Addressing Negative School Disciplinary Climates to Counter Violence and Radicalization and the Case of Tunisia

Technical Workshop on School Disciplinary Climates in MENA

Marseille, April 18-19, 2017
Drivers of Radicalization

Drivers for youth to engage in violent extremism (non-exhaustive)

- **Economic**: grievances unanswered by the political elites, bleak employment outlook
- **Social**: sense of injustice, belief in a revolutionary utopia, family breakdown
- **Conflict**: policies in the departing countries; dimensions specific to conflict zones
- **Individual drivers**: rehabilitation after a period of delinquency, religious incentives (prompted by propaganda from ISIS, AQMI or other similar extreme factions calling for Djihad)
Youth in the Mediterranean

Youth is a **frustrated generation** due to lack of employment and access to responsibilities:

- More than 20% of youth in the MENA region is unemployed
- Only 40% of youth work in the formal sector
- Young women are the most affected by unemployment

Social exclusion; sense of injustice; humiliation; social, political and economic grievances
Education and Youth Employment

60s

Arab States: Great investments in education

- Low quality
- Failed to equip youth with adequate ability to take action and make decisions
- Led to massive youth unemployment and structural underemployment
- Unemployment rises with the level of education
  - Trabendisme
  - Departure to Europe, Western countries and to oil producing Arab countries
  - Social protests
  - Violent protest: djihadist

BUT

Social frustration
Link Between Education, Unemployment and Violent Extremism

- Strong association between a country’s male unemployment rate and propensity of that country to supply Daesh with foreign recruits
- 69% of Daesh recruits report to have at least a secondary education


- Unemployed or underemployed educated Arab youth are more likely to be radicalized
- 48% of lower secondary school students are not learning, they fail basic literacy and numeracy tests, and even those who learn are not equipped with the skills required in a 21st century market place


- 45% of those radicalized in the Middle East come from engineering schools

Recommendations to Counter Violent Extremism

Public policies targeted to youth should focus on

- **Education**: to enhance the quality of education and to promote tolerance, dialogue, negotiation and compromise through pluralist thinking and peaceful confrontation

- **Fighting against discrimination, exclusion and marginalisation**: economic actions to favor youth employment in lagging regions
Rethinking Education to Foster Youth Inclusion and Prevent Violent Extremism

Enhancing quality of education is essential to achieve inclusive growth and empower youth

- New pedagogical methods
- Addressing violence in schools
- Investing in soft skills, including socioemotional skills
- Transmitting values and ethics
- Improving the content of the teaching materials/ removing contradictions between programs and the democratic legislative process
- Expanding civic engagement
- Promoting critical thinking and providing channels for peaceful contradictory debates
Violence in Schools - Lessons Learnt from Tunisia

*Workshop on Preventing Violence and Radicalization in Schools, Tunisia, May 2016*

- Many young Tunisians lack *moral and other support* from within the school system
- Violence in schools is strongly related to an individual’s learning difficulties and the *absence of family support*
- Violence has devastating effects on the *student’s psyche and performance*
- Violence taints the *quality of a learning environment*, undermining the entire school system
Recommendaions for Tunisia based on workshop discussions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIONS</th>
<th>URBAN</th>
<th>PERI-URBAN</th>
<th>RURAL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revise school time to free time for extracurricular activities</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<td>Foster school autonomy (e.g. governing boards and parents’ associations)</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<td>Specific modules on civic education</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<td>Awareness raising campaign on violence for schools</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<td>Adopt a new pedagogical approach (positive discipline, mediation)</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<td>Implementation of “advise booths”</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<td>Promote students’ civic participation</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<td>Review the disciplinary system</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<td>Decentralize cultural and sports activities</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<td>Organize a « hackathon » on violence prevention</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<td>Bring the school closer to the students (transports)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
<td>School canteens</td>
<td>LESS</td>
<td>LESS</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<td>Securing trips to school</td>
<td>LESS</td>
<td>LESS</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult literacy (to facilitate communication with parents)</td>
<td>LESS</td>
<td>LESS</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervised spaces for off-peak hours</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Thank you for your attention

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