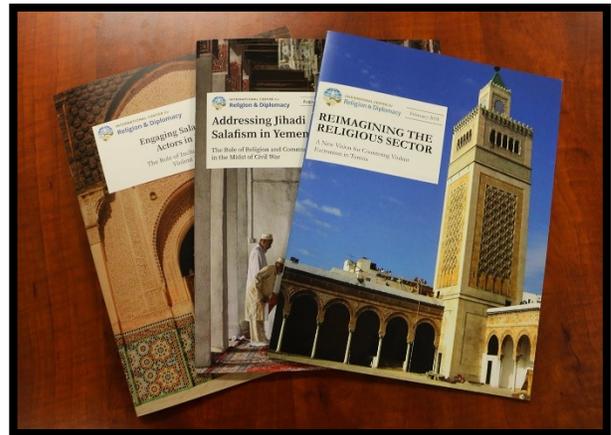# ICRD Monthly Update

December 7, 2018

Dear friends,

As the threats of violent extremism and extremist recruitment continue to reach new countries, government officials and policy makers are ***desperately searching for the best ways to address the pervasive realities of extremist rhetoric in their communities***. From hardline security approaches and increased surveillance of religious communities to training local communities on soft skills and early detection, many different methods are in place to prevent and counter violent extremism (P/CVE). However, few of these have ***comprehensive data on how local populations***, particularly conservative religious communities, ***are receiving these programs***. Oftentimes, implementers know very little about these communities to begin with.

In an effort to combat this lack of understanding and enhance the field of practice, ICRD has spent the last several years conducting research on the perception that conservative religious actors have with respect to their potential role in P/CVE. Phase one of this research took us to three countries of strategic interest – Yemen, Tunisia, and Morocco – where we conducted over 300 targeted interviews with relevant stakeholders and small focus groups. Out of this research, ICRD produced reports that focused on actionable policy recommendations for each country.

The full reports can be found on our website using the links below:

> *[Addressing Jihadi Salafism in Yemen: The Role of Religion and Community in the Midst of Civil War](#)*

> *[Reimagining the Religious Sector: A New Vision for Countering Violent Extremism in Tunisia](#)*

> *[Engaging Salafi Religious Actors in Morocco: The Role of Inclusion in Countering Violent Extremism](#)*

As a supplement to these reports, ICRD also hosted several speaking engagements and roundtable discussions throughout DC to further share our research with academics, researchers, and foreign policy experts in the U.S. With support and collaboration from the American University Society for Peace and Conflict Resolution, New America, and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, ICRD hosted [three events](#) detailing the findings from each country. Staff also published related articles in *The Review of Faith in International Affairs* and *Sada*.

As phase one comes to a close, ICRD is proud to announce the expansion of this study into four new countries. In the coming years, ICRD will study the role and inclusion of conservative religious actors in P/CVE in **Spain, Indonesia, Lebanon, and Kenya**. As ICRD continues to contribute to the field of practice, through programmatic interventions and further research, be on the lookout for upcoming publications and events that demonstrate our findings from these countries.

With your continued support, ICRD is increasingly recognized as a leader among practitioners, experts, and policy makers. Our programs and research continue to pave the way for more inclusive and impactful P/CVE programming, that demonstrates a greater capacity for success and sustainable long-term security. I encourage you to check out the research reports and events produced in the first phase of our study, and I look forward to sharing the findings from phase two with you.

Warm regards,

James Patton

ICRD is currently designing a program to understand and reverse an increasing trend toward religious prejudice in the United States. Through a series of meetings with American religious leaders across the spectrum of faith practice, ICRD will produce a replicable toolkit to be used in seminaries and to help local communities better address issues of religious diversity and collaboration. Please consider supporting this effort by making a one-time or recurring donation of $100/month. Together, we can empower religious leaders in the U.S. to mitigate cycles of prejudice and engage one another peacefully across religious differences.

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