



**NEW SECURITY CHALLENGES**  
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# Countering Violent and Hateful Extremism in Indonesia

Islam, Gender and Civil Society

*Edited by*  
Greg Barton · Matteo Vergani ·  
Yenny Wahid

palgrave  
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# International and Local Actor Collaborations to Prevent Violent Extremism Among Youth in Indonesia: Initiatives and Effectiveness

*Subadi and Utami Sandyarani*

## INTRODUCTION

In 2010, the Indonesian Government formed the National Agency for Combatting Terrorism (Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme—BNPT), established to be the lead government body responsible for counterterrorism. Through the course of the past decade, as the agency has worked intensively to combat terrorism within Indonesia, it has come to emphasize the need for global cooperation and for international institutions working towards preventing violent extremism to play a stronger role in Indonesia. President Joko Widodo has taken the lead in stressing

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the need to develop stronger cooperation between international counterterrorism institutions and the Indonesian Government and civil society (Sumpter, 2017: 133). It is for this very reason that within BNPT, there is a unit focused specifically on international cooperation. Because terrorism and terrorist networks, by nature, represent both a domestic and an international challenge, Indonesia, like other nations facing this problem has sought to build collaboration with international institutions, both at the government and civil society levels. This also requires global collaboration between funding bodies and experts in order to broaden the impact of research on violent extremism prevention and to ensure its effectiveness.

Although there exists an extensive body of research on Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) in Indonesia, literature on international institutions working in cooperation with local actors in Indonesia for PVE initiatives remains under-examined. It is vital to recognize the role of collaborative efforts by these local and international actors. Moreover, it is imperative to assess their project initiatives and effectiveness. Such studies are important as they can help to examine the opportunities and challenges faced by international institutions working in Indonesia.

### YOUTH: NECESSARY CONCERN

At the time of the 2002 suicide bombing in Bali, which saw 202 people killed, it was seemingly unthinkable that Indonesian youth would be involved in planning and executing terrorist attacks of this kind. Within a few years, however, the previously unthinkable had become all too familiar. By the time of the 2011 suicide bombing at a church in Solo by 17-year-old Ahmad Yosefa Hayat, the issue of youth involvement in terrorism, and as perpetrators no less, was no longer remarkable. A new pattern had emerged. In 2016, five years after the Solo church bombing, Nur Rohman carried out a suicide bombing on a police station in the same city. Although he was 32 years old at the time of the suicide bombing, Nur Rohman had first become involved in a vigilante group and then terrorist network in Solo when he was just 22 years old (IPAC, 2016).

A study conducted by BNPT in 2012 looking at 110 perpetrators of terrorism found that all were under 40 years old and most under 30 years old, with almost one in eight under 21 (11.8% were under 21, 47.3% of aged between 21–30 and the remaining 29.1% were aged between 31–40 years). Considering this evidence, it is reasonable to assume that those

perpetrators who form the most dominant age group (21–30 years) had likely already taken an interest in extremist media content or had joined an extremist group some time prior to committing acts of terrorism. This suggests that there is considerable scope for preventing violent extremism and the spread of terrorism by preventing young people from being exposed to terrorist content or networks in the first place.

The pathway to terrorism is often a very complex journey for young Muslims and generally involves an ideological shift towards more conservative, intolerant, militant and/or extremist views. In conjunction with this potential ideological shift, rising anger fed by perceptions of social injustices within their country or in their specific environment can also serve as a significant push factor towards violent extremism. Not infrequently these conditions are fostered by feelings of moral panic and a mentality of feeling under-siege which can ultimately lead to the belief that Islam (or more accurately a particular interpretation of Islam) is the only solution (Hasan, 2018: 4). A significant contributing risk factor that has been identified here is that of religious education, with many young Muslim students not having access to religious education with a solid peace perspective in school (Suhadi, 2018: 60). For this reason, the two institutions observed in this chapter, SFCG and UNDP, agreed on the need to initiate youth-specific projects with an emphasis on peace-focused religious education. They argue that addressing violent extremism prevention for youth is a strategic initiative. Without such an initiative, the risk of youth disengagement leading to violent extremism will only continue to grow.

Developing PVE projects specifically for youth is a strategic initiative supported by the two institutions' studies. For example, and SFCG study entitled *Working Together to Address Violent Extremism: A Strategy for Youth-Government Partnerships*, identifies the prevalence of youth in terrorist groups, noting that the majority of Jamaah Islamiyah members are male and young, the average age of an ISIS recruit is around 26 years old, and a large proportion of Boko Haram's fighters in Nigeria are teenagers. Nevertheless, the narrative that portrays youths as either the victims or the perpetrators of violence is often unhelpful in countering violent extremism efforts. Instead, the study makes the case for the involvement of youth in establishing counter-narratives, making young people part of solution in building peace and preventing violent extremism efforts, recognizing that most young people reject violence (Williams, 2016). The SFCG study is one of a number of studies that

recommend placing the emphasis on the importance of ensuring fundamental freedoms, the principles of human rights, religious tolerance and individual safety; ideas which form an important foundation for its Transforming Violent Extremism (TVE) programs in Indonesia. The SFCG report recommends the involvement of a diverse array of youth leaders and youth-led organisations.

Another important effort towards addressing the challenge of youth and violent extremism is CONVEY (Counter Violence Extremism for Youth), a collaborative initiative by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM, *Center for the Study of Islam and Society*), State Islamic University of Jakarta (UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta). The CONVEY project has conducted extensive research and broad public engagement that has resulted in a number of books, reports and public policies being produced as part of its knowledge sector of PVE. CONVEY studies show that young Muslims in Indonesia generally support open and moderate thinking and behaviour, and that until recently, the inclination of young people towards conservatism, radicalism and extremism had been in decline. But according to CONVEY's studies, however, there are two key enclaves—educational institutions and cyber media—which have been responsible for driving young people towards hard-line conservatism and radicalism (Convey Indonesia Project, 2018b).

Indeed, schools have become very vulnerable to penetration by ultra-conservative religious groups. Senior high school students who become acquainted with Islamic teaching deeply for the first time in Islamic based intra-curricular school organisations such as *Rohis* (the word Rohis is a contraction of Rohani Islam—‘Islamic spirituality’— and refers to extra-curricular religious instruction) have been found to be particularly susceptible to developing militant religious beliefs. Rohis sessions are extra-curricular but are supported and funded by the school's management. Since, the Rohis instruction program often offers exclusive teaching about other religions and sometimes presents a narrow vision of political Islam as being ideal—in many cases as a consequence of the alumnae of the school having influence over its curriculum—the students joining the Rohis session in turn are highly likely to develop conservative or even radical views. In addition to the influence that schooling can have, cyber media also becomes a fertile space for spreading values of radicalism and extremism among young people, including the popular but conservative packaging of Islam (Convey Indonesia Project, 2018a).

In view of these challenges, CONVEY points to the significance of encouraging young Muslims, including those affiliated with *Robis*, to have encounters with both other Muslims who hold more moderate views, and with students from different faith backgrounds. It is important to widen their views with diverse perspectives within Islamic groups and to experience direct interactions with other religious groups in order to respect differences (Convey Indonesia Project, 2018b). Another suggestion presented by CONVEY recognizes the urgency of producing alternative narratives of peaceful Islamic views (online and offline) that target students, including cyber literacy (Convey Indonesia Project, 2018a).

In line with the studies of SFCG and CONVEY, a study by the Wahid Foundation (WF), entitled ‘Youth, Middle-Class Muslims, and the Challenges of Intolerance and Radicalism in Urban Areas’, argues that the symptoms of intolerance and radicalism have increased among young people, with young middle-class Muslims being no exception. Middle-class Muslims were found to be concerned with their political-moral identity in responding modernity. At the same time, they are well equipped with technology and are connected to high-quality internet access. Therefore, it is no surprise that they find it easy to build a movement, mobilise and foster communal sentiments both online and offline for the sake of their exclusive religious aspirations. The paper quotes the Wahid Foundation’s survey about the activists of *Robis* and intra-school organisation (OSIS) at senior high school level, which shows that 60% of respondents were willing to go to *jihad* in the conflict area should the opportunity arise, and 86% of respondents supported perpetrators and acts of terrorism. (Huda, 2017: 10–14). These studies indicated that is imperative to engage youth actors in the PVE programs.

## UNDP AND PPIM UIN: THE CONVEY INITIATIVE

While acknowledging that the underlying factors that drive violent extremism can vary, CONVEY specifically focuses on trying to prevent it at the very beginning of its pathway through education. In conducting their PVE work through education, CONVEY utilized a multi-pronged approach made up of: (1) development of evidence-based knowledge on the nexus of education, violent extremism and its prevention, (2) advocating effective evidence-based policy on PVE, (3) engaging the youth and the public through youth-friendly and innovative approaches, and (4)

building regional cooperation and information-sharing for PVE among academics, educators and policy makers (<https://conveyindonesia.com>).

CONVEY boasts a highly collaborative approach in their work. Led by The Centre for the Study of Islam and Society (Pusat Penkajian Islam dan Masyarakat—PPIM) in the State Islamic University (UIN) of Jakarta, one of Indonesia's leading research centres in the field, with quality assurance supported by UNDP, CONVEY partnered with 21 civil society organizations (CSOs) for their second year of project implementation. These 21 CSOs include non-governmental organizations (NGOs), university-based research centres and private companies based in various parts in Indonesia, such as Maarif Institute, Nusa Tenggara Center (NC), Ambon Reconciliation and Mediation Centre (ARMC), Sabang Merauke, Peace Generation, Social Trust Fund (STF) UIN Jakarta, PUSPIDEP Research Centre Yogyakarta and several others. In conducting these activities, many of CONVEY partners also work with local-level organisations or communities. Initially, the project targeted more than 10,300 people including high school and university students, teachers and the general public. By the end of its implementation, it had reached more than 15,300 people through direct activities, and more than 4 million people indirectly. The high number of individuals reached by the CONVEY project is, in part, the result of the collaborative approach that was been developed between its partners. Due to the sensitivity of topics discussed in PVE, such collaboration is rare among CSOs working on PVE projects in Indonesia. Certain information is deemed not appropriate to be freely shared as it may jeopardise the PVE efforts they are working on. Under the CONVEY umbrella, however, CSOs involved in PVE would meet regularly to share updates and information from each of their projects, such as data, networks and insights. As a result, the implementing partners were able to adapt and expand their work in accordance with the information gained at these coordination platforms.

The youth engagement activities of CONVEY consist of two highly interconnected components, which include face-to-face engagement activities and multi-platform communication campaigns. The first component involves activities that allow participants to meet and get involved first-hand in learning about violent extremism, its dangers and ways to prevent it. These activities include innovative training for youth using a specially developed board game called *Galaxy Obscurio*, awareness-raising roadshows to various schools and universities and youth camps targeted at (1) Indonesian Muslim youth leaders, (2) interfaith youth leaders and

(3) international students from various Islamic countries. The second component of CONVEY's youth engagement program involves activities that utilize social and mass media as a means to increase and amplify counter-narratives and advocate P/CVE to youth and the general public. These activities include a social media competition called '*Milenial Islami Competition*', which aims to flood various social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook with peaceful and tolerant photos, memes, short-videos and comics. There was also an essay-writing competition for youth with a thematic focus on transformation of violent extremism, as well as, the production of creative content such as music videos, radio talk-shows, radio lip-ad and inclusion in various television shows and radio.

### SFCG: REDUCING THE RISK OF RECRUITMENT AND RECIDIVISM

While CONVEY makes explicit use of the term P/CVE, SFCG has taken a different approach. In their '*Reducing the Risk of Recruitment and Recidivism of Violent Extremism in Indonesia*' Project, SFCG aimed to address violent extremism through two ongoing issues in Indonesia: (1) the recruitment of youth to violent extremist groups and (2) the recidivism of former convicted terrorists returning to their former groups. In conducting this project, SFCG sought to contribute to reducing the level of recruitment of high-risk youth in targeted universities and schools to violent extremist groups, and to increase coordination among key stakeholders (e.g. CSOs, the Directorate General of Correction, community members) in supporting the reintegration process of former convicted terrorists into the community.

The target audience of this project was divided into two groups: the primary target group and the secondary target group. The primary target group were the direct beneficiaries of SFCG activities on the field-level, including the high-school and university students and community members in the target areas. The second group included the indirect beneficiaries of this program, such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The targeted location of this project included areas where a high level of radicalism and intolerance have been identified such as West Java, Jakarta, Central Java, Banten and Central Sulawesi.

In designing the project, SFCG built upon their extensive experience in working through creative media to build community awareness around conflict transformation and peacebuilding. While their work is heavily in line with P/CVE work, they instead refer to it as Transforming Violent Extremism (TVE) an approach that alters the dynamic of violent extremism into non-violent agency or engagement—as opposed to ‘counter’-violent extremism, which is deemed as ‘being reactive’ towards violent extremism. While SFCG believes that the use of violence in advancing certain beliefs or ideologies should be condemned, its approach in TVE tries to acknowledge the core motivations behind violent extremism, addressing these core motivations and transforming them into a more constructive outcome (Slachmuisjlder, 2017).

As part of their TVE work in Indonesia, SFCG conducted conflict management and media for peace training for youth leaders in five cities, through a movement called #CiptaDamai (literally #PeaceMaking). This capacity-building training aimed to increase young people’s skills in transforming conflict from using violent approaches to using constructive ones such as dialogue and collaboration. Furthermore, they also aimed to equip youth leaders with skills in producing media content that promotes conflict transformation and collaboration across people of different beliefs or ideologies. Media experts delivered several types of media training, including short-documentary film production, blog-writing and photography. Through various activities including training, workshops, discussions, film screenings and many others, SFCG were able to reach more than 9000 young people in Indonesia (Hiariej et al., 2017). In contrast to the work conducted by CONVEY, which subtly focuses on specifically Muslim youth as their target population, SFCG did not tailor their CVE program to just observant Muslim youth; instead, they targeted youth in general regardless of religion, with the single exception of their *pesantren* project held in 2012 (Octavia & Wahyuni, 2014).

## PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

The section that follows describes the PVE initiatives of these two international institutions, in collaboration with their partners, and will then analyse the effectiveness of these initiatives and their project implementation. Advantageous to this analysis is the availability of data from the two international institutions, most of which has been published in program reports and evaluations. This section focuses largely on the qualitative

data available, although in some instances quantitative data is also used to assist in describing perception changes of the target group.

## EVALUATING CONVEY

The PPIM UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Report (2018) on Islamic radical movements in schools and universities has generated important knowledge on the underlying factors that foster the growth of radicalism and extremism among Muslim high school and university students in Indonesia. This research report highlights troubling information relating to growing radicalism among Muslim high school and university students and provides a range of intervention options to address this problem through religious education. For example, the research shows that the vast majority of students (89.24%) agreed that Islamic religious subjects should also contain discussion about other religions to reduce negative prejudice between religious groups, and that discussion about shared-issues as seen from the perspective of other religions should be included (70.75%) (Convey Indonesia Project, 2018a). This data can strongly support any initiative to redesign the concept of religious education to include more cross-religious understanding.

In addition to quantitative data, CONVEY has also generated in-depth knowledge on the perspective of various youth organisations towards radicalism, violent extremism and terrorism. These survey results were then used to create public conversations about the rising support for violent extremism among high school and university students. Evidence of this public discourse is demonstrated by numerous reports—49 at least—made by local and national newspapers and online news sources about the survey. These include in major national newspapers, which supported the findings of the survey, such as Kompas, the Jakarta Post, Suara Pembaruan and Media Indonesia, as well as in several online news sources that were more critical of the survey results. Following these reports, BNPT released a statement that contained a list of public campuses that have been highly affected by violent extremism ([www.merdeka.com](http://www.merdeka.com)). The above situation demonstrates the tensions between those who think that radicalism among youth is prevalent and those who reject this view, and it has sparked policy discussions among several key policy makers such as BNPT and the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

In addition to generating evidence-based knowledge that sparked conversations among policy makers and the public, these youth engagement activities also served to increase the capacity of CONVEY's youth beneficiaries and to further develop their knowledge about radicalism, peace, counter-narratives, inter-religious relations and many others topics which have the potential to inform preventative measures to counter youth radicalization.

There are at least four youth engagement activities in CONVEY itself, and each has yielded various results in accordance with the nature and the target audience of its activities. These engagement activities included three youth camps: one for students of Islamic Universities from all over Indonesia, one for youth leaders from various religious communities, and one for Muslim international students in Indonesia. In addition to these camps, CONVEY has developed a training program which has been conducted in five major Indonesian cities and using a board game that focuses on peace.

Among the youth camps, the first was held by the Nusa Tenggara Center for university students from various Islamic universities to increase Muslim youth leaders' understanding of the concept of Islam *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (Islam as mercy to the entire universe). In a five-day youth camp in Lombok, 200 Muslim students from all over Indonesia participated in various classes and discussions about three main themes: (1) the concept of Islam *rahmatan lil' alamin*, (2) nationalism and our Indonesian identity and (3) preventing violent extremism, radicalism and terrorism. An essay written by one of the participants after the camp illustrates how the youth camp had expanded their knowledge about the nation-building process of Indonesia as a highly diverse society:

Christians in Indonesia have a major role in the Indonesian nation-building process. Therefore, Indonesia was not formed as an Islamic state, despite Muslims as the majority, but rather the state of Pancasila, given the population's religious plurality. All of these were inspired from the Medina Charter adopted by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. (Hasan, 2018)

The second youth camp, which targeted high school and university students of various religious backgrounds, worked towards increasing inter-religious understanding among the participants to prevent them from being radicalized. Ambon Reconciliation and Mediation Center (ARMC), CONVEY's implementing partner, gathered 120 participants

from various islands in Indonesia, and introduced them to concepts of inter- and intra-faith tolerance in order to improve their understanding of the importance of religious cooperation and tolerance. Through various approaches ranging from lectures, discussions, music, art, culture, outdoor activities and field trips, the camp effectively became a platform that brought the youth together to interact with other youth from different religions and faiths in a safe space. For most of the participants, the camp was the only platform that could connect them with youth from all over Indonesia and it saw them build genuine friendships with each other. Glen Fredly, a popular musician of Moluccan ethnicity, attended and supported the event, which resulted in high outreach on Instagram. One of the youth camp participants from South Sulawesi commented on her appreciation for the camp, saying that she had begun to realise that differing religious beliefs should be addressed constructively. As she described:

I learned to understand the various religious beliefs that most probably are different than ours. What we need to do, is not to debate them, is not to tell them that they are wrong nor right, what we need to do is to simply understand them. (Convey Indonesia Project, 2018c, p. 60)

The third youth camp was targeted at international students of Islamic religious backgrounds in Indonesia. Through a four-day youth camp in Bogor, CONVEY Project gathered together 29 young Muslim leaders from Indonesia and several other countries to discuss various topics with regards to Islam, peace and violent extremism. The camp allowed them to gain new knowledge from various experts and creative methods. Topics covered included, ‘Radicalism as a Threat to Peace’, ‘Various Perspectives in Islam and How to Identify Radicalism’, ‘Strengthening the Values of *Islam Rahmatan lil ‘Alamin*’ and ‘The Role of Youth in Promoting Peace’. The camp served as a strategic platform for this international community of youth with a shared common interest in advocating peace together. The international youth camp also promoted an appreciation of the ways Islam is believed and practiced in accordance to pre-existing local wisdom in Indonesia. A Canadian participant made the following comment:

This camp was one in a lifetime experience! I really enjoyed the programs, the speeches and the games we played. The chances we had for group

discussions were a great opportunity for developing our ideas and thoughts and then being able to present it in front of everyone helped us to build our presentational skills. Furthermore the working in groups gave us a chance to put into work our leadership skills. The speeches were very eye opening and influential. I personally gained a lot of new information that I believe will benefit me as the topics we discussed are quite relevant to the issues in our Muslim societies. The games that were played were so much fun and it truly tied in with the important messages that were the core of each topic presented. I am so happy for the opportunity I got to join this camp. I am fortunate for being able to meet other university students who like me share common interest in being peace makers of tomorrow. (Social Trust Fund UIN & Convey Indonesia, 2018, p. 94)

Another youth engagement activity conducted as part of the CONVEY project was the production of a specially developed board game called *Galaxy Obscurio*, which helps participants learn about collaboration, empathy and peacebuilding through an enjoyable activity. The game was produced through a collaboration between Peace Generation—CONVEY’s implementation partner for this activity—and Kummara, a game development consultant. The CONVEY project has successfully produced an innovative way of countering violent extremist narratives through this board game. The game is centered on building a galaxy, in which various planets and alien lifeforms exist. The participants’ task is to collect species while also fighting and eliminating viruses and they need to collect 24 points to win. The uniqueness of this game is that a participant cannot win alone. To win, participants must work together. This is where the game’s central messages of empathy and collaboration fall into place.

In introducing the game to 358 youth in five cities, CONVEY equipped the youth participants with knowledge about radicalism and violent extremism, which was then reflected upon after the game was played. As a result, the Board Game for Peace Training was able to change the attitude of participants on issues of violent extremism, terrorism and radicalism. For example, after the training, the number of participants who agreed that violent extremism, terrorism and radicalism were made to discredit Muslims decreased by 26.2% (Peace Generation Indonesia & Convey Indonesia, 2018). This change of attitude has been captured in one of the testimonials of the local partner who was involved in the program as a training mentor:

Ninin Karlina, an Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*) teacher, saw a change in the attitude of a student who initially considered all illegitimate cards for *tasyabuh* (resembling a product of infidels). After being invited to play and capture the values of peace, the student rejected the argument sustained in the beginning. He said he did not agree if anyone said all illegal cards according to what has been discussed. (Peace Generation Indonesia & Convey Indonesia, 2018)

After the training, the participants then competed to gain the greatest outreach. As a result of this competition, the board game for peace training has spread to more than 2800 people in Indonesia.

While the immediate results from monitoring tools indicate some positive changes among the beneficiaries of CONVEY activities, it is very challenging to verify that those activities have created a sustainable impact upon CONVEY youth beneficiaries without tracing the change of attitudes among the beneficiaries years after the project ends, possibly through an impact evaluation.

While practitioners of interfaith dialogues have stressed the importance for ‘communities to develop a common justice agenda to facilitate commitments across lines of religious division’ (Smock, 2003) to create trust and de-stigmatise negative stereotypes, the program of youth camps and board game for peace training was not designed to be ongoing. The agendas were filled with discussions, sharing and team building activities, however, these activities were designed as a one-time event. Cognitive change relating to knowledge of other religions might be reached through such activities, but to create substantial attitude changes towards other religions, mutual trust, commitment, continuous engagement and collaboration are critically needed.

Moreover, evidence for the link between the two youth camp activities, the board game for peace training and prevention of violent extremism itself remains weak. Materials for the two youth camp activities were dominated by topics such as inter-religious dialogue, mutual understanding among different groups and peacebuilding, with inadequate explanation on the nexus between such topics and efforts to prevent violent extremism. The board game for peace training, however, included materials on violent extremism and its counter-narratives. For one full day, participants would learn about the root causes radicalism and violent extremism, the push and pull factors, the types of narratives used by violent extremist groups and other materials about PVE. Nevertheless,

this was not clearly linked to the Galaxy Obscurio game itself, which supposedly became the highlight of the training; in other words, the training materials and the game were not effectively integrated.

### *Evaluating SFCG*

SFCG conducted an external evaluation for their CVE project which was published in a report called ‘Final Evaluation: Reducing the Recruitment and Recidivism of Violent Extremists in Indonesia’ (Hiariej et al., 2017). The evaluation was conducted in 2017 in five project locations including Bandung, Jakarta, Palu, Semarang and Banten. The evaluation involved a survey which was distributed to 256 direct beneficiaries and 914 indirect beneficiaries. The sample size was calculated based on their number of beneficiaries using Slovin Formula for the primary targets and Hypergeometric Distribution Formula for the secondary targets. In addition to the survey, the evaluation method also comprised of semi-structured interviews with 31 key participants, including national and local government officials, civil society organizations, ex-offenders and SFCG staff themselves. Furthermore, the external evaluators also held 13 focus group discussions (FGDs) with students, social media users and members of CSOs. Lastly, the evaluation also utilised a social media tracking method to collect data on the narratives and discussions around violent extremism and terrorism among the project’s direct and indirect beneficiaries’ social media accounts.

The evaluation study assesses the SFCG’s project through the five dimensions outlined in the Development Assistance Committee of the Economic Cooperation and Development (DAC/OECD) Peacebuilding Evaluation Guidelines, namely relevance, effectiveness, social media, coordination and sustainability. For the purpose of the discussion here, however, we will focus on only three dimensions: relevance, effectiveness and social media. With regard to the relevance dimension, the evaluation results suggested that the project was quite relevant to the context in which it took place. Several factors that may have contributed significantly to this relevance are (1) the topic of CVE that touched upon some of the most pressing issues faced by the general public and youth in particular, (2) the easily-digested materials and contents and (3) the youth-friendly and attractive media that were utilised to convey the message.

The evaluation found that the project was able to develop young peoples’ understanding of violent extremism, evidenced by the survey results which show that 70% of surveyed university students view

religious-based persecution as a form of violence (Corlazzoli et al., 2016). Furthermore, the effectiveness of the project at increasing youth understanding of violent extremism is also reflected in their preferences regarding conflict. The evaluation survey showed that more than 82% of the respondents prefer to resolve conflict through discussion. When compared to the baseline assessment, there is a 4% increase in the number of respondents who prefer a non-violent conflict style. However, the evaluation also showed that, while their knowledge about the dangers of violent extremism increased, their knowledge regarding creating non-violent initiatives or peacebuilding did not change significantly. In an interview in Bandung, the evaluator interviewed several alumni of the project and their answers indicated that they had limited understanding when asked to reflect upon real situations around them. As stated in the report:

Interviews among students in Bandung show that some youth beneficiaries in Bandung city hold unempathetic views on raids against Christian activities. On 6th December 2016, an Islamic vigilante group, Pembela Ahlus Sunnah (PAS), attempted to disband Christmas celebrations in Sabuga, Bandung. The students believe that such vigilantism departs from narrow political interests or shallow understandings on religion and peace. Yet, they were still unable to formulate arguments and concrete practices on this issue based on their knowledge on violent extremism, on the one hand, and youth beneficiaries find difficulties in developing arguments and practices to respond to intolerant activities in their everyday life, on the other hand. (Hiariej et al., 2017)

Furthermore, another criticism towards the project has been that while conflict management was a major component in the project, it did not sufficiently equip youth beneficiaries when facing issues of asymmetrical conflict. This is evident from some of the testimonials during interviews with students in Bandung and Palu, where they admitted that SFCG's technique was less relevant in managing conflicts in which there is an unequal power balance, for instance, conflicts such as urban eviction or land grabbing between large corporations and the common people. In these kinds of conflicts, some of the youth beneficiaries believed that a more confrontational technique, such as demonstrations and blockage, or non-cooperative methods are much more important.

Nevertheless, these youth-friendly approaches and methods appear to be working. When the students participated in the training, they were

required to choose which class they wanted to participate in, with options such as videography, photography, poster-making or essay-writing. The evaluation shows that youth beneficiaries seemed to be highly impressed by the media utilised in the trainings and that the majority of the beneficiaries were able to understand violent extremism through such methods. One student in Solo claimed that it was not until he made a film about the story of a mother of a former terrorist in East Java that he began to understand the conflict from the perspective of others.

In the SFCG Project, the aforementioned training on media for peace was enhanced by an online strategy centered on elevating the discourse on CVE among young social media users and raising their awareness about the issue. By using the #CiptaDamai hashtag, SFCG worked through various social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to produce and disseminate contents that may provide alternative narratives towards violent extremism. As most of SFCG's youth beneficiaries have social media accounts, the online campaign could be their most innovative and beneficiary-friendly method yet. Undeniably, through this approach, SFCG has produced eye-catching visual design, captions and videos that helped to raise awareness about violent extremism. However, the evaluation also pressed that despite the significant outreach the effort had achieved, it was not sufficient to spark any substantial discussions. Most of the postings were 'one-way', and most people only provided short comments such as 'cool' or 'great' rather than offering anything of substance.

### MOVING FORWARD: INCREASING SCOPE AND COOPERATION

The two programs conducted by both CONVEY and SFCG's CVE Project are both highly, timely and relevant international initiatives which see collaboration with local partners in responding to the increase of intolerance, persecution and support for violent extremism among youth. While SFCG took a community based and media utilisation approach in engaging the youth, CONVEY focused heavily on educational institutions. Each project employed their own expertise and advantages very differently, albeit targeting almost the same audience—youth and/or millennials—CONVEY has been successful both in generating much-needed knowledge that has helped understand youth violent extremism in an Indonesian context, especially in educational settings, and in engaging

with communities at a local level by utilising innovative youth-friendly approaches. SFCG on the other hand has focused its energy on efforts to engage with youth communities at a local level by using approaches that will be more likely to appeal to them.

The program effectiveness analysis presented above shows that both the programs of the UNDP Indonesia-PPIM and SFCG played a significant role in increasing youth awareness of terrorism and extremism, as well as in reducing youth interest in violence, extremism and terrorism. CONVEY's board game for peace training projects has been able to modestly reduce perceptions of some kind of conspiracy surrounding acts of terrorism among the participants. Meanwhile, the evaluation survey of SFCG's direct and indirect beneficiaries demonstrated that more than 82% prefer to resolve conflict through discussion following SFCG's program, which represents a 4% increase compared to the baseline assessment. The qualitative evaluation offers similar insights. CONVEY's participants in the youth camp project clearly illustrated how the youth camp expanded their knowledge about the nation-building approach to Indonesia as a highly diverse society. The youth participants of SFCG expresses that their sense of empathy towards minority increases after joining SFCG's project.

Both the UNDP and SFCG programs are short term in scope; they are not intended to remain active in Indonesia in the long term. Nevertheless, the programs offered by the two institutions have demonstrated how creative approaches to establishing youth-friendly methods for campaigning to prevent violent extremism amongst young people can be developed. The issue now is program sustainability. It is important to consider how the sustainability of these youth-friendly programs can be achieved in future when these institutions are no longer involved in PVE projects in Indonesia. At this point, it seems that the UNDP and SFCG approaches to collaborating with local institutions have been very effective, which presents possible ways that the vision, strategies and methods of these projects may be carried on. A number of civil society organisations, especially those working with youth, appear to have adopted these youth-friendly approaches for their own PVE programs. At the moment, however, neither religious institutions nor government bodies use youth-friendly approaches strongly in their PVE projects; instead, they tend to use conventional approaches which are not as accessible for young people. This chapter has shown that the engagement of youth is highly

significant to achieving greater success in PVE. This underscores the critical importance of religious institutions and government bodies adopting youth-friendly approaches in their PVE programs.

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