into account in the analysis that informs your initiative?</li><li>- How does the initiative take into account the local, national, regional and international influences on PVE?</li></ul>
People-centred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- How is your initiative design taking into account the perceptions, ideas and ambitions of the diverse teenagers in your neighborhood?</li></ul>
Multi-sectoral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- How have you involved diverse stakeholders in your approach?</li><li>- How is your initiative contributing to the gap between the ‘traditional’ security providers and young people/the community?</li></ul>

**Tip:** Encourage participants to start their initiative even though it may not be perfectly written down. The local organization is there to support and coach the mentors whilst they are implementing their initiatives, so that they can reflect on what went well and what needs to be improved from the very beginning.

**2.1.6 Finalizing the design of Human Security initiatives**

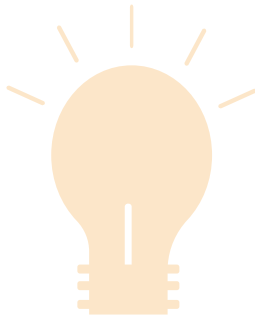
Once the basics of the ToC are clear, participants can start finalizing the design of their initiatives, which is what they will work on going forward. As such, they need to ensure that they include: their long-term goal, the outcome(s), the output(s) and the activit(y)(ies). It is also helpful to have them reflect on how their initiative relates to PVE.

After the mentors have developed their basic ideas, it is useful to create a setting in which different groups exchange their ideas with each other, an exercise that enriches and sharpens the ideas presented. Think, for example, of making use of a World Café setting. World Café is a methodology in which people are brought together to have collaborative dialogue on issues that matter for their real work, all in a café setting (the World Café, 2015). As described by the developers: “The World Café is based on the assumption that people already have within them the wisdom and creativity to confront even the most difficult challenges; that the answers we need are available to us; and that we are wiser together than we are alone.” (The World Café, 2015: 1)

Ensure that participants further sharpen the design of their initiatives by asking **HOW** the Human Security principles have been applied in the design of their initiatives, making use of the guiding questions in the overview on page 34.

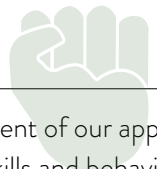
**2.1.7 Involving mentees in the envisioning process**

As you encourage mentors to apply Human Security principles in their initiatives with mentees, it is important for them to be able to facilitate conversations with their mentees on their perception on Human Security in the neighbourhood and to also involve them in (further) developing the initiatives. Encourage participants to use the tools they benefitted from during the envisioning process. For instance, a mind map exercise on ‘Security in the neighbourhood’ might be a useful one to also conduct with mentees as it allows mentors to see security from the mentees’ viewpoint (see page 26). You can also explore the subject through drawing sessions, story-sharing and facilitated dialogue. The communication methodologies which we will touch upon in the following ‘Empowering’ component of this handbook will come in useful here.



**Tip:** An important point to keep in mind when exploring Human Security issues with mentees is the need to make the language accessible for all. This can be done, for example, by talking about safety in one’s community.

## 2.2. Empowering



The second, parallel component of our approach is **Empowerment**, where the skills and behaviour of young people to grow in their role as mentor and communicate in a collaborative way are built. The latter serves them well in their role as mentors as they become better equipped to have meaningful conversations with their younger peers, and are able to empathize with and listen more appreciatively to their concerns without judgement. It also prepares mentors to address their grievances and put forward their solutions to (security) stakeholders. In our approach, having a fruitful conversation with security stakeholders can only take place after youth have envisioned for themselves what is required in their neighbourhoods. We shall elaborate more on this in the next section (2.3) on **Engaging**. However, youth need to prepare themselves well for this type of engagement because it is not easy to talk with security stakeholders about (perceived) grievances. This takes time, given the need to build trust and empower youth with communication skills to address their grievances in a way that creates a safe space to have a meaningful conversation.

Prior to discussing some of the communication techniques needed to enhance the communication skills of mentors, we shall first introduce a methodology that is well-suited to helping participants grow into their role as mentors to their younger peers.

### 2.2.1 The Presence Approach

The Presence Approach, a methodology initially designed for social workers, was introduced by Prof. Dr. Andries Baart (2002), and is about being there for others without directly feeling the urge to solve their problems. We find it important to make a clear distinction between mentors and professional youth workers in that sense. Whereas youth workers are specialized in identifying vulnerable marginalized youth and helping them solve their problems together with specialists, we see the role of mentors in the field as one of being there to listen and empathize with the needs of their younger peers. For some of the participants, this might be a new role they are taking on, while for others, it could be their natural way of relating to others. This is why it is useful to conduct a session where you allow participants to have an open discussion about this<sup>6</sup>. You may ask some leading questions such as: How would you establish contact with teenagers and how would you identify those most vulnerable? How would you offer support? How would you build trust? How would you deal with radicalizing teenagers?

What should be emphasized is the informal nature of the interaction with younger peers. And though this interaction may, in the beginning, be limited, you can, as a mentor, build a longstanding, trusting relationship with your mentees over time. The essence of this methodology is to establish a non-interventionist relationship. What is needed for mentors to grow into this role is patience, unconditional attentiveness, the winning of trust and the effective handling of difficult questions and critical moments in the lives of the teenagers. The Presence Approach focusses on building trust through listening to the stories of mentees in an empathic way. The point of entry is through establishing initiatives in the neighbourhood.

#### Boundaries of mentorship

Within the Human Security approach, being a mentor means organizing regular activities with a group of mentees, listening to them, communicating in a positive way and motivating them. The mentor aims to make the mentees feel comfortable and safe. The relationship that grows between the mentor and the mentee is built on trust, a trust that is fostered through regular encounters between the mentor and the group of mentees where principles of Human Security and human rights are adapted in the treatment of one another. This trust which

**Mentor:** One of the mentees, who had been in the project since the start stopped coming to the activities at the Institute. I called her to ask her if she was ok. She said everything was fine. Every time I called her she said that she was going to come to the activities at the Institute. And yet she wouldn't. One day she finally came. I went with her, we went to the rooftop and I took the time to spend some time alone with her; talk and listen. She told me about the situation at home; her mother had started to work and her brother was sick and needed surgery. The young girl was receiving a lot less attention at home and she was feeling that they didn't love her anymore. But we talked it through. We only talked for half an hour but I made her change her mind and she started coming to the activities again. I continued asking her how she was doing and after a while she told me that I was right and that she had imagined all of it.

is built will allow the mentees to confide in the mentor and discuss with the mentor or the group what causes him/her to feel insecure, to be afraid, and what lies at the root of his/her feelings of hopelessness. Mentors need the skills and support to take on this role, though given the limited nature of the role, they also have to learn not to take everything on. For example, for the more sensitive, personal issues such as sexual, physical or verbal violence, the mentor should seek advice from a youth worker at a local organization. In these particular cases, the teenager might be in need of specialized help which the mentor is often not equipped to provide. A mentor might avoid or feel inadequate when he/she comes across issues such as these, which is why it needs to be dealt with in your programme. One should also be aware that mentors

might feel overloaded with a sense of responsibility, which might also lead to a feeling of powerlessness, again making it essential, therefore, to discuss this with the participants. A workshop where mentors have the space to talk about these experiences with their peers is helpful to understand one's limitations and ways of addressing these concerns/difficult situations. At the same time, mentors should also be encouraged to be honest and open with their mentees on what can be expected of them.

As mentioned above, communication techniques that help participants become better equipped to be a mentor are a main aspect of our approach. We shall explain further why we find these techniques essential and provide you with some good references to further invest in these techniques.

**Mentor:** There was a mentee who asked me once: 'You are always talking about the problems in the neighbourhood, but when are you going to fix them?' I told her I was not the one who was going to resolve problems: 'You have to start'. So the teenager said: 'You are a grown-up and you couldn't fix them so how am I going to do that as a child?'. I didn't know what to say.



**AIHR on relation-building between mentors and mentees:** On the basis of the workshops, the mentors began applying the values of the project in the activities with the mentees. The activities were diverse and included drawing, games with an analytical component, dancing, sport, watching movies and discussing them. A relation of trust developed between the mentors and mentees. The mentors started implementing activities outside of our centre, such as visiting parks or going to the museum or a football game. Parents were then also included and given the opportunity to accompany their children and exchange views with the mentors.



**Tip:** Encourage participants to set up activities with the mentees on a regular and continuous basis in order to strengthen the relationship between the mentor and mentee. This is to build further on what has been achieved, increasing the impact of the project and the resilience of the teenagers.

## 2.2.2 Communication techniques to arrive at a common understanding

### Non-Violent Communication (NVC)

Non-Violent Communication<sup>7</sup> (NVC) is one of the techniques that we have found beneficial in making sure that the ‘needs’ on both sides are being expressed, and in a constructive manner. Developed at the beginning of the sixties by Marshall Rosenberg, important concepts in NVC are self-empathy, empathy and honest self-expression. NVC is based on the assumption that conflict occurs because the strategies people use to communicate their needs clash, not the actual needs<sup>8</sup>. NVC uses four steps to facilitate this process<sup>9</sup>.

Non-Violent Communication techniques can be introduced and practised with each other in a workshop setting. There is a lot of supporting material available online. Depending on the time and the group one is working with, you can decide on the balance between introducing the theory and the practice itself. We highly recommend including a part that allows for role-play<sup>10</sup>.

### Appreciative Listening

Appreciative Listening (Janse, 2018) is another communication technique we use for empowering mentors, as we believe that mentees’ stories about concerns in their lives matter deeply. We find this technique, to purely listen without trying to form ideas and reactions that are based on one’s own perception,

essential to our approach. This technique is very helpful in attempting to better understand what a mentee is trying to say.

You may want to build in some time to practice this<sup>11</sup>. As a facilitator you can request that participants split up in pairs and listen appreciatively to each other by providing a guiding question such as: “What is your perception of safety in your neighbourhood?” After having listened for five minutes, you may instruct the participants who have been in an Appreciative Listening position, to tell the wider group what they have heard the other person say. In this way, it helps participants understand the need to listen to someone else’s story in an attentive way without judging the contents of that story or feeling the need to start a conversation.

### Deep Democracy

The concept of Deep Democracy<sup>12</sup> was developed by Arnold Mindell. It is an attitude that focusses on an awareness of voices that are both central and marginal. We find this methodology very useful to include in our approach as it helps prepare for an engagement strategy. In the words of Myrna Lewis, it helps people “to lean into situations where there are differences of opinion and tension and say what needs to be said rather than asserting power and rank, silencing others or being silenced by them and then, avoiding issues and withdrawing.” (Deep Democracy, (n.d.)) In other words, this method is about gaining the wisdom of all sides and,



**Mentor:** The session about the importance of Appreciative Listening helped us a lot in dealing with children. We learned to listen to them and learned more about the issues and problems they wanted to discuss. So, when the mentees mention a fight that took place in the neighbourhood, we first listen attentively before discussing it together; who was involved?; and why did it take place? All from the viewpoint of the mentees. This way, we also learned more about our mentees and the neighbourhoods they live in.



therefore, highly beneficial to any form of engagement with non-like-minded stakeholders.

There are three levels of Deep Democracy in terms of how reality is perceived (Achtcoaching, 2016). Unlike 'classical' democracy, which focusses on majority rule, Deep Democracy suggests that all voices, states of awareness and frameworks of reality are important. Mindell introduces three awareness levels, which he calls consensus reality level, dreamland level and essence level. Consensus reality deals with the commonly-agreed-upon concepts of reality. Deep Democracy, however, suggests that we also take on board the dreamland level: there will be many things happening in a group that often go unnoticed, or an atmosphere of unresolved issues, and this level acknowledges those dynamics and those feelings. Once we become more aware of things such as previously unrecognized body signals or roles or energies in the group, the process of engagement becomes more fluid and new opportunities arise. Then we arrive at the third, essence level, where one can reach common ground, and in which people feel connected to each other.

Different exercises are available that will help you clarify the essence of Deep Democracy, with the Shoe Shuffle exercise<sup>13</sup> being one that we recommend. This exercise can be carried out around community themes that are known to be sensitive or controversial. For instance, the issue of foreign fighter returnees, surveillance by the police, etc. Think of a few instances such as these before-hand, and ask participants to provide an opinion, seeing whether others are willing to take a step closer once they hear a convincing argument being made. This exercise can also be used to introduce the concept of Deep Democracy.

For role-play, we refer to a practical example explaining the five steps to inclusive decision-making (Compassion to

Lead, 2017). Ask for volunteers to enter into a decision-making process. Request one participant to take on the role of facilitator. Discuss with participants the meta-skills needed to facilitate the discussion so everyone becomes aware of the fact that the facilitator needs to practice neutrality and compassion, allowing all voices to be heard.

The appointed facilitator practices the following five-steps to inclusive decision making:

**Step 1:** Collects all views, so allows for the participants to express themselves and explain their perspectives.

**Step 2:** Explicitly asks for feelings that have not yet been mentioned. Stresses the importance of putting everything on the table. Watches out for an opinion that differs from the majority. Makes it safe for that person to express him- or herself.

**Step 3:** Asks who can empathize with what has been said by others. Summarizes the perspective of the majority.

**Step 4:** Incorporates the wisdom of the minority by asking: What would it take for you to agree with the majority perspective? What can we add to the solution of the majority to accommodate the minority? Tries to incorporate as much as possible.

**Step 5:** Finally, makes a decision by asking everyone to raise their hands in agreement.

In a Deep Democracy approach, step five can be further explored by stepping into exercises that dive into the undercurrent. This, however, requires further training with a recognized institute and, therefore, cannot be tackled within the scope of our approach. Practicing the five-step methodology through role play is, however, very helpful in preparing your participants for an engagement with security stakeholders.

**Tip:** For the role play exercise, you can think of a meeting which is going to take place in your neighbourhood, such as a meeting to discuss safety in your community or one in which a decision needs to be taken on a sensitive topic. Say, for instance, the authorities want to install more cameras in the playground. Think of roles to be played. Here are a few suggestions: the role of teacher, the role of parent, the role of police officer, the role of a politician and the role of youth. Ask participants to prepare for their role prior to the meeting taking place. Other participants may observe what is being played out. Of course, the facilitator can step in whenever needed to remind participants of their roles and of the purpose of the role play.



## 2.3 Engaging

The third pillar, **Engaging**, follows on from Envisioning and Empowering as by now the participants in the programme are implementing initiatives and have grown in their role as mentors. They have also gained collaborative communication skills and more insight into the issues at stake in their communities. In a nutshell, they are ready to take the next step. However, we advise that you only step into the Engaging component when the participants themselves feel ready for it.

In our vision, addressing VE requires the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders, including: the state at multiple levels, the community and civil society organizations including young women and men. Each stakeholder is one piece of a much larger puzzle.

Serious involvement of young people as part of that larger picture is, however, often lacking in policymaking on security. This despite the fact that these policies affect young people's lives as well as sometimes explicitly seeing young people as a security problem. More generally, research shows that young people all over the world feel detached from decision-making processes and their

governments (Simpson, 2018). It is in that context that we try to integrate the interaction between youth and multiple levels of policymaking, with an emphasis on policymaking on security. The engagement of participants with security stakeholders therefore gets particular attention in this section.

Our engagement approach focusses on opening communication lines and building trust between stakeholders that are not like-minded and do not interact regularly, so that important issues can be discussed. Furthermore, it is about creating links between the participants of the project and other stakeholders who are part of that broader picture. Last but not least, it is about facilitating a process in which participants of the project can share their insights, ideas, questions and ambitions with other stakeholders. In this chapter, we will shed light on how you can facilitate sessions to prepare and facilitate participants' engagement with other (security) stakeholders. Before doing that, we will delve more specifically into the relationship between civil society, including young people, and security policymakers.



**Mentor:** I was part of the youth delegation who would speak at a side event at the United Nations in New York in June 2018. My role as a panellist attending the side event was to share with policymakers my views concerning what was most important: Human Security. It was a very unique experience because we got to share our experiences at the international level, and we stressed the need for national and international assistance to develop our work. I never expected to be in the UN presenting the project and sitting with diplomats and representatives from different organizations.

### 2.3.1 Different approaches on security

Civil society and young people may have a different role and responsibility from government when it comes to addressing VE. The young people in this project work on a Human Security approach to PVE. But what this entails, and how it fits in with the bigger picture of different approaches in dealing with VE, needs to be discussed with the participants. We offer you a visual that might come in handy when preparing such a session (see the triangle on page 43).

At the top of the triangle, one finds the short-term, Counter Terrorism (CT), approach, which involves hard security measures and is based on an 'isolation paradigm' in which individuals implicated in terrorism and terrorist organizations are contained through a targeted approach. It is an approach in which the state is central. At the bottom of the triangle, one finds the long-term PVE approach, in which a wide range of actors including communities, civil society (including young women/men as well as religious leaders, local associations,

etc.) and different governmental stakeholders develop resilience and address the 'underlying drivers that create vulnerabilities to VE' (UNDP and International Alert, 2018: 16). In the middle of the figure is the Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) approach, which involves soft security measures, but it still a more targeted approach than PVE.

The different actors and approaches in this visual relate to and impact each other. Some tensions exist, however, that need to be taken into account:

- ▶ CT is based on isolation, whereas PVE approaches are based on Peacebuilding and Human Security, requiring an inclusive approach. The repressive measures of CT have impacted the space for civil society to work in certain areas or with certain individuals/organizations.
- ▶ Respect for human rights is crucial to a human-centred and long-term approach on PVE, something which is not always the case with CT/CVE approaches.
- ▶ A trust deficit can exist between citizens and the security apparatus: how does work with security

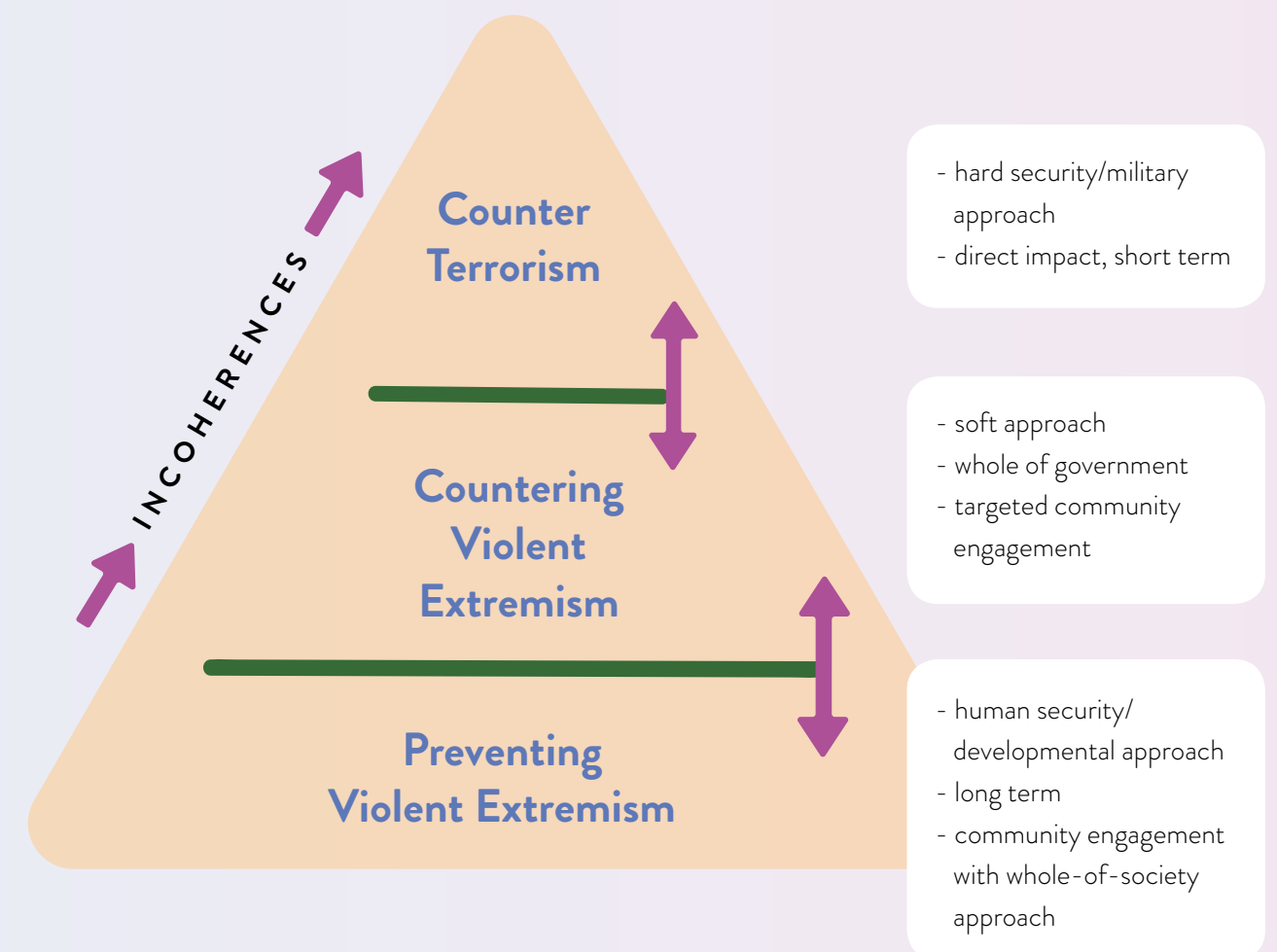
stakeholders impact civil society's trust among the communities they work in or are part of?

- ▶ Not all civil society work should be framed in security terms. A tendency can exist to instrumentalize civil society to achieve preventive or repressive objectives in order to push back on VE.
- ▶ There are a lot of other objectives that civil society works on, independently of whether these are relevant to the PVE/CVE/CT agendas.
- ▶ Different approaches exist within the different labels, which might lead to some contradictions. Therefore, it is important to have a critical view on the work actually done under the PVE, CVE and CT labels.

To prepare for an engagement between young people and security stakeholders, it is important to discuss with the participants how the three approaches (PVE, CVE and

CT) relate in their context, given that the relationship between government/security stakeholders and civil society varies by country and locality.

For effective PVE work based on Human Security, it is important that young people's views and ideas on security are taken into account by policymakers. It can give policymakers an insight into how their policies are experienced and perceived by young people, and how some measures might be counterproductive. It also gives young people a chance to share with policymakers the issues that are important to them, and what their perspectives and concerns on those issues are. On the other hand, through such engagement, young people can also gain more insight into the perspectives and imperatives of the state. A more constructive relationship could thus be developed.





### 2.3.2 Methods that are useful for familiarizing participants with engagement strategies

In the following paragraphs, we will discuss how you can familiarize participants with the process of engaging with (security) stakeholders. Communication techniques such as Appreciative Listening and NVC, that participants have learned in previous phases of the project, are helpful for this kind of engagement. It would be useful to remind participants of these methods.

#### Learning from case studies

A helpful way to introduce an engagement strategy to participants is to use an example. You can develop a case study based on your own organization's experience, or use an example from another context. For example, we have used case studies from our work in the Netherlands, Mali and Nigeria where we have experienced how civil society in marginalized areas, including young leaders, have reached out to authorities to have their perspectives heard and think collectively about how to address the issues at play in their community, including radicalization that leads to VE. In these kind of case studies, make sure that you include some history of and give some context to the engagement, and speak about the objective of the

engagement process, the way it was gone about, as well as the outcomes. Include some reflection on what went well and what was challenging. An example of such a case study, based on HSC's work on engagement with the Financial Action Task Force, is on page 45.

On the basis of these case studies, a session can be prepared in which mentors go through the case study/ studies in small groups and discuss certain questions. Do a recap after, in which groups share their main findings. Questions on whether communication techniques such as NVC were applied in these case studies, or could have been applied, may also be included in the debrief.

#### Practice an engagement strategy

Practicing engagement strategies can be a good way to familiarize participants with the process of engagement with (non-like-minded) stakeholders, and also a good way to practice skills such as NVC (or other communication techniques) in a safe setting. One way of doing that is making use of role play. There are role play exercises available online<sup>14</sup>. You can also develop this yourself, making use of a case study of a context in which radicalization and VE have taken place. You can present some background to the context and on the policies that were developed and measures taken in response.



# CASE STUDY

## An engagement strategy

The Work of the Global NPO Coalition on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

### Background

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body which researches how criminals launder money and terrorist organizations raise and access funds. It lays down the global standard by setting out 40 Recommendations which countries need to implement in order to ensure the integrity of their financial system and economy, thereby protecting it from threats of money laundering and the financing of terrorism. Over 190 countries have committed to implementing the standard.

One of FATF's 40 Recommendations, Recommendation 8, is entirely about non-profit organizations (NPOs). This Recommendation, as was originally set out, stated that NPOs were 'particularly vulnerable' to abuse for the financing of terrorism, setting out a broad requirement for governments to regulate the non-profit sector as a whole, thereby increasing the transparency and accountability of the NPO sector to prevent it from being abused for terrorist purposes.

However, the 'particular vulnerability' designation of the NPO sector was not based on adequate evidence, and the broad range of rules and restrictions for NPOs that several governments have issued as a result of Recommendation 8 and the resulting discourse on NPOs has had numerous unintended consequences and led to cases of overregulation. For NPOs, this has resulted in, among other things, onerous registration and licencing requirements, difficulties in accessing and distributing financial resources, and increased state surveillance. In short, it has led to the shrinking of the operational environment for civil society.

### Engagement strategy

NPOs needed to act. It was decided from the very beginning that a combative advocacy strategy (such as setting up an 'FATF Watch'-style group) would be counterproductive and possibly not help improve the situation for civil society, given such a strategy is likely to close doors, leaving little scope for influence. A strategy focused on engagement would probably be more fruitful, it was felt, enabling policies to be shaped from the inside. The fact that many diverse actors are involved in the FATF process was considered. Getting a constructive, multi-stakeholder dialogue going would be most productive, given the context.

In 2013, the then FATF President recognized the sector's concerns and saw value in dialogue with the sector. The conditions were right for engagement to follow. The Global NPO Coalition on FATF was set up: a loose network of diverse NPOs that works to reduce the negative (often unintended) impact of the FATF Recommendations on civil society. The Coalition engages in constructive dialogue with the FATF Secretariat and FATF member countries to mitigate the potential for overregulation. Awareness of the FATF and its processes is also raised among national governments and local civil society. Furthermore, the coalition is engaging with many other stakeholders relevant to the process (such as banks, Financial Intelligence Units, the FATF Style Regional Bodies, the World Bank, etc.), bringing them together around the table in many cases.

### Results brought about by the engagement strategy:

- Revision of Recommendation 8: the June 2016 revision takes out the claim that the NPO sector is 'particularly vulnerable' to terrorist abuse.
- The new wording of Recommendation 8 acknowledges that not all NPOs are at risk. The direction towards a risk-based approach means a move towards a more proportionate and context-specific implementation of the FATF standard.
- Recognition of the Global NPO Coalition by the FATF and regular engagement between NPOs and FATF.
- Awareness-raising and coalition-building at the global, regional and national level.

### Answer the following questions:

- Why do you think the Coalition chose to engage with the FATF rather than protest against its practice and policies?
- What conditions are required to make an engagement strategy successful?



Set out different roles for participants taking part in a multi-stakeholder meeting on certain issues occurring in the role-play neighbourhood. The stakeholders hold different positions and viewpoints with regard to what has been happening. The roles and instructions should be laid out on separate sheets of paper, so that participants read only about the role they will play. The group then starts with the actual engagement process, following the instructions on the sheet. Depending on the size of the group, you can have some people observe and look at specific things such as the use of NVC.

Try to overcome the participants' focus on the 'role' and not on the engagement strategy itself, by trying to make the experience as real as possible, avoiding stereotyping the people being played. It is less about acting and more

about actually engaging and experiencing the situation as a person (Happ, 2016). As a facilitator, you can carefully intervene and make suggestions if, for example, the multi-stakeholder meeting process gets stuck. Think for example about changing the way the stakeholders sit (how have they positioned the chairs?, and to what extent does this encourage an open and equal dialogue?).

After the role play, make sure a debrief takes place. The debrief is important both for participants to air their feelings on the experience, as well as for reflecting and learning from how this engagement went. Ask open questions about the different perceptions in the room, whether participants were able to listen to each other, whether it was possible to find common ground and how participants feel about the process.



### The 'Human Security Challenge' board game.

Apart from using role play, HSC has also made use of 'The Human Security Challenge' board game it has developed to practice engagement with mentors in the project. The game takes place on a board that symbolizes a virtual world. Six fictive nations invest in security and aim to gain the most power by the end of the last round. The dynamics are similar to issues that world leaders grapple with: limited resources, crises, conflicts and international negotiations. The players face crucial trade-offs between long-term stability and short-term national interests. By playing the game, participants gain an improved understanding of the complexity of security issues, helping them reflect on how they, as individuals, make decisions and position themselves in relation to each other. The debrief that follows the game encourages an appreciation of the benefits of mutual cooperation and of long-term sustainability.

### 2.3.3 Preparations and conditions for the actual meeting of participants and stakeholders

#### Participatory preparations

Before planning an actual meeting, try and see whether participants are willing to engage with certain stakeholders, and discuss with them what their interests are. What do they want to get out of the meeting? When meeting government stakeholders, mentors might have an interest in a specific department related to their concerns/questions. As an organization, you can support and facilitate the engagement process by inviting stakeholders, providing the setting, etc. However, it is important to keep the participants involved as much as possible to ensure ownership on their side.

Think also about whether some of the challenges that we mentioned before, about civil society engagement with security stakeholders, are relevant for engagement with particular stakeholders in the context. The trust relationship with stakeholders should be taken into account. Do not force participants to engage with stakeholders with whom they have a very tense relationship. Think through the choosing of stakeholders with an awareness of sensitivities in the local context and in consultation with the participants.

#### Preparing a detailed agenda, delineating roles and setting up for the meeting

Once the stakeholders and the general objective of the meeting have been agreed upon with the group, and you have an idea of who will be attending, make sure you think through:

1. The agenda,
2. The role division, and
3. The setting of the meeting.

It is important to prepare for the meeting in a participatory manner, with everyone being aware of the ins and outs in advance.

To prepare the agenda, have participants brainstorm in small groups about what they want to get out of the particular meeting, knowing now in more detail who the attendees are. Also, have participants think through particular experiences, insights and questions that they might want to share. Facilitate a process in which participants brainstorm about such questions in smaller groups, after which a plenary recap can take place. From

**Tip:** In our experience, along with preparing the youth for these multi-stakeholder meetings, advance preparations with invited stakeholders can also help. They can be familiarized with where the young people come from and what some of their issues are in order to create some prior understanding. It can also help the authorities with deciding who the right persons are to bring to the table in order to engage with the concerns that the youth express.

here, a more detailed agenda can be crystallized. When preparing this agenda, make sure time is reserved both for a 'getting to know each other' session at the beginning, as well as for follow-up Q&As/discussions at the end. Do consult the other stakeholders on the meeting agenda as well.

After having developed the agenda, participants will also have a better idea about what kind of role they would like to take during the meeting. Maybe a certain mentor would like to introduce the project. Or maybe they would prefer that the facilitating organization do that, and that they would like to just add to the introduction. In certain meetings, participants could, if they wish, take on a (co-)facilitation role. However, in an initial or sensitive meeting in which the objective is to build trust among (security) stakeholders and youth, it might be better to have a non-participant, for example someone belonging to one of the organizations but not part of

the project, facilitate the meeting. Do make sure that someone with experience of this type of sensitive meeting (co-)facilitates. This should be taken into consideration while dividing tasks.

When thinking about the setting, think somewhere along the continuum between informal and formal. A too-formal setting can intimidate, besides creating an atmosphere in which statement after statement is made and there is no actual interaction. Of course, expectations on the side of the government representatives also need to be taken into account. Communicating in advance with them about the setting of the meeting can be useful here. This can be done by the organization facilitating the project. Go through the setting of the meeting together, and give mentors space to react and co-define the setting. Explain certain choices if they have already been made.

It can be good to opt for a space, if available, in the neighbourhood that the young people are familiar with, for example a meeting room in the offices of the local organization. In other situations, a more neutral setting is needed. This depends on the local context.

The seating arrangement should also be thought through. For example, we tend to opt for arrangements in which the authorities present sit with the others in a circle. This creates a setting in which all stakeholders can interact on a more equal basis. Again, expectations can and should be managed by communicating about this in advance. Setting certain ground rules, for example, the 'Chatham House rule', might also be helpful for facilitating an open conversation with certain stakeholders.

### Follow up

Make sure a follow-up meeting is planned with the youth after a stakeholder meeting has taken place. That way, they can share their experience, and discuss how to go forward. Some participants may be relieved after the experience and others may be unhappy: it is good to give them a chance to address this and 'air' their feelings. Furthermore, it is important to support participants in their plans to follow up with the stakeholders.

Alongside meetings with the whole group of mentors, participants might have their own engagement processes with certain stakeholders, focussed on their own initiatives. It could be that such meetings follow on from the group meeting. Mentors can initiate these themselves, or with support from the local organization involved in the support and coaching of mentors. As facilitating organizations, it is important to assist the process while also giving participants the space to take the initiative and co-create the process. Furthermore, it is important to support the participants in their meetings by helping them with the relevant skills and knowledge so that they can engage in a fruitful collaboration.

### AIHR about supporting participants in approaching stakeholders:

Mentors had a training on engaging stakeholders with HSC, but they needed some follow-up from AIHR when it came to practice. Mentors started to approach stakeholders through different means of communication, and some of them asked AIHR to intervene when it came to stakeholders already partnering with the Institute.





HSC has, together with partner organizations, facilitated four international exchange visits between 2016 and 2018, with Tunisian mentors travelling to the Netherlands, or Dutch mentors to Tunisia. In either case, the group of mentors travelled with representatives from the local organization supporting and coaching them in their work. These exchange visits have been week-long and have included different programmatic elements. Mentors have got a chance to explore the neighbourhood where their peers work, and learn from each other's initiatives with teenagers. For example, during one of these exchange visits, a football game with local teenagers was organized, inspired by the vision/ambition of one of the visiting mentors. Mentors have also met with other stakeholders such as social workers, community police officers, religious leaders, etc., as well as visited arenas such as schools, etc., all of whom/which play a role in building youth resilience/ Human Security. Furthermore, mentors have, during these visits, met with authorities (municipal or national) to learn about policies that address VE in another context. Throughout the week these kinds of activities would be interspersed with other activities, including sightseeing and free time.

## 2.4 Exchange



Besides engaging with key stakeholders in their community, our fourth component is **Exchange**, which invests in peer-to-peer learning between youth (and other stakeholders) from different contexts. Experiencing another context can help youth reflect anew on their own context and, in some instances, understand it better. We suggest three programmatic elements for an exchange: the **first** is learning from peers, both about their context and on how they perceive it, as well as on their approach to work on resilience and Human Security. This can inspire participants to adapt ideas to their own context. The **second** element is to meet other stakeholders in that context so as to gain insight into the broader system of that context, and into different perceptions on security as well as into a diversity of approaches to PVE. The **third** element is to learn about the other country's governmental approaches (National Action Plans) to address VE and how that plays out at the local (municipal) level.

For each element we will suggest activities and methodologies which you can use to design an exchange component for your programme. Furthermore, we will share some dos and don'ts while organizing an exchange with the participants in your programme.

While the last element, to learn from National Action Plans on PVE of other countries, requires visiting another country, other elements can be facilitated in a(n) (possibly easier to organize) 'in-country' exchange. Travelling to another country can take youth out of their comfort zone, thereby creating a different kind of learning experience. However, there is also a lot to learn from youth and stakeholders inside one's own country. We recommend you think creatively about the possibilities for your organization in facilitating an exchange with youth in your country, youth from neighbouring countries or youth from a country even further away.

### 2.4.1 Learning from peers

An important element of your programme could be for the participants to meet young people in another context, which could be another municipality in your country, a neighbouring country or a country which is even further away. Preferably, these youth will also be active on Human Security issues, building youth resilience and/or working on PVE in their community. This exchange should, on the one hand, be about learning about the other context: about young people's perceptions on security in their community, and about their views on conditions conducive to VE there. On the other, the exchange should also be about learning from the approach taken in the work in that context, and becoming inspired and being able to adapt that to one's own context. Below are some useful methods to facilitate the exchange.

#### Appreciative listening to get to know each other

When bringing young people from two contexts together, it is important to find a suitable way to enable them to get to know each other. Appreciative listening is a helpful method. Bring participants together in a meeting room and divide them in pairs, one from each context. In case you do not have an equal number, you can play around with that format and make bigger groups. Guiding questions could be: 'What is your motivation to work on building youth resilience in your community?' and 'What would you like to get out of this exchange?' While doing this, participants apply 'appreciative listening' (see page 39). The facilitator should give clear instructions on the length of the introductions. The idea is that once they have had the chance to talk to each other informally, based on the guiding questions, they get to introduce the other person in their pair in plenary.

**Project Coordinator, AIHR:** The exchange left an obvious impact on the Tunisian mentors. It helped renew their motivation towards the work we are doing, since it made them value their work.



**Mentor, on exchange with peers in the Netherlands:** I was constantly thinking about how each experience, the Dutch one and the Tunisian one, had its peculiarities and uniqueness due to the different cultural and politico-economic backgrounds, yet they both somehow have similarities on different levels.

#### A Human Security tour to get to know the local context

A good way of learning about the context of young people in the area being visited, is to ask (a) local youth (organization) to guide the visitors through a 'Human Security Tour' of their neighbourhood. The tour should be prepared by local youth and/or the organization(s) supporting them. They can ensure that the tour includes places where people live, meet, work, shop, pray and go to school. An emphasis should be placed on how young people spend their time in these neighbourhoods, and how they feel about these different places. This could include sharing stories at certain places, so that visiting youth gain more insight into what these places mean for the local youth. The tour can include a visit to a local youth/community centre, guided by the people who run this centre. It should be as interactive as possible, to make it interesting and engaging for the visitors. Preparing some questions in advance for the visiting youth to think about and answer in a debrief session, such as: 'What do you think makes people feel secure and/or insecure in this neighbourhood?', also helps.

Facilitating a debrief session after this Human Security tour is important as a tour such as this inevitably raises observations and questions, and discussing them in the bigger group enriches the experience. The guiding youth/organization should also have a chance to share their perceptions with the group and clarify things from their end.

The safety of local and visiting youth is, of course, an important consideration while organizing such a tour. If this cannot be guaranteed, do not go ahead with it or adjust it so that it can take place in a safe manner. This can only be determined in consultation with the local organization/s and the youth themselves.

#### Facilitate learning from the approaches taken by local youth

Besides contextual learning, you also want learning from each other's approaches to be shared. The best way to facilitate this is to have the visiting youth experience some of the activities organized by local youth (organizations). We recommend having the visiting youth participate or assist local youth in their activities. Make sure this is prepared for in advance. It works best to have participants work in smaller 'teams' together with local youth.

### 2.4.2 Getting to know a diversity of stakeholders and perceptions and/or approaches

#### A meeting with local stakeholders

When holding an exchange with peers in another context and exploring their neighbourhood, an additional activity could be to have them meet other local stakeholders active on youth resilience and Human Security in that neighbourhood. Think, for example, of getting them to meet a community organization, social or youth workers and/or community police officers. Aside from meeting some of these stakeholders during the Human Security tour, a facilitated dialogue could also be organized with these stakeholders to learn more about their perceptions on security in the neighbourhood. This can be helpful in complementing the perceptions of the young people. When organizing this, make sure you consult the local youth, as they also need to be comfortable with a meeting such as this. You do not want this meeting to interfere with or hamper the already-existing local engagement processes.

#### A field visit to a relevant Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)

Another possible exchange activity is to facilitate a field-visit to a relevant NGO willing to do a session with the visiting young leaders to talk about their approach. This organization can be located in an area close to where the participants work or even slightly further away. As an organizer, you should prepare thoroughly with the organization being visited in order to make sure the session will be engaging and interesting for the people in your group. An exchange with practitioners in youth work or social work or another relevant field can be helpful for participants. This is especially the case when participants are allowed to ask questions and bring in situations from their own context, making it essential that the session be as interactive as possible. It is also good to have a diversity of staff members at the meeting, so that participants can learn from their different roles and expertise.

#### A World Café

A good way to facilitate an exchange with several stakeholders at the same time is to organize a World Café (The World Café, 2015). Like the visit to an NGO, this can be facilitated both in-country as well as in another country. When using the World Café format for the exchange component, it is helpful for participants of the World Café to come from different contexts and/or bring in different experiences.

The informal setting of the World Café format, with a small number (we recommend about four to six people per table) at each table, helps create a relaxed, natural and intimate atmosphere.

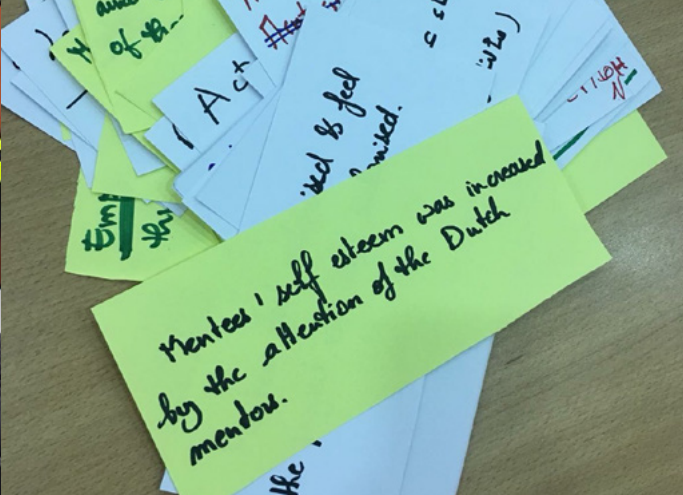
Different kinds of questions can be addressed in a World Café setting during an exchange visit. Think of what will be inspirational for or of value to your groups of mentors. You can think of questions relating to their work methods, or questions relating to the dilemmas that are part and parcel of working on youth resilience, Human Security and PVE. For example:

- ▶ How should security and citizens' freedoms be balanced in the PVE arena?
- ▶ How can state institutions and civil society work together in the domain of PVE?
- ▶ What is the role of youth in PVE?

Participants can be prepared earlier to take on certain roles at their table, for example being a facilitator or a report-writer. The World Café format involves participants moving between tables, thus ensuring that they meet different stakeholders. The minute-taker stays at the same table and reports on what came out of the discussions at their table at the end of the World Café session. It is important to make sure that you have sufficient stakeholders coming to your World Café for the mentors at each table to be able to have an exchange with other, new stakeholders.







### 2.4.3 Learning about how governments address VE

Having gained an insight into how young people, NGOs and other stakeholders perceive security and address VE in their context, it is also relevant to facilitate an exchange with governmental bodies addressing this issue in order to fully complement and round up the participants' exchange experience. Governments of different countries have their own approaches on how they deal with the issue of VE in their countries, and for participants it can be extremely helpful to gain an insight into the national strategy/National Action Plan<sup>15</sup> of another context. It will help them gain insight into state–society relations and how different governments shape their policies on VE. This broadened perspective is helpful for participants to then reflect on their own context. This element, however, does call for an international exchange.

Which governmental body is the most relevant one for participants to meet depends very much on the context. In many countries, municipalities are major actors in addressing VE. When visiting such a country, we recommend arranging a meeting with the municipality, as it will not only shed light on the national policy, but also on its local implications. Municipalities might have made their local policy based on the national one, but adjusted it to the contextual specifics of their municipality. They might be able to present this policy, but also share concrete experiences on working together with other stakeholders (NGOs, social/youth workers, the police, etc.) on addressing radicalization that leads to VE in their area. In some cases, such a meeting could be combined with meeting the municipality's key partners.

Another option is to meet with the relevant national body. In many contexts a national institution (for example a 'National Counter-terrorism Committee') to deal with VE may have been created. This might be a good body to facilitate an exchange with. In comparison to the municipality, they might be able to give more insight into the situation at the national-level, and will be able to present the national policy more fully.

In either case, it is important to prepare with the governmental bodies in advance of the meeting, so that they are aware of who they are meeting and what is expected from them in terms of presenting their policy and having a discussion about it. Making the meeting interactive and ensuring that mentors have the space to share their experience are other important points to take into consideration while making preparations.

#### Mentor, on meeting with Dutch municipality, community police officers and social workers:

I have realized how important it is for government to interfere in the prevention of radicalization of youngsters. Not just non-governmental organizations, but the police also have a great role in preventing extremism and making neighbourhoods peaceful and safe.

### 2.4.4 Closing an exchange with a creative session (collage-making)

Participants have a lot to take in during an exchange, especially when travelling to a new context and meeting a diversity of stakeholders. A good way to facilitate your closing is to have a creative session in which participants make 'collages' of their experience. For this session, you need a big pile of diverse kinds of magazines, out of which participants can cut out text, pictures, etc. which express their experience of the week. Have participants work in small groups of four, for example, and in case both groups (the visiting group and the local group of youth) are present at the closing, make sure you mix them. Instruct them to portray the major insights and experiences of this exchange in a collage. After 30–45 minutes, they come back in a plenary session in which they each have a few minutes to present their collages.

### 2.4.5 Dos and Don'ts

When organizing an exchange, it is important to prepare well and think it through, as well as be prepared for unexpected things to happen. Below are some dos and don'ts that might be useful. Some might be more relevant than others for your specific exchange.

- The exchange is often prepared in cooperation with other organizations. In advance of the exchange, make sure roles and responsibilities for the preparatory phase as well as for the exchange visit are agreed on.
- Prepare youth well for the context they will visit. The preparation should include a session on dos and don'ts in the local context. This is to make sure that participants are aware of local regulations, norms and values, which can then be taken into account in their behaviour.

- Consult youth about the programme set out. What are their ambitions for the week planned? Involve them, wherever possible, in the preparation of programmatic elements.
- Manage expectations and set clear conditions for participation. Make the responsibility for a successful exchange a shared one.
- Develop a programme in which moments of (interactive) learning, rest/free time and fun/touristy activities are balanced.
- Make a programme that fits the group you are accompanying. For example, it is important to take into account whether people are used to travelling in groups or whether they are used to working long/full days.
- Build in moments of 'checking in' with your group on their experience. This is crucial. You never know in advance what is going to happen and how people are going to react when out of their own context. It might be necessary to adjust the programme.
- Do an evaluation of the exchange about three or four weeks after the event, once participants have had a chance to process the experience.



# 3

## Setting the stage to implement the HSC Youth Leadership programme on PVE

This chapter provides advice on creating the right conditions to implement the HSC Youth Leadership programme on PVE. We share our methodological ground rules for the design of a workshop, we provide insight into our vision on the local organizations' role in supporting and coaching mentors, and we provide advice on how to work in partnership and on how to select the right areas to work in, as well as the mentors and mentees to work with.

### 3.1 Workshops

Workshops are key moments in which (all) mentors and project coordinators come together so they can agree on where they stand in the project, and also get introduced to new knowledge/skills/practices that will help participants further in the different components of the programme. Workshops are a tool, a means to an end, and not an end in themselves.

For the design of your first workshop, we advise you to pick and choose elements from our Envisioning and Empowering components. We encourage this because we view both these components as an essential step prior to stepping into the Engagement component. Whether you conduct a workshop of three or five days in duration at a time depends on your and your participants' abilities. Our experience is that three-day workshops work well, as it allows participants the chance to digest and make sense of new concepts and skills. Discuss this well in advance with the key stakeholders involved so that everyone is on the same page. In our view, therefore, it is better to design your programme in such a way that you organize several workshops with sufficient breaks in between, for mentors to be able to apply the lessons learned in their work with teenagers in the community. To be able to cover the learnings of the diverse components, and also be flexible with the process, we suggest a timeline of a year and 5 workshops. Of course, this also depends on the context. The advantage of doing more workshops with sufficient time in between is also the fact that the learning process becomes more integrated with the mentors' work in practice, as workshops are key moments to:

#### 1. Check in

We recommend you factor in a moment to 'check-in' with your participants each time you conduct a workshop. This is to create awareness amongst



participants and facilitators on where the group stands at that point in time in terms of their learning. A check-in exercise should be guided by a few open questions regarding the preceding periods of learning and how participants feel about the coming workshop. The facilitator should also take this opportunity to clarify certain things such as the timeline of the entire programme and what has already been accomplished, whilst combining that with sharing the objectives of the upcoming workshop. A check-in session is also important to get a sense of the group dynamic and whether participants are ready to go on to the next stage of the programme. A good way of doing this is through a simple exercise<sup>16</sup>.

## 2. Reflect on what has gone before

It is important to provide mentors a chance to take a moment to reflect on what they have been doing so far. You can use the 'proud and sorry' methodology to do this, in which participants can share what they are proud of in their community work and what they would still

like to work on<sup>17</sup>. An important aspect to this exercise is that participants stand up in front of their peers and read out their 'prouds' and 'sorries' as a way for them to 'own up' to their work.

## 3. Introduce a new element/refresh knowledge and skills

The HSC approach entails that a workshop introduces something new to the participants, which will allow them to further develop their work on the ground. Do discuss the new elements with staff accompanying participants, so as to assess whether the proposed elements fit the needs of the mentors. For example, you might have introduced the Theory of Change template in a previous workshop, and find that participants require more exercises to understand the concept in order to be able to write out their plan in a ToC format. Again, this is a tailor-made approach and you need to constantly assess which next steps and exercises are most beneficial for the learning process of the mentors and their work on the ground.

**Project Coordinator, HSC:** In advance of the project, we had developed a certain order for workshop-delivery. While preparing for the workshop with mentors on developing a ToC for their initiative with teenagers, we received signals from our local partner organization that the mentors were still struggling with approaching and starting work with the mentees. It was useful to then shift focus to what the mentors needed, which was more about learning how to go about that 'starting phase' of working with teenagers. Together with the local partner organization, we decided to postpone the ToC workshop, and first plan an extra workshop in which we would address these questions. Mentors developed an explorative phase in this workshop, and shared experiences with each other on working with teenagers. This demanded flexibility from the facilitators in terms of developing a new curriculum for the workshop, as well as budgetary flexibility for the extra workshop organized. This explorative phase worked out well. In the next workshop, the mentors were able to develop their ToC based on the new-found affinity developed with the teenagers.

## 4. Prepare and plan for the next phase

Make sure you reserve time in the workshops to plan collectively for the upcoming programme period. You can do so by requesting that participants prepare a presentation on what it is they are planning to do. The facilitators could do the same by presenting the next steps in terms of training components. It certainly helps to arrive at a joint timeline, agreeable to the majority of the participants. As part of this planning procedure, it is useful to conduct a check-out exercise<sup>18</sup>.

### 3.1.1 Methodological ground rules for conducting workshops

#### Co-facilitation

Combine the presence of 'new' faces in the workshop with some 'trusted' faces in terms of facilitators and trainers. Participants need to feel they are guided by organizations they can trust, and at the same time learn new things from new people. The latter can be facilitated in different ways. Instead of involving a new trainer, a visit to another organization with a certain expertise can also enable such new ways of learning.

#### Collective ownership

An important part of the learning in workshops is the peer learning that takes place. The exercises we refer to in this manual are therefore also meant to be carried out in smaller subgroups. It is useful to rotate participants within the subgroups so that they get to know everyone in the group and gain insight into a diversity of perspectives. Certain exercises are meant to develop your plans for the next phase of the project. You can work with 'set' subgroups for these exercises: for example, with those that will also be implementing a particular initiative. In the workshops, try to create a setting in which everyone can learn from each other's insights.

#### Creating a safe setting

In light of the type of programme, the work methods and the selection criteria for the mentors, developing and implementing Human Security initiatives will most probably be a first experience of the kind for the mentors involved. This might necessarily involve fear, hesitation and enthusiasm on the part of the mentors. You need to create time and space in the coaching process for the



mentors to air and share these feelings, engage positively with one another and ultimately learn from each other. For the work the mentors carry out with the mentees, discuss constructively the methods, the dos and don'ts of working with teenagers and ultimately the importance of learning from each other. In order to do so, a safe space needs to be created during workshops and meetings, which can be done by taking into consideration the following guiding principles:

- To listen and hear what is being said. (Or: to apply *active listening*)
- To Keep It Short and Sweet (the 'KISS rule'); to give others a chance to speak as well.
- To treat each other with respect, irrespective of belief, gender, sexual orientation or political interest.
- To respect the privacy of participants by not publishing photos or statements without their permission.
- To ensure the confidentiality of all the information shared in the room (the 'Vegas rule': what happens in the training room, stays in the training room). The Chatham House<sup>19</sup> rule could also be opted for, if agreed upon.

**Project Coordinator, AIHR:** Peer-to-peer learning enabled mentors to learn from each other's experiences throughout the process. Mentors were able to create the ground for sharing ideas, tools and strategies among each other to push their work forward. They were also able to develop certain communication skills, either among themselves or between them and their mentees. Furthermore, what was noticeable throughout the peer-to-peer learning process was the fact that mentors developed a sense of responsibility and commitment towards their work as they tried to be beneficial for the rest of the group. Mentors learnt as much from one another as they did from the workshops.

**Mentor:** We asked our mentees to tell us what made them feel good about their neighbourhood and what they thought did not and therefore wanted to change. And so they mentioned problems other groups had also brought up such as theft, drugs and the fact that there was no place they could go to to have fun and entertain themselves. When we were doing the mind map I noticed one of the mentees silent in a corner on a chair, clearly uncomfortable. I asked him what was going on but he refused to tell me. And whenever I would give him a pen so that he could write out what he was feeling, he would push the paper and pen back towards me. I asked him if he wanted me to write for him, and he said yes. From then on, I would write for him or I would show him how to write, and he would then write it on the board. And we understood that it was not that he did not want to participate but rather that he didn't know how to write.

As usual, the activity was followed by a debriefing session for mentors, where they came together to discuss, share and go through the activity. We shared what happened during the mind mapping exercise with the mentees that day and what we had come to realize, making the other mentors aware of the issue so that they then could start paying attention to it, if relevant, during their sessions with their mentees.

The same guiding principles can be applied to the facilitated dialogue sessions with government stakeholders. Given the highly-sensitive nature of the VE topic and also given that government stakeholders and youth do not interact regularly and might have very different perspectives on security in the neighbourhood, it is important to pay attention to creating a safe setting in which the programme participants and government representatives can express themselves freely. As it can sometimes be a bit intimidating for young people to meet government representatives, we need to pay a bit more attention to creating a sense of ease on their side, so that they can express themselves.

**Learning by doing**  
Make sure that there is enough 'doing' in the workshops. New methods that are introduced should be practised or applied by the participants within the workshop, for example through role play as mentioned earlier. Also, make sure that there is time for debriefing/reflecting on the 'doing', and specifically on the implementation of their initiatives, so that participants can share their experience and learn from each other's experiences and insights.

**Peer-to-peer learning**  
Peer-to-peer learning is an important aspect of the way we approach youth empowerment and resilience. You can foster it by organizing briefing sessions to discuss what activities and approaches worked and what activities and approaches did not during the mentors' sessions with the mentees. These types of briefing sessions on challenges and successes also allow for analysis, and for discussing together what might be at stake.



- Tips on workshops**
- Make project coordinators part of the workshop to ensure that the workshops are not 'isolated sessions' but useful in the longer-term process.
  - Diversify the ways of working: alternate between plenary settings, group work, working in pairs, and individual work<sup>20</sup>.

### 3.2 The role of a local organization in supporting and coaching mentors

Support and coaching at a more structural level is important so as to advise and support mentors in the implementation of their initiatives and on the conversations they have with their mentees. We view this as a role which the local organization is best-placed to take on. Preferably this organization is located in the areas where mentors work with mentees. A requirement is that this organization has a good reputation in the identified area (see also paragraph 3.4 on identifying the area(s) to work in), and offers certain other prerequisites including:

- ▶ Knowledge of the neighbourhood based on an existing network and preferably an affinity with youth in that neighbourhood.
- ▶ A certain level of trust within the neighbourhood, which guarantees them the ability to accompany mentors and mentees.
- ▶ A track-record of cooperation with local authorities.
- ▶ The ability to create a safe place in which to organize meetings in the neighbourhood.

Certain criteria can be (further) developed during the project period. However, working with an organization that is rooted in the marginalized communit(y)ies is highly recommended as this also ensures sustainability of the programme.

The support and coaching of mentors is an important role. Mentors have to be realistic in terms of what initiatives/activities they can implement. As they define their ToC and the activities they will carry out in order to attain their overall goal, they need to take into consideration constraints of time and resources, the need to engage with other stakeholders and the fact that their mentees need to participate in the process of development and implementation of the initiative. Your

role as an organization coaching mentors will be crucial at this stage of the project; offering support but not taking over their responsibility in terms of setting achievable goals and the activities needed to attain these goals. Furthermore, you will be expected to support them in thinking of and developing new activities that will help the mentors achieve their aim in the event that something does not go the way it was planned, either because of a disinterested/uncooperative stakeholder or bureaucratic red-tape encountered.

Coaching, in this handbook, means offering mentors the time and effort to listen to their challenges, to help bounce off ideas, to help in setting up meetings with key stakeholders, etc. Crucial, however, is not to impinge on their sense of ownership just because, for example, you feel you might be in a better position to organize a meeting. This can be extremely disempowering. Coaching is, therefore, more about providing assistance in an impartial non-judgemental way, perhaps simply by asking open questions so the mentor can come up with solutions by him- or herself.

While trainers and facilitators can have a more transient role, coming into and out of the setting as needed, mentors need to be supported and coached by staff members of a local organization on a more structural basis. Make sure project coordinators build in time to sit with every subgroup of mentors after a workshop to help them further, or provide extra training or peer-to-peer sessions whenever needed. Organizing team-building activities are also an essential part of this process. Again, flexibility is key: it is important to base one's work on the needs of the mentors, and work at their pace and in their time.

#### AIHR on facilitating team building among the mentors:

After the first training, we felt that the 12 mentors were not yet a cohesive team. We thought about the steps needed to support and coach the group in order to build to a strong group, filled by the spirit of collective group work. The first step was to organize informal meetings outside of our HQ, for example in a café or restaurant, to create an atmosphere conducive to knowing each other better. In that setting, we thought of and discussed creative ways of continuing our work.

Later on, we also went to a film festival with the group, during which we watched a movie on children's rights. After the screening, we went back to a café to discuss the movie together.

We also created a Facebook group to share information and where, at times, discussions were initiated to think about and plan activities.

**Tip:** You need to be sensitive to the feelings of the mentor group: be attentive to their needs and aware of the dynamics within the group in order to be able to offer the best coaching and support.

#### Project Coordinator, AIHR:

The most important elements of our approach in supporting and coaching mentors were: the response to and meeting of their needs, and help with increasing their capabilities while introducing the concept of rights itself. We were coaching and supporting them through applying the lessons learnt from the workshops (e.g., applying the ToC in developing their Human Security initiatives). [...] The process was more about supporting the mentors in developing their initiatives, setting their goals and developing the means to achieve them. During the process, some of them encountered inconveniences. They thought they would have to stop the initiatives. We worked together as a team to link some of the initiatives and to come up with new activities addressing the same issues they wanted to work on in the first place.



**The case of the HSC and AIHR partnership**

HSC brings with it a strong background in development, conflict transformation and Human Security curricula and capacity building, as well as a strong network with stakeholders in these fields, both at the international and national levels.

AIHR has a robust background in Human Rights, development of Human Rights curricula, and capacity building, and a sound network in these fields in the Arab region.

The word partnership cannot be underestimated here. Both workshop facilitation and the support to and coaching of mentors, as well as the engagement, exchange and adaptive learning elements were discussed between the two parties on a regular basis. With unique insights on both sides, strategic decisions were taken together and a lot learnt from each other's expertise.

On a more practical level, HSC had the lead in developing and facilitating workshops. AIHR took the lead in including the human-rights-based approach within the learning process, and in supporting and coaching mentors in detailing and implementing their plans.

**3.3 Working in partnership**

As our programme is multi-faceted and multi-layered and requires both skilled facilitators, a project coordinator and staff that offer coaching to mentors, we recommend working in partnership to implement it. Moreover, a partnership is also highly recommended because of the complementarity different organizations can provide each other. In our opinion, seeking partnership with other organizations is about seeking complementarity. Once you have assessed what it is that your organization has to offer in this programme on PVE, then you can also identify those issues that you might want to seek in partnership with others. For instance, if your organization is based in a community and works with youth then you might want to seek partnership with an organization that is more familiar with PVE work or an international organization able to conduct peer-to-peer exchanges.

**3.3.1 Common understanding of a Human Security approach to Youth Leadership on PVE**

Whilst seeking a partnership with another organization, it is good to explore and understand each other's vision and mission beforehand. Of specific importance is the need to have a conversation to find out if all parties involved have a basic common understanding of PVE, Human Security and Youth Leadership, similar to what we described in Chapter 1. While it is understandable that organizations may have different insights, there needs to be common ground in recognizing the complexity of VE,

and how a diversity of push and pull factors play a role in being drawn into VE. A good way, therefore, to test the waters is to organize a half-day workshop in which you can discuss all three concepts in order to see whether you and your prospective partner share a common understanding. It is, for instance, key that all parties involved share the same view with regard to providing space for youth leaders to open up, and to allow them to speak freely in order to deepen their learning process. Embracing this approach to Youth Leadership also requires a certain level of courage: young people might have ideas and ambitions that are not directly in line with what you as a facilitator envision. It, therefore, requires commitment to really take seriously the insights, ideas and ambitions of young people. You might want to visit some of the current activities of your prospective partner to assess this. Once you have agreed on a partnership, it is important to agree on roles and responsibilities to avoid misunderstandings. We suggest drafting a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in which specific roles and responsibilities within each organization are listed. To get an idea of the roles and responsibilities involved in the programme, we would like to refer you to section 3.5. An MoU certainly helps to advance the collective ownership needed for this type of programme.

**AIHR:** The implementation of this project was a new and important experience in the life of AIHR. The process was exciting and stimulating. The project fits AIHR's vision which looks to integrate a human rights culture, a culture of peace and tolerance in the daily life of youth, and make this culture accessible and a tool for change, especially for youth (girls and boys) who live in difficult circumstances and experience social, economic or cultural marginalization.



### AIHR, on selecting target areas:

Our headquarters, the Saida centre, is located on the border between the three neighbourhoods where the project was implemented. Therefore, AIHR had a locally-established network at the very start of the project, which enabled us to identify diverse stakeholders engaged in the project, including mentors, teenagers, local associations, schools and authorities.

We identified the three areas because they are some of the most marginalized neighbourhoods of the city of Tunis. The inhabitants here experience exclusion, discrimination, high rates of unemployment and criminality, poor infrastructure, a tense relationship with the police, etc. There is also drug use and a high rate of school dropouts.

We want to work with the young people in the neighbourhood to build a sense of collective ownership, so that they feel the work of AIHR belongs to them too.

**Tip:** To prevent stigmatization of areas chosen, and taking into account the security of the people involved, one could choose not to frame the programme in PVE terms. Again, this depends on the specific context, and the advice given by the local organization(s) involved.

### 3.3.2 Investment of time to collectively plan and reflect

Partnerships require the investment of time: to discuss and agree on next steps, to reflect on previous steps and for monitoring purposes. It is good to build this awareness in from the start of the programme and point out how much time will be required in a week, say, for meetings to discuss progress and ensure collective ownership. Make sure that this investment of time is also well understood at the senior level in order to avoid misunderstandings. When partners are not in the same location, video- and tele-conferences can be very useful for these regular planning/reflecting/monitoring meetings.

Workshops can also be an important time to get a better sense of where the participants are, and if there has been anything left unsaid that the facilitators should be aware of, so that any necessary changes can be made.

### 3.4 Identifying the area(s) to work in

Parallel to identifying a partner organization, the programme location/s must also be identified. Bearing in mind a Human Security approach, we acknowledge that some neighbourhoods might have more of a need for this type of programme, given they are considered to be more at risk. Think, for example, of marginalization, (old) conflicts, tensions between community members and state/security actors. These issues have been identified as possible push and pull factors for VE. Areas should be identified on the basis of existing research together with a mapping conducted by the local stakeholders involved.

### 3.5 Staff involved

Implementing this kind of approach ideally requires commitment from more than one staff member per organization, taking on specific roles and responsibilities but also stepping in for others when required. It is important for the local organization taking on the role of supporting and coaching mentors on a more structural basis to ideally appoint more than one staff member having an affinity with working with young people. These staff members need to be open to the ideas of young people and be flexible in their ways of working. Furthermore, a background in managing projects with volunteers, social work and/or youth work will come in useful here.

The project also requires facilitators and trainers who are familiar with the methodologies referred to in this handbook. A track record of working at the nexus of

development and security as a civil society activist is an advantage. Needless to say, these facilitators/trainers should also be comfortable around and have an affinity with young people.

Overall, it is valuable to work with a diverse team of staff members, in terms of gender, age and background. Whereas a core team can work on a regular basis, other team members can touch base whenever there is a need to discuss issues such as resources, the further development of the project, or cooperation amongst partners involved. This is helpful for reflection on how the project is evolving and to tackle possible potential challenges in a timely manner. We therefore recommend that, ideally, you have a minimum of two people per organization involved in such a project.





### 3.6 Identifying mentors and mentees

Part and parcel of the Human Security approach is to work with youth from marginalized communities, embracing an inclusive approach; young men and women from marginalized communities are considered agents of positive change who can more effectively analyze safety in their communities and then be capacitated on finding/implementing solutions for the threats they have identified.

We think it vital to work with youth that live in communities where poverty, exclusion and criminality is heavily concentrated and deeply rooted. Instead of established peacebuilders who have a lot of experience in mediating and volunteering, look out for young people who have a way with their peers especially when it comes to communication. Make sure you end up with a mix of mentors. The more diverse the group in terms of gender, cultural background, lifestyle, commitment and provenance, the better the conditions for peer-to-peer learning. The group of participants ought to reflect the diversity of the community in order to better understand the diverse needs in the community. Furthermore, by creating this safe space for young people to overcome prejudicial feelings, they are able to gain new insights from each other as well as benefit from the expertise and/or perceptions of their peers.

#### 3.6.1 Mentors

Ideally speaking, mentors are persons ‘born and raised’ in the neighbourhood of interest, who have undergone challenges themselves but are seen by their younger peers as role models. They are the ones best equipped to coach mentees, facilitate discussions with teenagers from the neighbourhood and guide them in designing and implementing initiatives.

In advance of selecting mentors, the organizations involved can together develop a list with general criteria on which basis the selection will be made. It is good to be aware that the criteria only serve as guidelines: you are not looking for individuals who will necessarily meet all of them. Criteria can be around age, relevant previous experience, as well as certain characteristics. We suggest the following:

- ▶ Aged between 18 and 26
- ▶ Living in the neighbourhood
- ▶ Previous experience with or interest in volunteer/ community work
- ▶ Committed to investing a certain amount of time in the project (both for the workshops as well as for mentoring teenagers)
- ▶ Have language skills: it is useful, though not essential, for some mentors to speak English so that they can engage with international stakeholders

Commitment is an important criteria. In case one is working with mentors on a voluntary basis, it is key that they be committed to the programme and feel passionate about it. Clarifying what the programme entails, and what mentors can get out of it, is a good start. Volunteer or not, it is important to set out expectations clearly: mentors need to commit to investing a certain amount of time every week over a certain time period, as well as participate in the workshops.

**Tip:** Please bear in mind that mentors need to grow in their role and in their understanding of the programme. Do not expect all of them to be enthusiastic from the start. Some require more time to take ownership of the programme and demonstrate trust. This is perfectly understandable as you are working in areas where people are faced with a lot of other concerns and volunteering might not be their first priority.

**AIHR:** Identification of mentors and first contact with them was one the most important phases of the project. This was essential in creating a positive start, setting a good base and ensuring engagement. A delicate process, it needed a lot of patience and pedagogical skills before trust was established with and among a group of mentors. It was especially challenging to find mentors who were capable of and committed to engaging in the project. These were often frustrating and insecure times, but moments from which we learned a lot and finally decisive in the continuation of the project.

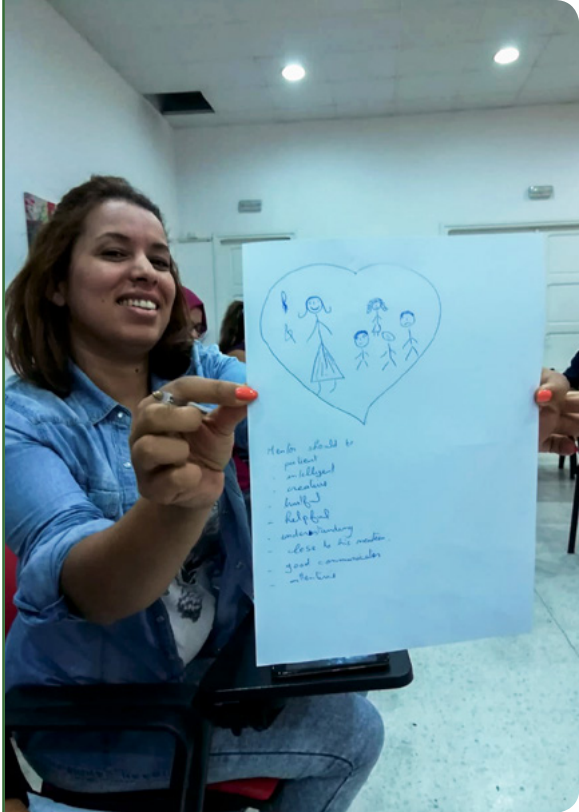
**AIHR:** We learnt during the first phase that not all the chosen mentors were as devoted or engaged and that youth from the neighbourhoods of interest do not often believe in effecting change or have faith in the promised change. Some of them quit the project. And we had new candidates who had some kind of link to the neighbourhoods (work, relatives, born there but moved out) but were not residents. We chose to be flexible regarding that criteria as long as they could prove their motivation on working on the project.

**Experience of AIHR with approaching teenagers to become part of the project:**

Since the teenagers in the neighbourhoods of interest for the project and their families already know the Institute, we organized a launch event for the project (drawing, dancing, singing, French club) where we invited every interested teenager. We had 160 teenagers in our space.

By the end of the day, we invited a group of six teenagers to a separate room, where we presented ourselves and the project. We also gave them the space to talk to us about themselves: what they love, what food they hate, what movies they watched, etc. After getting to know each other, we talked to them about the new clubs that we were going to create (this was how the mentors had chosen to frame their work with the mentees). We presented the objectives of the club: the club was for them and the activities would be mainly decided on by them. We consulted them on what they thought we could do in the club. We told them that we had chosen them from among all the 160 teens out in the lobby. After a quick think-through, they accepted our offer to be part of the upcoming project. And we agreed to have the first activity two weeks later.

What worked well with the mentees was the flexibility of the mentors and the needs-based approach they used.



**Recommendation by AIHR:** We recommend factoring in enough time for the mentor-selection phase. Young people interested in becoming mentors can be introduced to the objectives of the project and the upcoming processes in the pre-selection phase. That way you can see how engaged the mentors are or are likely to be.

The longer period gives the organization the opportunity to work on the dynamics of the group, creating stronger bonds between the mentors.

**3.6.2 Mentees**

In terms of mentees (aged between 12 and 16), they do not need to have a certain experience or indeed a set of particular skills to take part in the programme. It is, however, crucial that the teenagers live in the neighbourhoods of interest to the programme.

As with mentors, it is important to discuss how to identify mentees and find an approach applicable to the specific context. This process of identification should be conducted in collaboration with the mentors. An important element of the identification is developing an inclusive approach, taking on board youth with different kinds of characteristics and backgrounds. As with the diversity of the mentors, it is good to have a diverse group of mentees, so as to enhance understanding of each other.

In our experience, every organization and their group of mentors go about approaching the mentees differently. In some cases, mentors already have teenagers in their environment that could use some extra support. In others, they start a specific initiative or weekly activity/club for which they invite teenagers from the neighbourhood. When mentors and mentees are both from the same neighbourhood, this process is sometimes quite organic. However, oftentimes this is not the case, and organizations deploy yet another strategy. It also depends on the network of the local organization among youth in that neighbourhood.



# 4 Learning throughout the process



In this chapter we explain why and how we apply adaptive learning as an essential way to collectively reflect on learning throughout the entire programme.

## 4.1 Adaptive learning

Adaptive learning is a response to working in a socially-complex environment. It is the ability to build in continuous learning in the programme design so as to create the results one truly desires. This methodology also helps ensure that your workshops are being implemented effectively, responding to the needs of the participants involved. The assumption behind adaptive learning is that self-reflection and analysis with regard to set objectives, through a highly participatory process, is a *necessity* for the success of the programme. It enhances transparency and trust and helps to ensure the process is tailored towards context-specific needs.

The key aspects to successful adaptive learning are:

- A.** to purposefully plan, design and make resources available to ensure adaptive learning takes place from the very start of the programme
- B.** to apply a method that captures data that is in line with the overall principles of the programme
- C.** to facilitate the process of adaptive learning for all relevant stakeholders involved in the programme to nurture new patterns of thinking.

A good way of building in adaptive learning is to work with two qualitative monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools: Story Collection and Analyzing, and Outcome Harvesting. In the following paragraphs we shall introduce both tools and provide further insight into how you could integrate these tools in the design of your programme.

### Project Coordinator, AIHR:

We learned from practice that you should always adapt. You shouldn't force something on the mentee just because you had decided you were going to do something. You can achieve the same objective in many ways. You have to be open to learning from each activity you do – what works well and doesn't – in order to adapt.



## 4.2 A qualitative way of monitoring and evaluating

Monitoring and evaluation is essential for better planning, assessing and implementing initiatives as it helps analyze the degree to which your goals are met, helps you adjust your strategy for the upcoming workshops and helps you plan ahead.

There are however many challenges in monitoring and evaluating your work on PVE. The main challenge is called the prevention challenge: it is often said that prevention programmes cannot be evaluated because of the challenge of proving that something did not happen – a classic dilemma in the field of conflict prevention. Another challenge is that cause and effect in relation to VE is non-linear. As we explained in chapter one, there is no single road that leads to VE and therefore PVE work also has to take into account the fact that it is difficult to measure results when cause and effect are non-linear and interwoven. Also, working in complex social environments, where conflict, distrust, hope and fear are part of the daily life of the participants, requires more qualitative monitoring tools to measure results. HSC deals with these challenges by making use of story collection and analyzing as well as Outcome Harvesting (OH) as methods that are particularly designed to monitor perception and change of perception over the course of a given programme. We shall explain the process of how you can integrate both methodologies in the design of your programme.

### 4.2.1 Story collection and analyzing<sup>21</sup>

Story collection and analyzing is not just about collecting and reporting stories from the participants in the programme, but also about having inbuilt processes to learn from these stories and, in particular, to learn about the similarities and differences in what different groups and individuals value. It is about clarifying the values held by different stakeholders. Story analyzing can be very helpful in explaining *how* change comes about (processes and causal mechanisms) and *when* (in what situations and contexts).

#### Story collection

The stories should focus on personal change and can be collected by asking questions such as, ‘What, in your opinion, is the most significant change that took place

**Example of a story collected:** On a personal level, I got to explore my own potential as a mentor and as a leader in my own community, starting from gaining the trust of my mentees and their parents, and gaining more confidence in myself. I started to believe that there are no people for whom or places for which there is no hope. I became more open.

because of action/intervention/the introduction of A?’ or ‘Which tool has left a lasting impression on you, and why?’ The personal change stories should conclude with a statement on why certain events, etc. were chosen for the story, and why this was particularly significant for the participants. The frequency of collecting stories is variable, but should be determined in advance. Every six months is advisable.

#### Story analyzing tool

Once the stories are collected, the selection committee, which is made up of both facilitators and a minimum of two participants, can start designing the questions for categorization. Make sure the selection committee is made up of women and men to ensure that data collection captures differences in perception between women and men. This collective process is important in order to judge the significance of change in perception, knowledge and behaviour. This categorization helps participants and organizers gain insight into the collective learning, and is done by determining domains of change. These domains are broad categories of change stories, e.g., changes in perception of safety in one’s community, perceptions of being treated unfairly relative to others, perceptions towards state institutions (particularly regarding security, human rights and corruption). These domains can also look into social PVE dynamics such as family relationships, inter-group tensions, gender norms or examine sources of resilience. Three to five would be a feasible number of domains. This categorization can be done either before or during/after reading the stories.

#### AIHR on story analyzing:

When the methodology of story analyzing was first introduced, it was a bit confusing to learn that evaluation would be based on stories shared by mentors. Yet, when focussing on the nature of the project, it is quite irrelevant to have the usual evaluating tools. Within such a programme, quantitative evaluation would not be as appropriate as qualitative evaluation. Information and experiences gathered throughout the process cannot actually be measured, so what story analyzing has offered has helped us, as AIHR, and the mentors to learn from this experience.

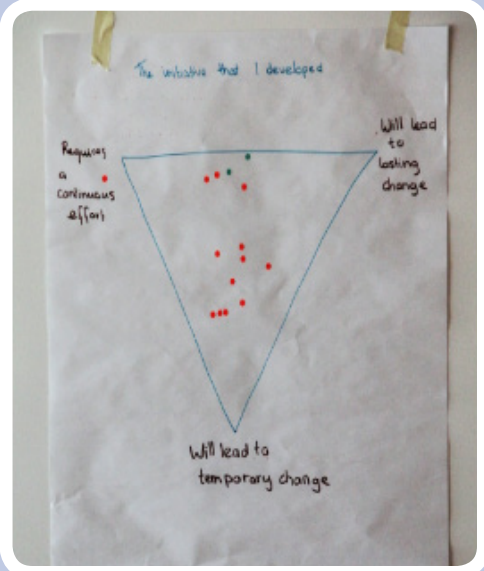


Collective learning

The stories are analyzed together through visualization, determining how participants have grasped the knowledge and skills to envision, for instance. Below is an example of how such a process of collective learning can be conducted, either online or on paper. The facilitator can request participants write a personal change story related to the specific training conducted or related to the initiatives being implemented. Participants are then requested to place a marker, a dot, in the tripoles that are prepared in advance. After walking past five or six of the prepared tripoles and placing their dots, the facilitator asks the participants to take a closer look at each tripole. The facilitator points out where the majority of the dots are placed and points out those dots which stand out. The collective learning starts when the facilitator opens up the conversation by asking the question: 'What do we see?' 'Can anyone recount the story behind this dot?', etc. This way, a collective sharing process ensues, leading to a better understanding of what else may be needed.<sup>22</sup>

21. I recognize the following characteristics in the area where I will work with adolescents ...

- Sentiments of alienation and exclusion, feelings of humiliation, feelings of victimhood
- Marginalisation and discrimination, limited social cohesion and self-exclusion
- Negative sentiments towards foreign policy in "The West" or like "The West in at war with Islam"
- A salafist-jihadi interpretation of Islam
- Problems with identity formation and absence of feeling part of something
- Psychological trauma and other complex psychological issues
- Strong group formation
- Presence of hate incitation and extremism
- High presence on social media
- Unsolved conflicts of long duration
- Lack of justice
- Violations of human rights
- Lower socio-economic status in comparison with the rest of the country
- Lack of good governance



Project Coordinator, AIHR:

We are so occupied with daily tasks: calling stakeholders, organizing activities, that it was only when we did the Outcome Harvesting that I realized how much had been done, that we were changing something and that there has been an impact even if we do not always not see it. [...] When we did the Outcome Harvesting session with HSC, AIHR and the Tunisian mentors, we were able to see what went right and what we could have done otherwise throughout the process. Mentors were able to reflect on their own as well as on others' experiences through the stories they shared.

4.2 Outcome Harvesting (OH)<sup>23</sup>

Outcome Harvesting is designed for situations where decision-makers want to understand the process of change and how each outcome contributes to this change. An outcome is the observable change in agenda, behaviour, policy or practice in another social actor. It contributes to one or more of the objectives of the intervention to which the intervention has directly or indirectly contributed.

Outcome Harvesting is designed to support learning, and therefore particularly useful for mid-term and end-of-term evaluations. It is also suitable for complex contexts in more dynamic and uncertain environments in which unintended outcomes dominate, including negative ones. In your work on PVE, it can help you capture all the unforeseen (positive and negative) outcomes that are inherent to working in a complex domain. As it is an approach in which all key stakeholder representatives verify, analyze and interpret their own outcomes, it serves the purpose of adaptive learning. It is a process which inspires and motivates because it allows everyone involved to immediately see the richness of results at all kinds of levels.



**Mentor:** It was a good method. Everyone shared something he saw had changed or had realized we had achieved and then it all came together and we realized we had achieved more than we thought.

Outcomes are defined as changes in behaviour such as actions, relationships, policies and practices of one or more social actors influenced by an intervention. It collects evidence of what has changed and, then, working backwards, determines whether and how an intervention contributed to these changes. The outcome(s) can be positive or negative, intended or unintended, direct or indirect, but the connection between the intervention and the outcomes should be plausible.

Outcome Harvesting is a highly participatory approach and requires a separate workshop. It can be done in pairs with a similar question as in story collecting: 'What, in your opinion, is the most significant change that took place because of action/intervention/the introduction of A?' The process of telling each other a story of change adds to collective sharing and an understanding of the richness of the outcomes harvested at all kinds of levels: behaviours, relationships, actions, policies and practice.

### Visualizing levels of change

Both methodologies mentioned above provide insight into different levels of change within your programme. To be able to categorize the different levels of change, the following questions can be of help:

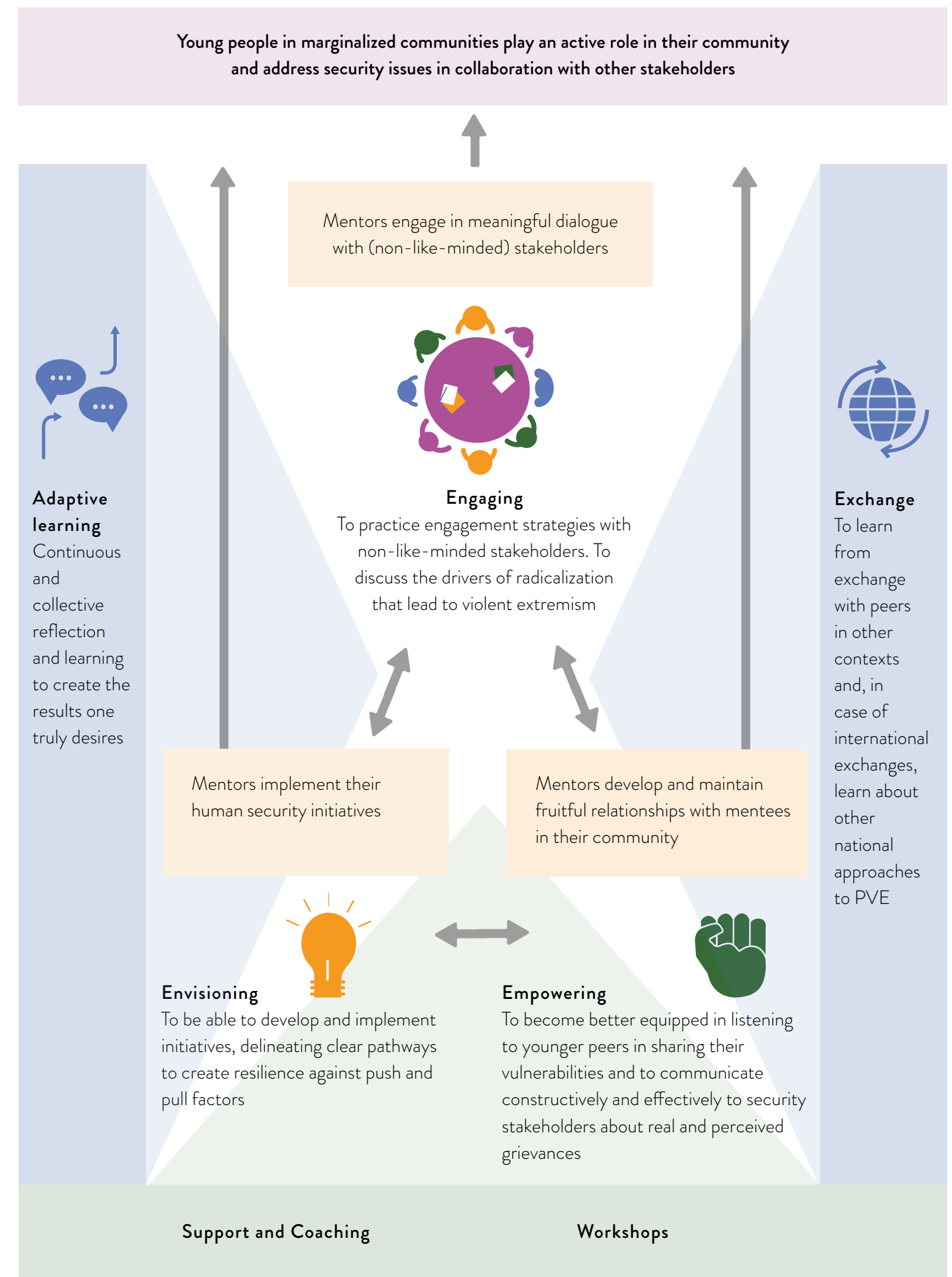
- What change do we see at the systemic level (for instance, in terms of agenda, policy)?
- ▶ What change do we see in relationships (for instance, between mentors and mentees, between mentors and other key stakeholders in their community)?
- ▶ What change do we see in the perception of participants (for instance, towards the role of government, other communities, family members)?
- ▶ How does this change look for different groups (men, women)?

**Tip:** Depending on the time period covered and the number of rounds needed to collect stories and harvest outcomes, the approach requires a substantial time commitment from everyone involved. It is important to explain that the process of story collection, story analyzing and outcome harvesting are part and parcel of your project. Explain to participants that adaptive learning is an integral part of the project and be clear from the start how much time is involved.





## THE HSC APPROACH IN A NUTSHELL



# End-notes

## Introduction:

1. Our founding director, Lia van Broekhoven, spoke at the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee civil society side event on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001): <http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/human-rights-treaty-bodies/watch/counter-terrorism-committee-civil-society-side-event-on-the-occasion-of-the-tenth-anniversary-of-the-adoption-of-security-council-resolution-1373-2001/5240590002001/?term=&page=3>

## Chapter 2:

2. More information: United Nations Development Programme (1994): Human Development Report 1994, see: [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr\\_1994\\_en\\_complete\\_nostats.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr_1994_en_complete_nostats.pdf)
3. Find exercises here that will help participants learn more about human rights: <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/activities.shtm>
4. Clear instructions to conduct a Force Field Analysis can be found at: [https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED\\_06.htm](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_06.htm) (Retrieved in November 2018).
5. <https://medium.com/then-somehow/you-have-more-power-than-you-think-try-circles-of-influence-2bd0a96403d5> [Retrieved November 2018]
6. HSC has partnered with Streetcornerwork, a Dutch organization in the Netherlands to provide training on the Presence Approach.
7. More on the website of The Center for Non Violent Communication via <https://www.cnvc.org/>
8. Find here an accessible introduction to the basics of NVC: [http://www.citizenshandbook.org/nonviolent\\_communication.pdf](http://www.citizenshandbook.org/nonviolent_communication.pdf)
9. Check [https://www.nonviolentcommunication.com/pdf\\_files/4part\\_nvc\\_process.pdf](https://www.nonviolentcommunication.com/pdf_files/4part_nvc_process.pdf) for the four steps in the process of NVC.
10. An exercise we have made use of to introduce and start practicing NVC is detailed here: [https://turningtide.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/NV\\_communication\\_roleplay.pdf](https://turningtide.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/NV_communication_roleplay.pdf)
11. For instructions on practicing Appreciative Listening, we found the following link useful: <https://marionlangford.com/introducing-appreciative-listening/> [Retrieved November 2018]
12. A brief history of Deep Democracy can be read via <http://www.iapop.com/deep-democracy/> [Retrieved November 2018.]
13. Have a look at the description of the exercise via this link: <https://bouckaert.nu/en/soft-shoe-shuffle/>
14. Have a look at Mind Tools Essential Skill via this link: <https://www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/RolePlaying.htm> [Retrieved December 2018]
15. National policies might be inspired by international policy documents. For example, the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism was accompanied by a letter penned by the UNSG in which he recommended that all UN member states develop their own National Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism, suggesting several priority areas of action: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/675](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/675)



- Chapter 3:**
16. Suggestions for simple exercises for the check-in can be found via this link: <http://www.funretrospectives.com/category/check-in/>
  17. <https://trello.com/c/ClulePDu/16-proud-sorry>
  18. Examples of playful ways to conduct a check out can be found via this link: <https://toolbox.hyperisland.com/check-in-check-out>
  19. For more information on the Chatham House rule, see here: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/about/chatham-house-rule>
  20. Have a look at the principles of Future Search. We have found Future Search principles and methods very useful in our work. See: <http://futuresearch.net/about/principlesandconditions/>
- Chapter 4:**
21. For further information on how to tell and collect stories, see: [https://www.smartgrid-engagement-toolkit.eu/fileadmin/s3ctoolkit/user/guidelines/GUIDELINE\\_ENGAGING\\_PEOPLE\\_THROUGH\\_TELLING\\_STORIES.pdf](https://www.smartgrid-engagement-toolkit.eu/fileadmin/s3ctoolkit/user/guidelines/GUIDELINE_ENGAGING_PEOPLE_THROUGH_TELLING_STORIES.pdf)
- Examples of templates to collect MSC stories are included in the guide by Davies & Dart (2005), that is available via the following link: <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/iesf/document/%E2%80%98most-significant-change%E2%80%99-technique-davies-dart-2005>
22. HSC has partnered with Perspectivity, a Dutch organization in the Netherlands, to provide training and facilitation on storytelling and story analyzing.
  23. For further information on the methodology of Outcome Harvesting, have a look at: Wilson-Grau, R. (2015) Outcome Harvesting. BetterEvaluation. [http://betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/outcome\\_harvesting](http://betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/outcome_harvesting)

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- ▶ Smart Consumer, Smart Customer, Smart Citizen (S3C), (n.d.). *Guideline: Engaging People through Telling Stories*. [pdf] Available at: [https://www.smartgrid-engagement-toolkit.eu/fileadmin/s3ctoolkit/user/guidelines/GUIDELINE\\_ENGAGING\\_PEOPLE\\_THROUGH\\_TELLING\\_STORIES.pdf](https://www.smartgrid-engagement-toolkit.eu/fileadmin/s3ctoolkit/user/guidelines/GUIDELINE_ENGAGING_PEOPLE_THROUGH_TELLING_STORIES.pdf)

#### Outcome Harvesting

- ▶ Wilson-Grau, R. and Britt, H., 2013. *Outcome Harvesting*. [pdf] Ford Foundation. Available at: [https://www.outcomemapping.ca/download/wilsongrau\\_en\\_Outome%20Harvesting%20Brief\\_revised%20Nov%202013.pdf](https://www.outcomemapping.ca/download/wilsongrau_en_Outome%20Harvesting%20Brief_revised%20Nov%202013.pdf)
- ▶ Wilson-Grau, R. (2015) *Outcome Harvesting*. BetterEvaluation. [http://betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/outcome\\_harvesting](http://betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/outcome_harvesting)

**Human Security Collective (HSC)** is a foundation, established in 2013 and based in The Hague, with a strong background in development, conflict transformation and security. We operate worldwide on involving citizens and their communities on issues of security, working on the belief that the idea of human security provides an organizing frame for security action. The three main strands of our work include:

**Enabling civil society space** through engaging with entities that have an impact on the financial and operational space of civil society. These include the Financial Action Task Force, governments, banks, banking regulators and supervisors, and multilateral institutions, among others.

**Introducing a human security and human rights approach to the prevention of violent extremism.**

This strand seeks to address the root causes of violent extremism through coaching youth, women, faith-based, human rights and peacebuilding organizations on these approaches, and facilitating their engagement with national, regional and international policymakers with the aim of influencing current (globally-driven) strategies, policies and programmes to address violent extremism through initiatives that are developed and driven by communities.

**Enhancing youth leadership in conflict and deprived areas**, which seeks to strengthen the capacities of youth (leaders) to contribute to resilience and human security in their community as well as empowering them so that they are able to engage with the wider community and society, policymakers and security stakeholders on their ambitions for human security in their neighbourhoods.

**The Arab Institute for Human Rights (AIHR)**, established in March 1989, is an independent regional organization that works to **promote human rights in the Arab region**. AIHR was founded as an initiative of the Arab Organization for Human Rights (AOHR), the Arab Lawyers' Union (ALU) and the Tunisian League for the Defense of Human Rights (TLDHR), with the coordination and support of the UN Centre for Human Rights, now the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Few years after its establishment, **AIHR was awarded the UNESCO International Prize** in 1992 for its role in human rights education.

AIHR aims at raising awareness of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration for Human Rights (UDHR) and the related international accords. AIHR **further aims at promoting and disseminating a culture of human rights and democracy in the Arab region** through supporting human rights education programmes and initiatives, and supporting the capacities of human rights organizations as being fundamental actors in promoting and protecting human rights in general, and disseminators for human rights culture in particular. AIHR's strategic orientation is represented by these four core strategic orientations:

1. Supporting the sustainability and effectiveness of human rights programmes for civil society;
2. Developing educational policies based on human rights;
3. Modelling human rights in popular education, and
4. Supporting the processes of reforming institutions and frameworks.



**This handbook** lays out the Human Security Collective approach to Youth Leadership in the context of Violent Extremism. Based on programmatic work carried out in the past few years, it sets out the four main components of this approach, namely:

- ▶ Envisioning,
- ▶ Empowering,
- ▶ Engagement, and
- ▶ Exchange.

Besides the practical details on implementing such an approach, the handbook also contains a wealth of stories of inspiration as well as recommendations and best practice from those involved. We trust that their insights and creative practice will inspire you in your work, possibly in different contexts from ours, benefitting from the rich experience of these young leaders, and setting the stage towards ensuring that youth living in marginalized communities engage in the prevention of Violent Extremism on their own terms and in their own time.

**Lamia Grar (Director, Arab Institute for Human Rights):**

*“Looking back, the project provided space for human interaction, for building relationships and, most importantly, for empowering young leaders. The whole process was about applying the Human Security approach, enabling youth to act within their local communities, as well as address PVE. Young leaders developed positive communication skills as well as a new vision for their neighbourhood, and were able to see the importance of their work in the local community and at the national level. They could set their minds free from negativity, passivity and unresponsiveness and orient themselves towards goals set. Despite their struggles and vulnerabilities, young leaders benefitted from this project at a personal level as well as having a lasting impact on the communities they are part of.”*

