



Protecting Children And Adolescents From Terrorism And Radicalisation (Briefing Paper: Measures Needed To Remedy The Impact of Daesh)

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By: Dr Ahmed Qassem Muftin*

Introduction

There are potentially three provinces of thought or general frameworks that can, if we invest in them well, provide us with effective solutions and real successes in the face of extremist behaviour, culture and practice. These provinces deal with the culture of extremism that preceded it on the one hand and, on the other hand, represent remedies to eliminate the impact of violence and radicalisation, and which can be summarised as follows:

The first province: It is evident that one aspect of religious culture, widely disseminated in certain schools and seminaries and some academic circles, portrays a certain sect or group as being the owners of the true Islam, and that it alone can deduce the correct legal edicts to formulate jurisprudence or the true religion. It is thus necessary to disseminate an open and tolerant religious culture which permits pluralism and acceptance of the other, be it an opinion, the individual, the community, religion or culture, and to promote better understanding of religion and Sharia and its provisions.

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The second province: The dissemination of a culture of civil society and democracy. Whenever this form of culture is weakened, the culture of violence and extremism flourishes in its various forms: religious, ethnic, factional and regional. This is primarily “**an educational, academic, intellectual and media**” responsibility, and as such should be sponsored by a national effort which requires the government, through all its official civil organs – and at the same time, the executive branch places the national effort on an institutional footing – to create an integrated and concerted project, which is continuous and permanent in nature and not merely temporary or contingent.

The third province: The consolidation of the values of tolerance and pluralism and the culture of respect for human rights and acceptance of others and reinforcing them through the institutions tasked with guidance and education. This will require the Ministries of Education and Higher Education and Scientific Research to take a lead role in this matter, together with the Religious Endowments, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and media institutions, who together bear great responsibility in this regard.

Fieldwork in The Theoretical Basis of Preventive Policies

The theoretical basis for this study stems from the concepts of prevention and the avoidance of crime or its commission. Its main objectives are in finding early warning mechanisms that assist with the prevention and rejection of the act of terrorism, at its very conception.

The study also presents a vision for dealing with the impact of these practices, on the level of the individuals involved, especially the children of Daesh.

Contemporary theories of crime prevention are based on two basic concepts:

First: Social Prevention–

In this type of prevention, emphasis is placed on the socio-economic factors of crime and terrorism and how to address them through education, employment, housing, and by engaging children, adolescents and youth in constructive activities, as well good socialisation and social networking within a network of compatible relationships in a supportive, reinforcing social environment and other targeted social programmes.

Second: Situational Prevention–

In this type of prevention, preventive efforts are focused on socially vulnerable groups, which are more predisposed to crime, such as children, adolescents and young people, because of their willingness and lack of social experience. Otherwise, to focus on specific geographical areas with higher rates of crime as maybe found in security-stricken areas; areas under the control of terrorist groups, or areas in which the rule of law is weak. Alternatively, focus on studying increases in certain crime patterns in society, such as recruitment and combat training in

booby-traps, explosive belts and suicide bombings, and provide pre-emptive measures and activities which address and prevent them from happening.

To demonstrate the previous concepts in the form of a pyramidal triangle, in order to make them more accessible, and so that we can better understand the theoretical basis behind them, they will be presented as follows:¹

In order for the criminal and terrorist behaviour to arise, a person must possess the **will** to commit the criminal act, however, **will** on its own is insufficient to facilitate the criminal act unless the person also has the opportunity and ability to carry out the crime.

For example, for a person possessing the criminal will to carry out violent terrorist behaviour, he must first be fuelled by ideas that feed his behaviour so that he is ready and receptive to ideas that depict the corruption in others and believes he alone possesses the absolute truth. This extremist ideology underpins the criminal mentality of individuals engaged in the perverse behaviour of terrorism in all its forms. This form of criminal behaviour is at the heart of the criminal will, symbolised by the letter A in the apex of criminal behaviour, where terrorist ideas are formed in those who are receptive to them and in whom the criminal will is formed, thus making them predisposed to committing the

1. Dr Abdallah Bin Abd Alaziz Alyusuf (arranged by), «The Role of the School in Combating Terrorism, Violence and Extremism», pp. 6–7, Assakina Campaign website; watched on 27/10/2017 at 10 am on the following link:<http://www.assakina.com/files/books/book87.pdf>

criminal behaviour whenever they have the opportunity and capacity to do so, represented by the letters B and C in the triangle of criminal conduct. There is little doubt that children and adolescents are more susceptible to such a course of conduct by reason of the fact that the process of recruiting, persuading and deceiving them is easier and less complex than with adults.

Thus, a person who participates in criminal conduct must hold certain beliefs which predispose him towards criminal behaviour. He must also find the right opportunity for the destructive behaviour, and also have the capacity to exploit the poor security and the ready availability of explosives and other similar courses of conduct, to commit acts of destruction and spread panic and fear among members of society. The criminally violent, terrorist and extremist behaviour is thus the result of the availability of the three determinants defined by the triangle of criminal behaviour: **will, capacity, opportunity**.

We conclude from the above that prevention focuses its efforts on reducing opportunities for a person's criminal conduct and reducing his chances of being able to practice criminal behaviour represented by B and C. Preventive efforts at stage A come at more advanced stage, which are based on efforts to subdue the person's criminal will such that that they are unwilling to immerse themselves in criminal behaviour. This may be achieved by means of sound socialization and by meeting their recreational needs, which would make them less inclined to

engage in criminal behaviour, even if they have the opportunity and capability to exercise such behaviour.

Prevention efforts are based on rejecting the criminal will in its entirety through developmental programmes primarily dedicated to the well-being of the citizen and minimising his will to practice deviant behaviour – if not to nullify it. Nevertheless, social preventive efforts will only succeed if all segments of society comprehensively perform their respective obligations in the interests of stabilising society at large.

Preventive efforts require the backing of the various institutions of society, including educational, media and civil society institutions, which together will perform the important and significant task of denying the criminal will a place in children and adolescents, thus preventing them from practicing violence and extremism. The rejection of criminal behaviour must evolve from the preventive strategy, by which we mean the individual is self-motivated to eschew violent and socially destructive practices assisted by the various means of socialization, the most important of which are the family and the school and their role in combating terrorism, violence and extremism.

The social causes of the emergence of terrorism, violence and extremism

(Direct and indirect impact on children and adolescents)

Radical thought in individuals evolves in three basic stages, which are, in general, the product of imbalances in the social environment which are necessary for the formation of deviant thought.

1. Persons with extremist ideas (including some family members, neighbours, friends, influential figures, who form the social environment in which the child is reared and forms his personality) have a strong desire to exclude others. In their view, they are the only ones who understand the facts and such other matters. By holding on to these false truths, they pass them on to children and young adolescents who, being in the process of growth and character formation, readily receive them as true and correct.
2. Extremists have a blinkered view and see facts as one dimensional and believe life follows only one path. Children and adolescents influenced by them take them as their role models, see through their eyes and adopt their beliefs. Their inner voice proclaims: **«I am right and all others who think differently are absolutely wrong– worthy of annihilation; may truth and goodness prevail.»**

3. Extremists adhere to dogmas and thoughts which reinforce their own convictions with no room for compromise; and which they refuse to give up or discuss with others.
4. In-depth social analysis of the practice of violence and extremism indicates that there are common characteristics amongst children and adolescents who bear an extremist ideology, characterised by a spirit of destruction and vandalism. These characteristics can be summarised as follows:²

A – **Suggestibility**; what is noticeable about them is that they have absorbed large amounts of information from certain influential religious people, without discussion or giving them a second thought. They accepted the information as given and not open to discussion.

This suggestibility is necessary to the susceptibility of children and adolescents towards criminal behaviour in real life.

B – **Juvenility**; by reason of their tender ages, these young people have a greater sense of adventure and are more willing to set aside the social norms of adults and mature people.

C – **Experiencing violence**; by witnessing or attending the scene of a violent event as a form of psychological and social training to accept violence and terrorism.

D – **Intensive military training**; this point is particularly relevant

2. ditto p.8

to the ability to practice criminal behaviour.

E – **Brainwashing**; undergoing ideological and moral re-orientation aimed at alienation from others and characterising others as unbelievers and legitimising the shedding of their blood and committing terrorism and murder against them.

F – **Three levels of Extremism** :

1. Mental or cognitive level, characterised by the inability to reflect and think (**do but do not discuss**).
2. Emotional level, characterised by impulsive behaviour (**emotional energy in children and adolescents is high and must be exploited**).
3. Behavioural level, characterised by committing violence against others, (**You believed in what we said and thought, and you trained, and have come to know your enemy; now act**).

There are factors that may create the opportunity for terrorist behaviour, including the following:

1. A deterioration in the economic and social circumstances of the families of the children concerned.
2. Similar patterns of behaviour in other parts of the world, which are circulated daily on social media, and are viewed by children and adolescents who become motivated by them and find in

them justification for the violence.

3. The lack of outlets for dialogue, and living in monotonous environments and orientation, which generates extremism.
4. The conviction that it is impossible to change reality by peaceful means; that is to say, convincing children and adolescents that reality is bad and can only be changed with violence and terrorism.
5. The presence of intellectual symbols who glorify deviant behaviour and persuade children and adolescents to embrace their ideas.
6. The control by terrorist groups of certain areas and forcibly subjecting their inhabitants to their attitudes, beliefs and practices.

In the world of Daesh and its proclamations, children are the most exposed group to extremist practices from amongst the population. The movement employs deliberate tactics with children aimed at planting deep the roots of violence, consolidating its radical ideology and turning children into their long-term legacy.

Daesh's terrorist tactics have had a negative impact on the psyche of individuals in general in the areas under their control, especially on children. Scenes of long queues of pupils and students in their bright colours on their way to school have disappeared. The organisation imposed its own brand of educational curricula that conform to their beliefs and attitudes and forced teachers to undergo courses in the new

curriculum and the new teaching methods which collectively lead to the creation of a generation named the “Cubs of the Caliphate.” Education became restricted to males only, who were taught martial arts, handling weapons, beheadings, and how to carry out suicide missions. The witnessing of brutal killings and violence encouraged some children to imitate them, whilst others suffered from panic attacks and trauma.³

Children in areas under the control of Daesh were exposed to the worst living conditions possible, where they suffered severe trauma repeatedly over a long period of time from all the violence, war and displacement around them, in addition to the neglected schooling, deprivation and poverty. Such harsh and painful conditions are devastating to the organic and functional structure of the brain; because the brain during childhood goes through the most important stages of its development, and the trauma leads to tension, fear and panic in children, and this represents a serious danger to their biological and mental health. It is often accompanied by physiological changes in the body, resulting in chemical changes in the brain, creating a toxic environment for the brain cells. The toxic environment compromises the function of these cells, as well as harming the structure of the brain. Because of these changes, children will grow up with weak mental abilities, poor education, and a high probability of developing mental

3. Assia Ismail, Children are the most affected by the practices of Daesh, watched on 5/6/2017, at ten am on the link: <http://www.hawarnews.com>.

illness, such as depression, anxiety disorders of various kinds, internal suppression of feelings; or extreme emotions, anger and hostility, as well as the practice of harmful habits such as smoking and drug abuse.⁴

Methods employed by Daesh to win children over into their fighting ranks:⁵

The organisation employed a series of deliberate, systematic and varied tactics to win children over and to join its ranks, perhaps the most important of which are the following:

- 1. Exploiting children and adolescents from poor backgrounds through financial and other enticements made to their families** in return for a monthly salary of between \$300–500, as well as trying to win them over through intellectual and ideological indoctrination and persuading them to fight alongside their militants.
- 2. The development of religious curricula** that justify militancy, violence and fighting, as well as curricula on war, murder, planting of explosives, slaughter, how to commit suicide, applied across schools in areas under their control.

4. Professor Juman Makki Kubba, «Children of War and what the Future Holds: The Time Bomb,” Journal of Dialogue, No. 40, (Baghdad, Iraq Institute of Thought Dialogue, June 2017), pp. 105–106

5. Omar Ali, Daesh Recruits Children in Mosul, published on the Ruwda site on 22/8/2015, watched on 15/1/2018 at 6 pm, on the link: <http://www.rudaw.net/arabic/middleeast/iraq/220820152>

3. **Distributing toys and gifts** of a violent nature to children who have passed courses or lessons that serve the ideology of the organisation and its aims of permanence and control.
4. **Subjecting them to intensive military training in special camps** in different fighting and assassination techniques, and perhaps some of the most well-known training camps for children are Ashbal AlEzz, Raqqa, Altabaqa, AlZarqawi, Alashbal, Altalae’.
5. Daesh relies on incentives to recruit children which provide them with **recreational and social activities** which they lack because of the dire conditions they live in. They provide adolescents with the opportunity to express themselves by bonding with a strong military organisation, where they can experience power and self-realisation; because they are allowed to perform acts and practices normally reserved for adults.
6. The organisation has conducted phased and age-dependent operations for the recruitment of children, gaining their trust and overcoming their fear barrier, especially those between 6 and 12 years of age. The organisation deliberately engages them in logistical support for its fighters, such as ammunition transfers, catering, and the cleaning and repair of military equipment. Others were involved in guard duty, patrols and checkpoints, close combat training and learning about military life and the nature of its activities, eventually becoming experienced fighters.

7. Showing scenes of violence practised by the organisation to the children, encouraging them to practice and participate in them.
8. Recordings and images broadcast by the organisation of executions, slaughter and crucifixions carried out in areas with the children in the front lines, shown carrying cameras and cell phones to photograph the scenes.
9. Kidnapping children and forcing them to join training camp to train them in suicide missions. Children undergo training in isolated and closed camps. Children are separated from their families, all communications are severed, and subjected to intensive and violent training that includes becoming acquainted with martial arts, the use of arms, preparing mines and explosives, and training in suicide attacks. The organisation coerces the children in the camps with the rape or murder of members of their family.
10. Favouring certain children among their peers by allowing them to carry arms, wearing uniforms, accompanying them to the organisation's leadership, carrying banners, listening to anthems, and in some instances giving them titles such as those that are given to leaders of the organisation such as Abu Qa'qa' and Abu Talha, and the like.
11. The spread of sectarianism and hatred of the other and justifying

their murder and humiliation, based on the fact that joining the organisation is part of the defence of the organisation's religion and doctrine, being the one and only true religion to be followed.

12. Reinterpretation of Quranic verses by the organisation for the children in a way that serves its policies and focusing on the gate of "Jihad" to the exclusion of all else.
13. Children declaring their allegiance through formal rituals conducted in public by repeating doctrinal and ecclesiastical phrases and slogans in the classical Arabic language, whose meanings are mostly lost to the children. However, they are designed to prepare them for sacrifice and death for the sake of the alleged state and the propagation of its doctrines. The rituals are conducted in a manner which endears them to the children and invites them to be optimistic.
14. Employing children in espionage and the gathering of information in certain areas, particularly the areas they inhabit where they are unlikely to cause suspicion.
15. Printing booklets and mini stories that serve the organisation's ideas, some of which bore the title "The Role of the Sister in Jihad." These include urging women to read bed time stories of jihad to children and encourage them to play shooting games to improve their aim.

16. The organisation adopted a “family jihad” approach for its foreign fighters to ensure the total loyalty of these families to the organisation. The adoption of this method resulted in intense and often excessive enthusiasm for the fighting by those families. Apart from the “ideological” motivation, the organisation paid excellent salaries and benefits to these families of at least \$600 per month per person, as well other benefits from the “spoils of war”, meeting the cost of marriage, housing, and leadership roles. Thus, the families of foreign fighters enjoyed a luxurious life compared to others.

Since Daesh’s entry into Iraq and its subsequent evolution, the organisation has focused on displaying children prominently in its propaganda. Children are not merely propaganda tools, they are people who will be raised to become extremists and possess the ability to fight and kill. This is a phenomenon that requires an in-depth study to ascertain the various methods used by the organisation to identify and recruit children in different parts of the world. A careful analysis of Daesh’s propaganda methods, its social media output and interviews with children who fled the organisation; as well as interviews with some of those arrested, and those interviewed by journalists, researchers and aid workers, and later published on social media sites, satellite TV and newspapers; provided us with a wealth of material that enabled us to analyse the recruitment and training models used by Daesh in the enticement and recruitment of children into their ranks.

The Daesh children may be divided into five categories:

- Children of foreign fighters (families already belonging to the organisation).
- Children of local fighters (families already belonging to the organisation).
- Unknown familial links and orphans who found their way to orphanages controlled by the organisation.
- Forcibly conscripted against their own will and the will of their loved ones.
- Those who volunteered willingly to work with the organisation against the will of their loved ones.

The growing proportion of children successfully recruited into the organisation is a sign of the successful grooming and enticement techniques employed by Daesh. The organisation worked hard to inculcate in the children a spirit of commitment and intimate friendship. This pattern is different from the recruitment of children in many other parts of the world where terrorist groups have flourished, especially in African countries, where children groomed for fighting are often orphaned and, in general, have no living parents. They are either abducted or abandoned by their carers. The terrorist militias nurture them socially and form close bonds to compensate for the loss of their families. As a result, their families are replaced by the organisation as their carers.

Hundreds of foreign children arrived in Iraq and Syria from various countries in Europe, the Middle East and South Asia. At the moment of arrival, they are enrolled in a religious school in an area controlled by the organisation, two of which were designated to meet the needs of English speakers. These schools represent one aspect of a systematic and institutional strategy to transform children from mere passers-by to fully-fledged professional fighters, based on the passage of children through six different stages: **socialization, education, choice, subjugation, specialisation and self-centricity**. By way of clarification, they are discussed in further detail:⁶

1. Socialization:

The organisation initially educates children through the gradual process of socialization rather than indoctrination. The organisation has a number of ways of achieving this, but the most obvious is through public events that aim at raising awareness about the opportunities offered by Daesh to its collaborators or those subject to their administration. These meetings and gatherings – more often than not – attract children to their fold by offering them free toys and sweets just for turning up at the demonstration. During these events, children are allowed to participate by waving black Daesh banners or even just sitting down, for which they are honoured and given presents. Such temptations act as a kind of attraction; the repetition of such events leads children

6. Mia Blum, «The Cubs of the Caliphate – Children of Daesh», Hassad Al Bayan, Issue 2, Baghdad – Al Bayan Centre for Planning and Studies, August 2015, pp. 168– 168.

to come out to learn more about life under the organisation and to empathise and to become loyal to them.

From another point of view, but in the same vein, children are routinely encouraged to attend public executions. In the beginning, they are shown films of executions, and gradually they are brought to live events. If children become accustomed to watching corporal punishment of this sort, they will be assimilated to this violence and come to see it as something normal, eventually leading to their participation in it or, at the very least, regarding it as an acceptable practice.

Propaganda video clips of Daesh show children carefully lined up in front of the camera, schooled in how to behave at such events, and in some cases, children carrying arms are praised, or holding up the severed heads of victims of Daesh. Children in general, and those of foreign and local fighters in particular, learn that participation and attendance at such occasions involves reward.

2. Education, subjugation and choice:

After the children have attended a number of “**Attend, salute only, witness and learn**” events and meetings, the next step in the indoctrination process takes place through their inclusion in free **educational** programmes and special curricula prepared by Daesh, who took control of many schools and mosques. Although many of the

original schoolteachers remained in their positions, they were forced to teach a revised curriculum prepared by the organisation, which is taught exclusively to male students, who were completely separated from the opposite sex. This includes weapons training and indoctrination in the strict ideology of the movement. At first glance, the casual observer may conclude that school attendance was compulsory for the children and their families, whereas in fact many parents send their children without any coercion (families of foreign and domestic combatants belonging to the organisation), and in a few cases parents who had refused to comply with the organisation, received threats (families not wishing to belong to the organisation).

In such schools, children are taught the Daesh ideology which brings them closer to each other, as well as to other members of the organisation, some of whom go about scouting for talented children, to be later embedded in one of the group's training camps to win the accolade of «cub» in the cubs of the caliphate and their prospective army.

The organisation sees the children as tools to defend it; making education with its traditional skills unnecessary. They are not interested in creating an ideological consensus amongst the children, or in developing materials that help them acquire diverse knowledge. The only thing they need is people who are ready and qualified to fight. This is what we term as “**subjugation**” or single-mindedness and compulsory.

Joining Daesh generates a sense of pride, prestige and competitiveness amongst the children of the “Cubs of the Caliphate,” so that every child becomes eligible for military training as well. The younger pupils are initially trained as spies to encourage them to watch out for family members or neighbours who criticise Daesh or violate one of the sharia laws that the organisation believes in. These young conscripts know that doing good work will increase their chances of entering the Cubs Training Camp. If successful, and they pass this stage, they will undergo a formal and systematic development process, involving indoctrination and physical training. At this stage, children imitate the roles of adults, wearing similar uniforms, learning the language spoken by adults, studying the characteristics of “enemy infidels” and the reasons for killing and eradicating them.

Daesh designed a systematic process to produce an efficient armed youth corps, which faithfully adopts all the teachings of the organisation and believes in them. The cubs who have been recruited– like other children in the areas controlled by Daesh – witness executions, stonings and beheadings. Indeed, these cubs are then transformed from mere witnesses to participants who accompany the victims to their place of execution, and in some instances they hand out knives to the grown-ups who behead the condemned and ultimately they themselves become the executioners, as a demonstration of their final and most extreme **choice** as proof of their allegiance to the organisation.

3. Specialisation and Self-Centricity

The previous stages were limited to multiple and interrelated activities and roles, which were carried out by child cubs generally, but the current phase of the process involves allocating to the children specialist tasks according to skills they demonstrated during their training, learning and study, in order to classify and discover their true potential and talents. Some of them are sent to checkpoints or may perform personal guard duties for commanders; or wear explosive belts, even if they are not actually going on a suicide mission. In doing so, their composure is examined when carrying an explosive belt, so that eventually they may be used as real-life suicide bombers. This is what we term as “**Specialisation.**” Children who demonstrate a willingness to communicate and possess a deep understanding of Daesh ideology are deployed as recruiters and trainers and supervisors of other children, relying on the common language they share with children of their age group as a tool to recruit and win over other children to Daesh.

The recruitment of children not only motivates adults to work with the organisation and creates a challenge for them, but it also helps to entice more children to join the organisation with promises of status and rewards from both adult insurgents and the general public.

Newly graduated cubs are required to roam the city publicly in full combat uniforms, carrying multiple weapons as a sign of their strength and discipline on the one hand, and on the other as a symbol of

violence that helps to spread fear and dread in the hearts of opponents of the organisation. They are also required to show off their martial arts skills in the public places, where the cubs take turns in demonstrating their moves, whilst also taking beatings from senior commanders as a display of their combat abilities and perseverance; often accompanied by dozens of younger children whose faces express their surprise and admiration. These events are repeated with each group of cub graduates in order to win over yet more children, who want to be recruited into the ranks of the cubs. This is what we term as “**Self-Centricity**”, that is to say organisational- centricity and expansion.

Daesh has developed a special methodology that surpasses what was previously adopted by terrorist groups to win recruits; to guarantee the survival of the organisation and its continuity as far as possible. The top priority of any terrorist organisation is survival. Ensuring the continuity and longevity of the main group by periodically injecting new blood into it is the key to achieving that goal. Daesh has also developed a structure based on the principles of recruitment that combine intensive physical and military training with deep levels of indoctrination and psychological, social and ideological rehabilitation, which are rare even in the recruitment by major terrorists. It is therefore possible to say that Daesh – based on the above six stages – have excelled in designing a systematic process not only for the graduation of war machines, but for the graduation of an efficient armed youth corps which truly embraces all the teachings of the organisation.

In order to rehabilitate and reintegrate children freed from Daesh, it will be necessary to create a complex, multi-level programme with a high level of coordination and creativity involving a variety of disciplines, including the treatment of psychological trauma and the distortion of family and social relationships. Children will also need educational rehabilitation to undo the distortion of the Islamic faith and to revisit the body of knowledge and the various sciences, as well as vocational training. It is very likely that these children will have problems with socialization because of their lack of empathy and communication. The families of such children will either play a positive or negative role in the reintegration and rehabilitation of their children. It may therefore be necessary to separate some of these children from other family members, especially the negative ones, which will probably make the process of normalisation and return to normal life more challenging, whilst also appearing to be rather complex and confusing. For this reason, this study proposes some policies and agendas to handle these thorny issues.

Problematic Cases under consideration requiring a solution:

1. Children born in Iraq to married foreigners (members of Daesh) with no parents or close relatives. What is the legal status of children (orphans or unknown parentage) born to foreign parents?

2 – Children born in Iraq to a foreign father and an Iraqi mother and vice versa (members of Daesh) with no parents or close relatives.

3 – Almost 3000 children were trained to be part of an elite fighting force in the ranks of Daesh under an intensive programme entitled “How to be a Mujahid for the sake of Allah?” Some were killed during the fighting but most survived after the liberation of their cities.

4. Children undergoing psychological and social rehabilitation should be dealt with according to the following age groups: **1 – 6; 7 – 12; 13 – less than 18**. They should also be classified in terms of the degree of their involvement in violent acts according to the following three levels: **witnessed but did not participate in the acts of violence; participated in but did not himself commit acts of violence; committed both acts of violence and killings.**

In view of the foregoing, it is essential that the results of this study should be turned into policy and practice for implementation and not just be given short shrift. This is because its purpose is not to confront a particular organisation or problem, but rather to promote sound and balanced thinking that ensures a secure and cohesive society which is facing imminent threats and which must fortify itself against a variety of challenges. It is a task in which all public and civil society institutions must participate.

Set out below, for greater clarity, is a summary of the proposed frameworks for some of these institutions, as well as a matrix of policies for the various state institutions and their operational procedures:

Framework 1: Recommendations which impact directly on children and adolescents:

1. To review the school curricula, especially the curricula for Islamic studies, Arabic language, history, civic education and general culture. To imbue a moderate image of Islam and focus on the meanings of moderation, compromise and higher human values such as justice, tolerance, love and acceptance of the other, with special attention given to primary and secondary schools.

2. To develop and improve the bond between child and school; to achieve better educational outcomes; to develop the necessary measures to address the phenomenon of the school dropout by enforcing relevant legal provisions and by working in partnership with the appropriate authorities. To develop legislation which plugs the gaps in this regard, as well as providing financial support to poor families to enable them to enrol their children in school.

3. Bring into force inspections of private and special needs schools in relation to non-curricular activities which accompany the formal curriculum to ensure that they are consistent with the Iraqi education philosophy of moderation and fairness.

4. Expand the horizon of educational activities and focus on the culture of volunteering and the care of innovators, making sure they include the greatest number of pupils and students, especially in the

primary and secondary levels, in order to reduce aggressive and violent behaviour in children, and to live safely.

5. To prepare practical and theoretical scientific and recreational programmes and activities to be run by the Ministry of Education and under the auspices of UNICEF for the purpose of rehabilitating and developing pupils and students who lived with or lived under the control of Daesh and studied in their schools.

6. The publication of educational pamphlets in the form of stories and tales about children and adolescents with cartoons and caricature drawings; to be used as training tools for students during school hours and summer holidays, as well as being distributed free of charge to people in the liberated areas. Will help to promote confidence and tolerance in children – to be published by the Department of Child Culture in the Federal Ministry of Culture.

7. Adopting teaching methods which rely on play and recreation as a means of rehabilitation and development and to eliminate the effects of terrorist practices on children and pupils, especially those who are traumatised, as well as children who have been subjected to terrorist and criminal acts. To make the children happy and to help them enjoy playing again, in accordance with the special article on children in the Geneva Convention entitled “The Child’s Right to Play.”

8. Improve the knowledge of Islamic education teachers and enrol

them on training courses in jurisprudence and on decoupling deviant and extremist takfiri thought from the true principles and values of Islam. To train them in offering interreligious comparisons that focus on similarities, with an emphasis on general ethical characteristics and attitudes based on cooperation and tolerance.

9. The Ministry of Commerce, the Provincial Councils and the Ministry of Interior must tighten the laws on the licensing and sale of firearms and ammunition, and put in place measures to prevent the importation of fireworks and toy guns and the like, and to prevent their sale to the public and to confiscate those already on the market.

10. The Ministry of Youth and Sports undertakes, in cooperation with the Ministries of Education, Labour and Social Affairs, to prepare plans, programmes and activities for implementation in areas which witnessed violence, military operations and security problems, as well as the areas liberated from terrorists; in the form of outdoor camps, competitions for children and adolescents, training and recreational courses for the benefit of the target age groups and to rehabilitate them psychologically and socially.

11. The Ministry of Culture and Iraqi Media Networks should jointly broadcast messages, in the form of short stories, children's cartoons, children's plays, drawings rejecting violence and terrorism and radio programmes; through multiple media outlets (such as video, audio, print and electronic), as well as directly to schools and children's

playgrounds. The broadcasts are intended to illustrate the extent of the popular rejection of extremism, exaggeration and the takfiri mind, and sent out at convenient times in order to reach the maximum numbers of the target audience.

12. Expanding Iraqi media network coverage – in cooperation with other Iraqi satellite channels – of youth and recreational activities and competitions that attract young people and children to help increase awareness of tolerance and diversity and the rejection of exaggeration and extremism.

13. The Ministry of Education issuing instructions requiring schools in the liberated areas (as a first stage; later to be applied to all schools nationwide) to appoint a psychologist and a social worker to provide advice, guidance and care to pupils and students and their families, and bring back specialist observation of the psychological and social aspects.

Framework 2: Recommendations which impact indirectly on children and adolescents:

1. Drawing up a national policy to address the effects of terrorism and extremist thought on children, to be administered by the National Security Advisory with the participation of other relevant bodies, which includes detailed frameworks for the various ministries, commissions and organisations, to enable them to carry out their developmental functions, awareness campaigns and operational responsibilities.

2. Drawing up rehabilitation and training programmes aimed at employing imams and preachers working in mosques (both shia and sunni) as mentors, especially those working in liberated areas or who have witnessed waves of violence, incitement and extremism. The training should be based on dialogue and acceptance of the other's opinion. The programmes should be run by skilled teachers, specialised in the field of Sharia combined with other educational, social and psychological competencies, who encourage respect for and appreciation of all segments of society and are able to bring about the desired change to shield the attendees from the influences of radical, takfiri thinking. To develop and put in place training programmes for the benefit of mosque employees without formal qualifications to enlighten them in the forgiving and tolerant nature of Islam and its middle-of-the-way thinking, and to provide them with a shield against sliding into extremism and exaggeration.

3. The need for local and international organisations to work on programmes for the guardians of children (father, mother etc), to raise their awareness about how to conduct themselves with children exposed to scenes of violence in general, and children who participated in crimes, in particular.

4. Both the Sunni and Shiite leadership to instruct their imams and preachers –following suitable rehabilitation– to address the people through their sermons, and gatherings about the serious dangers of

extremist ideas and their negative repercussions on religion, society and the nation.

5. Making greater and better use of scientific and preaching experts from the universities, armed forces, religious authorities, judges, national security advisors, education, media networks, writers and poets and artists to ensure participation in an integrated preaching process that promotes middle thinking and fights exaggeration and extremism.

6. Intensify efforts and form a Higher Committee headed by a member of the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers with representatives from relevant bodies to develop plans for the dissemination of enlightened thought, and to publicise an image of Islam of moderation, especially in areas which suffer from radicalisation and extremist thought.

7. The Ministry of Education should establish standards aimed at attracting, selecting, appointing and evaluating the performance of non-extremist teachers.

8. The Ministry of Education should set in motion a plan for the gradual exclusion of extremist teachers and employees, and the reliance on security vetting in new appointments, and to exclude extremists from curriculum-making committees, particularly in areas liberated from terrorists.

9. The Directorate of Tribal Affairs in the Ministry of Interior to activate the role of dignitaries and influential tribal personalities in the provinces to counter the Takfiri thought, and ensure their support for the State's actions against this kind of thinking and its followers and promoters.

10. Enlisting the aid of forums, cultural meetings, student gatherings, science days, press releases, university radio stations and the like in universities and colleges; to combat extremism and Takfiri thought.

11. Activate the role of women's awareness and putting in place appropriate plans and programmes to break the deadlock in women's awareness programmes that positively affect their attitudes, especially for adolescents and teenagers.

12. The Ministry of Culture, in cooperation with the Ministries of Defence and Interior, shall monitor works and satires that incite extremism and violence and prevent their entry, circulation and sale.

13. Local governments in the liberated governorates, to monitor written slogans and graffiti in public places that refer to Daesh or any of its symbols and work on eradicating them from all regions; monitor their supporters, identifying them and taking appropriate administrative and legal measures against them.

14. Reinforcing the participation of relevant institutions – local government and security forces in all their forms – in the implementation

of security plans, strategies and programmes, which take into account the specific needs of each governorate.

15. The Ministry of Higher Education shall encourage graduate students and faculty members to prepare research on the subject of extremism and Takfiri thought and how to deal with its effects and implications.

16. The Ministry of Communications and other concerned bodies shall take the necessary measures to monitor the content of social media, which includes any texts, writings, drawings, symbols or maps, and others that promote, support or defend extremism and extremist thought.

17. The Ministry of Communications and other concerned parties should recognise the necessity of remedying the problems with mobile phone simcards by linking them to their actual users' names and documenting them, and to disallow purchase of prepaid cards and new lines without documentation, and to block services for undocumented lines.

18. The Ministry of Communications and other concerned parties should limit the sale of mobile phone cards and internet lines to foreigners, and restrict their sale to those holding valid residence permits and refugee cards.

19. The Ministry of Communications and other concerned parties shall restrict access to sensitive information and shall also restrict access

to such information by telecom companies and to conduct a security audit of their employees.

20. The Ministry of Communications and other concerned parties shall link all ministries and government departments and institutions via a safe government network.

21. Iraqi media networks and other Iraqi satellite channels, to develop communications messages depicting the role of the Iraqi armed forces, in their various forms, in peacekeeping at the local level of the province, and in the reception of displaced persons fleeing areas of armed conflict, in providing health and relief services in unstable areas and highlighting their role in the reconstruction of the country. Also, depict their role in the removal of mines and explosive devices from roads, buildings and bridges; to increase the people's empathy with them.