

indispensable ingredient for a pragmatic and long-term solution to all forms of violent extremism.

Daesh Loss of Territory: Challenges and Opportunities

TCC expert and Associate Director, Dr. Houda Abadi, opened the workshop presenting on the evolution of Daesh recruitment propaganda in response to its recent territorial losses. Dr. Abadi emphasized that Daesh's loss of ground is not in any way indicative of its overall decline. Although having territorial authority is fundamental to its existence as a physical state, Daesh's ideological influence extends far beyond the contours of the land it controls. As one participant from Morocco highlighted, "Daesh might be losing its territory, but it is not losing its cause." Participants agreed that military approach alone is not a far-sighted strategy to eradicate deep-rooted violent extremism and prevent its recurrence in the future. A military defeat cannot be expected, on its own, to halt the proliferation and resonance of Daesh's perverted accounts of Islamic history and theology, engineered meticulously to incite fear and hatred and, in the

achieve, and military intervention alone could, in such circumstances, become part of the problem. Despite losing territory, Daesh will continue to recruit in new and innovative ways. Effective response to this increasing threat requires a flexible and comprehensive counter-messaging methodology, and an intersectional, community-based prevention strategy that targets local grievances, offers inclusionary and empowering alternatives, and fosters intra- and intercommunity relationships.

The Rise of Islamophobia and Fear of Religiosity

Islamophobia, the hatred of and prejudice against Muslims purely because of their religious affiliation, is a widespread phenomenon in the western world. Expert, Mr. Arsalan Ifthikhar, international human rights lawyer and author of *Scapegoats: How Islamophobia Helps Our Enemies and Threatens Our Freedoms*

In their local communities, each workshop participant is engaged in planning and implementing projects designed to prevent violent extremism. Overall, twenty-three participants are engaged in 59 total projects in four different countries. Figure 1 illustrates the number of projects being implemented by country; figure 2 identifies the 59 projects by category:

Figure 1: Participant Projects by Country

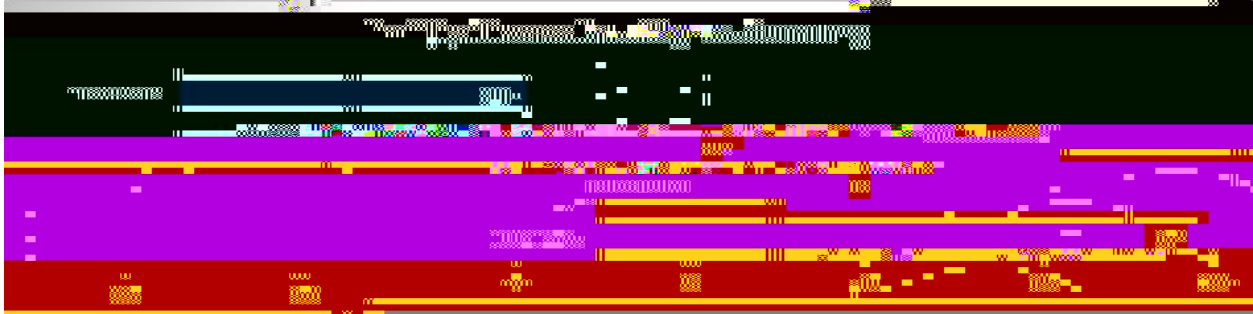
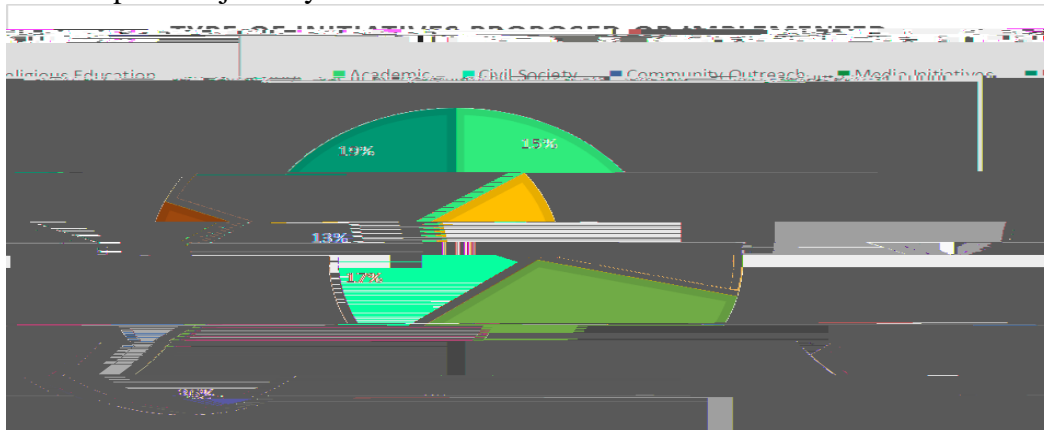


Figure 2: Participant Projects by Classification



On the final day of the workshop, the participants presented detailed country reports highlighting the successes and challenges of their local initiatives and the strategies and opportunities for the future.

Tunisia

Tunisian participants have engaged in a variety of projects both on- and off-line. They are collaborating with different civil society organizations, such as Families Against Terrorism and Extremism and International Rabat Organization, to arrange workshops aimed at recovering groups, especially youth and women, exposed to violent ideology. To prevent the radicalization of its younger generation, the Tunisian group has initiated religious literacy programs that address misinterpretations of the sacred Islamic texts. In terms of media involvement, the Tunisian participants have conducted radio programs, published magazine articles, and issued online sermons that deconstruct Daesh’s virulent agenda, reveals the inconsistencies in its propaganda, and offers empowering alternatives. The Tunisian team has also collaborated with government agencies to address some of the structural problems, such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of social justice, that constitute push factors for terrorism. One of the



Belgium

Participants from Belgium have been involved with various domestic and international human rights groups to combat extremisms, in the form of Daesh as well as rising far-right, ultra-nationalism. They have partnered with organizations like AFD International and the European Organization for Co-existence and Human Rights to discuss deep