**About this call for interest**

The National Coordination Unit for Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) invites civil society organizations (CSOs) to be part of the next phase of Lebanon’s national consultation about PVE.

The national consultations will take place across nine workshops held throughout 2019, designed to engage a cross section of Lebanese society in the development of a national action plan to prevent the spread of extremist ideas. This national action plan will seek to address the wide range of economic and social conditions that allow extremism to breed including a lack of economic opportunities, perceptions of inequality and a lack of trust.

The National Coordinator for Preventing Violent Extremism invites expressions of interest from CSOs who wish to be part of the consultation process. Selected CSOs will participate in orientation and training activities in the preparation for the first consultation around the topic of Economic Development and Job Creation taking place in January 2019.

The national consultations – held at the Grand-Serail in Beirut – will include participants drawn from government ministries, representatives from specified syndicates and unions, the private sector, civil society organizations and academia. They will come together to brainstorm ideas, projects and policy proposals that can contribute to the development of Lebanon’s new national action plan that will be published towards the end of the year.

**About the National Strategy for Preventing Violent Extremism**

The Republic of Lebanon’s National Strategy for Preventing Violent Extremism was ratified in March 2018 following an extensive process of dialogue and engagement involving all twenty-nine government ministries.

1. The strategy defines extremism as:
2. a) The spread of individual and collective hatred that may lead to social violence
3. b) The rejection of diversity and non-acceptance of the other, and the use of violence as a means of expression and influence

c) A behavior that threatens societal values ensuring social stability.

In response, it puts the concept of Prevention at the heart of the approach – aiming to tackle the problem at source rather than responding to it once it’s too late. It proposes to take action across a range of different policy areas in order to address the underlying social and economic factors in Lebanese society that allow extremism to breed.

The strategy groups these factors into nine thematic pillars, each of which will be the subject of individual consultative workshops in 2019. These are:

1. Dialogue and Conflict Prevention

2. The Promotion of Good Governance

3. Justice, Human Rights and the Rule of Law

4. Urban / Rural Development and Engaging Local Communities

5. Gender Equality and Empowering Women

6. Education, Training and Skills Development

7. Economic Development and Job Creation

8. Strategic Communications, including through the Internet and Social Media, and

9. Empowering Youth.

By addressing the underlying conditions in each area that provide the fertile ground for extremism to flourish, the strategy aims to make individuals, families and communities increasingly resilient to the lure of violent extremism, and to enhance the economic well-being of the country too.

**‘A Whole-of-Society Approach’**

The strategy recognizes that preventing violent extremism requires a broad ‘whole-of-society’ effort in which government and civil society work hand-in-hand.

January 2019 will therefore see the start of a year-long ‘national consultations’ about PVE, during which government, civil society, the private sector and others can come together and develop policy proposals and an action plan that will turn the strategy into action.

The first stage of these national consultation will take place on January 2019 at the Grand Serail, Beirut under theme Economic Development and Job Creation.

Civil Society Organizations specialized in this area and with a background or experience in in economic development and job creation are invited to express their interest in being part of the consultation process by completing the following survey by : **10 January 2019**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/create/preview/?sm=dTQSdNzKoOD_2FG7JdYaBGQMH1TDS1F3qL4KXeyc0oV3Q_3D>

Participants will be selected for each workshop based on the evidence provided and the relevance to each workshop theme. Further opportunities to participate in orientation and training in preparation for the national consultations which will be made available throughout the year.

This is a unique opportunity to play a vital role in tackling the challenge of violent extremism which doesn’t just threaten Lebanon’s security, but damages communities and impacts on the economic well-being of the country too.

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Lebanon’s National Consultations about PVE: Be Part of It.