

EXPERT EVALUATION OF SENSITIVE STRATEGIES

INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY INSTITUTE

WHO

The International Peace and Security Institute hosting a symposium on "Countering Violent Extremism"

GOAL

Focus the insights of subject experts on strategy solutions to the global problem of violent extremism.

HOW

Ethelo's platform served as a parallel conversation to the live symposium where participants to collaborate on developing an approach and strategy.

OUTCOME

Quality, focused input from experts providing clear insight into the effectiveness of a range of strategic interventions as well as highlighting areas of consensus and disagreement.

In 2016 the International Peace and Security Institute hosted a symposium on 'Countering Violent Extremism' in Washington D.C. Over 250 leading policymakers, digital pioneers, religious leaders and development practitioners used Ethelo as an online tool to collectively evaluate a range of strategies. Experts identified the top strategies as well as approaches regarded as ineffective. The platform revealed levels of disagreement and consensus on different ideas, as well as (unexpected) areas of difference and convergence between diverse participant subgroups.

BACKGROUND

On April 6th and 7th 2016, the International Peace and Security Institute hosted a symposium on "Countering Violent Extremism" in Washington D.C. UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon opened the gathering of 250 leading thinkers, policymakers, digital pioneers, religious leaders, military experts and development practitioners from around the world.

The specific objectives of the symposium, convened to advance the substantive outcomes from the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism and the United Nations General Assembly, were to:

- challenge traditional thinking in order to identify innovative CVE solutions to disrupt the agendas of violent extremist groups.
- take a different look at the problems to countering violent extremism and define gaps in methodologies.
- map the state of the art in CVE and set the new research agenda to further advance the evolving foundation of the CVE field.

top strategies for addressing violent extremism, as well approaches regarded as ineffective.

The results were delivered on the final day. Participants evaluated 17 distinct perspectives and approaches in answering three fundamental questions surrounding violent extremism:

1. What should we be "countering"?
2. What causes violent extremism?
3. What approaches to CVE are most effective?

The need for strategic insight

The organizers of the CVE symposium turned to Ethelo to coordinate a problem solving exercise on the strategic practicalities of countering violent extremism. More than 50 of the symposium participants collaborated online, in parallel with the live event, to answer specific key questions critical to high level decision-making.

Ethelo was used to provide a structured online environment that allowed participants to collectively evaluate a range of ideas using both quantitative techniques and free dialogue. Through Ethelo, participants identified the

OUTCOMES

Ethelo focused the collective intelligence of the participants towards evaluating more than 15,000 highly nuanced alternative approaches to countering violent extremism. Ethelo was able to reveal levels of disagreement and consensus on different ideas, as well as areas of disagreement and consensus between different participant subgroups. For example, strong differences in opinion were exposed around the role of mental illness in extremism, and about the value of roles played by the private sector.



The final recommendation for strategic action is shown above.

Considered against the range of possible outcomes, this recommendation was unexpected for many including the organizers of the event. A more confrontational approach had been expected, given the military background of many participants: instead, Ethelo exposed a broad agreement around the value of non-military interventions.

*Ethelo turned out to be such a
huge asset to the symposium - thanks!
- IPSI President Cameron Chisholm*

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