



Women as PCVE Actors in Jubaland: From Victims to Preventers

Policy Brief

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Focus Areas:

Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) | Inclusive Governance | Women, Peace, and Security | Social Cohesion

Executive Summary

Somalia's transition from conflict toward stability increasingly depends on preventive approaches that address the root causes of violent extremism. The **National Transformation Plan (NTP 2025–2029)** marks a strategic shift from emergency response to long-term state-building, emphasizing inclusive governance, economic transformation, social development, and peace and security. Parallely, the **Jubaland Development Plan (JDP)** prioritizes local governance, stabilization, service delivery, and social cohesion in one of Somalia's most strategically sensitive regions.

Within this policy landscape, women remain among the most underutilized actors in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE). While women in Jubaland bear disproportionate impacts of insecurity and radicalization, they also occupy pivotal roles within households, markets, informal justice systems, and community networks—positions that are critical for early warning, mediation, and resilience-building.

This policy brief argues that **empowering women as PCVE actors is not a standalone gender agenda but a direct implementation pathway for both the National Transformation Plan and Jubaland Development Plan**. It outlines practical, scalable recommendations for government institutions, development partners, and civil society to move women from the margins of security discourse to the center of prevention efforts.

Policy Context: National and Jubaland Priorities

National Transformation Plan (2025–2029)

The National Transformation Plan establishes four mutually reinforcing pillars:

1. **Transformational Governance and Security**
2. **Economic Transformation and Job Creation**
3. **Social Development and Human Capital**
4. **Resilience, Peace, and State–Citizen Trust**

Across all pillars, the NTP explicitly emphasizes:

- Inclusive political participation
- Community-based security and stabilization
- Women and youth empowerment
- Prevention-oriented peacebuilding

PCVE is therefore embedded implicitly across the NTP, particularly through governance legitimacy, economic inclusion, and social cohesion.

Jubaland Development Plan (JDP)

The Jubaland Development Plan complements the NTP by focusing on localized implementation, with priorities including:

- Strengthening district and local governance
- Stabilization of recovered and border areas
- Youth employment and livelihoods
- Social cohesion and reconciliation
- Service delivery in marginalized communities

Women's participation is recognized as essential for community stability, yet operational integration into security and prevention programming remains limited.

Policy Gap:

While both frameworks acknowledge inclusion and prevention, women's roles in PCVE are not sufficiently institutionalized or resourced at state and district levels.

Problem Statement

Despite strong national and state-level policy commitments, women in Jubaland face structural and operational barriers that limit their participation in PCVE efforts.

Key Challenges

1. Limited Decision-Making Power

Women are often present in consultations but absent from formal peace and security decision-making spaces.

2. Weak Institutional Integration

Gender considerations are inconsistently mainstreamed into stabilization, security, and prevention programs.

3. Economic Marginalization

Poverty, unemployment, and limited access to finance increase household vulnerability to extremist recruitment.

4. Protection and Safety Risks

Women peacebuilders and activists often operate without safeguarding mechanisms.

5. Underfunding of Women-Led Organizations

Grassroots women's groups with deep community reach struggle to access direct, flexible funding.

These gaps undermine both **NTP goals of inclusive governance** and **JDP objectives on stabilization and social cohesion**.

Why Women Are Central to PCVE in Jubaland

Women contribute to prevention across three interconnected levels that align directly with national and state development priorities.

1. Household-Level Prevention

Women are often the first to notice:

- Early signs of radicalization
- Behavioral changes linked to recruitment
- Exposure to extremist narratives

This aligns with the **NTP's focus on human capital and social resilience**.

2. Community-Level Prevention

Women:

- Mediate local disputes and clan tensions
- Support reintegration of disengaged individuals
- Reduce stigma around defectors and survivors

This directly supports **JDP priorities on reconciliation and local stabilization**.

3. Institutional and Governance-Level Prevention

Women's participation:

- Enhances legitimacy of local governance
- Improves trust between citizens and authorities
- Strengthens accountability mechanisms

This reinforces **NTP Pillar 1 (Transformational Governance and Security)** and **JDP governance reforms**.

Strategic Opportunity for Jubaland

Jubaland is uniquely positioned to pilot gender-responsive PCVE approaches because:

- Local governance structures are expanding
- District stabilization is ongoing
- Donors are shifting toward prevention and resilience

- Women’s civil society networks are active and trusted

By embedding women’s leadership into PCVE now, Jubaland can operationalize both the **NTP’s transformation agenda** and its own **development priorities**.

Policy Recommendations

(Explicitly aligned with NTP and JDP priorities)

1. Institutionalize Women’s Participation in PCVE and Stabilization Structures

Actions

- Mandate women’s representation in district peace and security committees
- Embed gender advisors in stabilization and prevention programs
- Formalize engagement with women-led civil society organizations

Alignment

- **NTP:** Transformational governance and security
- **JDP:** Local governance and stabilization

2. Fund Women-Led PCVE and Social Cohesion Initiatives

Priority Interventions

- Community mediation and dialogue
- Counter-narrative and peace messaging
- Trauma healing and psychosocial support
- Youth mentorship and family-based prevention

Alignment

- **NTP:** Social development and peacebuilding
- **JDP:** Social cohesion and community resilience

3. Link Women’s Economic Empowerment to Prevention Outcomes

Actions

- Market-linked vocational training
- Women-led cooperatives and SMEs
- Access to microfinance and savings groups
- Support for cross-border and local trade

Alignment

- **NTP:** Economic transformation and job creation
- **JDP:** Livelihoods and poverty reduction

Prevention Logic:

Economic stability reduces susceptibility to recruitment and coercion.

4. Protect Women Peacebuilders and Human Rights Defenders**Actions**

- Establish confidential reporting mechanisms
- Provide legal aid and protection services
- Create rapid response and referral pathways

Alignment

- **NTP:** Rule of law and state legitimacy
- **JDP:** Civic space and community trust

5. Integrate Women into Community-Based Early Warning Systems**Actions**

- Train women in risk identification and reporting
- Link community alerts to district authorities
- Support gender-sensitive data collection

Alignment

- **NTP:** Preventive security and resilience
- **JDP:** Community-based stabilization

6. Strengthen Women's Leadership in Local Governance**Actions**

- Leadership training and mentorship
- Support women's participation in district councils
- Promote inclusive electoral and consultative processes

Alignment

- **NTP:** Inclusive politics
- **JDP:** Decentralization and accountable governance

Implications for International Partners

For donors and regional actors, investing in women as PCVE actors offers:

- **Cost-effective prevention** compared to post-conflict response
- **Stronger alignment with national and state plans**
- **Higher sustainability through local ownership**

Support should prioritize:

- Multi-year financing
- Flexible funding for local organizations
- Integrated peace–development–governance programming

Risks and Mitigation

Risk	Mitigation Strategy
Cultural resistance	Engage religious and traditional leaders
Elite capture	Transparent, community-vetted selection
Fragmented donor support	Joint PCVE coordination platforms
Security deterioration	Pair prevention with stabilization

Conclusion

The National Transformation Plan and Jubaland Development Plan both recognize that **security, development, and governance are inseparable**. Women’s meaningful participation in PCVE is one of the most practical ways to operationalize this vision.

Reframing women from victims to preventers strengthens social cohesion, enhances governance legitimacy, and addresses the root causes of violent extremism.

For Jubaland, empowering women is not only a gender commitment—it is a strategic investment in sustainable peace.

About CRPS

The **Center for Research and Policy Solutions (CRPS)** is a Somali policy research institution dedicated to advancing inclusive governance, civic participation, human rights, and sustainable peace. CRPS works at the intersection of research, policy dialogue, and community engagement to support locally grounded solutions to violent extremism and state-building challenges, with a strong focus on Jubaland.