



UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM
Programme Office in Doha



International Hub on
Behavioural Insights
to Counter Terrorism



BI Academy

UNOCT BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS ACADEMY

Training and Technical Assistance in the Behavioural Insights Approach
to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE)



8-12 MAY
2023

Doha, State of Qatar

Overview: The mission of the BI Academy is to build, install and support capacity for using behavioural insights (BI) to prevent and counter violent extremism. The Academy provides knowledge and creates an environment that allows people to grow professionally and personally while making meaningful contributions to society. By equipping individuals with the skills needed to use BI tactically in their work, they can make a real difference in their communities by preventing or countering violent extremism.

The programme starts with a five-day training course that will reinforce skills in theoretical and applied behavioural methods. This course will include sessions covering topics such as understanding behaviour change, analytics, experimentation and evaluation. Following this intensive training, participants are provided with six months of remote support for project execution, professional development and mentorship.

Rationale: Most approaches to PCVE focus on violent ideologies. But violent actions cause much more harm. The emerging scientific discipline of behavioural insights – the under-recognized factors that lead to human decisions and actions -- offers new explanations and potentially new solutions to complement existing approaches to preventing extremism violence. Following the UN Secretary-General's 2021 Guidance Note on Behavioural Insights, the UNOCT's BI Hub presents a unique opportunity for

interested practitioners to become internal experts on behavioural insights theory and applied methods, positioning them to advocate for building sustainable BI capacity within their institutions.

Participants: The programme is open to UN entities, Member States government institutions and civil society organizations at the global and local level. Participants should have sufficient seniority in their workplace to affect programme or policy decisions, access to and understanding of the implementation level, and an openness to challenge assumptions in their work. Additionally, they must be available for all five days of the initial training course and set aside a minimum of one full day per month over the following six months.

Content: Led by world-renowned experts in applied BI, the initial five-day accelerated training ("Academy") will feature two days of in-depth coaching in one of our three main BI themes: Mental Health, Social Psychology and Behavioural Economics. Participants will also have the chance to learn about the other themes during shorter "boot camp" sessions. Finally, the Academy will end with a two-day applied course in behavioural design, during which participants will develop and propose their own BI intervention project as well as plans for implementation and an evaluative test of its efficacy. Through its comprehensive curriculum, students will be given the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding

of identity formation and narrative construction, ingroup-outgroup psychology, social norms in radical groups, situational and contextual influences on decision-making, cognitive scarcity and insights from empirical literature in the context of CT/PVE.

Topics to be covered include:

- Explored the impact of threat, stress and trauma responses on decision-making, and mindfulness interventions to increase resilience for radicalization and international terrorism
- Discussed identity formation and narrative construction, ingroup-outgroup psychology and social norms in radical groups
- Examined situational and contextual influences on decision-making, cognitive scarcity and insights from empirical literature in the context of CT/PVE

- Applied behavioural theories to analyze policy or programmatic challenges; identified metaphysical barriers; developed human-centered design and co-design methods
- Covered ethical considerations for behavioural design; outlined steps for designing/scaling behavioural policies and evaluations.

The BI Academy will provide participants with theoretical knowledge on behavioural science as well as practical skills related to design thinking and behavioural insights. This includes learning about how behaviours can be changed through evidence-based interventions such as nudging, designing experiments, measuring impact and using data for decision making.

Logistics: The Academy will be held in Doha, Qatar between 8-12 May 2023. There is no cost to participants for attendance. Follow-up activities will be scheduled in close coordination with each participant's availability.

International Hub on Behavioural Insights to Counter Terrorism

United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) has established its International Hub on Behavioural Insights to Counter Terrorism in Doha, Qatar, to help counter terrorism and radicalization leading to violent extremism.

The Programme Office was established on 15 December 2019, through an agreement between UNOCT and the State of Qatar. It carries out three core functions: research into the drivers and factors contributing to radicalization leading to violent extremism and terrorism; capacity building for Member States, regional organizations and civil society partners; and communication, outreach and partnerships.

*"This new initiative is an important step towards understanding how we can better use behavioural insights to counter terrorism around the world," said **Under-Secretary General Vladimir Voronkov, head of UNOCT.** "We are grateful for the commitment of the State of Qatar in helping us develop this critical programme which will help strengthen global efforts to prevent terrorism."*

with Member States, regional organizations, civil society partners and other stakeholders to develop programmes that integrate behavioural insights. The research conducted by the office also provide a better understanding of how individuals become involved in terrorist activities, in order to identify potential preventive measures or interventions that can be taken at different stages of radicalization.

To promote communication, outreach and partnerships across different sectors, the International Hub organizes conferences, workshops and awareness campaigns. It also shares knowledge, expertise, experiences and lessons learned on behaviourally informed counter-terrorism initiatives worldwide.

*"We are determined to make this initiative a success, said **USG Voronkov.** - By working together with our partners around the world we can continue our collective efforts towards preventing terrorism through better understanding of its underlying causes." (end of quote)*

The International Hub brings together experts from various fields including public policy, psychology, criminology and sociology. These experts work together



Find out more about the International Hub on Behavioural Insights to Counter Terrorism:

www.un.org/counterterrorism/Behavioural-Insights

