Diplomacy Lab Project Requests: Spring 2016

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1. Comparison of Corrections Systems: Examples from the Former Soviet Union (FSU) and Western Systems
2. Trafficking of Female Prisoners: Prevalence Rates and Database Development
3. Hybrid Legal Systems: The Convergence of Common Law and Civil Law Legal Traditions and Implications for Global Justice Reform
4. Successful International Law Enforcement and Rule of Law Programs to Counter Violent Extremism
5. Customary Law in the Sahel: Implications for Rule of Law Reform
6. Use of Technology in Rule of Law Promotion Programming
7. Police Force Development: Academic Foundation for Best Practices
8. Comparative Analysis of Juvenile Correctional Systems
9. Comparative analysis of anti-corruption practices in the Caribbean
10. Why We Go: What Attracts Females to Join ISIL
11. Explain a Complicated Process- Passport Website Instructional Videos
12. Educate and Engage an Audience- Passport Agency Lobby Video
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14. Comparative Study of Violent Extremist Groups with Youth Gangs, Religious Cults, Marxist and Extremist Right-Wing Groups That Have Engaged in Violence
15. Radicalization of Second and Third Generation Immigrants
16. The Role of Women in Countering Violent Extremism
17. Internet Governance Forecasting Project
18. Women’s Empowerment – Cultural Examples of African Women as Change-makers
19. Nudging INL - Integrating Behavior Economics Insights into Criminal Justice Sector Reform Programs and Policy
20. LGBTI Issues: Analysis of Historic Participation of LGBTI Persons in African Culture
21. Social Media - Who Uses Which Platform and When in Africa?
Comparison of Corrections Systems: Examples from the Former Soviet Union (FSU) and Western Systems

Office of Criminal Justice Assistance and Partnership, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL/CAP)

Overview:
In some countries, corrections systems are rigid organizations with set hierarchies and top-down leadership. Less rigid systems, which push decision making to the lowest levels are able to utilize the skills and talents of staff, increasing the ability to be a dynamic rather than static organization. FSU countries are primarily composed of rigid organizational structures that have had difficulty responding to developments in the post-Soviet period. INL performs corrections system assessments and assists in developing corrections systems reform recommendations for INL and partner countries and has extensive experience in FSU corrections systems.

INL requests that a research team develop a comparative study of 3 western corrections systems and 3 examples from the FSU with regards to organizational structure and key corrections system characteristics, such as staff training, prisoner classification, prisoner programs, etc. The study would examine the following key characteristics:

Organization structure
Staffing patterns
Inmate composition
Staff training
Staff selection and career paths
Prisoner classification (levels, models, etc.)
Budgetary resources

CAP will assist the research to identify the most relevant countries for study, will provide background information on the corrections systems if possible, and assist in the identification of favorable outcomes. Three FSU example countries are recommended.

Format of Final Product:
20-30 page report- Must include 1-2 page executive summary
Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
Former Soviet Union corrections systems, comparative corrections analysis

Maximum Number of Projects: 1

Comments: See below references for initial guidance:
Project 02

Trafficking of Female Prisoners: Prevalence Rates and Database Development

Office of Criminal Justice Assistance and Partnership, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL/CAP)

Overview:
Female prison populations are a vulnerable incarcerated population and have been subject to exploitation by corrupt staff and prisoners with criminal network connections. The knowledge of the prevalence of sexual exploitation of female prisoners around the world is at this point primarily an anecdotal exercise of media reports and unverified accounts. However, the prevalence of this type of exploitation has deep and important impacts on U.S. programs and funding for criminal justice and, specifically, corrections reform.

As a fact-setting research project we request that a research team examine broadly the prevalence of sex trafficking of female prisoners particularly by corrections staff. As there is a dearth of data on this topic, we would recommend that the research team perform an extensive content analysis of open source information to identify countries, corrections systems, and specific institutions where this activity has occurred and to develop a database (MS Excel or MS Access) listing the following characteristics: Country of incident, Institution affected, Individuals involved in activity, Number of exploited female prisoners, Length of time of the activity, and dates is available, Criminal prosecutions and convictions, Sources of data, Other variables to be discussed and developed by participating research team.

We would request that the research team examine this from a global perspective, and then sub-divide by continent. Using the database we request a report examining prevalence rates globally, and by continent, defining characteristics of incidents and differences among incidents.

Format of Final Product:
20 page papers- Must include 1-2 page executive summary

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
Women in prison, human trafficking and prison systems, sex trafficking, corruption in corrections systems

Maximum Number of Projects: 1

Comments:
We would encourage the participating research team to use the developed database to publish in peer-reviewed journals and or other publications.

For initial guidance see below references:


http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/prison/
Hybrid Legal Systems: The Convergence of Common Law and Civil Law Legal Traditions and Implications for Global Justice Reform

Office of Criminal Justice Assistance and Partnership, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL/CAP)

Overview:
Today most justice systems are best classified as hybrid legal systems. Although many were traditionally strictly civil law or common law systems, as a consequence of development these systems are converging in many areas around the globe. In the United States Louisiana provides a unique example of how a mixture of legal traditions can operate side by side with a state system rooted in the civil law tradition and a federal system based in common law. Louisiana’s success in walking the common law civil law divide can serve as a great example to countries dealing with similar issues.

We request that a research team study hybrid legal systems where common law and civil law traditions successfully work in tandem. We request that the research begins by focusing on Louisiana and then chooses two examples of non-U.S. justice systems that have successfully integrated both civil law and common law components. We would like the team to examine these systems with a focus on how they can provide a model to other nations undergoing justice sector reform.

Specifically the research team should provide a brief overview of the examined common law-civil law hybrid systems and what characteristics permitted the two legal traditions to successful mix together. The research should focus on what implications these models have for other justice systems around the world with both common law and civil law influences that are going through reform.

CAP will assist in identifying countries currently seeking assistance in this area to help focus the research team’s efforts.

Format of Final Product:
20 page paper - Must include 1-2 page executive summary

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
Common-Civil Law hybrid systems, international justice reform, international law, Louisiana state law

Comments:
See references below for initial guidance:
http://digitalcommons.law.lsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=6210&context=lalrev
http://weblaw.usc.edu/assets/docs/contribute/83_3KimforWebsite.pdf

Maximum Number of Projects: 1
Comments:

See references below for initial guidance:
http://digitalcommons.law.lsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=6210&context=lalrev
http://weblaw.usc.edu/assets/docs/contribute/83_3KimforWebsite.pdf
Successful International Law Enforcement and Rule of Law Programs to Counter Violent Extremism
Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, Office of Criminal Justice Assistance and Partnership (INL/CAP)

Overview:
Countering violent extremism (CVE) is a key foreign policy goal for the United States. The U.S. State Department coordinates law enforcement and rule of law CVE efforts in U.S. overseas programming through a number of bureaus and offices, including INL. Within INL, INL/CAP provides subject matter expertise to assist INL program officers in developing criminal justice programs, including by working with U.S. state and local law enforcement partners to conduct capabilities assessments, host study tours, and provide training and technical assistance for INL’s overseas partners. Many of these programs, which have primarily focused on traditional law enforcement elements, are now working toward incorporating elements of CVE. INL/CAP in unaware of any significant bodies of research that have been conducted on the successes and failures of domestic and international CVE law enforcement programs worldwide, such as community-law enforcement engagement.

Focusing on the priority regions of the horn of Africa and the Sahel, INL/CAP requests a research team to develop a database of law enforcement and/or rule of law programs that addressed or currently address CVE and identify the programmatic elements and initial reactions as to success and how that is being measured. CAP will provide assistance with database development and identifying variables of interest. The research group would then identify two representative programs and develop short case studies of the programs. Programs included in the database may not necessarily be in the region of interest but should be tied theoretically to the region based on political, social, cultural or criminal justice system similarities in the country to a country in the region. If no program exists with such similarities, alternative case studies could be used.

Format of Final Product:
Excel database; 2 case studies

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
Radicalism, countering violent extremism, rule of law development, law enforcement reform

Maximum Number of Projects: 1

Comments
See below references for initial guidance:
http://www.theiacp.org/portals/0/pdfs/CVESBrief101613.pdf
Overview:
In many parts of the world, customary law is a significant component of a country’s legal framework. In some countries, more citizens turn to customary legal procedures and traditions to adjudicate civil and criminal conflicts than turn to formal civil or common law systems. In the Sahel, the region that spans the southern range of the Sahara desert from Mauritania on the far west through south Sudan on the far eastern edge, customary law is a significant component of legal frameworks. Customary law can be an oral tradition, passed down through generations, or can be codified, usually a process undertaken by the State. Customary law does not exist in a vacuum and is usually part of a country’s legal framework that mixes customary law, Islamic law, French colonial-era civil laws, as well as civil laws introduced since independence.

Individuals in this region typically turn to the customary legal traditions in lieu of formal legal proceedings for a number of reasons including distrust of State-sanctioned court system, insurmountable court fees and economic costs, and comfort in longstanding dispute resolution traditions. In addition, in most Sahelian countries, aspects of Islamic law have mixed with local customary beliefs and practices; some specific aspects of customary law can trace its foundations to Islamic law.

INL operates rule of law programs in multiple countries in the Sahel region focused on the justice, police, and corrections sector and is seeking a project team to explore best practices for incorporating the customary legal traditions, or the syncretic mixture of customary law and Islamic law, for rule of law reform projects.

We would request that a project team examine two to four countries in the Sahel with INL programs and identify:

1) The basis of the legal systems and the space customary law and/or Islamic law operates within the legal framework;
2) Citizen attitudes towards customary and/or Islamic law;
3) Rule of law reform projects in selected countries;
4) Recommendations for how customary and/or Islamic law could be used to support rule of law reform projects

Research groups should utilize multiple data sources to identify citizen attitudes to law and legal proceedings to build the case studies. These data sources could include the foreignassistance.gov website,
the AfroBarometer survey instrument, and other identified sources. CAP will assist with the identification of countries and provide analytical support as requested.

**Format of Final Product:**
Paper format (maximum 60 pages with 1-2 page executive summary per case study)

**Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:**
Rule of law reform, customary law and legal reform, Sahel legal traditions

**Comments**
See below references for initial guidance:

**Maximum Number of Projects:** 1
Overview:

Social media and new technologies that allow a broad audience to be exposed to information and increase access to resources are a force for change in the world. Examples of successful use of technology to promote the rule of law include the use of SMS to allow users to anonymously report corruption or the use of social media to highlight more access to justice for disadvantaged populations. Since these technologies can now be considered to be past a nascent stage of development their advantages for rule of law reform can be assessed through an examination of how technology can be used to supplement and advance rule of law reform projects and how messaging can be achieved through social media.

The INL/CAP offices requests that research team examine the various technologies available for rule of law reform efforts by focusing on 5 country reform efforts that have used technology to supplement their more broad rule of law programming. These 5 case studies would identify the project, the goals, funding sources, type of technology utilized, and the benefits to the project through the incorporation of the technology. Rule of law programs can be broadly defined to the entire criminal justice spectrum but projects would ideally be in countries where INL operates. Case studies should identify what factors would have to be present to replicate the use of the identified tech in other countries with similar power grid issues and public access demographics.

Example of projects to be identified: programs that support development of electronic case management systems, mobile video courts, and etc.

INL/CAP will assist the project team to identify INL countries of interest and with relevant research assistance.

Format of Final Product:
Paper format- 5 case studies 2-4 pages each depending on the final number of studies

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
Public organization use of technology, rule of law reform development.

Maximum Number of Projects: 1
Police Force Development: Academic Foundation for Best Practices
Office of Criminal Justice Assistance and Partnership, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL/CAP)/ Office Anti-Crime Programs (INL/C)

Overview:
INL is one of the few entities in the United States federal government and one of a select group worldwide that provide support, program development and funding for international police reform. As part of this task INL funds and supports International Law Enforcement Academies (ILEAs) in Bangkok, Budapest, Gaborone, Roswell-New Mexico, and San Salvador that:

Support regional and local criminal justice institution building and law enforcement.
Provide high-quality training and technical assistance in formulating strategies and tactics for foreign law enforcement personnel.
Assist foreign criminal justice officials in the professionalization of their criminal justice systems in line with international standards and ethics.

Various federal, state and local law enforcement agencies provide training courses at ILEAs for regional groups of participants on advanced police skills, prosecutorial and judicial training, and advanced leadership training towards the goal of affecting organizational change within developing criminal justice systems. The ILEA program focuses on training team leaders, mid-level managers and supervisory officers, rather than on large-scale force generation.
This research project would examine and analyze the academic and criminological literature to identify best practices across multiple training providers, venues and curricula to provide an academic overview of best practices in providing training for organizational reform and development within the criminal justice sector. A critical aspect of the analysis will focus on the prioritization of training areas where institutional change can be affected through the targeted training of the smallest number of officers in a given country.
The team could examine the topic from multiple viewpoints and we are open to innovative ways to interpret the question but the key objective to identify best practices and lessons learned in police force development training should be addressed.

Format of Final Product:
20-30 page research paper- Must include 1-2 page executive summary

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
International law enforcement reform, police training in underdeveloped countries, law enforcement training

**Maximum Number of Projects:** 1
Comparative Analysis of Juvenile Correctional Systems
Office of Criminal Justice Assistance and Partnership, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL/CAP)

Overview:

The treatment, including arrest, detention, adjudication, and programming for juvenile offenders (generally defined as between the ages of 13 and 18 years of age), is as diverse as societies with juvenile detention systems.

In many societies, the number of incarcerated youth is increasing and presents special challenges to governments, civil society and public safety as the many offenders are released soon after reaching the age of emancipation.

INL/CAP requests that a comparative study examine different systems (within the United States and internationally) for juvenile detention, incarceration and programming to identify evidence based best practices that would facilitate INL/CAP’s work in the field of juvenile corrections.  This study would include, but not be limited to subjects such as:

- Laws governing juvenile crime and delinquency
- Agencies responsible for these systems
- Crime demographics of these systems (including a comparison of how these demographics match overall crime demographics)
- Population profiles of the offenders
- Staff training programs/regimens (police, courts, corrections, other including content, length and qualifications required)
- Programming provided (type, duration, location, while incarcerated, after release, prior to admission, etc.)
- Recidivism rates
- An annotated appendix of recent research into juvenile crimes and delinquency

INL/CAP will assist the research team with identifying countries of particular interest to INL, research methodology, and is open to a discussion regarding the scope and focus of the final product.

Format of Final Product:
Written Report not to exceed 50 pages including a two – three page executive summary and an appendix.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
Juvenile Justice/Detention/Programs/Alternatives to Incarceration
Comments:
Experts within INL/CAP are available for consultations to identify US systems, countries, and other starting points.

Maximum Number of Projects: 1
Comparative analysis of anti-corruption practices in the Caribbean

Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, Office of Western Hemisphere Programs (INL/WHP)/ Office of Criminal Justice Assistance and Partnership (INL/CAP)

Overview:
INL works over 70 countries worldwide on criminal justice sector reform and capacity building programs, including projects focused on combatting public sector corruption. In order to inform programming in the Caribbean, INL seeks research assistance in identifying why some Caribbean countries, such as Barbados, consistently score better than others in the region on global corruption rankings such as Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI). INL specifically requests a case study-based narrative report that does the following:
1) Identifies and reviews anti-corruption programs and practices in the countries listed in the geographic scope.
2) Identifies the economic, political, and social characteristics that affect the individual anti-corruption ratings of countries listed in the geographic scope.
3) Comparatively analyzes case study research described above and provides policy recommendations.

Geographic Scope: We request that analysis include the following countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, The Bahamas, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Key Sources: We request that Transparency International’s 2014 Corruption Perception Index be considered as well as other relevant corruption rankings.
INL will support the research team to identify relevant resources and will provide assistance on a regular basis.

Format of Final Product:
Written Report not to exceed 50 pages including a one to two-page executive summary containing a synopsis of policy recommendations, one to two page case study per country based on a consistent format, comparative analysis and policy recommendations, and an annotated bibliography.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
Anti-corruption programming, corruption reform, Caribbean regional studies

Comments:
Experts within INL/CAP are available for consultations to identify U.S. systems, countries, and other starting points.

Maximum Number of Projects: 1
**Why We Go: What Attracts Females to Join ISIL**

R/CSCC – Center for Counterterrorism Communications

**Overview:**
Find and report data about what motivates young women (teen to early 20s) to join terror groups, specifically ISIL. What similarities/differences exist in the backgrounds and actions of young women who travel to ISIL-held territory or express an interest in doing so?

Are their motivations similar to or different from males? Are motivations for young women in Muslim-majority countries different from those in Western countries? How do messaging and recruitment tactics play upon the women’s motivations/vulnerabilities? What are the similarities and differences in messaging and recruitment tactics used to attract men and women to the “Islamic State.” Have countries or NGOs tried to address these motivations and/or counter ISIL messaging? If so, how?

What social media sites cater to young women who seek information about ISIL? What other social media sites do teens and young adults in the demographic use and what topics/trends do the sites focus upon or discuss?

What are the estimates of number of young women who have travelled to join ISIL since 2013 and how are those estimates derived (e.g., law enforcement estimates, tracking social media accounts)?

Researchers should use a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods.

**Format of Final Product:**
Approx. five- 10-page report detailing research and answering the questions.
In addition, two one-page reports. The first: Curating the content/messaging directed at women. The second: Recommendations on effective content, programming and counter messages.
Appendix of most relevant studies, research papers, articles.
Availability for in-person or Skype-type conference call/presentation upon completion of the report.

**Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:**
Background in qualitative research methods; familiarity with female teen (psychological) development helpful; familiarity with Arabic helpful to research Arabic-language social media sites.

**Comments:**
Initial Resources:
CSCC Info:
The White House (Executive Order 13584) established the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC) to coordinate, orient and inform Government-wide public communications activities directed at audiences abroad and targeting violent extremists and terrorist organizations. Among its duties, CSCC is to “develop U.S. strategic CT narratives and public communications strategies to confront and discredit extremist messages.” CSCC is ‘housed’ in the U.S. Department of State, reports to the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and works closely with other Department of State bureaus and U.S. Government agencies.

Understanding the drivers of radicalization and prevention mechanisms is critical for CSCC’s efforts to develop communications strategies and narratives. Furthermore, CSCC has found that amplifying the credible voices of people affected by extremism, such as the families of those radicalized, can be a deterrent to those targeted by extremists messaging.

**Maximum Number of Projects:** 2
Project 11

Explain a Complicated Process- Passport Website Instructional Videos
Passport Services, Community Relations (CA/PPT/S/PMO/CR)

Overview:
Travel.State.Gov is the only official resource customers can access to get the most up-to-date information on all things passport. The website tends to be text-heavy due to the amount of information that must be communicated to the customer, and a series of videos would help condense that information. This project seeks to develop a series of visually coherent videos that explain the complicated passport process in a way the public understands. The topics would likely include renewing a passport, applying for the first time, and minor passports, but are up for discussion.

Format of Final Product:
A series of 4-5 short videos explaining how to undertake basic passport tasks, such as renewing a passport, applying for the first time, getting a child’s passport, etc. Ideal production would include a mix of animation, graphics, and text. Any sound would need to meet current 508 Compliance for the disabled or hard of hearing (example: closed captioning).

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
Marketing, Graphic Design, Photography, Film, Advertising, Tourism Studies

Maximum Number of Projects: 1
Project 12

Educate and Engage an Audience- Passport Agency Lobby Video
Passport Services, Community Relations (CA/PPT/S/PMO/CR)

Overview:
Domestic passport agencies and embassies/consulates around the world have television screens which are viewable to anyone waiting in the public lobbies. We need someone to make us a modern, interesting video (or series of videos) that educate the waiting public about the Passport process and prep them with other information they might need for their trip. Current content varies by location and may include waiting times, applicant numbers called to windows, CNN, customized information slides etc.

Format of Final Product:
We need a looped video containing a greeting and Consular Affairs messages that looks cohesive, professional and informative. Ideal production would include a mix of animation, graphics, text and a potential recorded video greeting from a Department official. Any sound would need to meet current 508 Compliance for the disabled or hard of hearing (example: closed captioning).

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
Marketing, Graphic Design, Photography, Film, Advertising, Tourism Studies

Comments:
We are very open to suggestions for how this video might look- and we will provide you all of the content you need.

Maximum Number of Projects: 1
Assessing the Progress and Success of Deradicalization Programs
R/CSCC – Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications

Overview:
Examine government and private sector efforts to “deradicalize” religious extremists. What techniques appear to work best and with what audiences (e.g., are there differences between youth and adults, persons from Arab countries and persons from EU countries, females and males.) Can/do programs draw on experience from conflict-related or gang reintegration programs? Do prisons where returning fighters serve criminal sentences have programs? If not, are they developing programs? If so, what is the focus and methods? Are there any similarities or examples of success using with “cult deprogramming” methods?

Please include a section on how the person became aware of the program – was it voluntary or mandatory participation and did the recommendations or information provided by family or community member play a role in the person’s decision to take part in the program.

Other questions to consider:
How is “success” measured in both short and long-term metrics, was participation voluntary or mandatory, do programs focus more on reducing violence as a means to express an opinion or aim more to change extremist opinions or support of those opinions?
How do different countries deal with the issue of FTFs before, during and after travel?
What legal measures are taken, and what impact do coercive or corrective measures and criminalization have on the preventive work?
How have countries designed targeted de-radicalization programs, how have they involved civil society in this work, and what knowledge is needed in this context regarding FTFs’ motivations for travel, their role and activities during their stay, and their reasons for returning and, where relevant, disengaging?
What role can former FTFs can play in disengagement and other de-radicalization programs?

The project can be divided to look at programs in Muslim-majority countries/non Muslim majority.

Format of Final Product:
• A 10 - 20 page paper summarizing its findings and conclusions. Please include footnotes if referencing research of others.
• A one-page summary of paper.
• A bibliography of relevant articles and other research.
• Attach extensive annexes with key news reports and excerpts of the interviews to highlight “stories” that may be useful in communications activities to counter violent extremism.
• The paper should provide an overview of the situation and recommendations for ways that (a) Formers and returned foreign terrorist fighters can be placed in the right environment so that they don't backslide (b) concrete methods to prevent and respond to FTFs (c) what role family and social structures play in rehabilitation.
Please have mixed-use research methods (quantitative and qualitative).

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
• Proficiency in Arabic, French, and English is desirable to read first-hand accounts, reports, etc. in targeted language. Students should be interested in counterterrorism, conflict resolutions and/or criminal justice although it is not necessary that they have taken courses in terrorism studies.
• A team member with experience in psychology and/or educational systems would be beneficial.

Comments:
CSCC: The White House established (Executive Order 13584) the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC) to coordinate, orient and inform Government-wide public communications activities directed at audiences abroad and targeting violent extremists and terrorist organizations. Among its duties, CSCC is to “develop U.S. strategic CT narratives and public communications strategies to confront and discredit extremist messages.” CSCC is ‘housed’ in the U.S. Department of State, reports to the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and works closely with other Department State bureaus and U.S. Government agencies.

Understanding the drivers of radicalization and prevention mechanisms is critical for CSCC’s efforts to develop communications strategies and narratives. CSCC has found that amplifying the credible voices of people affected by extremism, such as the families of those radicalized, can be a deterrent to those targeted by extremists messaging.

Maximum Number of Projects: 2
Comparative Study of Violent Extremist Groups with Youth Gangs, Religious Cults, Marxist and Extremist Right-Wing Groups That Have Engaged in Violence

The Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC)

Overview:
The overall objective of this project is to draft a comparative research paper showing how the study of youth gangs, religious cults, Marxist and right wing extremists groups that have engaged in violence can provide insights into our understanding of radicalization, recruitment and mobilization to violent extremism. Additionally, research should highlight similarities and differences in effective disengagement and prevention methods. This is an important area to study as radicalization.

Through interviews and research, the students will have to answer the following questions:

- What are important similarities and differences across criminal, deviant, and extremist groups?
- Explore areas such as organizational structure, group process, and the increasingly important role of technology and the Internet in the context of radicalization.
- What is the relationship between violent extremists and those not as extreme? Do these groups serve as a firewall or conveyer belt to violent extremism?
- Why do people adopt radical beliefs, and why do some people choose to engage in violence to further those beliefs while others do not?
- Which models of radicalization to violent extremism explains how the process occurs in Scandinavian and/or Western/Eastern European countries, and what can these models tell us about preventing and countering violent extremism?

Format of Final Product:
- A concept paper summarizing its findings and conclusions. The final report should include an overview of the comparative analysis and recommendations for how the government can integrate findings/conclusions into policy and programming efforts to build community cohesion and counter violent extremism (e.g. – prevention strategies/mechanisms, counternarratives, etc.).
- Prepare a bibliography of relevant articles, including stories that may be useful in communications activities to counter violent extremism.
- Attach extensive annexes with key news reports and excerpts of the interviews that would help policy makers understand the drivers of radicalization so they can provide a more effective policy response.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
- Students should be interested in counterterrorism although it’s not necessary that they have taken courses in terrorism or counterterrorism.
• Cross-cultural understanding, human psychology, and education systems can be useful attributes in students pursuing this collective project, as well as an interest in strategic communications.

Maximum Number of Projects: 2
Radicalization of Second and Third Generation Immigrants

Project 15

The Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC)

Overview:
The overall objective of this project is to study the radicalization of second and third generation immigrants who do not feel a sense of belonging to their host societies, nor their ethnic countries of origin. This problem is most prevalent in Western European countries such as France, Belgium, Germany; however, we are open to exploring the issue in other countries/regions if relevant.

The project would research and analyze:

- The underlying factors that contribute to second and third generation immigrants becoming radicalized because they feel excluded from their host country.
- Explore the role that first generation immigrants play in this process (e.g. - What dialogues and stories do they/do they not tell their children about the reasons/circumstances they decided to flee their country of origin? And how do they help their children define their relationship with the host country and country of origin?
- Examine how secularism, Islamophobia and public attacks on Islamic values (caricatures, insulting Muhammad etc.) may contribute to feelings of alienation.
- Identify and profile youth who achieved a sense of belonging in their host country. Understand what factors and/or mechanisms have allowed them to thrive.

Format of Final Product:
The team will produce a concept paper summarizing its findings and conclusions, prepare a bibliography of relevant articles, and attach extensive annexes with key news reports and excerpts of the interviews to highlight “stories” that may be useful in communications activities to counter violent extremism.

The final report should include recommendations on how communities, NGOs, local and national governments can help develop and support programs that build community cohesion and counter violent extremism.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
- Students should be interested in counterterrorism although it’s not necessary that they have taken courses in terrorism or counterterrorism.
- Cross-cultural understanding, human psychology, and education systems can be useful attributes in students pursuing this collective project, as well as an interest in strategic communications.
Maximum Number of Projects: 2
Project 16

The Role of Women in Countering Violent Extremism
The Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC)

Overview:
The overall objective of this project is to draft a research paper outlining the study and analysis of women’s role in propagating and countering violent extremism. This area is understudied, though a vital element to understand to effectively address violent extremism.

Through interviews and research, the students will have to answer the following questions:

• What role can women play in challenging terrorist propaganda and building community resilience against violence extremism?
• In their roles in the family as mothers and wives, how can women exert considerable influence against extremism?
• What are good practices to integrate women and gender into responses to violent extremism?
• What role do pre-existing community-based organizations and national women’s organizations working for women’s rights, reconciliation, and the rights of children and young people to have quality education and opportunities play in preventing and countering violent extremism?
• What are the different roles that female and male law enforcement personnel can play?
  • Female police officers can build different networks than their male counterparts, and can play a different role. They can contribute to building trust between the police force and local communities as well as bring about de-escalation of violence and collect information that might be unavailable to men.

Format of Final Product:
• A concept paper summarizing its findings and conclusions. The paper should provide an overview of the situation and recommendations for ways to (a) better integrate women and gender into responses to violent extremism (b) identify areas in which Governments can support regional/local community-based and women’s organizations and could amplify voices of tolerance, unity, and non-violence and convey positive messages undercutting the violent extremist narratives in hard-to-reach communities should be included in the final report.
• Prepare a bibliography of relevant articles.
• Attach extensive annexes with key news reports and excerpts of the interviews to highlight “stories” that may be useful in communications activities to counter violent extremism.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
• Students should be interested in counterterrorism and/or gender studies, although it’s not necessary that they have taken courses in terrorism, counterterrorism, or gender studies.
• Cross-cultural understanding, human psychology, and education systems can be useful attributes in students pursuing this collective project, as well as an interest in strategic communications.

Comments:
The Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC) was established pursuant to Executive Order 13584 to coordinate, orient and inform Government-wide public communications activities directed at audiences abroad and targeting violent extremists and terrorist organizations. Among its duties, CSCC is to “develop U.S. strategic CT narratives and public communications strategies to confront and discredit extremist messages.” CSCC is ‘housed’ in the U.S. Department of State and reports to the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs and works closely with other Department State bureaus and U.S. Government agencies.

Understanding the drivers of radicalization and prevention mechanisms is critical for CSCC’s efforts to develop communications strategies and narratives. Furthermore, CSCC has found that amplifying the credible voices of people who are most impacted by extremism, like the families of those radicalized, can be a deterrent to those who are being targeted by extremists messaging.

Maximum Number of Projects: 2
Internet Governance Forecasting Project

Economic and Business Affairs, International Communications and Information Policy, Multilateral Affairs (EB/CIP/MA)

Overview:
The rapid global diffusion of Internet access and the continued development of information and communications technologies (ICTs) are creating novel and complex governance challenges. Increasing reliance on ICTs across the public, private and voluntary sectors is also prompting new actors to identify as stakeholders in this arena. These trends may significantly complicate the operation and legitimacy of legacy mechanisms for Internet governance.

This project seeks to identify the most likely institutional modalities for Internet governance, looking forward to approximately 2020. Particular attention should be paid to mechanisms pertaining to the governance of critical Internet resources, and to the development and maintenance of key standards and protocols. In developing forecasts, groups should clearly explain the basis for their assessments. Groups are also asked to assess the feasibility and relative desirability of the alternate scenarios they identify.

Format of Final Product:
Paper format (20-30 pages) plus 1-2 page executive summary of findings.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
International Relations, global governance, multistakeholder governance, Internet governance.

Comments:
Suggested Reading:
About EB/CIP:
http://www.state.gov/e/eb/cip/
https://blogs.state.gov/contributors/daniel-sepulveda

Academic Literature:
<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayFulltext?type=1&fid=9707327&jid=INT&volumeId=-1&issueId=-1&aid=9707322>
Maximum Number of Projects: 2
Women’s Empowerment – Cultural Examples of African Women as Change-makers

Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Bureau of African Affairs, Department of State (AF/PDPA)

Overview:
This project asks for research and description of African oral storytelling, folk tales, and modern culture, which depicts African women of strength as change-makers in their community. We would like to cite African women who previously positively influenced their community as inspiration and support for today’s Africans working for women’s empowerment, education of girls, and combatting female genital mutilation and violence against women and girls. Highlighting African women - whether fictional or real - who are culturally recognizable at a local level will provide our Missions and speakers a powerful avenue to facilitate discussions of women’s empowerment, and to motivate and encourage current change-makers. A secondary audience for this research will be those in a community who might justify keeping girls out of school, domestic violence, and female genital mutilation as respect for cultural tradition.

We would like to distribute a comprehensive description of African women as change-makers as found in African culture to the U.S. missions in sub-Saharan Africa. We envision distributing this compilation widely to our posts and the many agencies represented at our missions.

Format of Final Product:
We request a summary document describing each woman, placing her in a cultural context, with a telling of her story. Please conclude each entry by suggesting ways in which that woman’s story can illustrate a broader context of women’s empowerment.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
While not necessary, knowledge of the following might be helpful for this project:

- Local African languages (Wolof, Hausa, Swahili, etc.) as well as French and Portuguese
- Women’s issues; Girl’s issues;
- Anthropology – storytelling, oral traditions

Maximum Number of Projects: This research project could be organized in several creative ways:
1) Up to 48 separate reports, one for each sub-Saharan African country.
2) Alternatively, researchers could focus on broad geographic regions, such as East African countries, West African countries, Central African countries, and Southern African countries.
3) Another option would be to divide sub-Saharan Africa into linguistic groups, such as Wolof, Ibo, Swahili, etc.

4) We would consider proposals using other methods of subdividing this project.
Overview:
The objective of this project is to improve the effectiveness of State Department criminal justice sector policy and programs through empowering staff to better integrate and test behavioral insights as they design and implement criminal justice sector programs and policy.

Over the past few years, the development community has increasingly incorporated insights on the drivers of behavior from neuroscience, behavioral economics, and social psychology to design interventions that increase the likelihood that programs and policy lead to the anticipated change. Governments and other entities have set up “nudge units” to systematically incorporate these behavioral insights to improve the outcomes of government programs and policy. With the launch of the World Bank’s 2015 World Development Report on “Mind, Society, and Behavior” and the White House’s Social and Behavioral Sciences Team, there is interest in learning about how criminal justice sector – police, justice, and prison reform - programs and policy can test and incorporate behavioral insights to improve program effectiveness.

Yet for a variety of reasons the fields of governance and criminal justice sector assistance have lagged behind, relying more on untested, uninnovative interventions that pay little attention to human behavior. Evidence and guidance for incorporating human behavior in these fields is scant and poorly packaged than in other fields, like health and education. Governments embarking on criminal justice sector reform to builds citizen trust face an extremely difficult task that is at once intensely political and technical and involves a diverse web of actors at the political, operational, and community level whose behavior has complex and hard-to-predict interactions.

It is even more difficult to develop effective programs and policy to support these changes. Policy makers and program managers must understand the behavior and likely reactions of politicians who develop and support (or oppose) criminal justice sector reform; law enforcement, justice, and corrections officials who implement (or abuse) their authority; and civil society groups and communities that interact with (or spurn) criminal justice sector actors. It is not easy to understand the importance of behavioral insights, its relevance to their work, and how to tactically integrate in into program and policy design. This is where this project comes in.

Format of Final Product:
(1) Produce a max 20 page report summarizing the evidence for behavioral approaches specifically in the criminal justice sector and distilling practical lessons learned. It should include evidence related to policy makers, criminal justice sector officials, and communities.
(2) A max 3 page quick reference document that draws from these lessons and provides practical guidance on how to integrate behavioral insights into criminal justice sector program design, both improving project design and illustrative, creative ideas for experimentation.

(3) A max 3 page quick reference document that draws from these lessons and provides practical guidance how to integrate behavioral insights into policy development and implementation related to the criminal justice sector.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
International relations, international development, behavioral economics, neuroscience, sociology, social psychology, negotiations, monitoring and evaluation, research design

Maximum Number of Projects: 2

Comments:
Background materials
• Full report
• Summary of main messages
• When corruption is the norm focus area
• White House Social and Behavioral Sciences Team and Fact Sheet
Overview:
Recognition of the human rights of LGBTI persons is a foreign policy goal for the United States. One argument heard in Africa against support of human rights for LGBTI persons is that LGBTI communities are a western invention and African cultures should not be asked to accept western modes of thought. Occasionally we hear from African contacts that their traditional culture included LGBTI persons. Examples include statements such as:

• “We have a specific name for lesbians and homosexuals, and the word carries no negative connotations, it just is”;
• “In my town there was an entire street of shops and businesses – those who owned those stores and socialized there were known to be homosexuals, and that was fine,” and
• “There were always aunties or uncles living together, and no one cared.”

This project asks for research into traditional African cultures and their acceptance of what western societies might term “LGBTI communities.” That terminology could indeed be a “western” one. Research should therefore not focus exclusively on those who have identified or could be identified in folklore, fiction, song, or non-fiction as “LGBTI.” Rather, research should broadly identify examples of Africans who have not conformed to cultural constructs of “traditional” lifestyles. They could be individuals who are different in terms of behavior, dress, field of work, or personal aspirations as well as same sex individuals who co-habit or have close emotional relationships, with or without explicit references to sexuality. The Department of State can use an enhanced, nuanced understanding of culturally accepted “non-conforming” figures to more effectively support recognition of human rights for LGBTI persons in sub-Saharan Africa.

Format of Final Product:
Results could be presented in narrative summary citing specific examples from written/oral traditions or interviews.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:
All-Discipline

Comments:
Project Duration: Semester

Maximum Number of Projects:
This research project could be organized in several ways:
1) Up to 48 separate reports, one for each sub-Saharan African country.
2) Alternatively, researchers could focus on broad cultural regions, such as East African countries, West African countries, Central African countries, and Southern African countries.
3) Another option would be to divide sub-Saharan Africa into tribal/cultural groups, such as Wolof, Ibo, Zulu, etc.
4) We would consider proposals using other methods of subdividing this project.
Overview:

Should we send emergency information to American citizens in an African country using SMS text? Perhaps we could reach them faster or more broadly using WhatsApp, or record an old-fashioned radio announcement? If we design a way for Africans in remote areas to alert authorities of Boko Haram activities, should the system use SMS text, or a call hotline, or an internet platform? If we want to encourage Africans to vote how best can we reach them personally? Are other platforms, like South African-based Mxit, the best way to reach young African audiences? Public Affairs Sections at U.S. Missions in sub-Saharan Africa consider questions like these often. Statistics on African use of social media platforms are mainly anecdotal. Our Missions use disparate social media platforms to communicate within countries, and choice of platform would be more strategic if current use statistics were available.

This project asks for research and analysis of the current use of various communication platforms throughout sub-Saharan Africa. This includes radio, internet, phone, newspaper, and social media.

Format of Final Product:

We request a summary document describing the current reach of each major communication platform within each sub-Saharan African country. The summary should include sub-particulars on use by women and those under-35. Any distinction between urban and rural users would be helpful.

Potential Areas of Useful Expertise or Interest:

While not necessary, knowledge of the following might be helpful for this project:

• Statistical data analysis

Maximum Number of Projects:

This research project could be organized in several ways:

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1) Up to 48 separate reports, one for each sub-Saharan African country

2) Alternatively, researchers could focus on broad geographic regions, such as East African countries, West African countries, Central African countries, and Southern African countries
3) Another option would be to divide sub-Saharan Africa into linguistic groups, such as Wolof, Ibo, Swahili, etc.

4) We would consider proposals using other methods of subdividing this project.