



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

UNESCO in Action



Preventing **Violent Extremism** Worldwide



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Preventing Violent Extremism Worldwide

Foreword

The major challenges of our time are on a global scale. Instances of radical violence that know no borders and spread across the world under various guises are one such challenge. They threaten the stability of our societies and the conditions for sustainable peace and development, whether they appear in the form of terrorist attacks, the targeted destruction of heritage, the trafficking in cultural property, or hateful or revisionist ideology. We must respond to this global, multifaceted threat collectively and pre-emptively, through long-term preventive work with young people from all backgrounds. With a preventative approach, we can break the logic of intolerant discourse and expose the underlying causes fanaticism and hatred.

One of the main components of this preventive work is quality education. Education develops young people's capacities for critical thinking and respect for diversity. It is imperative to transmit the values of dialogue and peace to children from the earliest age, as recommended by UNESCO's programme on global citizenship education, which aims to mould committed, enlightened citizens, open to intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. An awareness of cultural diversity and the wealth of the heritage of humanity plays a key role. For all generations, and particularly the youngest, this awareness of our shared past is one of the best antidotes in the fight against destructive ideologies. It motivates hearts and minds to respect and defend pluralism and fundamental human rights.

UNESCO is also committed to making the best use of cutting-edge technologies that are transforming our societies. Media and information literacy has become crucial to teach young people to identify hate speech and radicalization spreading across the Internet. It can raise their awareness of the ethical issues surrounding access to and use of new media, to ultimately encourage and promote their freedom of expression and respect for the freedom of others.

Promoting gender equality is another of UNESCO's priorities. For many years, the Organization has been working to improve girls' and women's access to education and training worldwide, to enable them to develop their full potential and take greater control of their lives. Combatting gender discrimination is key for a less violent, more peaceful society.

This publication presents the various aspects of UNESCO's efforts worldwide to prevent violent extremism, and provides specific examples of its initiatives and achievements. These examples are intended to be a source of motivation to continue tackling the deeper causes of hatred and violence, and to sow the seeds of peace and mutual understanding in all minds.

Audrey Azoulay
Director-General of UNESCO



Introduction

Violent extremism is an affront to the principles of the United Nations, embodied in universal human rights and fundamental freedoms. In recent years, the number of attacks by violent extremists has been rising across the world. Not associated with any particular religion, nationality, culture or ethnic group, this threat affects the security, well-being and dignity of many individuals living in both developing and developed countries, posing a global risk for sustainable development and lasting peace. Security responses are important, but to be effective in the long term they must be combined with preventive global and local actions, encompassing education, the sciences, culture, and information and communication.

How UNESCO acts

Responding to this complex challenge calls for cross-sectoral endeavours. This is UNESCO's strength.

Building on the inter-sectoral approach of UNESCO's Integrated Framework of Action 'Empowering Youth to Build Peace', launched at the 'Youth and the Internet: Fighting Radicalization and Extremism' Conference held in June 2015, UNESCO acts to equip young people with the knowledge, skills and values that empower them to engage as responsible global citizens and to be resilient to any form of abuse or manipulation, including radicalization and violent extremism. This is embodied in the landmark decision 197 EX/46 adopted by Member States in 2015, to enhance the Organization's capacity to provide assistance to countries as they develop strategies to prevent violent extremism.

By aiming to protect human rights and dignity, all of UNESCO's contributions to prevent violent extremism also advance the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which seek to eradicate poverty, deepen sustainability, and leave no one behind. UNESCO is taking the lead on nine of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), starting with SDGs 4 on quality education and 5 on gender equality, and extending to SDGs 8 (decent work and economic growth), 10 (reduced inequalities), 11 (sustainable cities and communities) and 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions).

UNESCO also contributes actively to the overall efforts of the United Nations, the Security Council and the General Assembly to 'sustain peace' through long-term action to reduce threats and prevent conflicts. This includes leading contributions to the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy as well as the United Nations Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, launched in January 2016.

Reflecting the importance of its engagement and achievements, UNESCO is actively supporting the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism as part of the 2018 Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, is co-chairing the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) Working Group on Prevention of Violent Extremism, plays a leading role with the Secretary-General's High Level Action Group on Preventing Violent Extremism, and is an active member across all relevant working groups of the CTITF.

Priority action areas

- Education to build resilience;
- Media skills, counter-narratives and online coalitions;
- Youth participation and empowerment;
- Safeguarding cultural heritage, celebrating cultural diversity, promoting intercultural dialogue;
- Building inclusive sciences and sharing natural resources.

Advancing gender equality and empowering girls and women are a red thread throughout all of UNESCO's action at these levels.

At the heart of the United Nations

The United Nations Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism focuses on four priorities: (i) education, skills development and employment facilitation; (ii) empowerment of youth; (iii) strategic communications, the Internet and social media; and (iv) gender equality and empowering women. The Plan calls for a comprehensive approach, encompassing not only essential security-based counter-terrorism measures but also systematic preventive steps to address the conditions that drive individuals to radicalize and join violent extremist groups.

The Plan is an appeal for concerted action by the international community in support of Member States. It sets out *more than 70 recommendations* to help countries to check the further spread of

violent extremism; and it adopts an 'All-of-UN' approach at UN's Headquarters and in the field in order to support national, regional and global efforts to counter this threat.

UNESCO's action to prevent violent extremism builds on a series of ground-breaking resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council on measures to halt the illicit trafficking of cultural goods and counter the financing of terrorism as well as on counter-terrorist narratives and communications, embodied in United Nations Security Resolution 2199, Resolution 2347 and Resolution 2354, where UNESCO plays a leading role in implementation with partners. This includes also action to take forward Security Council Resolution (SCR) 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security.

Mapping PVE actions

There are a total of 222 ongoing and planned UN PVE activities at the global, regional and national level, led by 14 UN entities that had contributed to the 2017 mapping exercise. UNESCO is leading across the United Nations system, working alongside UNDP, UNODC, UN Women, OHCHR, CTITF-UNCCT, UNICRI, UNAOC, DPKO, CTED, DPA, the UN Office on Genocide Prevention and Responsibility to Protect, the Office of the Secretary-General Special Envoy on Youth, and the OSRSG-Sexual Violence in Conflict.



Education to strengthen social cohesion and resilience to **violent extremism**

UNESCO supports countries in crafting education programmes that build young people's resilience to violent extremist messaging and foster a positive sense of identity and belonging. From this angle, the role of education is not to intercept violent extremists or identify individuals who may potentially become violent extremists, but to create conditions to build the defences of peace within learners through values, skills and behaviours that reject violent extremism, and by strengthening their commitment to non-violence and peace.

This work is undertaken within the broader framework of Global Citizenship Education, where UNESCO leads implementation of Target 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Education. The work undertaken in the field of Global Citizenship Education also embraces activities pertaining to human rights and peace education, Holocaust and genocide education, and activities to combat all forms of intolerance, racism and anti-Semitism.

■ **Global advocacy**

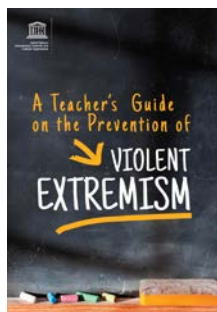
Working with education specialists from around the world, UNESCO is building a common understanding about how education can contribute to preventing violent extremism. Through Global Citizenship Education, UNESCO helps stakeholders to identify concrete and comprehensive educational responses to such threats, and to adapt them to their particular context.

■ **Guidance for teachers and policymakers**

UNESCO supports key education stakeholders to develop relevant policies, strategies and practices that help to ensure that places of learning do not become a breeding ground for violent extremism and exclusionary world views, but instead seek to advance human rights and tolerance, mutual respect and understanding.

For this purpose, UNESCO has produced guides, available in several languages:

- *A Teacher's Guide on the Prevention of Violent Extremism* suggesting ways to address the subject in a classroom, thus enhancing learners' capacity to debate controversial issues and develop critical thinking.



- *Preventing violent extremism through education: A guide for policy-makers* proposing how to prioritize, plan and implement actions to contribute effectively to national prevention efforts.

- *#YouthWagingPeace: A youth-led guide on PVE-E* based on more than 130 contributions from youth from 57 countries. Its abridged version – Action Guidelines for PVE-E – curates stakeholder-specific and community-wide strategies for immediate action.



Other publications address specific topics related to violent extremism, such as 'Addressing Anti-Semitism through education: Guidelines for policy-makers' as well as 'Education about the Holocaust and preventing genocide: A policy guide'.

■ Capacity building for teachers and policy-makers

The Organization builds capacity for teachers and policy-makers by providing them with information on effective and appropriate interventions that can help prevent violence and promote global citizenship. The *UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP)* works with education stakeholders and young people to develop innovative programmes founded on scientific principles of critical inquiry, mindfulness, empathy and compassion.

“ Teachers are playing a crucial role in helping communities to live in peace. We need to raise their awareness of the concept and the drivers of violent extremism, and how it can be prevented, so that they can use this knowledge in their everyday practice. ”

Participant of the UNESCO capacity-building workshop on the Prevention of Violence through Education in sub-Saharan Africa, February 2017, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

focus on
Africa & Asia

Starting in February 2017, UNESCO has been organizing regional capacity building workshops allowing policy-makers, teacher trainers and teachers to understand key concepts of violent extremism, and plan and implement educational measures to help reduce violence, and boost resilience. In Africa, trainings are organized with the **UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA)**, with focus on East Africa and the Sahel. Capacities are also being reinforced in Central Asia to help Member States face emerging challenges.

UNESCO cooperates with numerous international partners and non-governmental organizations in the field of PVE through education. The organization is spearheading projects in partnership including with the **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**, the **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)**, and the *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)*. With the *Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU)*, UNESCO expanded its *Clearinghouse on Global Citizenship Education* to include resources on PVE-E as well as provide access to research relevant to educating about the Holocaust and, more broadly, genocide and mass atrocities. All this is available in Arabic, English, French, Korean and Spanish.

Partnerships



Empowering young women and men to prevent **violent extremism**

There are currently 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10 and 24 in the world. This is the largest youth population ever. One out of ten of the world's children lives in conflict zones, and 24 million of them are out of school. Political instability, challenging labour markets and limited opportunities for political and civic participation have increased the pressures on young women and men everywhere, increasing their vulnerability to ideologically motivated violence and other forms of extremism. Clearly, any lasting solution must place young people at the forefront.

They are the most affected by multiple and often interlinked forms of violence. But they also can play vital roles as agents of positive change, provided that they are nurtured and empowered, through skills development, training and the new forms of engagement.

UNESCO's response to the Security Council Resolution (SCR) 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security puts young people at the very heart of efforts to address the root causes of violent extremism. This focus is perfectly aligned with *UNESCO's Operational Strategy on Youth (2014-2021)* and its integrated framework of action, Empowering Youth to Build Peace.

UNESCO is a member of the Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding, under the framework of the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, which coordinates the work of UN entities, NGOs, youth-led organizations and other partners in support of the implementation of SCR 2250. The Organization is also part of the Steering Committee for the progress study on youth, peace and security, mandated by the SCR 2250. This study was presented to the Security Council on 23 April 2018, and proposed a thorough review and in-depth analysis of young peoples' positive roles in building peace, which will help identify priorities and generate recommendations.

UNESCO's Youth team is developing a wide range of other initiatives that put young people at the forefront of UNESCO's response to violent extremism, including:

- supporting Member States in the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2250 to engage young peacebuilders in countering extremism;
- working with youth organizations to improve their skills and capacities and address any challenges they face;
- working with partner organizations to develop national youth policies;
- evaluating digital youth platforms and encouraging civic participation through social media;
- organizing events to promote participation of youth in addressing radicalization;
- undertaking research on the root causes of radicalization to better understand the social, political and economic factors that lead to violent extremism;
- raising stakeholder awareness of the issue;
- strengthening local resistance to equip individuals and youth networks with values, knowledge and skills to exchange, communicate and cooperate peacefully across social and cultural boundaries; and
- foster youth participation in decision-making and processes for ensuring peace and security, thus supporting good governance and countering violent extremism.

“

I went through the training in life skills and business. I learned how to use a computer. The Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative has taken me through an immense transformation. Throughout the training, I have changed inside. My behaviour has changed. Peace is now an integral part of my life.

”

*M.A. Paul
Young man from South Sudan,
youth leader at the Whitaker Peace &
Development Initiative, UNESCO partner*

focus on

UNESCO's study *Youth and changing realities* (2017) examines how educational experiences, as well as youth attitudes towards gangs, violence and gender identity, shape youth cultures. It also provides recommendations for policy-makers on how to address issues of growing inequality and exclusion, drug trafficking, migratory processes and deportations, family violence, stigmatization and institutional disaffiliation.

Latin America

The project *Networks of Mediterranean Youth (NET-MED Youth)* funded by the **European Union** promotes inter-regional dialogue, in particular with young people of the southern Mediterranean region. A wide range of activities is implemented together with strategic partners, both national and international, within and outside the UN system, as well as with other EU-funded projects and local civil society organizations. These include the Anna Lindh Foundation, Cartooning for Peace, the European Training Foundation, CELAT at Laval University, Réseau Euromed France, Voices of Youth (UNICEF), as well as MedMedia, Generation What?-Arabic, Open Neighbourhood South and SAHWA.

The *UNESCO Chair in Children, Youth and Civic Engagement*, National University of Ireland, Galway, the *UNESCO Chair in Community, Leadership, and Youth Development*, Penn State University, USA, are engaged in a range of activities that support UNESCO in the field of PVE. These include UNESCO and UN expert group meetings, conferences, and research proposals.

Together with the **Ministry of Education and Sport of Albania**, UNESCO is supporting the promotion of intercultural and interreligious understanding through education as a means to help prevent violent extremism.



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Nurturing **culture** to prevent **violent extremism**

Culture is a powerful and unifying force that can help prevent violent extremism and facilitate peace-building and reconciliation. It nurtures a sense of belonging, fosters mutual understanding and opens spaces for critical thinking.

Mobilizing young women and men, who are key actors in the protection and transmission of heritage and the production of contemporary cultural expressions, is essential to building inclusive, sustainable and peaceful societies. Active participation in cultural life also provides young people with opportunities to broaden their horizons by highlighting shared histories and experiences, and strengthening their ability to resolve conflicts peacefully.

Through its World Heritage Education Programme and the [#Unite4Heritage](#) campaign, UNESCO engages youth in the protection of all forms of heritage and the promotion of cultural diversity to foster more inclusive and peaceful societies.

To this end, throughout 2018, UNESCO has supported the organization of 51 World Heritage Volunteers action camps in 28 countries worldwide in cooperation with local youth organizations and communities. These action camps enhance the knowledge of young people about their own and other cultures and strengthen a shared sense of belonging and ownership with regard to cultural heritage. UNESCO also coordinates the World Heritage Youth Forums (for instance in Manama, Bahrain, from 17 to 26 June 2018) in conjunction with the 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee. Their goal is to foster intercultural learning and exchanges, promote a pluralistic view of society, and deepen young people's understanding of the benefits of cultural diversity.

■ **Leading Counter-Narratives**

The [#Unite4Heritage](#) campaign is a global social media movement powered by UNESCO to craft counter narratives rooted in heritage values, human rights and respect for cultural diversity.

Launched by Director-General Irina Bokova in Baghdad in March 2015 in response to the deliberate destruction of cultural heritage in conflict zones, the campaign calls on everyone to stand up against intolerance and hatred, to celebrate the places, objects, cultural traditions and shared values that make the world such a rich and vibrant place.

UNESCO is also leading the fight against 'cultural cleansing' – the deliberate targeting of cultural heritage as an attempt to destroy the legitimacy of others to exist – in its efforts to defend humanity's cultural diversity. It is spearheading the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2347 on the protection of cultural heritage in the event of armed conflict, which emphasizes the central role of UNESCO in preventing and countering the illicit trafficking of cultural property, a source of financing terrorism, and recognizes the distinctive role of culture as an instrument for dialogue and reconciliation.

Education programmes provide safe spaces to ensure the continued transmission of valuable local knowledge, life skills and competencies to future generations and render education meaningful in light of learners' real needs and future aspirations. This is why UNESCO invests in the integration of intangible cultural heritage in education as it facilitates context-based learning, fosters an appreciation of cultural diversity among young people and strengthens a sense of belonging among the learners and teachers, in support of the achievement of SDG 4.

In the context of rising religious fundamentalism, combined with increasing poverty and internal ethnic tensions exacerbated by mass displacements of populations within the country, UNESCO provided emergency technical assistance in October 2017 to Niger on revitalizing intangible cultural practices as a means to foster resilience and mutual understanding between displaced and host communities in Tillabéry and Diffa'.

For more information:

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/wheducation/>
<http://www.unite4heritage.org/>.

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Our ancestors took good care of cultural heritage sites, as they meant a lot to them. Cultural heritage is the human being's imprint in the world. It is a way to express identity, beauty and authenticity and needs to be protected.

Irena Luthon, Palestinian university student and volunteer at a #Unite4Heritage campaign event.

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focus on

Africa

Following the destruction of Mali's unique cultural heritage in Timbuktu in 2012 by armed groups, UNESCO and the Government of Mali immediately launched an ambitious heritage rehabilitation programme for the country in January 2013. It included the reconstruction of 14 of the 16 Timbuktu mausoleums inscribed on the World Heritage List – guided by the belief that culture is an essential source of community pride and identity, and vital for peace-building. The reconstruction of Timbuktu's physical fabric, which has made use of traditional masonry practices and built awareness in communities about the significance of local heritage places, is a significant first step towards also reconstructing the social fabric and promoting healing and reconciliation.

Partnerships

As part of efforts to ensure implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2199 on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, UNESCO has partnered with INTERPOL, the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the UN Security Council Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team. The resolution includes legally-binding measures to counter the illicit trafficking of artefacts from Iraq and Syria, and recognizes the defence of cultural heritage as a security imperative. Furthermore, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 2253, which calls on States to 'move vigorously and decisively' to cut the flows of funds and other financial assets and economic resources to individuals and entities on the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions List, UNESCO has intensified cooperation with the art market sector to strengthen policy dialogue and raise awareness about the link between the illicit trafficking of cultural objects and terrorism.



Preventing **violent extremism** on the **Internet**

The radicalization of youth as a source of violence is becoming a major challenge for many societies today, threatening the security and fundamental rights of citizens all over the world.

With a mandate to foster cooperation and solidarity through communication and information, UNESCO supports its Member States and civil society to prevent violent extremism and radicalization on the Internet.

As violent extremist groups are ever more effective in using Internet and social media to promote hatred and violence, UNESCO's work to counter online radicalization leading to violence is having an increasing significance for its Member States. Through concrete initiatives to foster youth empowerment through ICTs, as well as critical thinking, tolerance and respect for universal values, UNESCO is equipping young people with the necessary knowledge and Media and Information Literacy (MIL) skills so as to expand their social choices, build new forms of

global citizenship, and become more resilient to manipulation when using Internet and social media.

In 2015, within the framework of its Intergovernmental Information for All Programme (IFAP), UNESCO led the first-ever international conference on 'Youth and the Internet: Fighting Radicalization and Extremism', which brought together experts and decision-makers to share policy intervention experiences, projects and processes for reducing the use of the Internet as a tool for attracting young people to extremist ideologies and radicalism. The conference sensitized Member States and partners about the risks of this threat, and pointed to the urgent need for sustained international attention and global action in support of Member States. At this Conference, UNESCO also launched its cross-sectoral initiative *'A New Integrated Framework of Action - Empowering Youth to Build Peace: Youth 2.0 - Building Skills, Bolstering Peace'*.

This was followed in 2016 by the international conference 'Internet and the Radicalization of Youth: Preventing, Acting and Living Together', co-organized by UNESCO, IFAP and the Government of Québec, with the support of the Canadian Government. The resulting 'Quebec's Call for Action' ('Appel de Québec') called upon the international community to take multidimensional action to combat violent extremism. In this respect, Canada has provided support for the UNESCO inter-sectoral project 'Prevention of violent extremism by strengthening capacities of young people in Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia'.

UNESCO also promotes independent and professional journalism to counter the negative impacts of fabricated news stories, propaganda and rumours. Credible journalism based on facts and critical analysis is essential for sustaining policies that recognize human rights and dignity.

In fighting radicalization of young people in cyberspace that leads to violent extremism, UNESCO is playing a central role in cooperation with all major stakeholders to ensure that the Internet remains a safe space enabling young people to learn, socialize, express and realize their aspirations in the spirit of dialogue and tolerance. Thus, by acting effectively to bolster the Internet as a force for exchange, innovation, creativity, and, ultimately, peace and security, UNESCO is achieving one of the most important objectives of its constitutional mandate.

In May 2018, in the framework of the World Congress on Justice for Children: "Strengthening Justice Systems for Children: Challenges, including disengagement from violent extremism", UNESCO's IFAP organized a workshop on "The Challenges of Child Protection on the DarkNet", which contributed to sharing best practices and innovative approaches aimed at reducing the number of young people involved in radicalization schemes leading to extremism and violence.

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Pulling hate material from the Internet will never be enough to curb the phenomenon of violent extremism, because [whenever] one website goes down, two or three more are up the very next day. Simply taking down the content doesn't address the problem. You need to engage the speakers who are promoting radicalization and hate online and prepare our communities to respond/counter them with better arguments and facts.

Ross LaJeunesse, Head of International Relations,
Google

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focus on

North America
& Europe

The International Conference on Youth and Cyberhate, held in January 2017 in Nice (France), brought together researchers and civil society organizations from across Europe and North America to examine the role of online platforms in the radicalization of young people. UNESCO used the occasion to present its 2015 study on [Countering Online Hate Speech](#) and ongoing research on social media and youth radicalization. From this analysis, the Internet seems to provide an environment for messaging rather than act as a driving force in the radicalization process. This is why UNESCO promotes Media and Information Literacy (MIL) as a powerful antidote to online hate speech and radicalization.

focus on

Arab States

In May 2017, the Lebanese National Commission for UNESCO, in cooperation with UNESCO and the Rotary Club of Beirut, organized an international conference on 'Youth and ICT: Preventing Violent Extremism in Cyberspace', third in the series of events presented by UNESCO and its Intergovernmental Information for All Programme, IFAP. The conference brought together some 200 experts from 20 countries. It provided an opportunity to exchange experiences, to explore ways of preventing discrimination and radicalization leading to violent extremism on the Internet. The conference's [Final Statement](#) calls for adopting and implementing measures to prevent the online propagation of violence, to consolidate youth defences against extremist thought, and to encourage use of the Internet to promote a culture of peace.



Inclusive **sciences** and sharing natural resources to prevent **violent extremism**

Building more inclusive sciences and sharing natural resources are important for preventing the rise of violent extremism, through dialogue and cooperation.

With the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and other partners in the region and beyond, UNESCO has implemented scientific projects and activities to help promote sustainable development and build a culture of peace. Through its International Hydrological Programme (IHP) and the Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme, it has improved scientific understanding about Lake Chad's functioning and the state of its surrounding environment, while also developing institutional capacity for better management of the lake and its ecosystems.

Building on this, UNESCO has implemented a project on transboundary natural resources in Africa. This project (i) reviewed the state of relevant knowledge for the management of natural resources of the Lake Chad Basin; (ii) strengthened the capacity of

the LCBC and affiliated institutions for integrated water resources management and cooperation for peace and development; and (iii) produced a feasibility study on the creation of a transboundary Biosphere Reserve (TBR) and the nomination of the lake as a World Heritage site. The Basin's main areas touch five countries bordering the lake: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. This project has laid the foundation for the newly funded initiative by the African Development Bank, entitled: 'Applying the model of transboundary biosphere reserves and World Heritage sites to promote peace in the Lake Chad Basin by the sustainable management of its natural resources'.

UNESCO is also establishing the 'Knowing our Changing Climate in Africa' project. This focuses on the indigenous knowledge of pastoralist groups across sub-Saharan Africa about the weather and climate, and aims to build capacities and empower vulnerable and indigenous communities.

The project also expects to conduct transdisciplinary research on building synergies between science and local knowledge in order to enhance climate change adaptation, sustainable development and peace building.

“ *Safeguarding Lake Chad means improving the resilience of over 30 million people. Involving local communities is essential and we are pleased to be able to count on UNESCO's expertise in natural resources management and promoting intercultural dialogue in order to cultivate peace.* ”

Sanusi Imran Abdullahi, Executive Secretary of the Lake Chad Basin Commission

The formulation of appropriate Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) policy instruments in the African region is important for promoting peace and stability, and fostering conditions that hinder the development of violent extremism.

To this end, Spain supports Masters and PhD scholarships, as well as national STI funding in the region to encourage the development of spaces for inclusive research and exchanges among scientists and other stakeholders - including indigenous and local communities.

The participation of African scientists and local knowledge holders in international research programmes for sustainability, such as Future Earth (supported by Sweden), is important for the further involvement of scientists from diverse backgrounds and cultures in an equitable way. These measures aim to promote exchange and cultural rapprochement that can counteract violent extremism.



© CBLT (Commission du Bassin du Lac Tchad)

Snapshots of **action** across the world

■ **PVE in Mosul Schools in Iraq (Project funded by the Netherlands)**

Considering the Iraqi context, and specifically in Mosul where young people were exposed for three years to Islamic State occupation and its violent extremist narratives, it is necessary to introduce components in national education systems that strengthen learners' capacities to live together in a culture of peace, coexistence, positive engagement for responsible and sustainable change. Relevant quality education is vital to provide learners with the knowledge and skills – including cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural skills, such as critical thinking, multi-perspectivity, understandings of complexity, moral courage and responsible online behaviour – to develop resilience to violent extremism. This pilot project seeks to make schools safe places in wider communities, to build the capacity of teachers and shape pedagogies to bolster primary school learners' resilience and strengthen their commitments to non-violence and peace through appropriate educational strategies.

■ On 8 March 2016, at UNESCO Headquarters, a Panel discussion was organized on the theme '**Violent Extremism and Radicalization: Women as Victims, Perpetrators and Agents of Change**' with participation of women leaders, researchers and activists. The discussion focused on women's roles in the rise in violent extremism, as perpetrators, as victims and as advocates. The discussion raised awareness on the different roles and perceptions of women and men in a context of violent extremism and radicalization; it identified and supported women's experiences and capacities as peace-builders and agents of change; and it acknowledged and celebrated, on the occasion of International Women's Day, the efforts of the many women who claim their power to say 'no' to violent extremism.

■ The UNESCO-UNOCT project '**Prevention of Violent Extremism through Youth Empowerment in Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia**', co-funded by Canada, is a multi-sectoral initiative that aims to support young women and men in practicing new forms of global solidarity.

■ The **Youth Peacemaker Network** in South Sudan, in cooperation with **Forest Whitaker's Peace & Development Initiative**, trains and equips young women with the skills they need to promote peace and sustainable development within their communities.

■ Unlocking the power of cities to enhance inclusion and diversity is at the core of the **International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities'** mandate. ICCAR promotes international cooperation between cities to strengthen global solidarity and collaboration, as well as inclusive urban development free from violence and discrimination.



- In November 2016, social media broadcast the video '**The Value of Heritage**'. This was produced by the UNESCO Beirut Office in the framework of the Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Cultural Heritage project, funded by the European Union and supported by the Flemish Government and the Government of Austria. It sensitizes the audience to the value of their own heritage at a time when many populations are facing the loss of their heritage, customs and identity. Protecting culture today is essential for building peace tomorrow.
- As lead Agency for the **International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures** (2013-2022), UNESCO engages a variety of actors in conflict prevention, including youth, civil society leaders and activists, decision and policymakers, the private sector and researchers. This effort lies at the heart of the UN Secretary-General António Guterres's focus on preventing conflicts and sustaining peace and respect for human rights.

- UNESCO's **General Histories of Africa** and the recently completed UNESCO collection on **The Different Aspects of Islamic Culture** are unique resources exploring humanity's rich diversity and the exchange and dialogue that characterise the history of all societies and cultures.

Revive the Spirit of Mosul

In Iraq, violent extremism sent the country into a downward spiral of human suffering, division and violence between 2014 and 2017, adding to 35 years of war and insecurity. None of the great challenges – starting with preventing the rise of violent extremism – can be effectively addressed without a holistic approach, which places human and its future perspectives at the center of reflection. This is why, in February 2018, the Director-General launched the flagship initiative 'Revive the Spirit of Mosul', to restore Mosul as the living symbol of the pluralistic identity of the Iraqi people. With the support of the Government of Iraq and of the UN Secretary-General, UNESCO will coordinate international efforts in the restoration and rehabilitation of cultural heritage in Mosul and the revival of cultural life and educational institutions, to support the people and the Government of Iraq in rebuilding and bolstering the foundations of peace in response to violent extremism.

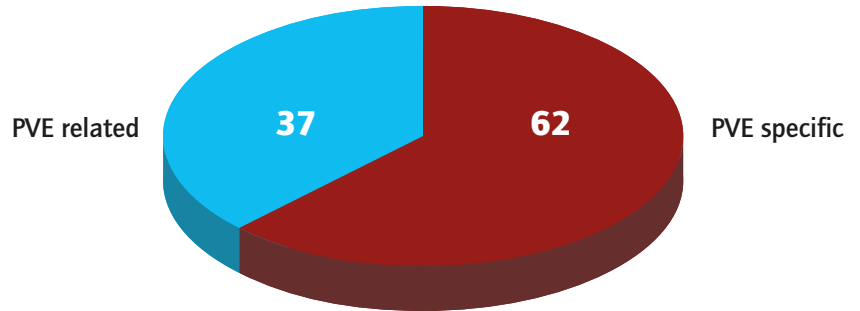


Mosul, view from the Tigris river bank © Ali Abaroodi

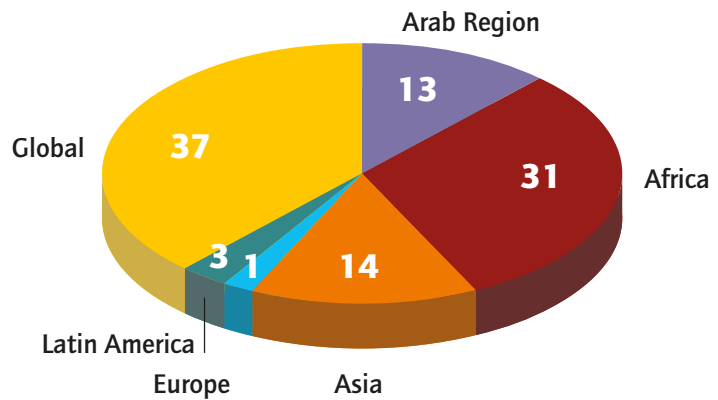


UNESCO's preventing violent extremism **activities**

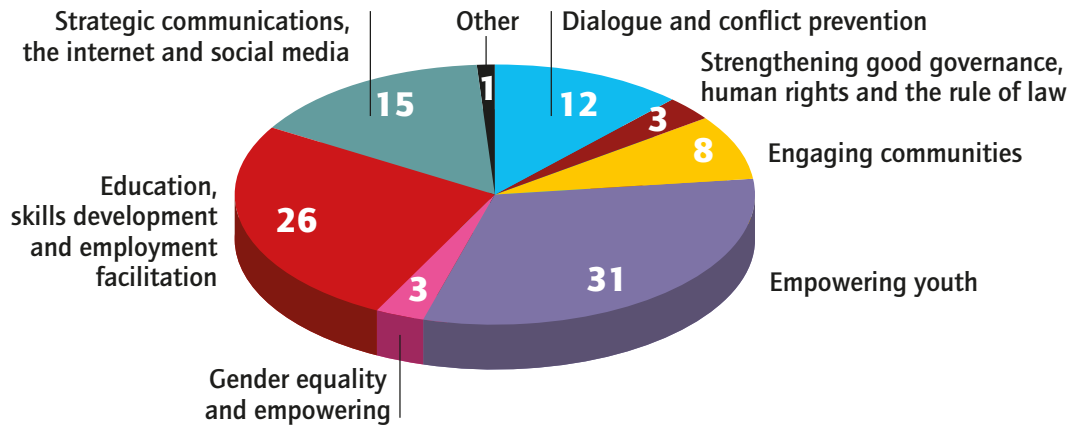
■ Distribution of 99 PVE activities by focus



■ Regional distribution of UNESCO PVE activities



■ Distribution of activities following the UN Secretary General's Plan of Action on PVE



Support UNESCO's Action

Effective responses to prevent violent extremism require an efficient and concerted mobilization of all UNESCO Member States and partners. The engagement and support of all stakeholders are key to achieve our common goal to strengthen the foundations of lasting peace and sustainable development.

Building on human rights and shared values, we must respond to the threat that violent extremism violence poses to national and international security with action across the board, nurturing the 'soft power' of education, culture, the sciences, and communication and information.

This is UNESCO's commitment.

Join us on this frontline to build a more secure, more inclusive and just world for all.

For more information, please see:

<http://en.unesco.org/preventing-violent-extremism>

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