As presented at the US Department of State



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Countering Violent Extremism

A Note on Scope

- Two key levels:
 - The initial turn to militancy (directly participating or indirectly supporting)
 - Return to militancy after a period of previous violence
- CSO may be more interested in the first level, but most rigorous evidence is on the second level

Key Themes

- Socioeconomic status:
 - Poverty → VE
- Education:
 - Less educated / madrassas → VE
- Religion
 - Islam → VE
- Repression
 - Physical integrity violation → VE
- Trust in government
 - Lack of trust in gov't → VE

Some Reasons to Be Concerned

- Subjects in studies are unique in key ways
 - Those who are VE vs. those who could be

 Factors allegedly producing VE do not allow identification of independent effect

The micro-macro challenge in existing research

Evidence: Experimental

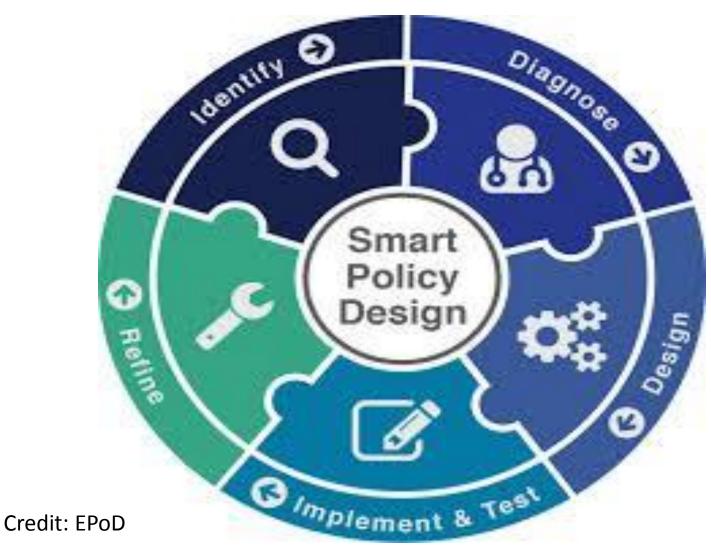
Information: VE costs reduces support for militancy

 Cash programs may reduce participation in crime and violence

Social skills training plus cash grants reduce recidivism

 Community driven development / reconstruction may increase social cohesion & thus reduce VE

Integrating Experiments into the Policy Process



Example of Integrating Experiments into the Policy Process

- 2011: DFID & Government of Punjab initiative
 - Bring vocational skills to poor and marginalized
- Researchers integrated through every stage
- Stages:
 - Standard rollout lessons learned
 - Mobilized through NGOs vs. micro-training centers
 - Varied distance to training center
 - Scaled up vocational education
- Punchline:
 - Process allowed optimization of implementation

For Discussion

How can we generate more researcher-policy implementer collaborations that allow for dynamic experimentation?

Could such collaborations allow for creative testing of conventional explanations vs. interventions such as those currently being tested?