

Operationalizing Somali National Strategy and Action Plan on Preventing and Countering of Violent Extremism (PCVE)

Key achievements during the reporting period

- A country-wide network of 240 like-minded religious leaders was established, working closely with the government in promoting tolerance and peace, and countering al-Shabaab propaganda, hate speech and incitement to violence. This network has proven reliable and flexible in implementing a robust awareness campaign on debunking harmful misinformation, countering discrimination, and discrediting al-Shabaab propaganda on COVID-19.
- The provision of ongoing capacity building support, mentoring, needs assessments, technical assistance and continuous staffing to government structures enabled increased PCVE coordination and implementation, and also allowed for a quick and effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 22 PCVE platform meetings were held in hotspot locations, allowing the identification of community grievances as root causes for violent extremism and the agreement of solutions by participants to avoid further escalation.

Project data

MPTF Gateway ID	00112758
Geographical coverage	Benadir, Galmudug, Hirshabelle, Jubaland, Puntland, South-West State
Project duration	01 September 2018 – 30 June 2021
Total approved budget	USD 4,306,230
Programme funding level	USD 3,234,659
Estimated delivery rate	86%
Participating UN entities	UNDP, UNSOM
Implementing partners	Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), Ministries of Endowment and Religious Affairs (MoERA) in FGS and FMS
NDP pillar	To achieve a stable and peaceful Federal Somalia through inclusive political processes, establishing unified, capable and accountable security institutions and establishing independent, accountable and efficient justice institution.
UNCF Strategic Priority	Priority 3: All Somalis benefit from Peace, Security and the Rule of Law including Justice; Priority 4: Effective and accountable institutions that respond to needs and rights of all Somalis.
SDG	5, 16
Gender Marker	2
Related UN projects within/outside the SJF portfolio	N/A

Focal person	Doel Mukerjee, doel.mukerjee@undp.org , 0619883848

Report submitted by: Robin Frost

	PUNO	Report approved by:	Position/Title	Signature
1	UNDP	Jocelyn Mason	Resident Representative	

Section 1: Executive summary

Brief introduction to the project

As a part of implementing the adopted PCVE Strategy in Somalia, the project will assist Somalia to staff and operationalize its coordination mechanism at the national and FMS levels. The project will provide operational support for the PVCE coordination mechanisms, including regular CAS Stand 4 coordination meetings, in addition to training and technical assistance. The project will promote linkages between Somali and regional PVCE initiatives, in partnership with other actors.

Consultations and workshops will be held with relevant stakeholders at national and federal member state level. These workshops will build the capacities of networks to engage on PCVE issues, and provide feedback on PCVE priorities. The project will also support small scale 'action research', including mapping of existing PCVE initiatives at community levels. Based on feedback provided during consultation and guided by the research studies, priorities and methodologies will be established for 'Phase 2' follow-on medium-term support to PCVE coordination, building upon the foundations laid under this project.

Situation update / Context of the reporting period

The COVID-19 pandemic was a defining challenge for the programme in 2020, with social distancing restrictions limiting the local consultations and activities that could be conducted. In addition, dangerous misinformation and propaganda on COVID-19 spread in Somalia, spurred by the violent extremist group al-Shabaab, resulting in COVID-19 messaging from government and particularly the international community being met with suspicion from some Somali communities. This increased the likelihood of negative health outcomes, increased discrimination against certain groups and exacerbated existing conflict fault lines. It was therefore crucial to work with the ulema to further the efforts of Somalia's prevention and response efforts to the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic also necessitated a pause in work on the PCVE Platforms and dialogue and mediation committees from March-August 2020. Instead, work plans were refocused to allow activities to continue and the programme engaged and trained well-known and trusted religious leaders to disseminate accurate information around Covid-19, bolstering the government's information campaign efforts whilst debunking superstitious and harmful narratives. Health and medical information have been combined with religious guidance on what defines the daily routine of most Somalis, especially attending mosque prayers and other religious gatherings and sending children to madrassa schools. In addition, religious leaders have been encouraged to incorporate messages of peace, solidarity, human sympathy and support in a time of global crisis, and to specifically counter misinformation by al-Shabaab that the virus is being spread by government officials and non-believers. This approach has not only helped mitigate the spread of the pandemic itself but additionally allowed for the refocusing of the initially allocated funding to support moderate Islamic voices towards addressing the emerging challenge of COVID-19 whilst still meeting the key project objectives.

As election-related tensions increased in Somalia due to political developments in 2021, social media and rumors monitoring highlighted a growing belief that the increase in COVID-19 cases in Somalia was engineered by the government to delay the election and to prevent the opposition's demonstrations. The project researched this trend and raised it with UN election and security task forces to adjust COVID awareness and response efforts to the appropriate risk mitigation measures. In addition, the project continues to monitor the vaccine rollout, including misinformation spread by al-Shabaab and other actors. To mitigate the risk of a disinformation campaign against the vaccine, close communication with government counterparts has taken place regularly during the reporting period to support the official messaging on vaccinations and to provide insights into the spread of misinformation.

Highlights of the project

1. A country-wide network of 240 like-minded religious leaders was established, working closely with the government in promoting tolerance and peace, and countering al-Shabaab propaganda, hate speech and incitement to violence. This network has proven reliable and flexible in implementing a robust awareness campaign on debunking rumors, countering discrimination, and discrediting al-Shabaab propaganda on COVID-19.
2. 22 PCVE platform meetings were held in hotspot locations, allowing the identification of community grievances as root causes for violent extremism and the agreement of solutions by participants to avoid further escalation.
3. The provision of ongoing capacity building support, mentoring, needs assessments, technical assistance and continuous staffing to government structures enabled increased PCVE coordination and implementation, and also allowed for a quick and effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Nationwide consultations held with traditional elders and religious leaders on their role in a potential peace process, contributing towards a public demand for peace talks.

Summary of key achievements during the reporting period

The project's awareness-raising campaign 'Clerics vs COVID', contributed to debunking harmful misinformation and sharing lifesaving health information. It also triggered a social debate about the need to limit gatherings for congregational prayers, and the application of social distancing measures at other places of worship. The campaign's success at countering the COVID-19 misinformation was a possible trigger for al-Shabaab to eventually acknowledge the dangers of the pandemic and mirror the government's efforts of establishing a committee of doctors and religious leaders in response to the disease.

22 PCVE Platform meetings were organized in selected at-risk locations in the FMS, as identified by the PCVE focal points in the states. Following structured guidelines of engagement with communities, the Platform meetings produced lists of community grievances identified as drivers and root causes for violent extremism.

The increased capacity for qualified and experienced government experts on PCVE work in Somalia resulted in PCVE mainstreaming into the work of the federal and FMS line-ministries, and improved collaboration between FSG and FMS through regular meetings. This capacity support enabled all PCVE focal points and OPM PCVE coordination officers to participate in larger coordination meetings and discussions, such as the CAS Strand 4, PCVE Committee meetings with line ministries, both at FGS and FMS level, as well as Project Steering Committee and technical level meetings with international partners.

As the programme concluded implementation on 30 June 2021, a key focus of 2021 was to develop a new project document for a medium-term intervention on tolerance and dialogue in Somalia, based on lessons and learnings from the implementation of the PCVE project. For this purpose, an external consultant was hired to conduct key stakeholder interviews and review past programming. Among the stakeholders interviewed were key government officials working on PCVE, peacebuilding and security issues in Somalia, women and youth civil activists, regional and topic-specific experts, and relevant actors at the FGS and FMS levels. In addition to targeted conversations with UN officials, the project has held an internal brainstorm session with UN colleagues to seek their feedback and suggestions. This has allowed key actors to share their perceptions of PCVE-related issues in Somalia, including assessments of the previous programming, changes in the security environment, best practices, and other learnings. This analysis will ensure better coordinated and evidence-based programming for the next phase of the programme, focusing on Tolerance and Dialogue.

Section 2: Progress Report Results Matrix

OUTCOME STATEMENT

CVE coordination by national authorities is functional at Federal and Federal Member State levels, and consultation mechanisms established.		
SUB-OUTCOME 1 STATEMENT		
OPM Coordination Office & PCVE focal points are staffed and capacitated to coordinate on PCVE, and commence implementation of priority issues from their respective PCVE action points.		
Output 1.1: PCVE coordination and collaboration: PCVE coordination between PGS and FMS; mainstreaming PCVE into work of federal and FMS line ministries.		
INDICATOR	TARGET	PROGRESS ON OUTPUT INDICATOR
		CUMULATIVE
Capacity of qualified and experienced government experts for PCVE work in Somalia developed	Build capacity by ensuring salaries of OPM and FMS FPs	Qualified and experienced persons for PCVE in Somalia identified and appointed by federal and state governments: six OPM and six FMS focal points (F:2, M:10). Positions were supported throughout the programme to ensure PCVE expertise being applied and mainstreamed throughout the work of federal and state governments, enabling continued implementation of PCVE specific programming interventions.
PCVE collaboration between FSG and FMS strengthened	Bi-monthly FGS Inter-Ministerial Task Force Meetings	The project has facilitated regular collaboration between the FSG and the FMS. The PCVE FMS Focal Points regularly meet with FSG PCVE officers to discuss implementation of the PCVE Platforms. Specific inter-ministerial thematic meetings, physically and then virtually, took place facilitated by the OPM-PCVE-CU. Increasing thematic inter-ministerial meetings, physically and virtually have taken on for example Amnesty or teaching Islam in state institutions. The OPM and MoERA held consultations, with delegations from 5 FMS, on the religious counternarratives manual which led to an agreement on collaboration. Increased collaboration between the FSG and FMS PCVE officers also allowed for the project to quickly adjust activities due to COVID.
PCVE mainstreamed into the work of federal and FMS line ministries- reflected in joint activities, ministerial work plans, policy documents	Bi-monthly FMS P/CVE Committee Meetings in FMS	Regular meetings held between FMS and OPM PCVE focal points. all PCVE focal points and OPM PCVE coordination officers participate in larger coordination meetings and discussions, such as the CAS Strand 4, PCVE Committee meetings with line ministries, both at FGS and FMS level, as well as Project Steering Committee and technical level meetings with international partners.
Output 1.2: Mentoring and technical assistance: Institutional and individual capacity building for PCVE coordinators and focal points at OPM and FMS levels		
Needs-based monthly workshops for OPM, FMS Focal Points, and P/CVE Line ministry counterparts on thematic areas	At least 8 technical capacity building workshops held on PCVE-relevant topics, based on detailed needs assessments and linked to ongoing/planned PCVE activities of the government	Regular needs assessments conducted by PCVE Technical Specialist. Based on these findings, 20 capacity building trainings provided to FMS (F:1, M: 5) and OPM PCVE staff (F:1, M:4). Conducted regular technical mentoring and twice a week calls with government counterparts to enable them to move forward on implementation. Delivered capacity building training on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism to 54 civil servants (F:3, M: 51)/all female civil servants currently employed at Ministry attended) in the MoERA.
Output 1.3: CAS Strand 4 Meetings: Support provided for the Comprehensive Approach to Security (CAS) Strand 4		
Regular CAS Strand 4 meetings held, with representation of FMS and key line ministries	Bi-monthly Technical Preparatory Meetings before Strand 4	Regular CAS Strand 4 meetings held. Support was provided to six Strand 4 meetings and five technical preparatory meetings among which one was held virtually.
SUB-OUTCOME 2 STATEMENT		
Stakeholder consultations and research undertaken to inform development of phase 2 PCVE support		
Output 2.1: Stakeholder consultations: Consultations on PCVE with strategic groups		
P/CVE Platform meetings with wider civil society and	PCVE grievances identified and addressed through at least 10 PCVE Platforms	PCVE Committee & Platform ToRs developed and adopted; community engagement guidelines developed; In 2019, 13 PCVE Platform meetings were held in 11 hot spot locations across the FMS. Identified community grievances

community representatives in hot spot areas in 5 FMS	and inter-ministerial / FMS-FGS coordination structures	as root causes for violent extremism and took steps to address them. In light of the pandemic and travel restrictions, steps were taken by the research teams to develop a virtual version of the questionnaire and explore options of conducting interviews and consultative meetings virtually / by phone. After restrictions were lifted in 2020, a further 9 PCVE platform meetings were held. 35 PCVE grievances identified with follow up sessions on agreed solutions to respond.
P/CVE Platforms extended to newly recovered areas	PCVE Platforms successfully extended to 2 locations in newly recovered areas (NRA)	<p>The OPM PCVE unit and the PCVE focal points in HirShabelle and South-West state have liaised with community leaders in newly recovered areas to identify community priorities and PCVE interventions.</p> <p>When the COVID-19 pandemic reached Somalia in early 2020, the OPM together with the UNSOM/UNDP PCVE team decided that it was not safe to convene PCVE platforms. Instead, the OPM PCVE unit in coordination with the PCVE focal points at the FMS presidencies started in-depth conversations with the FMS authorities to understand more about the needs of the communities in the potential project locations. New areas for potential activities have been identified through consultations at the local level.</p>
FMS community consultations on Amnesty Policy, incl. transitional justice mechanisms, forgiveness community-based reintegration	Community feedback received on forgiveness, transitional justice and amnesty in all FMS; Amnesty policy reviewed; Regulatory Impact Analysis on the draft Amnesty Policy prepared.	<p>Draft Road Map has been developed by OPM for further consultations, and meetings have been held between OPM and MoIS to decide on next steps and areas of potential collaboration.</p> <p>To mark the third anniversary of the 14 October attack in Mogadishu, community discussions were held with victims, their families, religious leaders and other members of the community. The day's activities also began the process towards social healing and dialogue, which are necessary for societal forgiveness and reconciliation.</p>
Consultations with traditional elders	At least 400 Traditional Elders consulted on their role in reconciling with al-Shabaab; community feedback on public demand for peace talks; insight into local peace arrangements; government policy document drafted to reflect findings and complement National Reconciliation Framework	International Religious leaders conference organized in Mogadishu in 2019 with 404 participants.
Consultations with Religious Leaders	Networks of Religious Leaders for PCVE established; at least 500 scholars engaged	<p>150 Religious Leaders engaged in the establishment of local networks of like-minded religious actors to promote Islam as a religion of tolerance and peace in HirShabelle state pilot.</p> <p>Manual promoting Islam as a religion of tolerance and peace developed and consultations held.</p> <p>Established nationwide networks of 240 like-minded religious leaders promoting Islam as a religion of tolerance and peace. An awareness-raising campaign on COVID-19 successfully engaged religious leaders to respond to harmful misinformation.</p> <p>The project has also sought feedback and discussions with these leaders. A feedback workshop organized over five days by the OPM and MoERA, with 79 participants (F; 7, M: 72) captured feedback and lessons learnt from the sheiks and imams who participated in the Clerics vs COVID campaign. Mediation Committees have also been established in Jowhar, Warsheikh, Balcad, Dhusamareb and Kismayo.</p>

Consultations with victims of terror attacks, linked to digital storytelling	Consultations held with Victims of Terror Attacks; road map developed for Government-led support to victims of terror attacks; victims' voices included into PCVE communications	In the Benadir Regional Administration, a research pilot intervention analyzed the degree to which different counter-narratives impact public opinion and receive positive responses. The government identified different messengers and developed varying messages to prevent and counter violent extremism, including stories of defectors/survivors, and victims of terror attacks, messages of women, religious leaders and youth representatives, as well as a clip produced by a group of comedians. Many of these messages developed out of the broad consultative process with key stakeholders undertaken in the course of the project, including the women's consultations and the religious leaders' conference. The comparative findings of the impact of using different messengers have been analyzed and a draft report is being developed with a larger discussion around social healing, forgiveness and transitional justice.
Consultation with women on trauma-informed community empowerment	Role of Women piloted in trauma-informed community empowerment in 1 location	<p>Based on the recommendations from the women's consultative process and the Women's Peace Forum, as well as building on recent research findings regarding the role of women in and under al-Shabaab, the OPM PCVE Unit developed an initial concept note on this activity which has been shared with the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development for feedback and collaboratively taking it forward.</p> <p>The project has held discussions with experts and government counterparts on mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), as well as trauma and women's role in addressing this. Through the partnership with religious leaders and PCVE Platforms, the project held discussions with women community leaders, as well as the wider community, on trauma and conflict transformation. The project has also engaged women madrassa teachers, ensuring that they are included in dialogue and mediation committees. This has resulted in three female madrassa leaders included in discussions on the religious manual.</p>
Output 2.2: Small Action Research: Research on PCVE in 2 districts		
Small Action Research on measuring PCVE programming impact completed and fed back into the PCVE-targeted work of respective government line-ministries through at least 5 Coordination meetings	Small Action Research on measuring PCVE programming impact completed and fed back into the PCVE-targeted work of respective government line-ministries through at least 5 Coordination meetings	Data collection for research locations identification completed. The project supported the OPM PCVE Coordination Unit in collaboration with the PCVE Focal Point for the Benadir Regional Administration in developing and commencing the implementation of a set of small action research pilot interventions. Six Small Scale Action Research Projects in all FMS and the Benadir Region were developed and conducted. Data collection concluded and a report analyzing the interventions was finalized in early 2021.
1 Government – Civil Society Symposium held on PCVE sensitive work of security forces	1 Government – Civil Society Symposium held on PCVE sensitive work of security forces	Work continued into inquiries and fact-finding missions to support the development of the concept note, as well as research efforts to identify existing training and organizational structures and processes (i.e. SNA, police).
Output 2.3: UNDP Technical Assistance: Overall project implementation; capacity needs assessments; technical mentoring; development of cross-sectoral programme on PCVE; monitoring; reporting		
Overall project implementation; capacity needs assessments; technical mentoring; development of cross-sectoral program on PCVE; monitoring; reporting	UNDP Technical Assistance: - UNDP PCVE Technical Specialist: Salary; Hazard Duty Station Allowance -National Project Officer -50% of 1 UNDP Admin Staff -10% of UNDP P5 Portfolio Manager	UNDP Technical Assistance needs met: - UNDP PCVE Technical Specialist: Salary; Hazard Duty Station Allowance - National Project Officer - 50% of 1 UNDP Admin Staff - 10% of UNDP P5 Portfolio Manager - Travel for Project Staff to Project Sites, and for training

Section 3: Narrative reporting on results

Progress towards outcomes

Output 1: PCVE coordination by national authorities is functional at Federal and Federal Member State levels, and consultation mechanisms established.

Increased coordination & capacity, exemplified in governmental response to COVID-19

Under output 1, the project supported the staffing and capacity of both the OPM and the governments of the FMS to coordinate on PCVE, through selected PCVE focal points. The increased capacity for qualified and experienced government experts on PCVE work in Somalia resulted in PCVE mainstreaming into the work of the federal and FMS line-ministries, and improved collaboration between FSG and FMS through regular meetings. This capacity support enabled all PCVE focal points and OPM PCVE coordination officers to participate in larger coordination meetings and discussions, such as the CAS Strand 4, PCVE Committee meetings with line ministries, both at FGS and FMS level, as well as Project Steering Committee and technical level meetings with international partners.

The Office of the Prime Minister’s PCVE Coordination Unit (OPM-PCVE-CU) has been supported as the custodian of the National PCVE Strategy and Action Plan, the national knowledge hub on PCVE, and the coordination entity on PCVE amongst federal ministries as well as between FGS and FMS. As a result, the OPM-PCVE-CU took ownership of the response to COVID misinformation with the establishment of the COVID-19 Governmental Task Force, which worked to counter violent extremist propaganda and misinformation through an awareness-raising campaign on COVID-19. The campaign also facilitated collaboration between MoERA and the Somali ulema by identifying and establishing a network of moderate focal point mosques willing to collaborate with the government in leading the dissemination of information on the pandemic to the communities.

The project supports the Comprehensive Approach to Security (CAS) Strand 4, which has regularly engaged PCVE actors from Federal Government line ministries, Federal Member states focal points, and civil society representatives. The CAS forum has evolved from a coordination platform to a forum of content-based exchange and collaboration between line ministries. It shifted from actors sharing updates towards thematic areas and joint reporting by various stakeholders on collaborative efforts to mainstream PCVE into their respective work. This shift towards greater coordination can be partly attributed to the increased capacity for qualified and experienced government experts, largely due to maintaining the salaries of these focal points.

Progress was made in encouraging inter-ministerial collaboration towards managing religious institutions across Somalia. Through technical assistance and capacity building, the Federal MoERA was supported to develop its vision, mission statement and mandate (including the key objectives of promoting Islam as a religion of tolerance and peace) and publish it on the ministry’s newly developed website (mera.gov.so). In addition, the programme supported the establishment of social media accounts. The Twitter account has responded to violent extremism attacks, allowing the ministry to provide accurate religious guidance and counter extremist narratives. It also has laid the foundation for future interventions as well as enabled the formation of strategic partnerships with other Federal ministries including the MoIS and MoJ. The OPM is in the process of developing similar strategic collaborations on selected thematic areas with other key line ministries.

In addition, the increased capacity of qualified and experienced government experts for PCVE work in Somalia was supplemented by regular workshops. These mentoring and technical capacity building sessions have become more ad hoc meetings on almost a weekly basis responding to upcoming needs and challenges and based on needs-based assessments to ensure a focus on priority needs areas and linked to ongoing and planned PCVE activities of the government. The sessions further resulted in an increased capacity of the PCVE-FMS-FP to coordinate PCVE, including

responding to various requests from state counterparts both at FGS and FMS level to provide information and training on PCVE.

Output 2: Stakeholder consultations and research undertaken to inform the development of phase 2 PCVE support

Stakeholder Consultations:

The OPM PCVE Coordination Unit, in close collaboration with the Federal Ministry for Religious Affairs, organized an international religious leaders conference on PCVE in Mogadishu in 2019. The Consultation with religious leaders and actors in Mogadishu was attended by 404 participants and resulted in the issuance of a communique as well as the recording of numerous statements of religious leaders demanding and explaining a correct interpretation of Islam as a religion of tolerance and peace. Both the president and the prime minister attended the conference, and the president in his speech encouraged religious leaders to play a role as mediators between Al-Shabaab and the population in the overall forgiveness and reconciliation process, which was widely reported and commented on in the media. The statements of the religious leaders were recorded and are currently developed into counter-narrative clips to be used by the OPM for wider dissemination. The overall positioning and feedback of religious leaders and actors on PCVE informed and fed into the revision of the national PCVE strategy.

As per their mandate to establish coordination structures and networks on PCVE in the FMS, the PCVE focal points organized four consultative meetings with state-level government counterparts, civil society and community representatives, including youth, religious leaders, traditional elders and minority clan representatives, to talk about PCVE. Meetings under the leadership of the respective state PCVE focal points, and with attendance of OPM PCVE Coordination staff, took place in Jowhar, Kismayo, Baidoa and Dusamareb and reached a total of 198 participants. In the meetings, the PCVE focal points informed participants about the overall PCVE agenda, the government mandate and capacities to work on it, as well as the plans to implement small action projects on PCVE in selected at-risk areas. The consultations not only increased knowledge of the participants on PCVE aims, objectives and approaches, but also provided dedicated feedback sessions in which participants informed the PCVE focal points about violent extremism-related challenges they face in their day to day life, and how government support to tackle them could look like. Lastly, these sessions were used to develop further the PCVE questionnaire to measure the degree of violent extremist actions, attitudes and networks which the PCVE experts developed in order to measure the programming impact of their small action research pilots.

PCVE Platforms:

A two-tiered PCVE coordination structure was developed in the FMS and the Benadir region, establishing PCVE Platforms and PCVE Committees. The objective of the PCVE platforms is to offer a forum for exchange on community concerns, conditions and grievances that either contribute to the development of an environment conducive to radicalization or pose actual motivations for communities and/or individuals to sympathize with and support violent extremist groups. The PCVE platforms offer civil society and community representatives a forum to raise these issues with government representatives. The government subsequently, through district, regional and federal level coordination structures, such as PCVE Committee meetings at state capital level, aims to address these challenges with community-based solutions, prioritizing issues identified by communities as most pressing.

As a first step, PCVE Committees with representatives of the respective state line ministries were established in all FMS. The PCVE focal points convened these meetings informing line ministries about PCVE and the platform outreach to communities. Subsequently, PCVE Platform meetings were organized in selected locations (Puntland, Galmudug, South West State, Hirshabelle and BRA). Following the structured guideline of engagement with communities, the PCVE Platform meetings produced lists of community priorities summarizing the PCVE-related challenges. The PCVE focal point subsequently reported directly to the respective PCVE Committee in the FMS, bringing to Committees' attention PCVE-related challenges identified and prioritized by communities for further action. The PCVE focal points further shared these lists of priorities with the PCVE Coordination Unit under the Office of the Prime Minister. The government took steps to address these root causes identified. Some of them were within the mandate of the PCVE structures and could be addressed directly by the FMS focal points on the ground. Others required the involvement and sensitization of

relevant local and state authorities mandated to respond. Some of the challenges raised were too broad and encompassing to develop a quick solution and require continuous engagement with the respective communities.

While COVID-19 restrictions were in place, the project supported PCVE Focal Points in the FMS to continue their focus on direct discussions with community representatives on developing solutions to address grievances. When in-person meetings were able to resume, PCVE platform meetings were held in hotspot locations across the FMS. PCVE grievances were identified, with agreed solutions also decided by the consultations' participants. In addition to follow up consultations and further escalation of grievances identified to key stakeholders, this feedback is being incorporated into a road map on forgiveness, transitional justice in amnesty in all FMS.

The experience of PCVE platform implementation showed that knowledge of the PCVE push and pull factors at community level is limited to non-existent. Through interventions by the government focal points, however, local experiences with the challenge of violent extremism can be easily linked to a more systematic approach of identifying and clustering challenges related to violent extremism. Having understood the concept of PCVE, community members are both willing and able to provide detailed information about motivations and triggering factors for local support to violent extremist groups. The PCVE focal points were able to address some of the challenges identified through relatively simple measures within the government mandate and capacity. Others do require a lengthier thought process that might entail continued dialogue between government and community representatives to develop and test solutions. In most circumstances, both community and government representatives do require additional support to come up with locally owned solutions, as well as capacity building and resources to be able to realize them. Once the exchange between government and at-risk communities is started, it has proven to be of utmost importance to guarantee its continuation on a regular basis, showcasing government responsiveness towards local grievances, establishing and strengthening a trust-based relationship.

Religious Leaders:

The project established a network of 240 like-minded religious leaders promoting Islam as a religion of tolerance and peace. An awareness-raising campaign on COVID-19 successfully engaged religious leaders to respond to harmful misinformation, sharing health-related information on prevention and response measures combined with religious guidance. The project has focused on disseminating messages promoting Islam as a religion of tolerance and peace by engaging sheiks into recording tapes and spreading the message through mosques' loudspeaker systems. They are encouraged to incorporate messages of peace, solidarity, human sympathy and support in a time of global crisis, and to specifically counter misinformation by al-Shabaab that the virus is being spread by government officials and non-believers.

The project has also sought feedback and discussions with these leaders. To build on the successful 'Clerics vs COVID' awareness-raising campaign and networks of likeminded religious leaders, a workshop on Promoting Islam as a Religion of Tolerance and Peace – Countering Wrongful Messages was held. The 79 participants (F: 7, M: 72) analyzed the manual of religious counter-narratives and distilled its key messages into points that directly counter al-Shabaab's misuse of religion. Through the consultations, the religious leaders have added two chapters to the manual and developed 10 key PCVE messages.

Dialogue and Mediation Committees have been established in Jowhar, Warsheikh, Balcad, Dhusamareb and Kismayo that engage religious actors into conversations on countering hate speech and violent extremism.

Victims and trauma-affected individuals:

As consultative meetings with victims of terror attacks were unable to take place in safe environments with trauma-trained facilitators due to COVID-19 restrictions, the focus was on developing a concept for engaging victims and linking this engagement with a larger discussion around social healing, forgiveness and transitional justice. When social distancing measures were relaxed, the project team sought to begin further dialogue with victims and trauma-affected individuals to ensure that their views are reflected in PCVE work. Victims of attacks, as well as their family members, were brought together to listen to the needs of this group. Their involvement in the commemoration activities for the 14 October 2017 attack allowed them to express how their specific circumstances must be noted in the larger societal social healing process. To recognize each victim of the 2017 attack, 734 gambar chairs were embroidered with the victims' names. These chairs, along with 734 prayer rugs, were used at a prayer meeting led by the Deputy Minister of

Endowments and Religious Affairs to reflect on those lost. Additional prayer meetings were also held around the city within communities to mark the victims of the attack. In addition, a communications campaign using the hashtag #NamesNotNumbers also commenced with the objective to begin a longer digital campaign to raise awareness to the victims of violent extremism in Somalia. Relatedly, the project has actively sought to include women in PCVE, particularly madrassa teachers, including as part of the awareness-raising campaign on COVID-19.

Research on PCVE:

The project supported the OPM PCVE Coordination Unit in collaboration with the PCVE Focal Point for the Benadir Regional Administration in developing and commencing the implementation of a set of small action research pilot interventions. The PCVE experts received guidance on how to select project locations and target groups, and how to design PCVE projects with a community-based research approach to test the effectiveness of those interventions. Six Small Scale Action Research Projects in all FMS and the Benadir Region were conducted and a finalized report analyzing the interventions was developed. These results have been fed back into the PCVE-targeted work of the respective government line-ministries. The initial baseline data was analyzed and preparations for the interventions continued. The BRA research component and the video launch, along with impact analysis, were captured into a report.

Section 4: Project implementation

COVID 19 Response

The work with networks of religious leaders was refocused to respond effectively to the COVID-19 crisis. Additional funds were mobilized to support the networks in promoting awareness around COVID-19 and combating misinformation. Well-known and trusted religious leaders have been engaged and trained to disseminate accurate information around COVID-19, bolstering the government's information campaign efforts whilst debunking superstitious and harmful narratives. Health and medical information have been combined with religious guidance on what defines the daily routine of most Somalis, especially attending mosque prayers and other religious gatherings and sending children to madrassa schools. In addition, religious leaders have been encouraged to incorporate messages of peace, solidarity, human sympathy and support in a time of global crisis, and to specifically counter misinformation by al-Shabaab that the virus is being spread by government officials and non-believers. This approach has not only helped mitigate the spread of the pandemic itself but additionally allowed for the refocusing of the initially allocated funding to address the emerging challenge of COVID-19 whilst still meeting the key project objectives.

In addition, as election-related tensions have increased in Somalia due to recent political developments, there were rumors on social media that the increase of positive COVID-19 cases was engineered by the government to delay the election and to prevent the opposition's demonstrations. Therefore, the project identified that COVID-19 campaigns are likely to be mired in election developments, especially due to popular rumors that the government is making up the pandemic to curb opposition movement. The project still supported raising awareness of the measures to prevent COVID-19 but also identified that the religious leaders network developed during the first wave of COVID-19 could have been put at risk of being associated with a political agenda which could negatively impact communities' trust in them. This risk was further demonstrated by an attack on a Benadir Regional Administration (BRA) government vehicle promoting COVID-19 awareness messaging. To prevent any reputational and physical harm, the project advised against outward large public messaging around COVID led by PCVE stakeholders and has closely monitored the situation throughout the reporting period, including by informing senior management about any rumors or trends circulating on social media.

Key constraints and challenges and associated corrective actions

Programming took place with the backdrop of election uncertainty. Although programming was not directly affected by the political developments during the electoral process, careful consideration was taken to avoid any sensitive activities that could negatively impact the project.

In addition, COVID-19 continued to be the main challenge to project implementation. The second wave of the virus brought stricter social distancing measures which meant that it was not possible to convene in-person PCVE Platforms. The project responded to these restrictions and the growing security situation by focusing efforts on evaluating past programming and drawing out key lessons and learnings. The increased focus on in-depth conversations with governmental counterparts at the FGS and FMS levels, and with civil society and community actors, increased relationships between the involved stakeholders, which will lead to greater coordination. Through these detailed discussions, the project has also identified the best ways for implementation in the second half of 2021. It has also strengthened relationships with key stakeholders, including the ulema, women, and youth, to try to build buy-in from the community to ensure greater project implementation.

Risk management

Type of risk	Description of risk	Mitigating measures
Political: Risk of Increased internal political divisions	An increase in internal political divisions will have a detrimental effect on all activities and interventions under the project. Internal political divisions are likely to further deepen the communication gap between the FMS and FGS	The project will work to create preconditions for building strong relationships at the technical levels with all local, FMS and FGS partners, with a focus to support a harmonized approach to the development of the security architecture in the country.
Strategic: Lack of Inclusiveness of all groups in the dialogue platforms	Inclusiveness of all groups, especially women would be important for this project. Lack of inclusiveness is likely leading to actions taken and policy framework developed being based on a “false” baseline undermining a whole of society approach.	Ensure coordination with MoWHRD and MoIFA to ensure all groups especially women’s participation is ensured. Relevant groups are identified in the project and women’s groups are included in the discussions on PCVE at the FMS. SNWO, specifically aiming at capturing women’s perspective on PCVE, to inform the national policy framework and action plans.
Delivery: Limited engagement with FMS	Limited engagement with FMS may undermine the overall objective of the project	Ensure that the project activities are well coordinated with other program interventions especially on rule of law. Coordination meetings to be well recorded.
Operational: Evidence-based research may not be completed during the timeframe of the project, due to lack of skilled interviewers and willingness of respondents to answer sensitive questions	Lack of evidence-based research to inform policy development and action plans will likely lead to actions taken and policy framework developed not leading to the intended aim of reducing drivers and push-factors for radicalization and recruitment to violent extremist organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure coordination with all PCVE focal points from all member states through the PCVE Unit at OPM. -Develop clear TORs on the skills required for interviewers and provide briefing/training to them before starting the research -Ensure confidentiality of sensitive information with clear indication on the purpose and how the information is managed.
Political: Varying level of	Variance in commitment to PCVE objectives can be caused due to political	-Ensure national ownership and leadership in undertaking PCVE related activities

commitment of the Federal Government and FMS to coordinate with stakeholders and engage in PCVE activities	dynamics, the capacity of the PCVE experts, resulting in unequal levels of implementation among states	-Set up and monitor coordinating mechanisms with all the related groups (youth, elders, communities and state authorities) -Constant ongoing engagement and encouragement to address challenges encountered at different states; -Support capacity development and results-based approach.
Operational: Lack of donor commitment to support the implementation of a full-fledged project on PCVE	There may be a possibility that the project may not be fully funded, leading to partial implementation of the program objectives.	-Resource mobilization strategy to be developed; -Regular engagement with bilateral and multilateral stakeholders; -Ensure successful delivery of the results under Project, visibility and reporting on results -Regular engagement with government stakeholders, pillar working group and other development partners.
Delivery: Restrictions in operations due to COVID-19	Due to health restrictions as a result of COVID-19, large community gatherings in the context of PCVE Platform meetings in FMS have been postponed—including in newly recovered areas; Small action research interventions in FMS that include consultations and community gatherings; and PCVE symposium.	Activities have continued through virtual channels. For all paused activities, priorities and actions have been rescheduled to ensure business continuity, with adjustments towards virtual exchanges and a focus on preparations.

Learning impact

The grassroots consultative programming has produced important lessons to be addressed, notably the need to recognize and tailor programming on PCVE around its Somali interpretation “tolerance and dialogue”: It demands the acknowledgment of intolerance and lack of dialogue as root causes for radical viewpoints and the use of violence in Somalia. Community-based programming needs to focus on changing social norms and structures in a deeply hierarchical, clan-based and patriarchal society by ensuring social, economic and political inclusion and empowerment of the most vulnerable, acknowledging and addressing actual and perceived grievances, and encouraging a society that accepts and values diversity and pluralism. Most importantly, tolerance and dialogue programming needs to encourage dialogue as a valued tool for coexistence and socially accepted means to address differences of opinions on wide elements constituting the social, cultural and religious fabrics of Somali society. The promotion of non-violent alternatives to conflict resolution and cultivation of common ground between conflict parties must include paving the way for a dialogue with al-Shabaab, creating conditions conducive for formal peace negotiations and making the public demand for it heard. Tolerance and dialogue processes therefore need to focus on a grassroots approach to establish an infrastructure for peace.

Religious leaders, clan elders, women and the business community in particular need to be systematically supported in their capacity as traditional peace brokers and bridge builders between the Somali government and al-Shabaab. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, this dialogue process has become even more relevant to ensure that gains made by state institutions are not lost to al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab presents itself as an alternative governance structure and the only legit basic service provider to the Somali people. Across the Somali society, al-Shabaab is perceived not only as the enemy but also as an extended clan or family member or business connection. Hence, international assistance needs to adjust its narrow focus from military and security-based support towards real commitment to targeted soft-power interventions to facilitate a peace process. By socializing the idea of peace talks, creating conditions conducive to negotiations and empowering and capacitating traditional peace brokers within the

Somali society, the interventions undertaken through the PIP on “Tolerance and Dialogue” shall identify those entry points for to develop a bottom-up infrastructure for peace, along with the identification of complementary top-down options for negotiation scenarios.

Coordination with other UN entities including UNSOM/UNSOS within and outside the SJF portfolio

UNDP and UNSOM closely coordinated on the project to align and synergize strategic political guidance with the technical level implementation through joint engagement with key government counterparts and ensuring the project implementation is harmonized with the overall strategic guidance provided by the mission and in line with its mandate. This holds particularly true for advocacy for the envisaged shift from PCVE programming to a more contextualized version of tolerance and dialogue whilst holding the PCVE Strand 4 accountable to its objectives and milestones as envisaged in the London Security Pact and design of Somalia's security architecture.

Synergies with other funds (UN and non-UN) working on similar issues

Limited synergies with other funds due to the innovativeness of the PCVE programme’s work.

Partnerships

Partnerships developed with the networks of religious leaders and have enabled access to influential religious voices within communities and resulted in progress towards the countering and debunking of extremist narratives through dialogue on peace and security.

Monitoring and oversight activities

Monitoring activity	Date	Description	Comments & Recommendations
Meeting with PCVE focal points	30 Jan 2019	Meeting on measuring PCVE programming in Somalia	5 small action research project identified for submission to Task Force
Stakeholder reviews	13 Feb 2019	Two stakeholder reviews were undertaken through a Task Force during the reporting period.	Addition of column for indicators/timeframe in the TOR of the Task force. Approval of annual work plan by Sweden and Netherlands and implementation of the work plan should commence.
Audit	July 2019	UNDP Audit	Detailed feedback sessions with FMS focal points and OPM PCVE unit
Project Steering Committee	28 August 2019	PSC meeting	Project review and key decision making
Cross-Strand Coordination Meeting	21 October 2019	Strand 2c, 3 and 4	Review collaboration and coordination mechanisms; develop steps for improved working together
Project Steering Committee	19 November 2019	PSC meeting	Project review, key decision making, sustainability plan
PCVE Platform – Review Meeting	Dec 2019	FMS Focal Points and OPM	Review of results from the platform meetings, and strategy revision to improve addressing grievances

Field Monitoring Visits	2019 - 2021	Various field trips by OPM M&E and UNDP Technical Specialist	Project oversight and monitoring progress on the ground; interviews with key stakeholders / beneficiaries
Small Action Research	June 2020	Data collection on the two remaining research locations, Galkayo and Adado, completed.	Data collection to be integrated into analysis for recommendations.
Project Steering Committee Meetings	September and December 2020	Project Steering Committee meetings were also held reviewing PCVE activities and Ministerial programmatic work.	Responded to challenges posed by COVID-19 to agree on a new annual work plan. The project acceleration plan (Sept-Dec 2020), as well as project extension, was agreed. PCVE work was integrated into the mainstream programmatic work of the FGS and FMS ministries and presidencies.
Small Action Research	January 2021	Data collection on the two remaining research locations, Galkayo and Adado, completed and the final report is being finalized.	Data collection to be integrated into analysis for recommendations.
Project Steering Committee Meeting	March 2021	CAS Strand 4 meeting held with PCVE focal points in the FMS and led by the OPM PCVE Coordination Unit.	Discussed the progress on PCVE Coordination, the FMS and line ministries' updates, revision of the national PCVE strategy, Strand 4 ToR, and partners' update.
Independent Evaluation	Completed	An independent evaluation through a Third-Party Monitoring report has taken place reviewing the COVID-19 awareness campaign.	Project review, oversight and planning
Technical Task Force Meetings	Regularly	Technical level discussion held regularly with government counterparts and donor partners / PSC members, and formal PSC planned for August.	regular, ad-hoc discussions and technical mentoring sessions with counterparts responding to specific concerns and gaps of knowledge.

Communication activities

PCVE programming is a highly sensitive endeavor and any communication and visibility of activities in Somalia need to undergo a dedicated analysis of the related risks, not only for UN staff members and partners implementing the activities but most importantly for people participating and attending events. Nevertheless, program activities have been actively shared through the communications department of the OPM-PCVE-CU, as well as through the UNDP and UNSOM communications channels. During the reporting period the project steered away from overt public communications outputs due to the political situation and tension. Instead, the project focused efforts on sharing information internally with colleagues across the UN.

Section 5: Project management

Number of project board meetings held	5
Number of UN staff (international/national) funded by the project	3
Number of government personnel funded by the project? What are their functions and where do they work?	12
How has the project ensured the visibility of SJF donors during the reporting period?	The contribution of SJF donors has been highlighted in each workshop and communication activity
Projected funding needs for next year	N/A

Section 6: Cross-cutting issues

Gender equality and women empowerment

The project prioritizes the inclusion of women in PCVE strategy and implementation through output 2: stakeholder consultations. The project seeks the input of women through the PCVE Platforms, which bring together local community representatives to discuss grievances and possible solutions. Feedback from these workshops has highlighted gender-specific grievances, such as the issue of rape for women and girls in internally displaced camps (IDPs). This is relevant to PCVE work as some women and girls, as well as their family members, reported grievances such as injustice and marginalization, due to lack of prosecution of these sexual violence crimes.

Recognizing that the religious space in Somalia is a heavily male-dominated domain and that religious leaders (sheiks, imams) are exclusively male, the project intervention undertook efforts to ensure the inclusion of women and female perspectives, experiences and knowledge into the work with the religious community. During the consultative process on the manual of religious counter-narratives in Jowhar district, three women were identified in the district of Jowhar who themselves lead madrassas (Quranic learning schools) were invited to the consultations and their inputs informed the writing of the manual. Whilst initially the male religious leaders in Jowhar formed a committee that did not include women, the project staff on the ground – with the support of the HirShabelle Minister of Religious Affairs himself – managed to convince the religious leaders to include the female madrasa teachers into the committee structure.

It was acknowledged by the religious leaders that creating pathways to counter the exclusion of women and actively engage them in faith leadership would help to instill knowledge and belief of respect and non-discrimination, equality and human rights and as such directly contribute to the Religious Leaders Committee's mandate and objective to address and counter attitudes underpinning the use of violence. Engaging women in the network of religious leaders was further supported in order to increase and strengthen the profile of women who are already working to counter violent extremism, and to help support female commitment to this cause.

Proportion of gender specific outputs in the project	Total number of project outputs	Total number of gender specific outputs
	2	1
Proportion of project staff with responsibility for gender issues	Total number of staff	Total number of staff with responsibility for gender issues
	3	3

Human-rights based approach

The project applies a human rights-based approach throughout all activities by ensuring they include those members of society who are most marginalized, giving voice to the most excluded, using the UN's convening power to bring them together to ensure they are heard and that their rights are respected and promoted by government institutions and service providers.

The project systematically identifies and engages different groups as important stakeholders and to ensure that the most vulnerable are included. Throughout the project, the inclusion of a variety of actors and viewpoints has been essential to the project's goal to develop a grassroots infrastructure for peace. The PCVE platform coordinates a collaborative approach between the Somali Federal and State authorities, with focal points set up in relevant line ministries. As part of the implementation of the National Plan and Strategy for PCVE, consultations have been held and continue to be organized with identified core constituencies. These include youth groups, organizations focused on empowering women, religious leaders, the diaspora, the private sector, and other partners at the national, regional, and international level. Consultations with the key constituencies have taken place across the Federal Member States, as well as through events organized through the Federal Government of Somalia. This engagement between communities and the government has allowed for greater inclusivity and new activities to promote peace and dialogue, as well as an opportunity for feedback from these stakeholders to determine their perceptions of whether the project is including their viewpoints in implementation.

Has the programme included a protection risk assessment in its context analysis, including on gender issues, and taken measures to mitigate these risks to ensure they are not exacerbated, or new risks created?	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Result</th></tr> <tr><td>Yes</td></tr> </table>	Result	Yes
Result			
Yes			
Number of programme outputs specifically designed to address specific protection concerns	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Result</th></tr> <tr><td>0</td></tr> </table>	Result	0
Result			
0			
Number of programme outputs designed to build capacity of duty bearers to fulfil their human rights obligations towards rights holders.	<table border="1"> <tr><th>Result</th></tr> <tr><td>2</td></tr> </table>	Result	2
Result			
2			

Leave no one behind

Exclusion and marginalization are major drivers of violent extremism, whilst in turn the impact of violent extremism disproportionately affects vulnerable communities. The programme's interventions to address grievances and encourage dialogue has contributed to greater awareness and consideration of the needs of the marginalized. Consultations with stakeholders were designed to include the most vulnerable, as inclusion of all viewpoints has been essential to the project's goal to develop a grassroots infrastructure for peace.

Social contract and legitimacy

The social contract between the state and population has been strengthened by jointly engaging state institutions, religious leader and community stakeholders to counter extremist narratives by facilitating moderate religious support of federal and state government work - for example, the Clerics vs Covid campaign worked to specifically counter misinformation by al-Shabaab that the virus is being spread by government officials and non-believers.

Humanitarian-development-peace nexus

Although it is not reflected explicitly in the programme design, violent extremism impacts all elements of the nexus and heightens the vulnerability of already-vulnerable groups to conflict, poverty, lack of access to aid and fragile state institutions. Countering and preventing violent extremism is inherently crosscutting across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

Environment and climate security

N/A

Prevention of corruption

The capacity development of partner institutions and mainstreaming of PCVE has contributed to the professionalism of institutions and an environment less tolerant of corruption.

Section 7: Looking ahead: Focus on the future

The project has launched a Project Initiation Plan that captures the programmatic shift to “Tolerance and Dialogue”, focusing efforts to contextualize the notion of PCVE and tailor our programming closer to the needs of the Somali context. Based on the findings of the PIP, the project is developing a new project document for a medium-term intervention on tolerance and dialogue in Somalia. The research conducted on this shift has found that there must be a shift from a top-down approach to a focus on the community level. It has also become clear that successful extension of the programming requires context-specific tailoring to respond to the root causes of violent extremism in Somalia and to increase Somali ownership. The new shift in programming would identify and capacitate community actors that are already working towards increased dialogue and conflict transformation, including leaders in the Somali ulema. Through increased local level interventions and support to mid-level community leaders, civil society and local government actors, the foundations and local pathways to peace can be supported through an inclusive process.

The project is also working on improving the Monitoring and Evaluation capacity to better capture the impact of community-based programming on peacebuilding, conflict transformation and reducing violent extremism. The project will continue building on current efforts to improve the data collection and analysis on PCVE programming, including by key stakeholder interviews.

The project will also continue to monitor political developments, particularly related to instability around the elections. Regular conflict analysis reports will ensure that the project is up to date in understanding the dynamics of the political situation and identifying how activities can be implemented best in the current context.

Section 8: Human interest story: Voices from the field

Due to the sensitivity of PCVE programming and the potential impact of visibility on beneficiaries or on those involved in implementation, it is not possible or responsible to provide human interest stories.