

BUILDING
SMARTER
DIGITAL
AWARENESS
AND
RESPONSE



BUILDING SMARTER DIGITAL AWARENESS AND RESPONSE

Leveraging diagnostics and data analytics for harm detection, deterrence, disruption and response

A changing geodigital landscape

The United Nations is confronting a rapidly changing global risk landscape. Global threats are increasingly interconnected and interdependent. What this means is that shocks and stresses are growing in frequency and intensity both online and off. Digitalization is generating new opportunities while also spreading digital harms. These challenges have far-reaching consequences across the UN from headquarters to country offices affecting the delivery of humanitarian assistance, development, peacebuilding and peacekeeping.

The UN Secretary General is calling for a step-change in how the UN engages with threats and challenges. The 2021 [Our Common Agenda](#) calls on agencies to ramp-up data-driven and evidence-based approaches to conflict prevention, peace operations, relief and development. Greater capacities to predict and forecast shocks and stresses from the climate to the cloud are essential. The Secretary General is urging greater use of [strategic forecasting and behavioral science](#) to drive action.

Data-driven heuristics

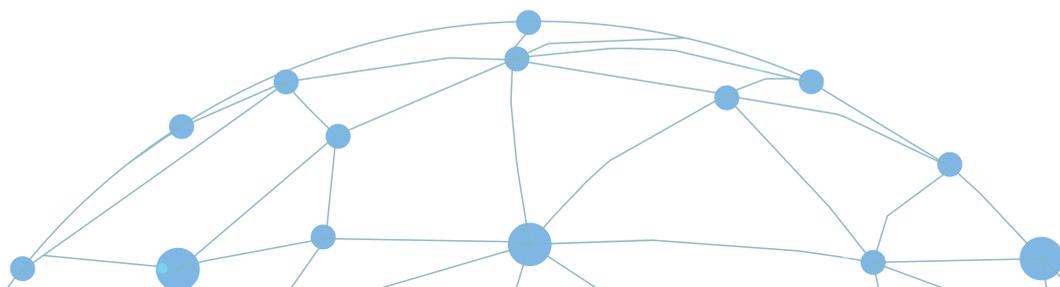
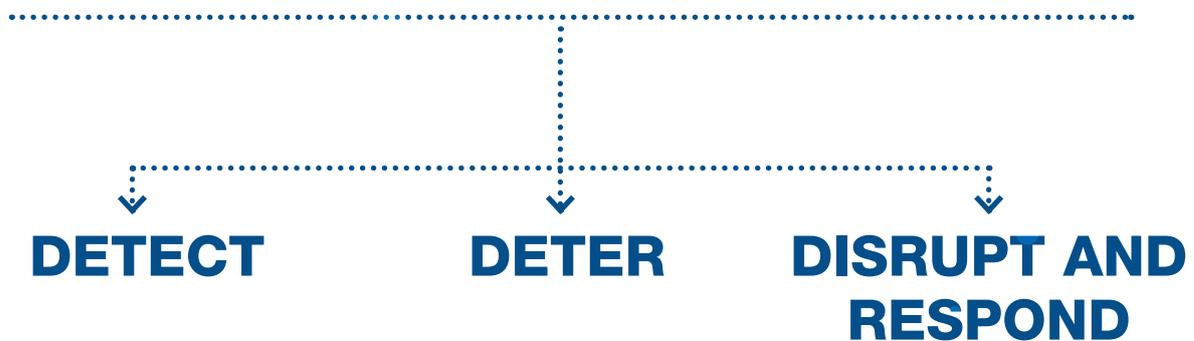
SecDev specializes in diagnosing and designing data-driven tools to mitigate real world and digital risks. We have a successful track record building foresight and awareness capabilities for the United Nations Development Program, United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations, the United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime, United Nations Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate, and the United Nations Office for Counter-Terrorism. SecDev is helping the UN measure digital harms and support operational activities to help make agencies smarter.

SecDev is working with the UN and World Bank to build, design and deploy diagnostics and heuristics to strengthen situational understanding, improve planning and programming, and to support response in

areas of operation. For the past five years SecDev has stood-up ethical digital monitoring systems, analytical dashboards and geospatial platforms to turbo-charge early warning; deliver real-time data and analysis to inform strategic communications; and map on and off-platform metrics to monitor and evaluate the outcomes and impacts of programs and projects.

SecDev applies a public health approach to helping governments, companies and international organizations quantify digital harm. This means it focuses on identifying risks and promoting protective factors in the online ecosystem. The company's geographic reach is global. SecDev participates in the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism and works directly with social media companies in Latin America and the Caribbean, Central Asia and South Asia and Africa. UNDP has recruited SecDev directly, via trust funds, and with support from bilateral donors.

DIGITAL AWARENESS + RESPONSE



DETECT

Monitoring online hate and digital harms in Sri Lanka

SecDev is working with UNDP Sri Lanka to expand its mapping of the online threat environment over time. Since 2020, SecDev has trained and partnered with a team of subject matter experts to track the ways in which misinformation, disinformation, and hate speech are spreading across public-facing and encrypted social media platforms. SecDev is providing analysis to the country office for the purposes of situational awareness as well as to inform early warning capabilities.

Monitoring for digital harms in the Maldives

SecDev has partnered with UNDP Maldives to support the design, development and deployment of advanced analytical capabilities to track online harms. Since 2020, SecDev has worked with UNDP and national government counterparts to diagnose the scope, scale and dynamics of online extremism. SecDev is expanding its activities to support training in open source intelligence and to design a real-time mapping capability that adheres to the highest ethical and human rights standards.

4.5 billion people use social media worldwide

Two thirds of the global population is connected to the Internet

25% of global GDP will be digital by 2025

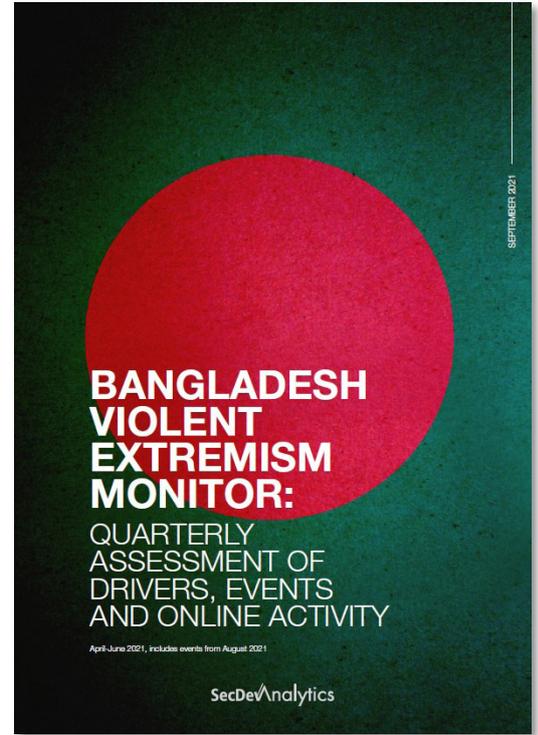
All conflicts and crises now have a digital dimension

DETER

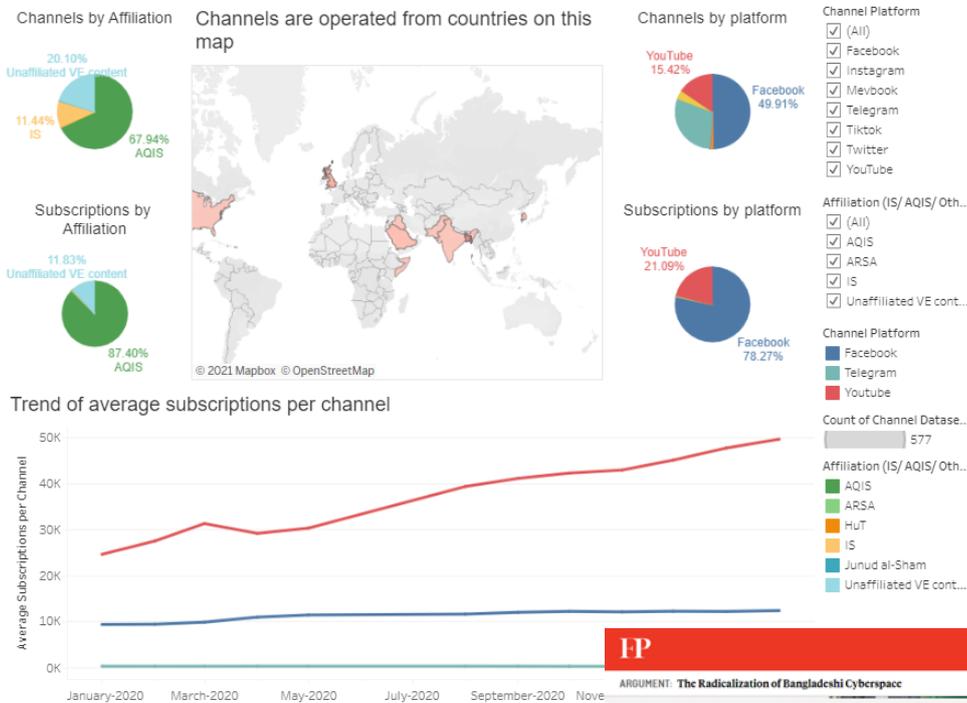
Tracking digital extremism in Bangladesh

SecDev provides a range of assistance to UNDP's Partnerships for Tolerant and Inclusive Bangladesh (PTIB) project. Since 2016, SecDev has monitored a range of social media and messaging platforms to better understand the ecosystem of online extremists and digital harms. Applying a public health and ethical approach, SecDev has developed a real-time threat feed to map content and interaction. Analysis is supplied to UN agencies, bilateral partners and the host government, and is also used to inform UNDP operations.

Mapping digital harms in Bangladesh



Bangladesh Violent Extremism Monitor: February 2021



IP

ARGUMENT: The Radicalization of Bangladeshi Cyberspace

ARGUMENT
An expert's point of view on a current event.

The Radicalization of Bangladeshi Cyberspace

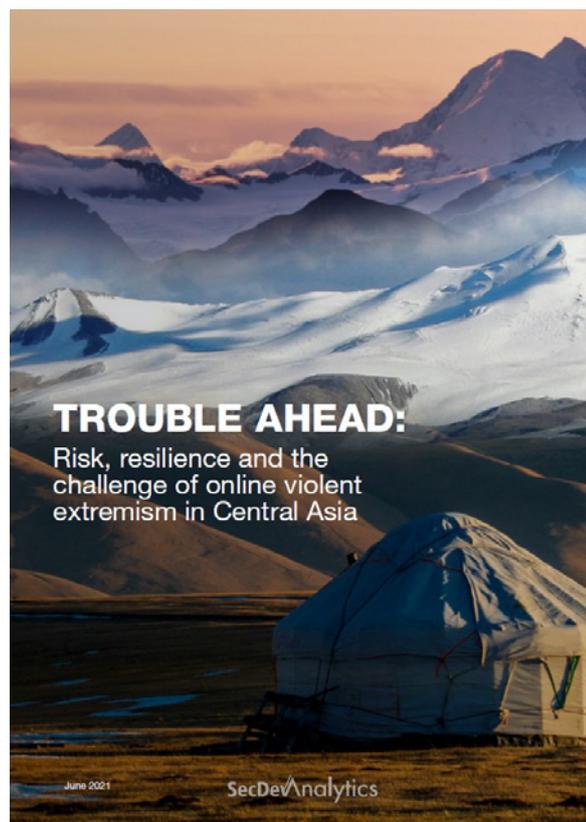
After the pandemic pushed people online, Islamist extremist groups reached an even wider audience. But the authorities are fighting back.

By **Robert Mussooth**, a principal at the SecDev Group and co-founder of the Igarapé Institute.

Countering digital extremism in Central Asia

During the past five years SecDev has worked with a variety of partners, including Facebook and the OSCE, to assess the online risks posed by extremist groups and networks in Central Asia. Since 2015, SecDev has launched digital mapping processes in Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in multiple languages. The process has helped identify proscribed/dangerous actors and content, while also providing real-time insight into the ways groups recruit and radicalize followers. Findings are used to inform policy, regulations, and operations.

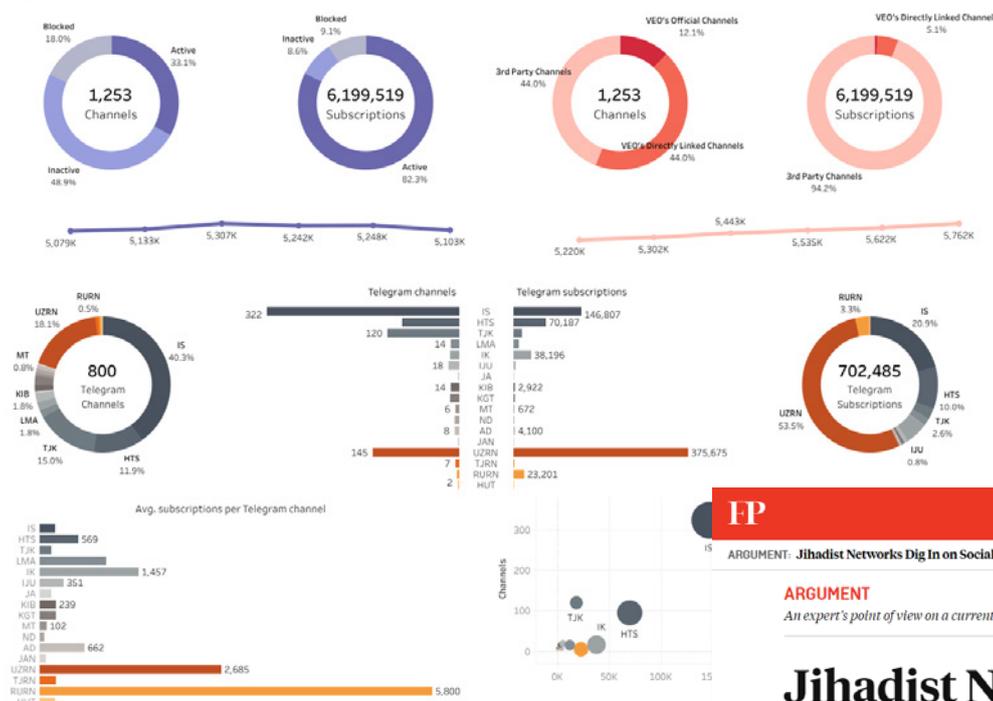
Mapping violent extremist channels and interaction in Central Asia



Ecosystem of VE-channels



Ecosystem of VE-channels by Channel Status and Relation to VEOs



FP

ARGUMENT: Jihadist Networks Dig In on Social Media Across Central Asia

ARGUMENT
An expert's point of view on a current event.

Jihadist Networks Dig In on Social Media Across Central Asia

Almost 500 extremist channels on Telegram, VKontakte, and other networks spread propaganda and vie for recruits. Most of them have ties to the Islamic State.

By [Kumar Bekholotov](#), [Robert Muggah](#), and [Rafal Rohozinski](#)

DISRUPT AND RESPOND

Digital Humanitarian Response Mechanism

The front lines of armed conflicts are increasingly digital, putting first responders and civilians at risk. To this end, SecDev is supporting aid and development agencies to improve their digital awareness and safety in Yemen through the Digital Humanitarian Response Mechanism (DHRM). This initiative was launched as part of the “lifesaving program” issued by Grand Challenges Canada that includes partners such as the US, UK and Netherlands. The DHRM involves creating a playbook to detect, deter and disrupt digital harms while strengthening long-term community resilience. Globally, SecDev’s DHRM team is working with social media platforms to monitor and reduce online digital harms. At the local level, civil society and youth leaders are co-creating sustainable approaches to mitigate the harmful effects of mis/disinformation.

Considered
the **worst**
humanitarian
crisis in the world

Over **4 million**
people forced from
their homes, **79% of**
them women and
children

20 million - two
thirds of the
population - in need
of humanitarian
assistance

24% of Yemenis
are digitally
connected

3.2 million Yemenis
are social media
users - growth is
28% a year

80% of Yemenis
think trusted
information comes
from Facebook

SecDev advantage

SecDev can offer a range of services to the UN as it grapples with complex risks and expands its online engagement strategies. SecDev experts can support agencies to expand their digital early warning and diagnostic capabilities, including through applied research, training and evaluation. SecDev can also provide advisory and related services, including curating large datasets and co-design data analytics to ensure skills are generated in-house. Finally, SecDev can help support the development of strategic outreach to at-risk groups, including digital literacy training and the deployment of privacy and data protection tools.

Design thinking: SecDev excels in blue-sky thinking and ideation. We source the right talent and resources to help clients develop the next great idea. Our global network and technical know-how means we apply cutting-edge approaches to deal with challenging problems online and off.

Advisory and consulting: SecDev undertakes diagnostics across a wide range of problem sets. We excel in data curation, mapping digital vulnerabilities, strengthening cyber security and building forecasting and intelligent security operations systems.

Executive empowerment: SecDev delivers experiential learning targeting senior leadership with globally recognized specialists and thought leaders, including public keynote presentations, structured seminars, operational workshops and mentorship.

Advanced skills training: SecDev delivers training to clients across a range of skill sets, from open-source intelligence to cyber-security and digital safety and literacy.



SecDev

managing risk and building capacity

At SecDev, we help our clients manage risk both online and off through diagnostics, innovative analytics and accelerating tested solutions. SecDev applies a public health approach to mitigate risks, strengthen protective factors and strengthen digital resilience. We apply intelligence-as-a-service and ethical data science-on-demand combined with deep experience working in vulnerable settings. SecDev develops and deploys early warning systems, super forecasting and geospatial risk analytics to anticipate crises and drive more informed decision-making. For more information on SecDev's digital risk monitoring, management and transformation practice, contact us at risk@secdev.com.

secdev.com