



GENDER AND P/CVE POLICY TOOLKIT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) Gender and Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) Policy Toolkit provides guidance and advice to support the practical use of the [GCTF Good Practices on Women and Countering Violent Extremism](#) and the [Addendum to the GCTF Good Practices on Women and Countering Violent Extremism, With a Focus on Mainstreaming Gender](#). Launched in September 2022, the Toolkit was developed by the Co-Chairs of the GCTF Countering Violent Extremism Working Group, and the governments of Australia and Indonesia with support from the [Global Center on Cooperative Security](#). It is based on an extensive desktop study and consultations with a wide range of policy professionals and practitioners from governments, multilateral organizations, and civil society organizations across the globe.

MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM CONDUCTIVE TO TERRORISM

Drivers of violent extremism conducive to terrorism, modalities of engagement in acts of violence, resources mobilized by governments to prevent and respond to political violence, and the impacts of political violence vary enormously across groups of boys, girls, men, women, and people of diverse gender identities. Notions of femininity and masculinity play influential roles in individual and group identities and in levels of social marginalization and inclusion. Gender mediates relationships to power and the allocation of and access to goods and services, as well as rights and responsibilities. Gender inequalities are often at the heart of social and economic injustice, perpetuating power imbalances across people of diverse gender identities. Violence, marginalization, and discrimination against women, girls, and gender-diverse populations are systemic and structural, perhaps one of the most endemic and long-standing categories of political violence in the world.

Mainstreaming gender into the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of peace, security, and development interventions, including those aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) conducive to terrorism, is not just a matter of ensuring the participation of women. It is about ensuring inclusive, equitable participation and leadership of people of diverse gender and intersecting identities, recognizing also the diversity existing within different gender-based groups. In addition, it is about accounting for the experiences, needs, and challenges of individuals and recognizing gender differences and inequalities, as well as other intersecting inequalities such as those based on socioeconomic status, age, disability, and ethnic and cultural identities. Integrating a gender perspective is a prerequisite for successful human rights-based and people-centered policies and programs intended to address peace and security issues, including those that aim to prevent and counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism. For P/CVE interventions to be effective, equitable, and just, they must be gender responsive.

Gender-sensitive analysis of engagement in violent extremism conducive to terrorism is necessary for understanding if and how men, women, and people of diverse gender identities follow different pathways to engaging in violence and joining and supporting terrorist groups and how gendered ideologies, narratives, and dynamics inform recruitment and mobilization to violent extremism. Moreover, violent extremism conducive to terrorism and P/CVE efforts should be considered within the broader context of gender inequality and restrictions on human rights, as well as instances of gender-based violence and general criminality. Furthermore, sexual and gender-based violence needs to be considered distinctly because it is increasingly used as a recruitment and terrorism tactic and can be an early indicator of the spread of violent extremism conducive to terrorism and acceptance of violence in a society.

OVERVIEW OF THE TOOLKIT

The GCTF Gender and P/CVE Policy Toolkit provides practitioners and policymakers with relevant frameworks, good practices, and resources for designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating gender-responsive P/CVE policies and programs. The implementation of these good practices and recommendations will look differently depending on the local context and the lived experiences of participating individuals and groups but should always be in alignment with six key guidelines.

1. **The principles of nondiscrimination and equality should guide all P/CVE policies and programs.** Nondiscrimination and equality are core elements of the international human rights normative framework, which includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which enshrines that every human being is entitled to all rights and freedoms “without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.”
2. **The do-no-harm principle and gender and conflict sensitivity must underpin all components of P/CVE policy and programming interventions.** P/CVE policies and programs need to avoid creating or exacerbating drivers of violence and, wherever possible, make a positive contribution to peace.
3. **Accountability to communities is a prerequisite for engagement.** The maintenance of strong, independent institutions of oversight and accountability over the justice and security sectors to prevent, investigate, and punish abuse and corruption is a crucial prerequisite for equitable, inclusive community engagement.
4. **Gender-responsive stakeholder engagement should be inclusive and participatory and prioritize the voices, needs, and empowerment of the most marginalized.** All aspects of P/CVE program design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation should be co-led and -managed by stakeholders, partners, and program participants of diverse gender and intersecting identities, prioritizing women’s civil society organizations and marginalized groups that are most impacted by a policy or program.
5. **Inclusivity means more than “casting a wide net.”** It means actively seeking to remove barriers to participation as well. Interventions are only as inclusive as they are accessible. The participation and leadership of boys, men, girls, women, and people of diverse gender identities can vary significantly depending on when and where activities, meetings, and consultations are held.
6. **Local and civil society experts should be equally compensated.** When women, men, and people of diverse gender identities are invited to participate in activities as expert speakers or panelists or to author or consult on a written output, they should be equally compensated.

Chapter 1 outlines this series of guiding principles and the legal and policy frameworks underpinning them that should inform gender-sensitive and human rights-compliant P/CVE policies and programs. It provides top-level guidance to inform the research and development of a broader evidence base for policy and programming, the design of gender-sensitive P/CVE policies and programs, and the monitoring and evaluation of these efforts. Applying these principles in practice will support policymakers and practitioners in designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating rights-based, gender-responsive policies and programming that uphold states’ obligations under international human rights, humanitarian, and refugee law while adhering to the principles of do no harm and promoting gender equity, justice, and empowerment.

Chapter 2 examines the existing evidence base on gender and P/CVE and its limitations. Gaps in the literature’s attention to structural and cultural barriers to the involvement of women, girls, and people of diverse gender identities in the security sector and decision-making processes can be mitigated by

work already being done in adjacent fields. For example, the context-specific risks to their safety and enjoyment of human rights when participating in P/CVE efforts require more attention and support. This chapter explores some of these challenges while giving special consideration to gender-sensitive approaches to research, including ethical considerations in research and data gathering, the importance of a gender analysis in P/CVE efforts, and use of this analysis to identify gender biases and stereotypes that are reflected in current P/CVE research.

Chapter 3 outlines gender considerations applicable to the design of all P/CVE policies and programs. It further supports policymakers and practitioners in designing gender-responsive and human rights–compliant policies and programming that uphold the do-no-harm principle and promote gender equity, justice, and empowerment. The chapter includes practical guidance for using theory of change to explore, understand, and explain the changes needed to achieve policy and program goals, as well as good practices for facilitating accessible, gender-responsive stakeholder engagement. It also offers considerations, case studies, and recommendations for gender-sensitive P/CVE policy formulation and program development.

The final chapter elaborates on the importance of integrating a gender perspective in monitoring and evaluating P/CVE policies and programs. It offers a range of principles, concepts, strategies, and tools for designing and implementing monitoring and evaluation frameworks incorporating gender-based and human rights–compliant goals and targets. It provides practical guidance on the development of different types of indicators to measure change and important considerations for facilitating inclusive data collection systems and processes, and planning and conducting evaluation activities.

The GCTF Gender and P/CVE Policy Toolkit includes a variety of resources, including case studies, publication references, a glossary, and an annex providing an overview of relevant UN resolutions and international framework documents.

