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REPERTOIRES OF OFFICIAL DERADICALIZATION OF NON-VIOLENT RADICAL MUSLIM WOMEN IN KAZAKHSTAN

ҚАЗАҚСТАНДАҒЫ ЗОРЛЫҚ-ЗОМБЫЛЫҚСЫЗ РАДИКАЛДЫ МҰСЫЛМАН ӘЙЕЛДЕРІНІҢ РЕСМИ ТАРАЛУЫНЫҢ РЕПЕРТУАРЫ

РЕПЕРТУАРЫ ОФИЦИАЛЬНОЙ ДЕРАДИКАЛИЗАЦИИ НЕНАСИЛЬСТВЕННЫХ РАДИКАЛИЗИРОВАННЫХ МУСУЛЬМАНСКИХ ЖЕНЩИН В КАЗАХСТАНЕ

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Abstract

Today, Kazakhstan is only beginning to grasp the challenge of non-violent radicalization among Muslim women. By placing Islamization within the framework of securitization, the state is reviving and adjusting the discourse on the role of women in Islam and within a secular state (Heathershaw and Montgomery, 2014). As women return from Syria and Iraq, Kazakh authorities have found themselves looking for answers - how and why do women fall into the trap of "destructive religious currents" and what are the solutions for their successful deradicalization? I explore Kazakhstan's deradicalization of women through the work of rehabilitation centers across the country. My work aims to compare the policy's design to its implementation, to reveal the gender bias, and to examine the relationship with the social support in which deradicalization takes place. By analyzing state-activated coercion, cooptation and propaganda, I am motivated to provide an answer to how their design and implementation shape the effectiveness of deradicalization of women.

Through triangulation of qualitative research methods and data sources, I analyze official policies on preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism, employ an experiment of accessing 18 rehabilitation centers across Kazakhstan, and draw on interviews with deradicalization providers as well as on the media content analysis on the work of the rehabilitation centers between 2014 and 2018. My analysis shows that the design of the deradicalization policy in Kazakhstan is gender-neutral with no differentiation in the rehabilitation among men and women and is lacking meaningful implementation mechanisms. These flaws result in multiple repertoires of official deradicalization of non-violent Muslim women performed by rehabilitation centers across the country: most centers are non-existent, while the rest are either hidden or publicly visible.

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Chapter 1. Introduction: Puzzles about Deradicalization of Muslim Women in Kazakhstan

Today, Kazakhstan is only beginning to grasp the challenge of non-violent radicalization among Muslim women. By placing Islamization within the framework of securitization, the state is trying to shape the discourse on the role of women in Islam and within a secular state (Heathershaw and Montgomery 2014). These attempts lead to several paradoxes. First, Kazakhstan has been able to stem the increasing number of females who together with their husbands joined the Islamic State (ISIS). The official data published in the period between 2014 and 2016 estimated that among 500 Kazakhstani citizens who had become affiliated with this terrorist group, 170 were women (Caravanserai 2017). The International Soufan Center report on ISIS returnees (2017) claims that more than 200 women from Kazakhstan resided in ISIS-controlled areas. By November 2017, 106 Kazakhstani citizens have been deported or returned from the conflict zone with 43 of them being women and children.

Second, Kazakhstani authorities recognized the need to develop a variety of preventive and rehabilitative practices aimed at bringing Muslim women to the officially-approved version of Islam: deradicalizing existing non-violent female radicals, and preventing future radicalization in general (Jaskoski et al. 2017). Yet, as I explore in this thesis, Kazakhstan lacks both an official definition of deradicalization and a mechanism of effective rehabilitation of women.

The third paradox involves the uncertainty of Kazakhstani government towards rehabilitation centers. I examine the effectiveness of the functioning rehabilitation centers, which have been mentioned for the first time in the 2013-2017 state counter-extremism program as providers of rehabilitation services. Such centers are new in Kazakhstan. In contrast to prisons, they were not inherited from the Soviet Union, and they are purposefully designed to operate as

alternatives that reject rehabilitation through punitive measures. Surprisingly, the Kazakhstani government funded these centers under the 2013-2017 state program, then decided to abolish their funding by the end of 2016, and finally chose to reconsider their funding once again up until 2022. These centers are supposed to work with non-violent followers of the perceived non-traditional radical branch of Islam known as Salafism (Haykel 2009) with an aim to convert them to a more moderate Hanafi ideology. Although Salafis are predominantly anti-secular - not all of them renounce the authority of the state or oppose secular education or political reforms, thus, ranging between non-radicals and fundamentalists (Lenz-Raymann 2018).

Ignoring these differences, Kazakhstan designs a single approach to weaken Salafism. This approach combines state-activated coercion, cooptation and propaganda, all of which are used for preventing and rehabilitating religious radicals (Kassenova 2018). However, these instruments are gender-neutral – because they adopt a single approach to dealing with processes without acknowledging the different behavioral and psychological factors rooted in gender specifics. Yet the state's instruments and its policies consist of gender bias when it pertains to female rehabilitation due to their implicit concentration on a male-based terrorist portrait (Bukeeva 2017). Specifically, coercion through criminal justice applies male-centered punitiveness, exacerbates stigmatization, and increases the chances for recidivism, the most popular indicator of deradicalization. Cooptation is implemented by a) enlisting local religious leaders, who are always males, and works only if these leaders are authoritative in their communities; and b) by enlisting non-governmental organizations through state grants. Through propaganda the state popularizes the norms of traditional Islam and its place within a secular state (Kassenova 2018). However, propaganda works only if people pay attention to and trust the state-approved sources of information. In short, official deradicalization is likely to succeed in

the long term only if it receives approval of broader society - when social actors "own" the deradicalization policy. Yet we know little on how local actors accept, transform or reject official deradicalization in Kazakhstan.

Thus, the theoretical puzzle of my research is to find out how official deradicalization is designed and implemented if the state does not have an official definition and conceptualization for deradicalization as a process? How do local public and private actors perceive and respond to policies planned and imposed from above? To address these important yet understudied theoretical questions, I explore the effectiveness of Kazakhstan's official program on the deradicalization of women by revealing its biases, design, and implementation on the ground. I ask: How and why does the design of the program and its implementation shape the success and failure of deradicalization? How do experts and local actors judge official deradicalization and accept, transform and reject it?

My central argument is this: official deradicalization of women is effective when its proper design and successful implementation are integrated with their social support. Social support can be understood as the inclusion of the emotional and companionship support offered to women by their closest social network (Uchino 2004). Proper design of deradicalization of women should be female-centered rather than male-centered with no punitive bias. Yet, in order to work, this design needs to be implemented by competent experts – theologists, imams, and psychologists, who have appropriate skills, resources and cooperation from the range of government agencies at the center and local level, and have a strong interest in completing deradicalization in fact, not just on paper. Furthermore, deradicalization succeeds only when its participants are no longer stigmatized and alienated by society and fully rehabilitated and integrated in their neighborhoods and workplaces (Bailey and Edwards 2017). Moreover, I find

that definitions of success of deradicalization (as an outcome) among Kazakhstani officials vary: some use recidivism rates among females, others use change in external attributes such as removing the headscarves and hijabs (Zhursin 2012), others use a change of the woman's religious views, yet others use marriage with the non-Salafi partner and the presence of a full-time job. As a result, local actors have wide latitude in handling deradicalization in Kazakhstan, a finding that is consistent with the research on decentralized governance in Kazakhstan.

To support my claims I use a triangulation of data sources and research methods. I draw on evidence from official government documents, including three state counter-terrorism programs (2013-2017, 2017-2020, and 2018-2022), my own and published interviews with experts and government officials, my own experiment of contacting deradicalization centers, local centers for religious studies and a nationwide "114" telephone hotline in Kazakhstan, and my own analysis of the media coverage of deradicalization cases in Kazakhstan between 2014 and 2018. In my analysis of the Kazakhstani counter-terrorism programs I apply Salomon's (2002) policy analysis framework to reveal if the official rehabilitation policy is a) gender-neutral, b) effective, and c) adequately funded.

My interviews with experts and state officials helped me learn their perspectives on the effectiveness of the deradicalization of women through the work of rehabilitation centers. Because I was not able to contact deradicalized women, I analyzed media stories to learn about the experiences of Salafi women who went through the process of deradicalization as well as who did not. Importantly, media coverage sheds light on the obstacles that these women face, thus, revealing problems with both design and implementation of deradicalization. Additionally, the media reports demonstrate a wide range of deradicalization practices and delivering rehabilitation services to women across the country: from stealing state funds to investing in

women's careers. And finally, my experiment of contacting rehabilitation centers and the nationwide hotline provides additional evidence of faulty implementation and local variation in the provision of rehabilitation services to women.

The rest of my thesis is organized as follows. First, to ground my research I review the small yet growing body of existing research on deradicalization policies of non-violent Muslims abroad and in Kazakhstan. Next, I explain my research design with the list of hypotheses and concepts. Then, I provide a summary of securitization of state attitude towards non-traditional Islam in the post-Soviet Kazakhstan. Then, I critically analyze the design of official deradicalization of Muslim women in Kazakhstan and reveal its male-centered bias and criminal justice bias. Finally, I evaluate whether the goals of official deradicalization have been implemented across the country and find a significant local variation that ranges from pure formalism to corruption to meaningful rehabilitation of women. I conclude with my contribution to theories deradicalization that stresses the importance of bottom-up perspectives on the success and failure of deradicalization.

Chapter 2. What Does Effective Deradicalization of Women Depend on?

Most scholars explain deradicalization of violent extremists in relation to group members and men while ignoring non-violent radicals. Some propose to focus on the properties of the group or individuals while others argue that it is the content of the deradicalization policy that makes it effective or not. Yet others insist that social surroundings determine success of deradicalization. However, little is known about the deradicalization of non-violent women in the framework of the policy design and its implementation.

1. **Effectiveness of deradicalization depends on properties of the group or individual radical.**

Scholars disagree on the drivers of this process: some focus on ideological change (Garfinkel 2007) while others on the rational cost-benefit calculations of the radicalized individuals (Bartlett and Miller 2012). These arguments do not fit well with what my informants told me. According to my interview with Ainur Abdirassylkyzy, the director of the Astana-based research and analytical center for the study of religion at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Civil Society, women in Kazakhstan become radicalized either by themselves, through partners, or through their religious communities and gatherings known as *djamaats*. In all three cases, when women become adherents of Salafism they become isolated from the outside world. To be involved in any activity or social networks outside of their family home - women must be granted the permission of their husband, brother, or father. For this reason, once female Salafi followers become part of a female djamaat - their sole social network, they start developing very strong ties with it.

Jacobsen (2017) and Pooley (2015) identify belonging to a group and being part of a sisterhood - as the strongest pull factor in female radicalization. Thus, the deradicalization of a woman is more likely to be successful when rehabilitation centers rely on working with other members of female djamaats. Primarily, this has to do with collective deradicalization being more demonstrative, motivational and inspiring.

Rabasa (2010), Pressman (2009) and Bjorgo (2013) note that in groups, the decision to de-radicalize starts when an individual is influenced and inspired by the group's leader. Since the levels of radicalization vary, not all of those who are considered radicalized proceed to participate in terrorist activities. For this reason, Table 1 below sums up the interaction between individual and group deradicalization processes, where a strategic crisis means a voluntary ideological deradicalization based on the group's transformation (Rabasa 2010).

For an effective collective deradicalization - group leaders should be targeted first. This serves as a sign and as a trigger for individuals in the groups and leads to the attrition of members, followed by a strategic crisis when the leader and individuals engage in a cost-benefit analysis of staying and exiting the group, this then results in a demonstration effect and organization deradicalization (Rabasa 2010). Therefore, individual and collective deradicalizations are co-dependent processes, which require a multi-faceted rehabilitation, a process, which shows to the group members that benefits of transforming into non-radical group outweigh its costs.

In Kazakhstan, however, according to my interviews and media content analysis, measuring the dynamic of group deradicalization, especially within female djamaats, poses a challenge due to the closeness of these religious communities and the unwillingness of women and men to talk with people who to change their religious views and values (Tuleubekova 2015).

In fact, only one of my interviewees mentioned that his rehabilitation center workers had "entered" female djamaats, thus, indicating that gaining access to them is difficult.

Table 1. Initial Stages of Collective Deradicalization

Trigger	Weighing the costs and benefits of disengagement vs continued violence	Turning point
Repression leads to strategic crisis or situation in which the leaders reexamine the group's tactics	Period of questioning when push and pull factors, exit barriers of radicalism are considered by leaders	Decision by the leaders to forgo violence if they determine that the expected utility of de-radicalization exceeds that of continued militancy

Source: RAND, 2010.

2. Effectiveness of deradicalization depends on the content and implementation of the program.

In contrast to informal dynamics of individual radicalization and their groups, which are difficult to access for researchers, the content and implementation of deradicalization has concrete observable dimensions of ideological and behavioral change. However, many scholars disagree on these dimensions. Some argue that deradicalization should be about changing the mind of radicals while others claim that socioeconomic rehabilitation by the means of financial assistance is more important. There is an agreement that prevention is more successful in curbing non-violent radicalization, "a process by which individuals come to hold radical views in relation to the status quo but do not undertake, aid, or abet terrorist activity" (Bartlett and Miller, 2012). Preventive programs aim to educate citizens about religion, to tackle unemployment and other social and economic problems, such as injustice and corruption.

For example, the International Organization on Migration's regional field assessment in Central Asia on migrant vulnerabilities advises states in Central Asia to focus on long-term prevention as it is more effective and can resolve real grievances in large communities (Kazmierkiewicz 2016). Similarly, Taspinar (2009) in his study "Fighting Radicalism, Not "Terrorism": Root Causes of an International Actor Redefined"" insist that the prevention of violent extremism (PVE) in the region should "*go beyond the narrow context of combating terrorism and address its social and political roots. An approach based exclusively on security instruments may be effective in dealing with concrete radical groups or particular target groups that could be susceptible to extremism. It will hardly work for the religious segments of populations at large. Without civil-political work in the local and religious communities, these populations are left to the influence of radical Islamic movements*" (p 76). This statement places a great importance on reconfiguring state-society relations beyond the scope of securitization that need to be addressed in rehabilitation efforts. The role of social support, which I will discuss below, should be as integral to deradicalization.

In Kazakhstan, PVE and deradicalization services are offered at the local level: NGOs and local government agencies. Religious deradicalization is designed to be delivered through rehabilitation centers, which are supposed to operate as non-governmental organizations - but in fact they are totally dependent on the state's budget, which makes deradicalization a tool of state's cooptation. This dependence is well captured by Sofiya An's (2017) in-depth analysis of Kazakhstan's modern welfare system where she traces its configuration from the Soviet years based on the development of social work. She concludes that today domestic nongovernmental and newly reformed governmental organizations are becoming more involved in delivering

social services to the local populations. However due to the intrinsic differences between the two types of actors and the way they deliver these services, "social work has emerged not as a coherent, homogenous field but as distinct, fragmentary fields" split among NGOs and quasi-governmental NGOs. They lack stable funding, competence and experience, and are plagued by bureaucracy and confusion about their roles. My research comes to a similar conclusion in the work of rehabilitation centers based on the quasi-governmental control and the variation in local rehabilitation practices. Similarly, in a study of regional economic regulation in Kazakhstan, Duvanova (2016) finds that local authorities are able to design and implement their own regulatory policies.

For any policy that relies on decentralized implementation, the issues of control and trust in implementers are crucial. Cook (2010) claims that rehabilitation of radicals should be a combination of carrots and sticks, and to do so the state should not exert too much power over the process: "it is important to strike a balance between control and trust, the latter being more forthcoming in non-governmental [rehabilitation] programs. Government involvement may thus affect initial levels of trust in the scheme from program participants."

Cook (2010) also notes that design of deradicalization programs can be of different types: it can be a shift away from radical religious beliefs towards an ideology which accepts the authority of the state and civil society; it can be based on the participant's integration into everyday life without any explicit denunciation of radical beliefs (coercion to adapt to social norms); and it can be a practice based on upholding one's radical beliefs with the rejection to use violence as a method, and refocusing on education. The same types of deradicalization are applicable to non-violent radicals, to men and women respectively. However, Cook and other scholars such as Stern and Porges (2010) emphasize that "the goal for policymakers realistically

should be that rehabilitation would mean a return to society without engaging in violent action."

In other words, the goal of any rehabilitation of radicals is both social re-integration and rejection

of violence. But how does an effective deradicalization policy look like for non-violent radicals,

especially women, if violence is not something these women can denounce?

Similarly to the arguments offered in the CORE report, some scholars claim that the main

weakness of all de-radicalization programs across the world - in Singapore, Colombia, Yemen,

Saudi Arabia and the UK, is based on their overwhelming concentration on ideology without a

sufficient reliance on other components (Morris et al. 2010). For instance, in Saudi Arabia, the

state hires Muslim scholars to conduct discussions within its rehabilitation program at the "Care

Rehabilitation Center" which have to be based on the following pillars: that real Islam does not

tolerate and fully rejects violence; that the interpretation of Islam of the detainee has been

purposefully manipulated to discredit "the right" Islam; and that only religious scholars approved

by the state have sufficient knowledge and expertise to interpret Islamic (Stracke 2007). In

Indonesia, throughout the process of deradicalization providers must articulate that any form of

violence is not acceptable according to Islam; the killings of any civilian for any cause is

unjustifiable; and that the state is not anti-Islam but anti-violence (Kruglanski et al. 2014).

Additional push factors which are part of deradicalization - are mandatory theology

classes, discussions with psychiatrists, discussions with former terrorists and radicals, and the

fear of being monitored and abused in the long term (Ezzarqui 2010). However, although these

examples only illustrate the dependence of deradicalization practice on counter-religious

arguments in the context of violence, this method is also prevalent in non-violent in the

deradicalization of non-violent radicals, which is confirmed by the respondents in my interviews.

In addition to the CORE and the IOM findings above, the UN Women's report (2017) asserts that factors which contribute to the radicalization of women in Kyrgyzstan are neither ideological nor based on their choice, and thus religious/ideological persuasion should not be the primary focus in the deradicalization efforts. Taking into account that these are four key push factors in the radicalization of women: a) traditional family ties – strong dependency on male – the head of the household, b) low self-agency of women – the inability of wives to disobey husbands, c) rise of unemployment and d) and a limited social circle. All four are society-based and should be adequately addressed in the process of deradicalization (Speckhard et al. 2017).

Experts note that women play an important role in "transmitting values and shaping opinions, which might be powerful deterrents to radicalization" Yet most of the research tends to focus on the consequences of political violence in relation to men excluding any information on the deradicalization of women. According to ICCT, many of the deradicalization policies in Europe and Indonesia view female relatives, wives and girlfriends as support in the de-radicalization programs. Yet in Kazakhstan, even when the discourse touches upon the deradicalization of men in prisons – local imams refuse to work with them due to the low salary, bad conditions, and a limited number of allocated hours to produce any satisfying results (Informburo 2018). In relation to women, there are no female religious preachers (mourchidates) in Kazakhstan in comparison to Morocco. As such female radicals in correctional institutions are only exposed to rehabilitation through punishment, which reveals the criminal justice bias of the state's policy towards radical women in prisons.

As it was mentioned above, the main debates on rehabilitation in relation to radicalized women revolve around the primary focus on ideology, psychology or social integration. Stern and Porges (2010) agree with Horgan and Taylor (2011) that successful deradicalization rests of

the modification in one's ideology and in one's behavior. Deriving from Abdirassylkyzy's perception of women's low self-agency, which I had discussed at the beginning of this Chapter, it can be argued that radicalized women are dependent on the expectations of the society, which strictly prescribe specific types of behavior to men and women, of being masculine and feminine. Since there is a widespread consensus that gender is a social construction, Butler (1988) argues that gender is not a 'locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time - an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts."

In Kazakhstan, many women are unwilling to engage in anything related to masculinity since based on the religious canons, the society's conservatism and patriarchalism - women have separate and strictly divided tasks and goals. They include being mothers, wives, and not participating in the public life. In this case, the focus of female rehabilitation should tackle all of the three aspects simultaneously – ideological, psychological, and of social integration. By convincing radicalized women that the state-approved interpretation of Islam does not limit their agency, this can alter their cognition and lead to a change in behavior and reintegration into society. Bjorgo (2013) argues that career prospects, work guarantees offered by the state could generate a will to create a family and finding a spouse, and a will to have more liberty and decision-making among women during rehabilitation. In any event, for deradicalization to be effective, the voice of radicalized women should be heard in order to know what has led to their radicalization and then tailor the program of female rehabilitation according to their needs, and possibly on a case by case basis. Yet Salafi women are viewed with suspicion and mistrust in Kazakhstan. They are banned from wearing specific types of clothes which constrains their ability to wear hijabs to schools, as in the multiple cases in the Western provinces of Kazakhstan,

or they are not hired due to their external religious attributes, which only fuels their powerlessness and isolation further (Moi Gorod 2017).

3. Effectiveness of deradicalization depends on social support structure.

According to Morris (2010), affiliative elements which are defined as social and personal relationships, social networks, and a feeling of belonging to one's community - are the key pull factors in radicalization of both men and women. Many of the experts agree that these affiliative factors or social structures are as important in the deradicalization of individual radicals (Morris et al. 2010). By many counts – inclusion of social structures with stable provision of financial compensation to the participant of the deradicalization program and his family, as well as a guaranteed employment – make the Saudi deradicalization program one of the most efficient in the world. To be effective, rehabilitation of females has to address the pull factors of their radicalization (see Table 2).

While most of the push and pull factors are present in the radicalization of men and women (see Table 2), the need to feel powerful and significant is found only among women. Abdirassylkyzy argues that in Kazakhstan within the Salafi djamaats women have to be married or watched by a "brother", they are not allowed to work outside but to take care of the house and children, thus these communities are extremely closed in nature. Women are deprived of any opportunity for socialization except for communicating with sisters from the same djamaat. Possibly, in these female-only communities, women feel more significant in their own households than outside of them (Abdirassylkyzy 2017).

Table 2 Difference in Push and Pull Factors among Men and Women

Women: Push factors		Men: Push factors
↑ Searching for identity or difficulties in combining two different identities ↓ Discrimination ↔ Alienation ↑ Perceived global injustice		↓ Searching for identity or difficulties in combining two different identities ↑Discrimination ↔ Alienation ↓ Perceived global injustice
Women: Pull factors		**Men: Pull factors**
↑ Belonging ↓ A sense of purpose ↔ Significance, respect or status in the group ↔ A sense of adventure - Feeling of power and control		↓ Belonging ↑A sense of purpose ↔ Significance, respect or status in the group ↔ A sense of adventure

Note: ↑ = More important; ↓ = Less important; ↔ = Equally important;
- = Present only for one gender
Source: Jacobsen (2017).

Similarly to Abdirassylkyzy, Gulnar Orazbayeva, head of the Center for religious studies in the Akmola region, asserts that the Salafi non-traditional practice of Islam and its interpretation of women's role became the foundation for female identity among this group of religious followers. Women change their attitude towards their broader family, friends, and towards the society in general, they internalize the idea of gender relations based on patriarchal settings. These settings constrain female role in social activities in comparison to men, women and their nature are displayed as insufficient, emotional, and irrational. Women are constrained by the norms of non-traditional Islam: they are deprived of decision-making about their clothes, they cannot divorce, and are not allowed to be leaders of religious cults (Orazbayeva 2015). Yet it is unclear from the state's program whether these affiliative pull factors are considered to a sufficient degree and employed in the deradicalization of non-violent women on the ground.

For instance, only the latest official state program against extremism and terrorism (2018-2022) mentions social support of family members of convicted violent radicals. However, all three state programs do not explicitly prescribe rehabilitation centers to focus on social support of non-radical women. This lack of support, as Alim Shaumetov, the head of the Astana-based "Ak Niet" republican rehabilitation center, told me, can delay and disrupt the long-term rehabilitation of women. According to him, for women in Kazakhstan socio-economic factors matter more in the process of radicalization. Poverty leads to isolation and search for spiritual help as well as the loss of own agency as confirmed by Abdirassylkyzy and Orazbayeva. Effectiveness of deradicalization depends on the ability to satisfy the desire to be part of a sisterhood, to live in a "just" society based on Islam, and to counter their feeling of isolation. In short, social support and social integration should be at the heart of work of rehabilitation centers, a finding confirmed by other scholars who had studied rehabilitation in different parts of the world (Ezzarqui 2010 on Yemen, Singapore and Saudi Arabia; Schmid 2013; Evars et al. 2018).

Cook (2010) usefully lists six most effective elements and practices of rehabilitation centers and programs, which make deradicalization effective:

1) Adoption of the principles of Risk, Need, and Responsivity (RNR)
2) Cognitive behavioral interventions (rewarding appropriate behavior)
3) Interpersonal sensitive approach to participants (treating them as human and not as criminals)
4) High quality of training staff (competence and professionalism of rehabilitation providers)
5) High treatment integrity (rehabilitation is conducted in strict accordance to its design)
6) A conducive setting (integration of community-based services and integration of social support)

The rest of my thesis provides evidence that these six Cook's criteria are for the most part lacking in Kazakhstani rehabilitation centers. The first three principles can be found as part of local variation among centers whereas the latter three principles are systematically not implemented throughout the country. According to my interview with Nurlan Kakimov from the akimat of Almaty, in the adoption of risks, needs, and responsivity – the functioning rehabilitation centers in Kazakhstan mostly focus on "risk groups" among radicalized women. From my interviews, I have not found any confirmation that women are cognitively rewarded for the appropriate behavior. They can be offered employment by the centers. However, I was not told of any explicit examples of encouragement by the staff. Furthermore, it seems based on my interviews that non-violent radicalized women in rehabilitation centers are exposed to a more friendly treatment as part of establishing trust among the staff and women themselves. However, all centers throughout the country lack both the high quality of training staff and the conducive settings, in which community-based services and social support are equally integrated. And as importantly, due to the lack of specifics in the design of the deradicalization policy – its implementation is designed locally. As a result, Kazakhstan's rehabilitation centers are unlikely to produce efficient and long-lasting results of working with Salafi women.

Chapter 3. Deradicalization of Muslim Women in Kazakhstan: Three Hypotheses and Research Design

As I mentioned in Chapter 1, Kazakhstan chose cooptation, coercion, and propaganda to challenge and counter ideological radicalization. The authorities rely on a combination of soft and hard power to implement the PVE. Among the soft power strategies are: raising awareness among citizens; increasing religious literacy; establishing rehabilitation centers; conducting a specific number of lectures in mosques, schools, and among risk groups. The hard power approach exhibits the criminal justice bias, involves coercion or its threat through the use of force, security monitoring of a person and his or her family, harsh legal punishments as well as physical imprisonment.

In contrast, the process of deradicalization of both women and men in Kazakhstan is widely unexplored, and this process remains a mystique for many. As such, I seek to contribute to the literature on de-radicalization of non-violent women in non-democracies, to assess the role of the state and of social support structures in the quality of rehabilitation and deradicalization efforts.

3.1. Case selection: Why Kazakhstan?

Kazakhstan is considered a police state that has a strong capacity to manipulate religious opposition, and has the funds to pay for deradicalization through cooptation, ban, and propaganda. Can the combination of these tactics be an answer to what is distinct about Kazakhstan's absence of violent female political mobilization in contrast to Kyrgyzstan OBON (Satybaldieva 2018) or Chechnya's "black widows" (Patel 2017)?

In Kazakhstan, according to the ministry of religious and civil society affairs, Salafis as followers of non-traditional Islam pose a "destructive threat" to the state's national interests because they do not recognize other Islamic branches, and are associated with the long-term plans to establish a caliphate instead of a secular state (RFERL 2016). However, the everyday life of Salafi communities in Kazakhstan can be a topic for further ethnographic research. Kassenova (2018) stipulates that the most relied tool of Salafi radical groups' is "its readiness to help the underprivileged and provide assistance in times of need, thus creating a sense of solidarity and fostering loyalty with disadvantaged populations. This policy is particularly successful with women, often the most underprivileged in society" (Migacheva and Frederick 2018). While radicalized relatives and partners of these Kazakhstani women are imprisoned for long sentences without any substantial help from the state, the number of these women is growing (Tuleubekova 2015) yet they do not engage in violent revenge against the state. Why so?

According to Tatiana Dronzina (2011), a leading expert on female extremism, the lack of violent mobilization among females in Kazakhstan can be explained by the absence of political and ethnic conflicts; because cultural and religious norms do not fully limit women in their access to social life – in non-traditional Islam women can still socialize in female djamaats. According to Abdirassylkyzy, female non-violent mobilization is explained by the national mentality of women being the wives and mothers; by the absence of vengeance against the state; and Kazakhstan's friendly diplomatic relations with other Muslim states. In short, both experts do not mention the absence of violence as an achievement of official deradicalization policy.

Thus, the theoretical puzzle of my research is to find out how is official deradicalization designed and implemented if the state does not have an official definition for deradicalization

and it does not seem to exhibit any centralized deradicalization efforts? How do local public and private actors perceive and respond to policies planned and imposed from above?

To address these important yet understudied theoretical questions, I explore the effectiveness of Kazakhstan's official deradicalization of women by revealing its biases, design, and implementation on the ground. I ask: How and why does the design of deradicalization and its implementation shape its success and failure deradicalization? How do experts and local actors perceive official deradicalization and accept, transform and reject it?

Specifically, I argue that official female de-radicalization policy through rehabilitation centers is:

H1: ineffective because of the faulty design:

> *H1.1 gender bias – male-centered approaches*
> *H1.2 criminal justice bias – deterrence and punishment prevail over rehabilitation and integration*

H2: ineffective because of faulty implementation due to the:

> *H2.1 Lack of coordination among state and non-state agencies - securitization vs rehabilitation*
> *H2.2 Lack of stable funding for deradicalization providers*
> *H2.3 Lack of competent deradicalization providers, such as theologists, social workers and psychologists*
> *H2.4 Lack of consistent implementation across the country (local improvisation) that ranges from imitation of de-radicalization to actual rehabilitation of women*
> *H2.5 Lack integration of social support of women*
> *H2.6 Social and economic marginalization of women*

3.2. List of concepts:

Radicalized woman – "A woman who undergoes a personal process in which she adopts extreme political, social, and/or religious ideals and aspirations, and where the attainment of particular goals justifies the use of indiscriminate violence. It can be both a mental and emotional

process that prepares and motivates her to pursue violent behavior" (Horgan & Braddock, 2010).

Since there is no proclaimed violent radicalism among women, this definition partially fits

Kazakhstan' case, additionally, even when radical women have anti-secular sentiments, rarely do

they plan to change the regime or have any direct grievances against the political elite. A

radicalized woman in Kazakhstan is mostly associated with being a Salafi follower by the state

(Eurasianet 2018).

Deradicalization – "Social and psychological progress whereby an individual's commitment to,

and involvement in, violent radicalization is reduced to that they are no longer at risk of any

engagement in violent activity" (Horgan & Braddock, 2010). According to state officials in my

interviews, religious deradicalization means a) shifting one's radical views, usually from

Salafism, towards a more accepted moderate religious current, specifically to Hanafism, b) the

rejection of going to Syria for Jihad.

Official deradicalization policy – A government policy aimed at cessation of violence and

radical beliefs, and reintegration into society (ICCT). There is no standalone official nationwide

deradicalization policy in Kazakhstan. Instead, it is defined in several central government

documents: the 2005 Law on Countering Extremism and Terrorism, three State Programs on

Countering Religious Extremism and Terrorism adopted for 2013 – 2017 years, drafted but not

adopted for 2017-2020 years, and the latest one adopted for 2018-2022.

Locations of official deradicalization– For non-violent radical women, it is the rehabilitation

centers which offer psychological, religious, and legal assistance along with employment in

some cases

Providers of official deradicalization – Quasi-governmental rehabilitation centers and their

staff – imams, theologists, psychologists and lawyers who work on developing their own

deradicalization and rehabilitation programs. These rehabilitation centers are monitored by local akimats and institutions at a national level, such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Religious and Civil Affairs, the National Security Committee

Pull of official deradicalization – Relying on the traditional interpretation of Islam to remind about the role of family ties, support of and for the state, rhetoric about their reintegration into society by providing professional training for further employment, education, and the improvement of the life of their children

Push of official deradicalization – Mandatory lectures and meetings, consistent monitoring of everyday life, alternative legal punishments, economic and social marginalization, and discrimination

Indicator of failure of the official deradicalization – recidivism; membership in the community of radicals; non-Hanafi Islam beliefs; rejection of authority of the state and of DUMK; wearing hijab; and refusal to contact rehabilitation centers.

Indicator of success of the official deradicalization – low recidivism; avoidance of members of their former non-traditional religious community; acceptance of Hanafi mazhab; meaningful and stable employment; friendly relations with the rehabilitation center workers; removal of hijab; and sending their daughters to school without hijabs.

Rehabilitation – A return to society without engaging in violent action (Stern and Porges 2009; Cook 2010).

Social support structure of women – Family, friends, neighbors, employers, colleagues, Hanafi religious groups; informal collective practices; strong trust among them

Gender bias – An implicit bias based in the non-differentiation between genders, a general approach to dealing with processes without acknowledging the different behavioral and psychological factors based on gender specifics

Criminal justice bias – Preference for coercion and punishment and threats of using them, such as bans, police monitoring and criminal prosecution

3.3. Challenges of field research:

One of the very first challenges that I have encountered during my research was to find out if the official deradicalization policy exists in Kazakhstan. Most of the media content covers radicalization and the PVE methods but the discourse on the successful rehabilitation of radicalized men or women is not as widespread in the media. This could be attributed to the lack of successful rehabilitation cases or due to the state's unwillingness to share its deradicalization methods. For instance, during my interview the representative from the akimat of Almaty warned me that I am writing about a topic that can be later used against "us" by our "enemies". As such, most of the methodologies and practices employed during the process of deradicalization are fully omitted from the media coverage or from the state rhetoric. Instead, the media and the state mention two observable providers of deradicalization – rehabilitation centers and the state's telephone hot line "114". As such, rehabilitation is widely portrayed as a possible and likely end-result without any substantial information on how it is designed or how it is implemented.

Another challenge was the lack of available data online or during the interviews that I conducted. There is no data available on how many women were radicalized or deradicalized. Such absence of data makes it almost impossible to measure, at least approximately, the rates of radicalization and the success of rehabilitation. Alim Shaumetov, the head of the "Ak Niet"

center mentioned that he is unwilling to share with me any data on female radicalization or deradicalization, because he previously got in trouble for doing so publicly. In distinct media outlets he shared two contradictory statements. In *Kazakhstan's Pravda* (2015) he claimed that in 2015 "Ak Niet successfully" deradicalized 345 people, the majority of whom were women from 17 to 35 years old. Whereas in Kyrgyzstan's *InoZpress*, he mentioned that in 2015 his center was able to deradicalize only 10 females since the practice to work with women is too recent.

Therefore, learning about deradicalization requires extensive field research, since most of the official and unofficial data is inaccurate (Dolnik 2011) and carries a gender bias. The data on the number of terrorist and extremist groups in Kazakhstan, their members and their mission, is mostly confidential. However, there are some official records available on the Prosecutor's General website where the numbers can be purposefully minimized or maximized – to show the effectiveness of the work that is being done, or , increased – to receive more funding. Based on this data it is known that between 2013 and 2017, the percentage of women engaged in extremist activities (such as inciting social, national, tribal, racial or religious enmity and spreading terrorist propaganda or making public calls to conduct an act of terrorism) has risen from 2.2 percent to 5.6 percent. This resulted in the total of 41 women charged with these crimes over five years (Qamqor.gov.kz 2017).

Furthermore, while conducting online research on terrorism, scholars need to access websites which could have been used for radicalization of local populations, which can lead to legal threats (Reynolds 2012). In Kazakhstan such websites are banned and it is challenging for researchers to get access to information without any informal networks and connections with state officials who can share their expertise, since agencies can ignore official requests made by

the academics. In 2017 alone, the Ministry of information and communication banned 9000 websites due to their alleged connection to extremist and terrorist content (Mukanov 2018).

It is equally challenging to have access to the subjects of the research – female radicals in custody or in rehabilitation centers – which often requires official permits. Women who are undergoing deradicalization and rehabilitation tend to be secretive and unwilling to talk to outsiders, including researchers. Rehabilitation providers were unwilling neither to grant me access to interview women who were successfully deradicalized nor to grant me access to the staff. Data on the actual number of rehabilitation centers in the country are not publicly available. As of now, on paper, there are 26 centers for religious consultations under the akimat of every large city working on deradicalization (Nurseitova 2017).

So far, only two scholars have interviewed individuals sentenced to prison terms for extremist and terrorist crimes. Sociologist Serik Beissembayev (2016) interviewed 14 men sentenced for terrorist crimes, aged from 19-29, mostly young Kazakh speaking Kazakhs. And psychologist Yulia Denisenko, who has founded the first deradicalization center in Kazakhstan in 2007 and works with radicalized women, has released very few results of her research due to security agencies insistence on secrecy. As such, there are no interviews with deradicalized women apart from a few very recent documentary films used as propaganda. They include the "Widows of Khalifate" shown on Khabar TV (on January 28th 2018) and the story of Assel Bazarbayeva, who publicly addressed President Nazarbayev at the 25th anniversary of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan (April 26th 2017) about her successful deradicalization by a national rehabilitation center and urged the public to fund more of such crisis centers across the country (TengrinewsTV 2017). In Bazarbayeva's later interviews, she argues that the work in rehabilitation centers for women should be done by psychologists and psychiatrists, and then by

theologists. She emphasized that relying only on religious counter-arguments is not enough to change the way women view the world and themselves, which confirms the arguments presented in the UN Women (2017) report.

In addition, conducting research on deradicalization on the ground poses ethical challenges. A scholar is faced with an internal dilemma of conducting the interviews by the means of an acceptable level of deception or telling the truth about the research and having a higher chance of receiving distorted responses (Bikson et al. 2007). The researcher faces more danger, since there is a necessity to interview people highly critical of the government, often engaged in violence, those who can threaten the researcher if s/he writes about their values in a non-acceptable for them way. As a result, Dolnik (2011) advises to inform the government in the process of the research about meeting people involved in extremism, as well as to have a reliable circle of networks to be safer in such environment and to be prepared to ask sensitive questions while also remaining unbiased. In Kazakhstan, I have been warned that women may decline to speak, they can be punished for stating their negative opinion, or I, as a researcher, can be intimidated by security officials. Having access to state officials or experts who shared their expertise on the topic of deradicalization was possible only by sending them an official letter from Nazarbayev University at least two weeks in advance or to rely on the network of people who could ask them to be interviewed. None of officials have provided access to deradicalized women, which made it impossible for me to learn about women's perception of the practice of deradicalization.

3.4. Triangulation of Methodology and Data Sources:

This thesis is based on a multi-method exploratory field research in one country – Kazakhstan – through triangulation of the multiple data sources and purposive sampling. It focuses on how de-radicalization policy is designed and (non)implemented on the ground, in order to check the effectiveness of de-radicalization of women in Kazakhstan. It draws on new evidence that I collected by:

1) Studying the design of the official de-radicalization programs;

2) Interviewing four government officials in Astana and Almaty, on a national and a local level, about how they view and rate de-radicalization of women;

3) Interviewing experts, sociologists, and other religious experts to know more about general trends in radicalization and de-radicalization of women, and learning about their take on the quality of work performed in rehabilitation centers;

4) Producing a content analysis of the media reports about radicalized women and about de-radicalization policies to understand how the government approaches the discourse on radicalization through the media (see Appendix 1);

5) Conducting an experiment by contacting the nationwide hotline 114 and all 18 rehabilitation centers and oblast-level centers for religious studies in the country, examine their openness, accessibility and availability by phone (see Appendix 2).

1)   Analysis of official state documents related to official deradicalization:

The following documents and laws were analyzed in my research: The Law on Countering Extremism of 2005, the State Program on Countering Religious Extremism and Terrorism for 2013 – 2017, the Draft State Program on Countering Religious Extremism and Terrorism for

2017-2020 and the State Program on Countering Religious Extremism and Terrorism for 2018-2022.

These documents were selected on the basis of inclusion of the actions and concrete steps that the state has adopted to minimize and eliminate the rise of extremism and terrorism. Being part of the state's PVE and CVE, the state programs also mention rehabilitation and deradicalization. The Law on extremism was used to define the key terms that the state has already defined such as *extremism, countering extremism, and preventing extremism* used in the state programs from 2013 to 2020**.** My approach is aimed to evaluate whether the state's key documents include the following terms: rehabilitation, deradicalization, women, female, gender, and if yes – in what context. By typing them in in the digital document, I counted the number of times these keywords were used.

For each document I relied on Salamon's (2002) dimensions for analyzing policies which are focused on the effects and implementation of a policy during a specific period (Lascoumes and Le Galès 2007). These include – effectiveness, cost, feasibility, and acceptability. Effectiveness is aimed to describe how well does the policy work in targeting and covering the problem of radicalization; costs are aimed at measuring the financial expenditures of the policy; feasibility implies measuring the policy's utility; and acceptability measures whether everyone who is involved in the policy making or as an expert accepts the above conditions to be effective and efficient (Bouckaert and Peters 2002). By comparing the three designs to the implementation of the policy on the ground in the rest of the thesis, I conclude that deradicalization of women through the work of rehabilitation centers have a lot of room for improvement in Kazakhstan.

2)   **Interviews with official deradicalization providers:**

As my primary data I interviewed state officials and experts working in the akimats, the ministry of religious and civil society affairs, rehabilitation centers, and scholars, who can judge the effectiveness of the design policy and its implementation. I conducted semi-structured interviews consisting of 30 prepared questions in Russian. Throughout my individual in-depth interviews with a total of 7 respondents I also relied on additional questions when it was needed. Each interview lasted from 30-45 minutes in Russian language, except for one respondent who was more willing to respond in Kazakh. None of the interviewees agreed to be tape recorded, therefore I wrote down most of their responses and key words in my notebook with an agreement that I can always clarify with them when analyzing their responses. Furthermore, each of the respondents gave their consent to be interviewed and agreed for their names to be published in my research. Locations for interviews were chosen by the respondents, they took place in two cities – Astana and Almaty, and no compensation was offered for their participation. The goal of the interviews was to understand the logic behind de-radicalization policies; what happens after women are released, what social protection they receive and how successful their rehabilitation is (see Appendix 2).

I organized and moved the written responses from the oral interviews from my notebook to a word document with descriptive information on each of the respondents: name, age, sex, occupation, professional rank, and previous professional experience. By transcribing the data into the word document I also I relied on open coding, which specified whether the respondent is working on the design of the policy, on the implementation of the policy or is not involved in its execution but who is an expert on the issues of radicalization and deradicalization. Furthermore, in the process of open coding I was able to interpret whether the person approached

rehabilitation from a security, psychological or theological lenses. In addition I analyzed the responses to check for gender and criminal justice bias, and whether the respondents acknowledged the use of state coercion, cooptation, and propaganda in the state's rehabilitation design and implementation.

3)   Content analysis of the media coverage of deradicalization of women:

For my media analysis I selected articles between 2014 and 2018, with 2014 being the year when a rehabilitation center was set to be established by the State program 2013-2017. Although some centers already existed in 2007, I assume they were operating under a different name and a different mission. My samples include 15 articles predominantly from state-owned media agencies such as Zakon.kz, Tengrinews, Moi Gorod, and Forbes.kz in order to reveal how rehabilitation centers are portrayed (looking specifically for information on implementation and then on design), how deradicalization of women as a process or as an outcome is framed by the state media, how it is defined and whether it is measured as a success or as a failure. Moreover, the media content analysis includes articles on the specific use of state coercion, cooptation and propaganda as its tools against radicalization and deradicalization. I include these media stories in the rest of my thesis in the form of vignettes as illustrations of deradicalization on the ground in Kazakhstan. They include information about the rehabilitation centers, post-release marginalization, and local repertoires of deradicalization. More importantly, they give voice to women who have faced deradicalization in various forms.

Out of more than 100 articles that I have collected from August 2017, I had to filter out and select any media content that included a combination of at least two factors: mention of the state's response to radicalization, rehabilitation centers, rehabilitation, gender, crime, and

women's social support. By the end of the selection, 15 articles satisfied the criteria for investigation (see Appendix 2).

The limitation of this method however is that media in non-democracies is easily censored and manipulated, thus the portrayal of rehabilitation as a process can be distorted for better statistics and used as propaganda of the state's work. For more accurate information without the state's bias I analyzed a small number of independent or international media articles on Kazakhstan's response to radicalization and deradicalization such as the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. Oftentimes, deradicalization is not the main topic in Kazakhstan's media, so the articles focus more on radicalization and in some parts on ideological deradicalization.

4)   Experiment through contacting official deradicalization providers:

To check the existence, availability and responsiveness of deradicalization providers and whether it is possible to receive any deradicalization consultations by phone and online, I called the national hotline number "114", I attempted to access its website www.114.kz, and called 18 rehabilitation centers across Kazakhstan. To compile the list of 15 rehabilitation centers, I relied on the "Stop-sekta" website that consists of information on how to detect religious radicalization, the state's hot line, and the possible assistance that can be received from the state. Another three centers I added to the list as they were established after 2012 when the list was published. This list not yet been updated, demonstrating the lack of incentive from rehabilitation providers and the lack of control from the authorities. The online list is the only source of information about such centers that accumulated in one place, which increases the chances of being seen and used by the people who are in need of ideological rehabilitation. I thought that people in need would want to call as many centers in their region as possible.

By telephoning the rehabilitation centers on Monday March 25th and Tuesday March 26th 2018I found out that this list which comprises centers throughout the country responsible for de-radicalization and religious rehabilitation is outdated. This list is not updated every time that an NGO or a center loses its tender and social order. Private cell phone numbers listed on the internet have become the numbers of individuals not related to the rehabilitation work. I have called at least three times throughout the two days the centers that did not respond at all, the remaining centers however informed me about the closure of these centers or that these numbers belong to new owners. Out of 18 centers, I was able to access only 6 centers which provided me with further steps where to go or whom to call to receive further help. This experiment vividly demonstrates that by transferring all the responsibility to local agencies on a non-permanent basis leads to organizations that are not able to sustain themselves, they are not helpful to victims of radicals, which creates more disinformation in the attempts to receive guidance, and perhaps can serve as a sign that most of these out-of-work centers were created as a way to receive or steal state funding.

This chapter has outlined the main tools employed in my research on the work of rehabilitation centers and the deradicalization of women, however, it is important to discuss the environment in which religious radicalization, state's interference, and deradicalization take place. The next chapter places religion in the context of securitization in Kazakhstan.

Chapter 4. Context: Securitization of Religious Policy in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan

"The myth of radicalization is important as it is politically influential"

Religious radicalization in Central Asia including Kazakhstan is viewed and approached from the prism of securitization by the international and domestic experts alike (Heathershaw and Montgomery 2014). However, as the International Crisis Group (2009) and Heathershaw and Montgomery (2014) argue, security agencies in Central Asia are unable to distinguish non-violent religious movements from violent religious groups. According to the ICG (2009), this failure can lead to the confrontation between non-violent Muslim population and the state.

However, securitization has not always been an approach employed by the state in relation to Islamization. When, in 1992, Kazakhstan adopted the first law on state-religion affairs "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations," it was considered as the most liberal piece of legislation in the post-Soviet space. This law allowed religious organizations to function without any state registration and control (Marinin 2015). Post-Soviet Kazakh politicians, according to Kassenova (2018), quickly reinvented the Islamic identity as a tool for architecting Kazakhstan's national and ethnic identities. Officially the authorities support religious education and religious practices, which are channeled through a pro-governmental body known as the Spiritual Board of the Muslims of Kazakhstan (DUMK/Muftiate). After the Soviet demise, the number of mosques in Kazakhstan skyrocketed from 46 in 1991 to 2,320 in 2013 (Seksembayeva 2015).

By 2016, this number increased to 2,516 mosques nationally compared to 2,669 in Kyrgyzstan, 3,930 in Tajikistan, and 2,065 in Uzbekistan (Fergana 2017). While pursuing this religious liberalization, the DUMK and the state drew a visible line between the two categories of Islam: traditional and state-approved known as the Hanafi madhab, and so-called

nontraditional and destructive Salafi movement (previously often referred to as Wahhabism).

However they failed to pay sufficient attention to the feminization of Islam in Kazakhstan.

Driven by a political calculus and influenced by the long-lasting heritage of Soviet secularization

and "folk Islam", Kazakhstani leaders were more interested to frame religious consolidation as

an identity marker and symbolic practice (Omelicheva 2011; Kassenova 2018). Such state

manipulation diminished the authority and trust of the DUMK, and as a response – many of

religious followers diverted to minor, alternative and radical religious ideologies (Kassenova

2018; Smagulov 2016). Some of those who joined non-traditional religious movements gradually

became dissatisfied with the government's interference in religious freedoms (Mamyraiymov

2013).

Increasingly, the government officials and DUMK mullahs have been treating non-

traditional religious movements with suspicion expressed through cooptation, coercion, and

propaganda. Through cooptation, the state aims to incorporate religious organizations and

followers of non-traditional Islam into the government's control: Kassenova argues that the state

is "interfering using carrots rather than sticks – by giving the religious authorities financing and

also de facto monopoly in the religious sphere." Through propaganda the state popularizes the

norms of traditional Islam and its place within a secular state (Kassenova 2018).

Thus, despite a decade of religious liberalization and flourishing pluralism among

Muslims, the government of post-Soviet Kazakhstan had stopped its approval of wholesale

Islamization in the early 2000s (Kassenova 2018, p. 115). This can be interpreted as the state's

attempt to find the balance between officially controlling the religious realm but at the same time

offering some platform for religious expression and activities for traditional religious practices.

To illustrate this strife, I rely on the vignettes below which serve as examples and

evidence derived from the media content analysis of the state's instrumentalization of cooptation, propaganda and coercion in dealing with followers of non-traditional Islam, deradicalization, and specifically deradicalization and rehabilitation of women through rehabilitation centers. In the first vignette below, Gulnaz Razdykova, Director of the Pavlodar Center for Analysis and Development of Inter-Confessional Relations, depicts a form of state's cooptation along with the resistance of local actors:

Vignette 1 The State's Cooptation of Non-Traditional Religious Followers

"To date, our state has adopted many different documents, laws, and Conventions that are aimed to protect the safety of our citizens. But, unfortunately, these efforts do not always resonate with religious followers. We observe how representatives of some unconventional movements express their opinion that the state is fighting against religion. This is a deeply mistaken view, because it is the state that creates all conditions for practicing believers of all faiths. If you look at the dynamics of the growth of mosques, their number has almost doubled, with each year the number of Kurban-ait celebrants and religious celebrations is growing, the number of people who fast during Ramadan is increasing. This shows that practicing believers are surrounded by the attention and support of the state." (Mazhab 2017)

This vignette shows that publicly the state presents religion within the framework of safety and freedom. It claims that all the conditions are provided equally by the state for people of conventional and unconventional religious currents to practice their beliefs. The measurement of the state's support and attention for religious practices is declared by the increasing number of Ramadan fasters and celebrants of Kurban-Ait. However, these dynamics are mentioned as a way of coopting religious followers, mainly non-traditional, into supporting the state's actions without referring them to as a fight against religion. Otherwise, based on the unofficial definition of a religiously radicalized person from my interviews any person can be characterized as being part of the "destructive religious movement" – if he or she rejects the authority of DUMK and of that of the state, its national, cultural, and traditional values. So, even when there is no crime

committed by the followers of non-traditional religious movements, the Kazakhstani government sees their religious views as a potential threat for political mobilization. This is why it simultaneously securitizes religion and relies on cooptation to paint a picture of religious freedom and equality.

In fact, religious securitization intensified as a result of the terrorist attacks of 2011, 2012, and 2016 in Aktobe and Almaty. By facing a growing Salafi population and more frequent extremist activities - Salafism became a synonym for religious radicalism and extremism in Kazakhstan. According to the National Security Committee, in 2013, there were 24 Salafi djamaats with 495 followers (Tengrinews 2016). In 2016, this number grew up to 15,000 followers based on the data of the Committee for Religious Affairs (Tolegenov 2017). Whereas in August of 2017, Yermekbayev - the minister of religious and civil society affairs stated that the number of radical followers from both traditional and non-traditional currents was less than the unofficial number of 19,000 people circulated by the media (Zakon.kz 2018). He noted that as a result of the current state program, today, there were fewer radicalized individuals than two years ago. Yet he did not provide any figures. Overall, since 2011, various state officials have proposed to ban Salafism altogether, yet Yermekbayev has reassured that "the absence of an official ban on certain destructive trends, including Salafism, does not mean that the state takes a neutral position and takes no measures at all" (Total.kz 2017).

Indeed, the central government sees Salafism as not acceptable for Kazakhstan. Police compiles lists of Salafi followers, obliges them to attend police offices for checkups every 10 days, and to leave their finger prints in the police database (Issa 2017). Furthermore, by addressing this religious community publicly as "Salafi" state officials and security services demonstrate that they do not differentiate between its different currents, each of which can be

radical to a different degree. To their detriment, government agencies also contribute to a heightened confrontation between Kazakhstan's traditional and non-traditional religious movements.

In order to address these two challenges of ideological radicalization and a growing number of Salafi followers within the framework of Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PVE and CVE), Kazakhstan has adopted the State Program for Combating Terrorism and Other Manifestations of Extremism and Separatism for years 2003-2005, which was prolonged for 2004-2007 but the results of which have not been publicly evaluated; a law on countering extremism in 2005; two counter-extremism programs for 2013-2017 and 2018-2022. In essence, these programs mainly focus on agitation against extremism, on the propaganda of traditional religious values, and on the state's control of measuring the outcomes of every program.

Moreover, recently, the Ministry of religious affairs and civil society, established in 2016, became visibly more willing to rely on bans (coercion) in addition to cooptation and propaganda. The then minister Nurlan Yermekbayev, who has since been moved to head Kazakhstan's Security Council (2018), proposed to impose a ban on the use of burqa, niqab, balaclava and any other clothes which cover a citizen's face; to regulate the length of one's beard and the length of the pants (Smaiyl 2018). In addition to the new amendments to the Law of religion, which have just been approved by the *Majilis* (lower legislative chamber of Kazakhstan's parliament), the ministry proposed to make it illegal for minors below the age of 16 to pray in mosques on their own or if one of the parents does not approve of this practice. However, these are not single cases. The Vignette 2 shows that the state is also willing to expand its reliance on bans and the use coercion against individual choices in relation to religious education.

Vignette 2 The State's Reliance on Bans and Coercion

> At the beginning of 2018 the Ministry of religious and civil society affairs has been considering banning interested students from enrolling in religious studies at higher institutions abroad, due to their absorption of values and ideologies that are not representative and not applicable to Kazakhstan's values (referring to radical religious ideology). (Smaiyl 2018)

But could these preventive bans limit the growing popularity of unfavorable religious groups; serve as a preventive tool for further radicalization; and become an instrument for an effective deradicalization?

These proposals show that the government chose simple banning and propaganda to deal with a growing number of Salafi followers both in terms of designing deradicalization and its implementation. Official policy design lacks the indicators for the effectiveness deradicalization and rehabilitation. On the ground, implementation of this policy suffers from inconsistent budget allocations from the government due to the fact that it is mainly the NGOs that work in the process of rehabilitation of individuals, non-inclusion of social structures in the process of rehabilitation, and the lack official and social assistance in the post-release period.

Omelicheva (2011), Beissembayev (2016), Karin (2011) and Kassenova (2018) have written extensively on religious radicalization in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. However, apart from the reports written by the international organizations such as the Penal Reform International, UN Women and the International Organization for Migration, no scholar has yet investigated the process and different approaches to deradicalization in Kazakhstan. Yet based on the media portrayals, court records (see Chapter 6) and official public statements, it can be argued that radicalized women in Kazakhstan mostly use "non-violent pressure and coercion" in the process of radicalizing and recruiting other women and children. Mostly female

radicalization is exhibited by circulating extremist propaganda online or among her circles, recruiting new members, or accompanying their partners to Syria. But with the lack of analysis and incentive to research women's ideological rehabilitation, it is difficult to investigate female deradicalization, let alone place it in some theoretical framework. However, by analyzing the main PVE and CVE state documents it is possible to reveal which instruments the state seeks to employ in the process of deradicalization, both female and male, and how it seeks to measure its effectiveness. The chapter below lays out the main tasks, methods, and finances of Kazakhstan's state programs against extremism and terrorism.

Chapter 5. Faulty Design of Deradicalization of Muslim Women in Kazakhstan

As I reviewed in Chapter 2, scholars agree that the design of deradicalization matters for its implementation on the ground (Evars et al. 2018). For instance, the Kazakhstani State Countering Religious Extremism and Terrorism Programs for 2013-2017 and 2017-2020, identified corruption, bureaucratic red tape, and mistrust in the government as pretexts used for joining extremist groups (Committee of National Security 2013; 2018). Yet changing these three variables requires fundamental transformation of state-society relations.

Indeed, Satpaev (2007) and Junisbai and Junisbai (2005), classify Kazakhstan as an oil-rich autocracy with "the combination of limited pluralism and possibilities for political participation with the existence of a more or less free economic space and successful market reforms" (Satpaev 2007, p.283). Yet Sally Cummings (2004) has found "a lack of trust in leadership and a high degree of mutual suspicion and fragmentation among Kazakhstani officials. "Among the population, the trust in the state apparatus is also minimal. The Demoscope public opinion poll conducted in 2013 and supported by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, has found that among 2125 respondents from the biggest cities in Kazakhstan, only 11 percent show trust in Kazakhstan's governance system. The state body with the highest trust is the President and his administration (42 percent), and the bodies with the lowest levels of trust are courts and the maslikhats (local government councils) with 1.8 and 1.4 percent. The levels of trust towards city-level akimats, which are equivalent to city councils and are supposed to supervise and administer deradicalization on the ground, are about 5 percent throughout Kazakhstan. However, based on my analysis of the two state programs it can be concluded that the programs do not provide any concrete steps on how to strengthen the trust of people in the

state and to increase the trust levels among state officials leaving this issue unaddressed and up to its own fate. Yet, it should be noted that a low trust among state officials as well as the trust of the population in the state is not a sufficient condition for the failure of the deradicalization. A clear and well-designed policy with concrete steps that leaves no room for ambiguity and different interpretations is more important, as I will show in my study.

In this respect, the state's two PVE and CVE documents focus on the efforts of deradicalization by altering the ideology of groups at risk through propaganda and cooptation. In turn, bans are aimed at behavioral changes such as decreasing the number of places where praying is allowed. The emphasis on behavioral change is only presented in numbers: reduction in numbers of radicalized persons and those engaged in violent activities, and of confiscated materials and banned websites, which spread radical ideology and religious hatred, and an increase of lectures and counselling sessions with radicals, imams, and general religious public, as well as the number of converts from "destructive religious movements" to Hanafi Islam.

However, the Astana-based sociologist Serik Beissembayev posits that the lack of key definitions and conceptualization of terms deradicalization and rehabilitation produces divergent results. Furthermore, this also leads to disproportionate responses by the state in the attempts to target radicalization and deradicalization. He argues that current official practice of deradicalization tends to be ineffective because state authorities a) classify all Salafis as extremists; b) do not have measures for different levels of radicalization/deradicalization; c) apply a one-size-fits-all approach to different risk groups. In general, for the authorities, deradicalization is successful when an individual completely rejects Salafism and adopts a moderate religious ideology. But beyond this the outcome and completion of deradicalization is open to the interpretation of local actors, which varies from place to place. Furthermore,

Beissembayev sees governmental responses to radicalization as being overcentralized - a single approach is used even in the programs of de-radicalization instead of a case-by-case basis. For instance, the proposition to take away the right to citizenship from people who were convicted of participating in terrorist activities abroad demonstrates that the state prefers to solve a big problem with a simple ban (Sputnik 2017).

Another problem in the design of deradicalization is its bureaucratic and security foci. To illustrate, in the two main anti-extremism documents that the Kazakhstani government produced and adopted in the last decade, the terms "gender," "male," "men," "women" or "female" were not mentioned even once. In the 2013-2017 State program on Countering Religious Extremism and Terrorism the emphasis is placed on the creation of a rehabilitation center and the "114" telephone hotline, which, as I will explain below, ceased to exist. The term "Rehabilitation" is within the document is mentioned 3 times. The program calls for establishing a center for the rehabilitation of persons affected by religious extremist ideology and terrorism, or those, who are under the influence of a radical ideology; and reimbursing the victims of terrorism for the damaged property as well as to provide them with social rehabilitation measures, in accordance with the legislation. The term "deradicalization" and social support, however, are not mentioned at all.

In the proposed 2017-2020 State Program, which has not been adopted "rehabilitation" and "a rehabilitation center" as well as social support are not even mentioned. The term "deradicalization" is mentioned for the first time in the context of attaining a 100% coverage of convicted persons held in criminal institutions with counterpropaganda information, aimed at forming immunity to a radical ideology, thus, ignoring the risk groups outside the prisons.

The latest 2018-2022 State program is the most encompassing of the three documents. It recommends using the UAE's "Hedayah" rehabilitation center as a model for rehabilitative practices in Kazakhstan (Muftiyat 2017). Yet none of my informants mentioned this model center despite the fact that Kazakhstan's Ambassador to the UAE proposed to open a regional Hedayah center (KazISS 2017).

The same 2018-2022 State program mentions "deradicalization" 3 times, which is more frequent than in other documents, and "rehabilitation" is mentioned twice without revealing anything concrete about the substance of both practices and their quality controls:

a) Attaining 100% coverage of convicted persons held in criminal institutions with counterpropaganda information, aimed at forming immunity to radical ideology and to de-radicalization;

b) Forming and developing a single electronic database of counter-propaganda and methodological materials used for explanatory work aimed at shaping the immunity to radical ideology and in the process of deradicalization;

c) Offering explanatory information through the Internet and social networks aimed at developing immunity to radical ideology, zero tolerance for radical manifestations in the sphere of religious relations and in the process of deradicalization;

d) Ensuring the functioning of the unified republican hotline – "114" in providing consultative assistance to the population in the sphere of religious relations, and the center for social rehabilitation and adaptation of persons affected by radical ideology,

e) Ensuring the creation of representative offices in the regions to work with convicted persons and their close associates; and improvement of the activities of units for the organization of theological rehabilitation work in the institutions of the penal-executive system.

It is clear from these mentions that rehabilitation of non-violent radicals or women, which is the second stage of successful deradicalization, is not on the agenda. Nothing in the State Program's items listed above promotes their full reintegration into society and reduces their marginalization and stigmatization.

Furthermore, the latter program aims to take a more centralized approach to using counter-propaganda. By establishing a single database of methodologies the state can solve the problem of local variation in the process of deradicalization. A set of arguments and methodologies employed by the rehabilitation centers will be able to rely on a common template instead of allowing local actors to come up with their own content of deradicalization. In both of the programs, the state's hot line "114" is present – making it a tool that is thought to be effective. However, as of 2018, as I will explain below, the 114 hot line and its website are no longer functioning. Yet, the most important novelty of the latest program is that it aims to expand the functions of the rehabilitation center in its work with convicted radicals and their close relatives. Such representative offices are designed to operate in every region. Still, the 2018-2022 state program has not still acknowledged the need to work with the female relatives of non-convicted radicals who are undergoing deradicalization in the rehabilitation centers. This illustrates that social support of non-violent radicals is not considered by the state to be necessary in preventing radicalization or in the process or deradicalization in comparison to convicted radicals. This in turn can be problematic because based Yulia Denisenko's experience as the head of the association of centers for religious studies "out of 80 cases when citizens asked us for help in rehabilitation 90 percent of these calls came from the relatives of the citizens who became victims of radical propaganda" (Kazinform 2015).

I summarized the main goals, tasks, methods and indicators of three official deradicalization programs are in the Table 3 below. They illustrate the state's predominant reliance on supply of propaganda and preventive tools against radicalization, with no substantial focus on deradicalization and rehabilitation.

Table 3 PVE/CVE Tasks, Methods and Indicators in the Kazakhstan's State Counter-Extremism Programs, 2013-2022

Years	Description, definition and main tasks:
The Law on Countering Extremism **2005**	• Extremism – organization and (or) commission by: individual and (or) legal entity, pursuing the following extremist purposes: forcible change of the constitutional system, violation of the sovereignty of the Republic of Kazakhstan, integrity, inviolability and inalienability of its territory, disruption of national security and defense capacity of the state, forcible seizure of power or forcible retention of power, creation, management and participation in the illegal paramilitary forces, organization of armed rebellion and participation in it, incitement of social, estate strife (political extremism); incitement of racial, ethnic and generic strife, as well as related with violence or incitement to violence (national extremism); incitement of religious discord of strife, as well as related with violence or incitement to violence, as well as use of any religious practice, causing a threat to security, life, health, morality or rights and freedoms of citizens (religious extremism); • Countering extremism – an activity of the state bodies, directed to protection of rights and freedoms of person and citizen, foundations of the constitutional system, ensuring integrity and national security of the Republic of Kazakhstan from the extremism, prevention, revelation, suppression of extremism and relief of its consequences, as well as revelation and elimination of reasons and conditions, contributing to the implementation of extremism; • Prevention of extremism – a system of legal, organization, educational, promotional and other measures, directed to the prevention of extremism; Countering to extremism shall be carried out on the following basic directions: • Adoption of preventive measures, directed to prevention of extremism, as well as revelation and subsequent elimination of reasons and conditions, contributing to their implementation;

	• Revelation and suppression of extremism; The bodies of national security of the Republic of Kazakhstan shall carry out coordination of activity of the state bodies on countering to extremism in the Republic of Kazakhstan
State Program on Countering Religious Extremism and Terrorism **2013-2017**	• Key task: Strengthening of measures countering religious extremism and terrorism, specifically through the formation of a tolerant religious consciousness and immunity to a radical ideology in society • Target indicator: By 2017, the country's population, including 100% of young people and those who are prone to, and subject to radical ideology on a religious basis, will be covered by comprehensive preventive work aimed at strengthening anti-extremist and terrorist ideology Tasks and Methods: • By 2017, 100% of those who are prone to radical religious ideology will be covered by targeted preventive work of special information and advocacy groups and state bodies; • 100% coverage of secondary schools, as well as technical and vocational higher education, will be offered a course on the "foundation of religious studies" for a conscious attitude against any information of a radically religious nature; • Conditions for proper cultural, spiritual, moral, patriotic, physical development and upbringing of children and youth will be created in every settlement to the level of the rural district (100%); • Annually, the volume of printed media materials exposed to monitoring for the identification of publications propagating the ideas of religious extremism and terrorism will be at least 20,718 pages; • From 2014 facilitate the effective functioning of a special rehabilitation center for victims of destructive religious ideology, religious extremism and terrorism
Draft State Program on Countering Religious Extremism	• Key task: Ensuring the security of the individual, society and the state against violent manifestations of religious extremism and threats of terrorism. Improvement of measures for the prevention of religious extremism and terrorism aimed at the formation of societal immunity to a radical ideology and zero tolerance for actions related to radical manifestations, especially in the religious sphere • Target indicator: By the end of 2020 to decrease by 20% the number of persons sharing extremist ideas aimed at inciting religious hatred

and Terrorism **2017-2020**	Tasks and Methods: • Decrease the number of persons sharing extremist ideas aimed at inciting religious hatred or discord by 20% • Conduct 60 000 of explanatory and counterpropaganda activities, aimed at forming a of the population of immunity to radical ideology and zero tolerance for actions related to radical manifestations, especially in religious sphere; • Attain a 50% coverage of unregistered religious groups and communities with explanatory and counterpropaganda work, aimed at forming immunity to radical ideology; • Attain a 100% coverage of convicted persons held in criminal institutions with counterpropaganda information, aimed at forming immunity to radical ideology and **to de-radicalization**; • Increase by 60% the number of information groups staffed by theologists; • Reach a 60 000 coverage of monitored internet resources, to identify materials that promote ideas extremism and terrorism; • Ensure a 90% restraint of distributing materials with any signs of propaganda and/or justification of extremism and terrorism;
State Program on Countering Religious Extremism and Terrorism **2018-2022**	• Key task: Ensuring the security of persons, society and the state against violent manifestations of religious extremism and threats of terrorism Tasks and Methods: • To provide religious group and communities with information and counterpropaganda aimed at shaping the immunity to a radical ideology (from 72 % to 85%) • To supply convicted persons held within the institutions of the criminal executive system with counterpropaganda aimed at shaping the immunity to a radical ideology (100%) • To staff explanatory working groups with theologists • To form and develop a single electronic database of counter-propagandistic and methodological materials used in explanatory work • To ensure continuous monitoring of the mass media, Internet resources, including social networks, for the detection of materials containing propaganda of extremism and terrorism, and adopt judicial and extrajudicial measures (according to the orders of the authorized bodies) on their dissemination • To develop a profiling technology to improve the level of public safety in places of mass congestion • To involve non-governmental organizations through state social orders • To ensure the functioning of the unified republican Hotline - 114 to

		provide consultative assistance to the population in the sphere of religious relations, establish a center for social rehabilitation and adaptation of persons affected by radical ideology, and facilitate the creation of the center's representative offices in the regions to work with convicted persons and their close associates;

Source: Committee of National Security of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2013, 2017, and 2018).

A careful reader would immediately notice the absence of rehabilitation centers in the draft 2017-2020 program in contrast to both the 2013-2017 and 2018-2022 programs. This absence may be a symptom of disappointment of the central government agencies with the work of the centers, something that I explore in the following chapter. "Ak Niet's" Alim Shaumetov thinks what brought these centers back to the 2018-2022 program was Assel Bazarbayeva's dramatic speech in front of President Nazarbayev and the meeting of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, as well as the documentaries shown on Khabar TV in the middle of 2017 about the urgency of addressing religious radicalization. Yet the importance and the necessity of rehabilitation centers has been debated among policymakers. It is clear that this debate stems from the different interpretations of the state program by different actors. As an example, in an interview for *Kazislam* (2016), theologist Marat Smagulov, argues that the state's focus is aimed at the consequences of radicalization than at its causes, leading to inefficiency. However, former minister Nurlan Yermekbayev (Sayasat.kz 2017) interprets the state programs as the main instruments comprised of PVE efforts rather than the CVE, which he thinks as a response to today's religious dynamics - is more individually tailored and more beneficial.

Thus, based on the summaries of the measures that the state takes against radicalization, it can be interpreted that the official documents in general ignore the gender aspects and heavily rely on propaganda as a preventive mechanism. These programs are centered on PVE and CVE efforts while omitting the strategy on deradicalization and rehabilitation of individuals. This ignorance illustrates that deradicalization as a process is not viewed as part of countering-violent

extremism. The absence of terms "gender" or its synonyms within the context of both radicalization and deradicalization in the State Programs shows the absence of differentiation between these processes among males and females. As such, presumably it will not lead to any gender-specific PVE and CVE solutions. Therefore, the non-inclusion of gender specifics or any other specifics such as the language in which deradicalization or the prevention of radicalization should take place within the policy - should lead to the failure of PVE and rehabilitation in practice. As the Vignettes in the following Chapter illustrate, such absence of specifics can result in reaching fewer people with necessary preventive information.

The number of times that "rehabilitation" and "deradicalization" also shows that since the adoption of the first state program, the state has begun paying attention to the recipients of these services – victims of destructive religious movements, sentenced radicals and their close relatives. But the state has not changed its approach to the providers of rehabilitation services – in both programs the formation of one rehabilitation center is mentioned but without clarifying its status – national or local, whether it is a single center located in a city with its offices throughout the country or just a single rehabilitation center on its own. The clause on non-governmental organizations (public associations) responsible for deradicalization and rehabilitation services is present in the two state programs.

The design of the two state programs mentions only a single rehabilitation center. The implementation of the policy examined in the following Chapter provides some evidence in relation to the state's implicit practice of relying on "Ak Niet" as a model of rehabilitation services and on the encouragement of the plurality of PVE actors that leads to unsupervised local improvisation and variation among rehabilitation centers, which I explore in the following Chapter.

As one of the weaknesses of the design of the two state programs, is that the measurements of success of PVE and CVE rest on solely quantitative indicators of supply of propaganda without any quality check, thus allowing a great degree of freedom to de-radicalization providers who are free to manipulate these indicators. The methods of relying on propaganda as a key PVE strategy which is composed of lectures, seminars, counter-arguments in the social media, and workshops is found to be ineffective and too simplistic by Alim Shaumetov, the head of the Republican center "Ak Niet", which he claims is considered to be a role model center for successful rehabilitation.

Finally, there is a major question of paying for deradicalization and rehabilitation services. Comparing the official budgets of the two approved state programs (see Tables 4 and 5), one can see that the overall budget has increased by 2.6 times. In the 2013-2017 program, the central and local budgets were almost equal, with the local budgets receiving approximately 4 million tenge more than the center. In the latest 2018-2022 state program, distribution of funding has changed. The budget of central government (209.3 million tenge) is much larger than the local budget (60.7 million tenge). Arguably, this drastic change reflects the distrust of the center in the ability and capacity of the local level to conduct meaningful counter-extremism policy. Furthermore, the increase in the overall budget from 2013 to 2018 can also support my hypothesis that the lack of funding is key to successful deradicalization. Thus, the key mechanism that I analyze in my research – the work and effectiveness of rehabilitation centers, how they function and how they receive their funding is unexplored within the design of the policy. The two state programs emphasize the lack of competent theologians and qualified experts among security officials, confirming that securitization prevails over theological rehabilitation at

least in the design. Finally, the absence of any clause mentioning any financial or social

assistance to deradicalized individuals in order to curb marginalization and

Table 4 Budget of the Kazakhstan State Programs on Countering Religious Extremism and Terrorism, 2013-2017 (thousand tenge)

Level	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
Central	1 602 145	13 153 665	14 122 653	12 700 817	8 118 701	49 697 981
Local	14 584 767,5	11 186 654,5	12 202 164,5	8 410 946,6	7 093 860	53 478 393
Total	16 186 913	24 340 320	26 324 818	21 111 764	15 212 561	103 176 375

Source: The Committee of National Security of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2013.

Table 5 Budget of the Kazakhstan State Programs on Countering Religious Extremism and Terrorism, 2018-2022 (thousand tenge)

Level	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Central	52 306,6	49 939	37 340,5	34 930,7	34 844,5	209 361,3
Local	23 984,7	14 736,8	11 636,0	6 097,6	4 332,4	60 787,5
Total	76 291,3	64 675,8	48 976,5	41 028,3	39 176,9	270 148,8

Source: The Committee of National Security of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2018.

stigmatization confirms that the policy-makers are not guided to produce long-term sustainable

results. However, the fact that the new program saw an increase in the usage of term

deradicalization and includes the expansion of rehabilitation center's functions can be interpreted as a positive sign that local actors have the ability to shape the design of the state policy.

Employing Salamon's (2002) policy analysis framework of effectiveness, cost, feasibility and acceptability, I can claim that the effectiveness of the policy design does not produce or lead to the effectiveness of deradicalization and rehabilitation due to the absence of these two concepts within the program. These programs are not focused on rehabilitation and as such in light of the absence of an official deradicalization policy - state programs cannot be used as effective alternatives to a policy aimed specifically at deradicalization. Furthermore, the increase in budget allocation from 103 million tenge, where the republican budget was similar to the total of the local budgets to 270 million tenge, where the majority of funds come from the republican level indicates distrust of the local-made deradicalization and rehabilitation. Indeed, this distrust has basis, as I show in the following chapter, yet keeping most funding at the central level is unlikely to make deradicalization and rehabilitation of women more effective.

Chapter 6. How Is Deradicalization of Muslim Women Actually Carried Out in Kazakhstan?

As I have explored above, deradicalization of Muslim women in Kazakhstan consists of bans, cooptation, and propaganda. Rehabilitation of women is barely mentioned in the three State Programs. Until 2018, the central government sent tens of millions tenge to the local levels to carry out deradicalization yet provided little guidance on how to rehabilitate non-violent radical women. In this chapter, I first explore deradicalization and rehabilitation implemented through criminal justice system, and then I turn to the analysis of the effectiveness of rehabilitation centers and the religious studies centers attached to the provincial and municipal governments. Official criminal statistics demonstrate that in Kazakhstan a growing number of women has been sentenced for extremist crimes – both violent and non-violent (See Tables 6 and 7).

Table 6 Women Sentenced for Terrorist and Extremists Activities in Kazakhstan, 2013-2017

Year	Total	Of them are women
2013	89	2 (2.2%)
2014	57	3 (5.26%)
2015	138	4 (2.89%)
2016	229	16 (6.98%)
2017	158	12 (7.5 %)

Source: Qamqor.gov.kz (2017).

The non-violent actions of radicalized women, such as propaganda of unconventional religious ideas, for which women are often convicted, reflect a punitive approach without rehabilitation. Most women are imprisoned for spreading radical propaganda and recruiting (see Table 7 below) only.

Table 7 Women Convicted for Specific Crimes Related to Extremism and Terrorism in Kazakhstan, 2013-2017

Criminal Code Articles	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Terrorism (art. 233)	1				
Terrorist propaganda or public calls for committing terrorist acts (art. 233-1)	1				
Inciting social, national, tribal, racial or religious enmity (art.174)		1	3	2	
Intentional actions aimed at inciting social, national, tribal, racial, class or religious hatred, offending national honor and dignity or religious feelings of citizens, as well as using the propaganda of exclusivity, superiority or value, class, national, tribal or racial belonging, if these acts are committed in public or through the use of mass media or information and communication networks, as well as through the production or distribution of literature or other media and formation promoting social, national, tribal, racial, class or religious hatred (p.1 art.174)			1	2	5
The same actions committed by a group of persons, by a group of persons by prior conspiracy or repeatedly or combined with violence or threat of its use, as well as committed by a person using his official position or by a leader of a public association (p.2 art.174)			2	8	
Propaganda of terrorism or extremism or public calls for committing an act of terrorism (art.233-1)		2		6	

Establishing or becoming a leader of the terrorist group and participating in its activities (art.257)			1	
Participating in the activities of a terrorist group or in acts of terrorism committed by it (p.2 art.257)				1
Propaganda of terrorism or making public calls for committing an act of terrorism(art.256)			14	5
Financing of terrorist or extremist activities and providing other assistance to terrorism or extremism (art. 258)				1

Source: Qamqor.gov.kz (2017).

These criminal statistics demonstrate that the overall number of women convicted for extremist and terrorist crimes, including the use of propaganda, has risen from 2.2% in 2013 to 7.5% in 2017. Criminal justice bias is evident in the treatment of non-violent women especially in the context of sharing or spreading extremist propaganda. This is because, as I analyze below, the law-enforcement officials do not seem to learn about intent with which women shared this Internet content. The lack of focus on the intent of a crime such as the spread of extremist propaganda leads to overpunishment on average of 7-10 years (as for men). However, as important is the absence of a common definition whom the state defines as a radical because it gives more room for maneuvering between the state's religious and political interests. On these counts, anyone who reposts an article in the social media about an alternative religious view can be criminally charged with propaganda of terrorism, and be sent to prison.

According to official statistics, only 1 woman was sentenced for committing a terrorist crime, which was in 2013. Add to this the criminal case of the 30 year-old Zhansaya Tanatarova, who had been sentenced in September 2017 to nine years in prison for allegedly recruiting other members, using extremist propaganda, and planning to joining and assisting ISIS on the ground

(Time.kz 2018). Arguably, to be sentenced to nine years in prison for an intended but not accomplished crime can be considered as overpunishment. This confirms that political violence among Muslim women in Kazakhstan is extremely rare.

Little is known about deradicalization and rehabilitation of these convicts in prisons, and what is known is often contradictory. On the one hand, prison officials publicly report that hundreds of imprisoned radicals have been converted to traditional Islam. According to Azamat Shambilov, the head of the PRI in Central Asia, the overall number of people sentenced for extremis and terrorist crimes in Kazakhstan has risen from 154 in 2014, 317 in 2015, and 554 in 2016. As of 2017, out of 3500 imprisoned religious followers, 763 were followers of Salafism, and only 90 of them remain on their radical positions (Zakon.kz 2018). Overall, within the prisons and outside, 1076 people were deradicalized in 2014, 1995 in 2015, 2086 in 2016, and 321 in the first half of 2017. Currently, the official and unofficial numbers of Salafi radicals is stated to range from 15 thousand to 19 thousand followers (Zakon.kz 2018). Looking at the proportion of deradicalized individuals in comparison to the overall number of radicals, it can be argued that the effectiveness of deradicalization practices is not high. On the other hand, imams refuse to visit prisons and work with the radicals (Informburo 2016). Meanwhile, others propose to create separate prisons for convicted radicals (Alekhova 2016; Olzhabayeva 2016). As one Member of Parliament told a popular KTK TV channel at the end of 2016, "Some extremist organizations, unlike state structures, have formed their own type of post-prison rehabilitation, providing their members or new recruits from among former convicts - housing and work, and even help them in the creation of a family" (Olzhabayeva 2016).

Her quote clearly indicates the failure of prison-centered rehabilitation of religious extremists. This punitive "one size fits all" approach to deradicalization through criminal justice

exacerbates confrontation between religious and secular views. According to the theologist

Talgat Mamyraiymov (2013), some of the Salafis residing in Kazakhstan should not be punished

for their religiosity alone. This is because there are moderate *madkhalites,* who in contrast to the

followers of more radical Salafist strains, such as *takfirists* and *jihadists*, accept secularism, show

their support the government, and prefer to live within their own communities without any

tangible interactions with the secular society. Sociologist Serik Beissembayev, who interviewed

religious radicals in prisons, agrees. He told me that such non-differentiation leads to overuse of

state's force and makes their deradicalization ineffective in. In contrast, former security service

officer, Shaumetov of "Ak Niet" center views all Salafi followers with suspicion. He claims that

there is no variation in the de-radicalization process among them because at the core of their

beliefs lie an anti-secular sentiment and rejection of secular government and state-approved

DUMK.

Before I analyze both repertoires and effectiveness of deradicalization and rehabilitation

of women at these centers, I need to provide information about their existence, availability of

rehabilitation services and responsiveness. For this purposes, I have conducted an experiment by

contacting these centers, the "114" national telephone hotline, and the akimat-level religious

studies centers.

6.1. Local Variation in Existence, Accessibility and Responsiveness of Rehabilitation Centers in Kazakhstan:

Rehabilitation centers in Kazakhstan are supposed to offer different types of

psychological, theological and legal consultations to anyone in need. To be able to check

whether it is possible to receive any deradicalization consultations by phone and online, I called

the national hotline number "114", attempted to access its website www.114.kz, and called 18

rehabilitation centers across Kazakhstan. The "114" consultation hotline was created as an

initiative by the Committee for Religious Affairs to provide citizens with psychological and legal

assistance and offer religious clarifications. It was advertised that the hotline works in

partnership with local partners in case if professional assistance should be provided face to face.

It is claimed that between 2014 and 2016 more than 2,000 people were assisted by the hotline,

and 90 of them successfully went through a rehabilitation program (Kostanayskie novosti, 2017).

For the list of rehabilitation centers I relied on the stop-sekta website

(*www.vk.com/stopsektakz*), a Kostanay based association, which has been taken down as of April

15, 2018 for presumably an outstanding domain fee, a sign of unstable funding. This website

consisted of information against radicalization, the number of the state's hot line, and the

possible assistance that can be received from the state. It had a list of 15 rehabilitation centers,

which comprises centers throughout the country responsible for deradicalization, religious

rehabilitation, psychological and legal consultations. This list had not been updated as of 2012, a

year prior to the adoption of the 2013-2017 state program. Another three centers I added myself

since they were founded after 2012, and I found their information on the Internet. The stop-sekta

list was still online in April of 2018 providing the information as if all of these centers had been

active and working.

By telephoning these 18 centers on Monday March 25th and Tuesday March 26th of 2018,

I found out is that this list is not updated every time that an NGO or a center loses its tender and

social order. Private cell phone numbers listed on the internet have become the numbers of

individuals not related to the rehabilitation work. I have called at least three times throughout the

two days the centers that did not respond at all. The remaining centers informed me about the closure of these centers or that these numbers belong to new owners.

Out of 18 centers, I was able to access only six centers which provided me with further steps where to go or whom to call to receive further help. By calling the "114" hotline that is mentioned in both of the state programs produced no answer, the automatic response was "the number is unavailable". The official website www.114.kz and the provided cell phone number do not work neither. Both are thus inaccessible. This experiment vividly demonstrates two signs of failed implementation: 1)) one of the key PVE mechanisms on a national level – anonymous consultations by the "114" hotline is currently out of operation; and 2) the transfer of responsibility for rehabilitation to local agencies, which are not able to sustain themselves, . They are no longer helpful to persons seeking assistance, which creates more disinformation in the attempts to receive guidance. And this non-existence can serve as a sign that most of these no longer functioning centers lasted as long as the government paid for them (See Appendix 1).

Out of the six centers where I was able to receive an answer – the people who picked up the phone were mostly polite and pleasant to talk to, although I had to ask them questions myself: Is this a rehabilitation center? Do you offer religious consultations face-to-face and over the phone? All of the centers responded positively. At least one center asked me to call back since all of the experts were at a meeting ("Shapagat" in Atyrau). Other centers offered me the numbers of the city's akimat to receive "more updated information" and consultation (Taldykorgan). By briefly speaking with the centers' respondents I can state that these people are not experts themselves – their hotlines first go through secretaries and are then connected to the experts, if needed. However, I am not sure if first they connect the caller with a general expert and then transfer her/his call further to a specific expert – legal, theological or psychological, and

how qualified the secretary is to make this decision. However, none of the six centers mentioned the word "police." I can interpret that security forces are excluded from the conversation at the initial stages of religious consultations of the individuals or their families

In addition, all of the 18 centers are quasi-governmental NGOs. I assumed that the communal state enterprises such as the centers for religious studies under the akimats in Astana, Western, Eastern, Central, and Southern Kazakhstan, were consistently funded by the state, did not compete for the state orders (see the next section bellow), and thus did not need to be evaluated in their reachability. However, by calling twice the centers for religious studies under the city-akimats of Petropavlovsk and Pavlodar - the numbers of trust and the hotline - on Saturday May 19th, 2018, at 4 pm, I can state that either such communal enterprises do not function or offer their consultation on the weekends or they are not functioning at all. To my surprise, the case mentioned in Chapter 5 in which the center for religious studies at the akimat of Astana was evaluated for the proper budget spending by the Prosecutor's office in Astana within the framework of the state program 2013-2017, is also illustrative of inefficiency of their services.

In general, the functions of communal religious centers can be summed up as:

1. Holding meetings, lectures, seminars, and trainings to warn citizens about ways to prevent religious radicalization and what should be done if a person is radicalized;
2. Offering counseling to the population;
3. Providing an opportunity to communicate online through the "helpline";
4. Releasing social videos and clips;
5. Preparation methodical materials for distribution.
6. Training of state officials, imams and other actors responsible for deradicalization and rehabilitation.

This menu of general functions collected from the three centers of religious studies in Western Kazakhstan, Astana, and Pavlodar confirms that the main focus of communal governmental agencies in their work against extremism is the implementation of PVE rather than deradicalization and rehabilitation.

In short, my experiment clearly shows variation among rehabilitation centers in terms of their existence, availability of services and responsiveness to potential clients. Some of these centers are difficult to locate on the map, most of them are hidden in residential buildings as apartments with multiple physical addresses, but with no physical presence on the ground. For example, one four-year old rehabilitation center in Astana occupies a small three-room apartment in a residential building. It is a non-governmental organization funded only from the state grants, which are competitive. Every three years, akimats, announce a call for applications for "tender" (state order to execute a specific action and service), to work on the rehabilitation and deradicalization of Salafis. This also shows that unstable funding from the government hurts their continuous operation because they are able to provide rehabilitation services as long as the government pays for them. This lack of continuity does not let institutional memory to take root, and makes these centers dependent on the will and skills of their workers.

6.2. Local Variation in Funding and Spending in Deradicalization and Rehabilitation:

Cook's (2010) six criteria of an effective rehabilitation centers (see Chapter 2) assume stable budget for rehabilitation programs. However, this is not the case in Kazakhstan. Rehabilitation centers obtain funding through state orders on a non-regular and non-transparent basis. Based on the open source data and, according to contur.kz, an analytical media outlet, I found out that the money allocated to the fight on extremism and terrorism in the regions is

allocated through communal-state enterprises (CSE), which are created under the regional and city departments for religious affairs and are fully governmental. Usually, they are called as the Centers for Religious Studies and they mostly work on providing religious consultation rather than engage in the rehabilitation of victims of destructive religious currents. Whereas the NGO centers work on deradicalization and rehabilitation of radicalized individuals and are quasi-governmental. Provincial and municipal departments announce open contests for the state social order, select a winner and determine the content of their work.

This scheme today is the main mechanism used by the state to implement its policy in the area of preventing extremism and rehabilitating radical followers (Zhapparov 2018). This funding scheme leads to inconsistency in work, inability to hire skilled professionals, leaves the measurements and process of de-radicalization open to manipulations and different interoperations, crystallizes short-term thinking, and fosters corruption. However, the most critical aspect of the failure of the policy's design is the absence of budget allocated for socialization, training and employment of de-radicalized persons.

For example, in April of 2017, the leadership of "Center for the Study of Religious Problems" of the department for religious affairs in Western Kazakhstan was suspected of embezzling the allocated budget funds. Later, based on the information of prosecutor's office of the Almaty region, it became known that about 80 regional officials were fined and fired for misusing and spending the states funds allocated for the prevention of extremism (Zhapparov 2018). Earlier, in 2015, the prosecutor's office inspected the "Center for Research of Religious Problems of the Akimat of Astana" on the legality and effectiveness of spending budget funds allocated under the "State Program to Counter Religious Extremism and Terrorism for 2013-2017" and found substantial violations under the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan and

improper budget spending. As a result, the former head of the Center was brought to administrative responsibility and had to pay a fine (Astana Prosecutor's office 2015).

In the aftermath of the above scandals, the deputy General prosecutor, Marat Akhmetzhanov, a central governmental official, stated that the budget of the State programs for preventing and countering extremism and terrorism was used inefficiently – state bodies in at least three provinces – Karagandy, Akmola, and Zhambyl - spent a vast amount of allocated money but did not produce any real or efficient results in religious rehabilitation (Issa 2017). With this, state authorities admit the ineffectiveness of the local implementation of rehabilitation services. It also appears that throughout the country, including Astana, local officials pocketed or wasted funds allocated for deradicalization practices, which demonstrates that the levels of trust between local and central actors as well as their interests diverge. Two examples of diverging local repertoires of deradicalization are presented in the Vignette 3 and 4 below:

Vignette 3 Faulty Design of Deradicalization Policy and the Lack of Stable Funding for Deradicalization and Rehabilitation Practices

A couple of years ago, the department of internal policy of a district in the Karaganda region announced a contest for the state order among NGOs to conduct a poll among the djamaats and residents of the district in order to reveal their religious views. The main task was to rehabilitate, consult, and adapt persons affected by radical religious groups and organizations. The winners of the state order had to hold a series of events on ideological dissuasion and socio-psychological rehabilitation of supporters of radical religious movements and members of their families, based on the spiritual traditions and values of the Kazakh society. The regional akimat, as the initiator of the poll, insisted that the NGO had to have at least ten individual meetings with the participants in need during **one month**, attract at least three specialists with a theological education, and one with knowledge in the field of psychology. The overall budget allocated for the project was 219 thousand 643 tenge, approximately 650 US dollars, for the salaries and the field research altogether. (Central Asia Monitor 2018)

Vignette 4 Lack of Stable Yet Rigid Funding for the PVE Efforts

> The head of the Department for Religious Affairs at the Akimat of Almaty, Aidar Esenbekov, said that tens of millions of tenge are spent annually on the prevention of religious radicalization. Many of the preventive efforts are aimed at lecturing and countering propaganda in social networks. But he also immediately admitted that there is not enough funding to even create social videos. The allocated money is just sufficient to rent billboards, but not to produce any multimedia propaganda materials. (Informburo 2018)

6.3. Local Variation in the Gender Composition of the Rehabilitation Centers:

Is gender bias evident in the rehabilitation centers, which actually function? Judging by the gender makeup of the leadership of these centers, the answer is yes. The gender of the heads of these centers along with the NGOs, which are directly responsible for deradicalization of non-violent men and women, varies. There are men and women at the level of directors of both communal agencies and NGOs, the exact gender-ratio throughout the country is difficult to find due to the limited online information about the centers in the first place. Yet, according to the official websites of the centers for religious studies in Aktobe, Astana, and Eastern Kazakhstan – the directors are male. In relation to the functioning NGOs and rehabilitation centers, at least one woman out of six serves as the head such center (Karaganda). Overall, despite the fact that women are involved in rehabilitation practices at the highest level of rehabilitation centers, male directors dominate by far which can influence the gender bias in the implementation of rehabilitation of women. The head of the "Ak Niet" Center, told me that one-third of his staff are women. Shaumetov told that at "Ak Niet" women undergo deradicalization with the help of female-theologists who themselves were previously deradicalized or are the wives of theologists working at the same center. Yet he did not name a single female staff working there. Nor he had agreed to provide their contact information. He had promised to hire female-theologists in 2016

but two years later, the ratio of female providers at "Ak Niet" still constitutes only 30 percent (Caravansarai 2016). The main purpose for hiring female-theologists is to establish greater trust between the providers of deradicalization and the participants. This will allow female staff to be more effective in training women to differentiate traditional Islam from religious extremism. According to the plan, females exposed to radical ideas will be taught how to acquire new skills as hairdressers, cooks, and seamstresses, and in between these courses they will have the chance to speak with female-theologists and ask for clarifications on religious issues (InoZpress 2015).

It was, however, possible to find more information on how the existing rehabilitation centers function and how effective their deradicalization work is through the interviews, which I had conducted with seven state officials, experts, and the heads of centers, and from the media coverage of their work. This evidence is grouped by common themes, which I derived from my Hypotheses and from Cook's (2010) six criteria of an effective rehabilitation center:

1) Adoption of the principles of Risk, Need, and Responsivity (RNR)
2) Cognitive behavioral interventions (rewarding appropriate behavior)
3) Interpersonal sensitive approach to participants (treating them as humans and not as criminals)
4) High quality of training staff (competence and professionalism of rehabilitation providers)
5) High treatment integrity (rehabilitation is conducted in strict accordance to its design)
6) A conducive setting (integration of community-based services and integration of social support)

1. Is the Risk, Need, and Responsivity (RNR) model used in rehabilitation centers and deradicalization programs?

Security service officials and police handle the risk assessment, a sign of criminal justice bias. Kakimov told me that the risk assessment of radicals is done by the local police, Ministry of Religious and Civil affairs and the National Security Committee, when presumed radicals and deradicalized subjects are systematically checked on their locations, and their ideology for a simplified "full picture" to see if the person is employed, if his style of speaking and behaving has not changed, whether he has not been contact with other presumed radicals, which can foster further radicalization. This in turn illustrates the reliance on an oversimplified approach to measuring the success of deradicalization.

My interviews with Shaumetov from "Ak Niet" and Kairgeldy from the "Saat" rehabilitation center confirm this. Both informants claimed that the National Security Committee (KNB) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs usually send a list of radicalized persons to the rehabilitation centers, and, rarely, family members contact the centers or they themselves ask for help. The media and state officials claim that rehabilitation centers operate on a voluntary basis (Kakimov 2018; Shaumetov 2018). Based on the risk, need, and responsivity principles, if a woman is a wife of a jihadist, then her rehabilitation was conducted along with the National Security Committee, if she is a non-violent radical, rehabilitation is done from the theological and psychological perspectives by the centers.

Since there is no official definition of a radicalized person, or specifically of a current within a Salafi branch, then it makes sense that according to Kakimov, in the implementation there is no differentiation between various branches of Salafism, since the anti-secular governmental attitude is at the center of their ideology. This statement confirms Beissembayev's criticism of the official deradicalization approach but supports Shaumetov's argument that there is no difference among religious radicals. These contradictions show that there is no agreement

on whom should be deradicalized – every Salafi follower, or only Salafi followers who exhibit specific traits? Should a madkhalite be deradicalized if he does not reject the authority of the state and secular values?

Mirhat Madyarov from "Shanyraq", one of the leading religious scholars working on rehabilitation, developed a questionnaire to identify Islamic school of thought of a Muslim. Oftentimes, men and women think they practice Hanafism when they are followers of Salafism, and based on the results of the questionnaire – an individual de-radicalization program is implemented. Other leading practitioners such as Amanzhol Urazbayev from the Republican public association "Counter-terrorism committee" approves and supports of Madyarov's methodology as being one of the most efficient. It is especially critical when centers start working with leaders of a radical group, because a leader's successful rehabilitation can help with the rehabilitation of his followers. Although in cases with working with female djamaats, usually staff from rehabilitation centers visit them in their communities, since they are not willing to travel outside of them and because the demonstration effects can be more impactful that the counter-arguments at hand. Supposedly, only rehabilitation centers with sufficient help and assistance from the security forces can access such closed religious communities, since other Muslim representatives are perceived as a *kafirs* – infidels.

The head of the Center for Analysis and Development of Interfaith Relations of Pavlodar, Gulnaz Razdykova, explains that her center has a practice of categorizing females exposed to radicalization according to different risk groups, as shown in Vignette 5 below:

Vignette 5 Risk Assessment in Pavlodar's Center

> "I divide them [females exposed to radicalization] into the following categories: they are the wives of convicts for extremism, the wives of terrorists killed during special operations, the wives left on the territory of military operations in Syria, and female leaders, adherents of non-traditional radical movements. The distinctive features of such adepts are religious illiteracy, blind follow-up of the djamaat, and a combination of unresolved psychological problems." (CARMO 2017)

These categorizations demonstrate that although State officials and the providers of deradicalization and rehabilitation services do not distinguish between different branches of Salafism in their relation to extremism, they nevertheless apply the risk, need, and responsivity model to females exposed to radical ideology.

2.   **Do rehabilitation centers and deradicalization programs reward appropriate behavior?**

"Ak Niet" center relies on social and employment rehabilitation as their initiative to keep men and women away from unemployment and further radicalization. Shaumetov promises to hire the female relatives, who had been deradicalized, to work at the center yet this promise is limited by the uncertainty of funding. Women and their families are not given a voice to speak for themselves even after their rehabilitation. However, by relying on the media accounts from independent outlets such as *Central Asia news* or *Radio Azattyq*, it is possible to get the sense of the local improvisation not only in the process of deradicalization but also in the process of rehabilitation in the post-release period as depicted in the Vignettes 6 and 7 below.

Vignette 6 Faulty Design and Social and Economic Marginalization of Women

> "The wives of convicted extremists are left on their own to deal with their social and financial problems, they do not know how to act, where to go, they do not know their rights" says Aiman Umarova, a lawyer from Almaty. According to Shaumetov, these women, who are considered to be a risk group, need rehabilitation assistance – otherwise deradicalization will not be sustainable or effective. This is why, Shaumetov claims, the "Ak Niet" center tries to provide immediate help upon release, they look for jobs for those women as a way to prevent them from seeking help from the radical community and thus prevent them from engaging in extremist activities. (Caravanserai 2017)

Vignette 7 Lack of Financial Assistance to Families Affected by Radicalization

> The husband of the 28-year-old Tursyngul Tourniyazova was sentenced to 15 years in prison on charges of involvement in terrorism in 2012. She has four children; the youngest is four and a half years old. The eldest daughter is in the seventh grade. Tursyngul said that after her husband had been arrested, her family was in great financial difficulty. According to her, she was given a free stay in the house of a Muslim man who offered to shelter them as part of his charity work. Another example is the case of the wife of one of the first Kazakh suicide bombers - Meiramgul Sataeva, who says that she and her three young children received help only from her religious communities with housing and food. (Toiken 2017)

As described above, overall, because the state programs do not provide any financial assistance to deradicalized individuals, the center tries to rely on its own network to assist people in finding jobs in the post-release period due to being concerned that religious recruits can earn the trust of deradicalized individuals through financial assistance. Because for women as for men alienation is a key push factor for radicalization, and alienation can be interpreted as the lack of social support before, during, and after rehabilitation.

For example, because the design of the deradicalization policy does not include any financial or social assistance to the released deradicalized participants, rehabilitation centers have to depend on themselves to sustain the results of their work, something that hurts their effectiveness, as I have reviewed in Chapter 2. In some instances, cognitive behavioral

interventions and social assistance with legal questions and clarifications of religious canons in a different language than in Kazakh or Arabic, are offered as part of the local repertoires described below.

Vignette 8   Social Assistance Provided by the "Viktoriya" Rehabilitation Center, Karaganda Province

The center "Victoria" helped a young woman, a follower of a destructive religious movement, to apply for a special state allowance as a single mother based on the program for the development of productive employment and mass entrepreneurship. She got a free education and was trained professionally as a cook. Now the center's specialists are preparing her documents to apply for her child's allowance. This assistance is not an isolated case when comprehensive help is provided to people who find themselves in difficult life situations. (Zakon.kz 2017)

Vignette 9   Rehabilitation through Employment in the Khromtau District, Aktobe Province

State officials in the Khromtau district have opened a sewing factory for 10 deradicalized women and wives of convicted extremists. Previously these women were unemployed. They were trained as seamstresses at a local college for 2.5 months. To be able to purchase sewing machines and all the needed materials, local municipalities had allocated 1.5 million tenge. The head of the factory first employed the wife of one of the participants in the June terrorist attacks. Her husband is currently in prison. The new factory has already produced gloves and pastel linen - for kindergartens. The authorities insist that the women have changed their worldview. They no longer force their daughters to wear headscarves and hijabs. And they returned to the Kazakhstani interpretation of Islam. (Taipov 2017)

The observable contrasts between vignettes 6 and 7, and 8 and 9, confirms the presence of local variation in the provision of deradicalization and rehabilitation services. Such variation leads to rewarding the appropriate behavior (deradicalization) in some cases, but in others – it does not. Local variation directly depends on the resources of the center and the methodology applied by the center's staff.

3. Do deradicalization and rehabilitation providers treat women as humans and not as criminals?

As I have already mentioned, most deradicalization efforts use persuasion without explicit coercion. Thus for every radical argument, Shaumetov and other heads of deradicalization efforts, claim there should be better and stronger counter-arguments, which confirms the ideological focus of Kazakhstan's deradicalization program. Additionally to this, the interviewed heads of centers – Shaumetov and Kairgeldy state that the presence of the subjects of deradicalization is voluntary and that participants of the program visit the center in specific time slots throughout the week.

Similarly to the observations of Abdirassylkyzy and Orazbayeva, which I have mentioned in the Chapter 2, Shaumetov notes that working with female djamaats is more difficult than with men, due to additional barriers to their deradicalization. Women are more afraid to talk to strangers; theologists and psychologists must interpret not only their religious role but also their social role in the family based on the Koran, and other individual factors need to be accounted in the process, as for example, how traumatic was the woman's experience, whether her husband is imprisoned or dead, and whether she has children. This finding confirms the theory in the literature review about gender relations in non-traditional Islam in Kazakhstan. In practice, however, based on the media interview of Alim Shaumetov to *Kaztag* in the Vignette 10 below, it can be noted that it took the center only four days to deradicalize women who wanted to go to jihad.

Vignette 10 Rehabilitation of Women in 3-4 Days

> In 2017, about 30 convicts in the western region, with whom the "Ak Niet" worked for almost two years, asked the center's theologists to also work with their wives, sisters, and mothers. As it turned out, all 30 convicts had spouses who wanted to go to jihad. In response, "Ak Niet" gathered these women from all over the country and worked with them for **three-four days**. Those women who wanted to leave had changed their mind after they had conversations with theologists." Shaumetov said in the interview. (Kaztag.kz 2017)

This example illustrates that for deradicalization providers the refusal to go to Syria is an indicator of the success of deradicalization. However, in fact, it can be solely disengagement, and yet a leading center such as "Ak Niet" has no tools to effectively control whether disengagement (rejection of a specific behavior) of their participants results in deradicalization – the rejection of ideology. It is difficult to estimate the success of deradicalization in 3-4 days without relying on further monitoring and contacts with the subject. Thus, during the rehabilitation process "Ak Niet" leans towards a theological methodology with material pull factors, and after the release – security forces and the local police are responsible for monitoring the released women.

The National Security Committee (NSC) and its anti-terrorist center which are responsible for the State programs countering extremism and terrorism have the most control: They set the agenda, contact rehabilitation centers with lists of presumed radicals to whom these centers should offer their assistance, they control and intervene in the de-radicalization of convicted individuals and can have access to the process of deradicalization of non-convicts, as well as they monitor how local state bodies work on controlling recidivism; the General's prosecutor's office mostly works on assisting the NSC with data on radicalization, on the number of convicted people on the counts of terrorism and extremism, as well as the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the Ministry of Religious and Civil Affairs who mostly work with DUMK and theology experts, and NGOs. Securitized coordination among agencies is well-organized based on a top-down approach; however, coordination among agencies that can reveal the effectiveness

of local deradicalization programs is not sufficient. For instance, both Minister for religious and

civil society affairs and the Minister of internal affairs told the popular KTK TV channel in

November 2017, that their respective ministries were not responsible for handling female

returnees from the ISIS-controlled areas of Syria (Zhumanova 2017). This exemplifies the lack

of coordination among government agencies, as the public is left wondering about the fate of

these returnees. In addition, low levels of trust and corruption on the ground are a regular

problem among many public policies in the post-Soviet space.

Yet when it comes to the deradicalization of non-violent women and men, rehabilitation

centers, along with regional akimats, and DUMK play the pivotal role of delivering rehabilitation

services that are mostly based on ideology and theology, which in their nature is more humane

than the approaches taken by the security forces. Outside of the centers, however, non-violent

female and male radicals are viewed and approached as criminals.

4.   Do rehabilitation centers have highly qualified training staff?

In my interviews and information available on the Internet, each head of the rehabilitation

center praised their own methodology as the most effective, but they were unwilling to share

more details perhaps due to competition for the same state order and funding, or due to the covert

investigative activities. Therefore, the implemented methodologies of deradicalization appear to

depend on the education levels, the professional background of workers, allocated budget, and

regional diversity - which again confirms local variation. Some of the head of centers such as

Alim Shaumetov and Amanzhol Urazbayev from the Counter-terrorism Committee have worked

in the National Security Committee and come from a security background, others have worked in

mosques, but all of them had exposure with working with radical inmates, a sign of the criminal

justice bias. Below, I summarize professional characteristics of the employees of three centers in Almaty, Astana and Pavlodar.

For example, Ruslan Kairgeldy, the head of the newly formed "Saat" center in Almaty City, as "Shanyraq" center had lost its funding also works as an imam at a central mosque in Almaty. Religion and theology are central to his beliefs about deradicalization. However, based on my interviews with Shaumetov, Kairgeldy, Kakimov, Abdirassylkyzy and a response in social media by a psychologist Denisenko, all of the centers mentioned in this research and their staff develop their own deradicalization methodology. Some methodologies are based on a mix approach of theology, psychology and security, whereas others take only a theological approach. All of this depends on the personal backgrounds of the heads of the centers and their team.

The director of "Shapagat" comes from a religious professional background, he works at the Beket-Ata mosque in Almaty and speaks Arabic. Yulia Denisenko, the founder of the first rehabilitation center in Kazakhstan and the head of the "Association of the centers for Religious Studies", also speaks Arabic, has a background in psychology and in religious studies as well. Nurlan Kakimov, a 38 year old deputy director of department for religious affairs at the akimat of Almaty who has worked on the topic of radicalization for the last 15 years as a researcher and then as a state official. The professional experience of the head of "Ak Niet", Alim Shaumetov is in state security, and of that his team, has been with working with male radical prison inmates. Only since 2015, "Ak Niet" started to work with female radicals at their centers in Astana, Almaty and Zhezkazgan. As I have explained above, he had promised to train and hire female theologists in 2016 but in my interview he refused to provide any contacts of them and did not mention this training at all. One of the center's key requirements is the ability of women to speak Arabic, in order to earn the trust of the program's participants and to prove that they have a

religious background. Arabic is also necessary because at "Ak Niet" the main method of deradicalization is based on counter-arguing the Salafi ideology by quoting the right interpretations of religious canons. Yet, I was not able to secure any interviews with the staff working at the rehabilitation centers or to request any information regarding their competence and professionalism.

On the other hand, the Pavlodar's Center for Analysis and Development of Interfaith Relations has made the biography of their staff accessible online. For example, the head of the center – Gulnaz Razdykova has a PhD in history and has defended her dissertation of the components of Islamic education. The center's psychologist – Gulbaram Tasbulatova, has a bachelor's degree in psychology and has worked for the past 10 years as a children's psychologist. The center's theologists – Rauan Chinguzhanov and Nurbol Kaldybekov, have earned their bachelor's and Master degrees from the Egyptian University of Islamic Culture "Nur-Mubarak" from the department of Islamic studies (Islamic Sharia and Islamic Studies). The religious experts who work at the center both have bachelor's degrees from the Eurasian National University in Astana.

The professional background of deradicalization and rehabilitation providers as such is disparate. Their education levels vary from bachelor's degree in most of the cases to a doctorate degree in one case, however, on average working with radicalized men and women is something that they have been practicing for the past five years. Except for Yulia Denisenko who has a professional experience of working with rehabilitation centers since 2007. It is problematic to judge the qualifications of each individual provider or assess their academic background, however, most of the rehabilitation staff have been engaged in academic religious studies.

5.   Do rehabilitation centers abide by the high treatment integrity in their work?

Due to the absence of a deradicalization policy, lack of qualified personnel and lack of

monitoring of these centers, the integrity of treatment is low. Some centers engage in

whitewashing and outright corruption, others provide high numbers while others engage in the

actual long-term rehabilitation with little guidance and support from the central government.

Just the fact that women in the process of deradicalization come a few times per week to

the trainings demonstrates that the program's participants are not isolated from their

surroundings, their communities, and the former push factors. However, the literature

emphasizes that for the process of deradicalization to be effective and sustainable, participants

should be isolated from their radical communities. In other words, Kazakhstan's practice of

deradicalization of women at the local rehabilitation centers can be viewed as ineffective due to

its equivocal design that deviates from the literature on deradicalization – it improvises with the

inclusion of social support and there is no consensus on who should be deradicalized.

6.   Do rehabilitation centers offer a conducive setting in the process of the

**   treatment?**

Shaumetov of "Ak Niet" notes that community based-services (employment in this case)

and integration of social support as some of the key principles for an effective rehabilitation.

Specifically, when social support – women's children and close family members who were not

exposed to radicalization – was included in the process, Shaumetov concludes that it produced

better results. Yet he did not provide any specifics of how his experts create and maintain

conducive settings, except for mentioning that conversations with women take place in

apartments around the city.

Another rehabilitation center "Shanyraq", based in Almaty, that stopped functioning because it had failed to win the Almaty's city state order this year, relied on the similar methodologies as practiced by "Ak Niet". The interpersonal relations and a conducive setting are exhibited through the center's aims to establish trust, work with women by relying on their social support – at least indirectly - by mentioning their children and their future, and exposing different categories of radicalized women to a different set of arguments. But the most conducive setting is in Pavlodar because deradicalization is delivered by women for women in the center's newly established female club "Inabat". There, women obtain the skills of cooks, hairdressers, seamstresses, and painters. They spend their time socializing with other women and working on activities that they enjoy. In the processes of such participation they can engage in conversations with female theologists to receive religious support and consultations (CARMO 2017).

Despite the fact that female-theologists are becoming the new norm within rehabilitation centers, not every center is able to foster a conducive environment where women can find employment, engage in activities of their choice, or to rely on their social support in the process of rehabilitation. As in the many cases above – these services depend on the professionalism of the staff and on the resources that the center has or is willing to allocate.

6.5. Indicators of successful deradicalization and rehabilitation of non-violent women:

Shaumetov of "Ak Niet" argues that the numbers do not reflect the real success of the rehabilitation program and that they cause problems, he finds statistics unnecessary. However, in contrast to the data on deradicalization in prisons that is frequently published online (see above), this reluctance to share the official numbers of deradicalized non-violent women may imply the lack of confidence in successful rehabilitation. As the main visible and invisible indicators of

deradicalization Shaumetov, Kakimov, and Abdirassylkyzy mention the taking off of religious clothing, forming families, having fewer children, sending children to school without religious attributes, becoming involved in public life, speaking with respect about the state's leader and accepting the authority of the state. As it was mentioned earlier, the decision to not go to Syria for jihad is also considered as an indicator of a successfully deradicalized female. In other words, a deradicalized woman is the one who adheres to Kazakhstan's "national traditions". State officials, providers of rehabilitation services, and experts such as Yulia Denisenko and Azamat Shambilov (head of the PRI) were reluctant to share any personal stories of successful female deradicalization, except for the famous case of Assel Bazarbayeva. They also were unwilling to put me in contact with them because of the traumatic memories that female victims will not want to go back to. Most of the time Shaumetov and other interviewees spoke about radicalization of males, thus reflecting on the male bias of deradicalization, confirming my hypothesis 1, and the lack of financial assistance, which derives from its absence in the policy's design, confirming my hypothesis 2.

6.5.1. Main methodologies, actors, and structures in de-radicalization of women:

Kakimov from Almaty's Akimat told me that the practice of PVE in Almaty and in Kazakhstan in general is executed in three steps:

a) **Agitation/Propaganda:** is the spread of counter-radical propaganda conducted with the help of the new rehabilitation center "Saat" (previously this was done by "Shanyraq") and DUMK

b) **Prevention:** is conducted at the local level with the help of theology professors from the Islamic university "Nur Mubarak", which consists of lectures, which Shaumetov finds to

be as a least effective method in PVE, information about the republican "114" hotline

which is supposed to be dialed from a home phone number but does not work at all,

rehabilitation center's services and assistance, tips how to differentiate real Islam versus

radical Islam, and includes events aimed at social integration of unemployed religious

followers such as job fairs and markets, although this does not imply actual employment

c) **Evaluation and re-evaluation:** is done by the local police, Ministry of Religious and

Civil affairs and the National Security Committee, when presumed radicals and de-

radicalized subjects are systematically checked on their locations, and their ideology for a

simplified "full picture" to see if the person is employed, if his style of speaking and

behaving has not changed, whether he has not been contact with other presumed radicals,

which can foster further radicalization. This in turn illustrates the reliance on an

oversimplified approach to measuring the success of deradicalization.

These three steps and the process of de-radicalization at the local centers are controlled by the

following agencies:

a) Local level: DUMK (which Salafi followers do not trust), the akimats (which have

very low levels of trust among the population), the rehabilitation centers/NGOs, and police

departments;

b) National Level: The heads of the centers also pick their own staff from an array of the

above-mentioned fields, which raises the question whether there is a minimum standard

governmental training requirement that is necessary to obtain in order to work on the

deradicalization of individuals. Apart from mentioning that female-theologists can speak Arabic

and some of them were also subjects of deradicalization – there is no information on the high

quality of training staff of rehabilitation providers. This is especially troublesome since some

providers can be prone to radicalization themselves if their religious education and argumentation is weaker than the one of the radicalized persons.

6.5.2. Local repertoires of deradicalization:

For my media analysis I selected articles from 2014 to 2018, with 2014 being the year when rehabilitation centers were set to be established in every region of Kazakhstan by the State program 2013-2017. Although many centers were established from 2007 to 2017. My samples include articles predominantly from state-owned and quasi-state owned media agencies such as Kazakh TV, Almaty TV, Kazislam, Aktobe times, Tengrinews and zakon.kz, in order to reveal how rehabilitation centers are portrayed (looking specifically for information on implementation and then on design), how deradicalization of women as a process or as an outcome is framed by the state media, whether it is approached as a success or as a failure. Other sources from my media analysis come from independent outlets such as Radio Free Europe/Liberty, Forbes and Central Asia News. Moreover, the media content analysis includes articles on the specific use of state coercion, cooptation and propaganda as its tools against radicalization and deradicalization which were already presented in the vignettes in the opening chapters.

Thus, from among more than 100 articles that I have been collecting since August 2017, I had to filter out and select any media content that included a combination of at least two factors: mention of the state's response to radicalization, rehabilitation centers, rehabilitation, gender, crime, and social support. By the end of the selection, 15 articles satisfied the criteria for investigation (see Appendix 2). My data sources provide evidence of the different methods that rehabilitation centers adopt in dealing with female deradicalization and rehabilitation. The media discourse can be grouped into independent and state media, where the depiction of the

effectiveness of rehabilitation centers is drastically different. The independent sources, among

which Azattyq (Radio Free Europe) has a high number of articles on radicalization and

discrimination of women related to the Salafi ideology, mainly talk about the everyday

stigmatization that women face because of the human rights abuse by local police, economic

marginalization due to limited opportunities for employment, and the coercion and pressure that

their children face at school because of their religious parents.

The state media sources such as Khabar TV, Moi Gorod, Aktobe Times, and Kazislam

generally talk about the effectiveness of existing rehabilitation centers, the high numbers of

deradicalized people due to the working "114" hotline and other PVE methods such as lectures at

mosques and colleges. These articles also share stories of women who were convicted for

extremist crimes such as in *Aktobe Times* from 30.04.16, where a woman was sentenced to three

years in prison for recruiting people into a terrorist cell. By circulating such news, the media is

used as a tool of state's propaganda that warns readers about the costly consequences of

engaging in the spread of religious propaganda and recruitment.

Articles written by partially owned/controlled media such as Tengrinews and zakon.kz,

attempt to provide a perspective that falls in between the pro-state and fully independent sources.

They merely provide the news of the state banning a specific action without engaging in critical

in-depth analysis of why it is important to know. Some of their articles talk about the positive

results of the state's programs while others include citations that provide a counter-point.

As a an aggregate of the media content and the media information in the vignettes throughout my

research, I can conclude that due to the faulty design and the absence of a standardized approach

to prevention of radicalization and deradicalization, the lack of knowledge about female

djamaats, the ability of each theologist and NGO to work out a deradicalization methodology of

their own, and the lack of a systematic data analysis on female radicalization and deradicalization – local actors and police officials take on local improvisation as their methods of dealing with rehabilitation. These improvisations range between theater performances and films, job assistance, trainings by female-theologists, Russian-taught religious classes and fingerprinting, and being placed on a black list.

In addition, the plurality of responses to the PVE and rehabilitation practices is illustrated in the Vignettes below:

Vignette 11   Lack of Consistent Implementation of Deradicalization across the Country

> In October 2017, female state officials from Pavlodar region, Eastern Kazakhstan, and Astana, conducted a seminar and training in Russian at the Republican Mosque "Khazret Sultan" in Astana. The seminar was dedicated to the methods of spotting and avoiding religious radicalization. Currently, due to the fact that the majority of followers of Islam speak Kazakh and Arabic, religious trainings and seminars in Russian are not as widespread. Religious clerks in the regions are reluctant to conduct any sessions in Russian. However, in more diverse cities such as Almaty and Astana, religious representatives do not oppose working with Russian speakers as a way to reach out to as many people about the dangers of radicalization (Muslim.kz 2017)

These local improvisations of rehabilitation shows that centers on the ground depending on their own financial capabilities either offer social assistance to the released women or are unable to do so. This shows that the faulty design of non-including such pull factors of deradicalization as they are offered throughout the world impedes to the success of the policy. The Vignette below show that upon their release women are marginalized economically, socially, and politically due to the criminal justice bias and to the absence of a properly designed deradicalization policy.

Vignette 12   Social Marginalization and Discrimination of a Wife of a Convicted Terrorist, Mangistau Province

> As an *oralman (a "returnee' in Kazakh)* Gazizet is a woman who moved to Mangistau oblast (Western Kazakhstan) from Mongolia in 2011, faces everyday oppression by the society and state officials because her husband was convicted on terrorist charges. She is an ethnic Kazakh and applied for citizenship, but her application was denied despite all the necessary and valid documents. She now faces deportation because she is considered to be "a follower of destructive movements", she is unable to find a job because she is labeled as an extremist by the state officials and her neighbors. (Toiken 2017)

As the media content analysis demonstrates, local variations of implementation of deradicalization or in the prevention of radicalization are subject to criminal justice bias, gender bias, marginalization in contrast to some social assistance provided by the centers themselves. Such variation and improvisation derive from the absence of a common deradicalization policy where rehabilitation centers can decide on their own methodology, which is closely related to the background of the heads of these centers. Even when women are subject to deradicalization their approach is not different from men, some centers rely on social support while others do not find the necessity to do so because it is not written anywhere in relation to working with non-violent radicals.

These media accounts demonstrate how radicalized women are portrayed in the public, what treatment they receive, which problems they face after the release from rehabilitation centers, the faulty design of not differentiating between different branches of Salafism and an emphasis on focusing on force or in other instances on pull factors - as methods of local improvisations. In most of the media stories and based on the reluctance of center's to assist with interviews of deradicalized women, females are still deprived of self-agency, they are spoken on behalf of men, partners, and staff workers (See Appendix 2)

The limitation of content analysis of the media is that media in non-democracies is easily censored and manipulated. This resulting portrayal of rehabilitation as a process can be distorted for better statistics and used as propaganda of the state's efforts. For more accurate information without the state's bias I analyzed a small number of independent or international media articles on Kazakhstan's response to radicalization and deradicalization. Oftentimes, deradicalization is not the main topic in Kazakhstan's media, so the articles focus more on radicalization and in some parts on ideological deradicalization.

Chapter 7. Deradicalization of Muslim Women in Kazakhstan: Mission Impossible?

It can be concluded that due to the absence of an official deradicalization policy the state approaches deradicalization and religious rehabilitation as a hybrid process between PVE and CVE. As part of the PVE, state authorities rely on monitoring religious education and activities within mosques, they rely on non-governmental organizations to deliver to engage in preventive radicalization practices through the use of propaganda of Hanafism and secular values. Rehabilitation services to non-violent radicals in Kazakhstan, both men and women, are mainly delivered by non-governmental organizations, which actually operate as quasi-governmental organizations and are funded from the state's budget by the means of state orders. This can be interpreted as a tool of state's cooptation. Other actors that work on PVE are communal state agencies, which are fully governmental but mostly work on providing consultations instead of rehabilitating radicalized women.

As part of both PVE and CVE, the state places Islamization along within radicalization in the context of securitization. It relies on punitive force to deal with violent and non-violent radicals alike regardless of one's gender. The state's non-differentiation between PVE, CVE and deradicalization/rehabilitation, as well as its inability to distinguish between violent Salafi followers and non-violent, is not included in the design of the state programs 2013-2017 and 2018-2022. Due to this faulty design, the delivery of rehabilitation services does not reach the right recipients and as such impedes reaching a successful rehabilitation practice.

In the state program's design of 2013-2017 a rehabilitation center is stated as an institution, which can rehabilitate non-violent radicals. In the draft 2017-2020 program, rehabilitation centers are not mentioned at all. In the latest 2018-2022 state program, these centers are stated to work with sentenced radicals and their families. In both of these key policy

documents – gender is fully omitted from the design, which illustrates that these programs are based on a predominantly male social portrait of a radical. And thus, the implementation of rehabilitation through local agencies leads to multiple variations. Based on the background of the heads of the rehabilitation centers, such institutions can rely on a mixed approach of ideological/religious counter-arguments, psychological persuasion, and providing social assistance as a precursor for a sustainable deradicalization effect. Some heads of these centers come from security backgrounds and view radicalization strictly from the prism of the threat to state needed to be dealt with sticks over carrots, others come from religious backgrounds and do not find security or punitive force to be effective in the process of reintegrating radicals into everyday life. Local variation shows that as a result, some centers work with women categorizing them by belonging to specific risk groups such as a widow, the wife of a sentenced extremist, and single mother; other centers however do not differentiate among them and do not consider incorporating any rehabilitation tactics tailored specifically for women.

This in turn is detrimental to the cause, because the factors that push women towards radicalization are different from men. Women are not pushed by ideological reasons, but primarily due to socio-economic challenges. And they are pulled towards radicalization by the need to feel as if they belong to a group and to a sisterhood. This pull factor is stated in the literature review as the key reason for radicalization, and thus, rehabilitation services should tackle and minimize the alienation, which exists in their lives. This could be done through social support, social integration and assistance, however, due to non-existence of a policy that includes these as the must-haves, and local actors are free to include or exclude such provision based on their improvised methodology.

As such, both of my Hypotheses 1 and 2 were confirmed during the interviews that I conducted, throughout the analysis of the official state programs, in my experiment, and based on my media content analysis. The gender bias was confirmed by the absence of a gender-sensitive design of the state programs and in the interviews with the heads of centers and representatives of Akimat directly involved in the implementation of the state program – Shaumetov and Kakimov. The criminal justice bias refers to the non-differentiation among different Salafis who can be both radical and non-radical - was revealed in the interviews with Beissembayev, Kakimov, Abdirassylkyzy and Shaumetov. The number of women sentenced for extremist crimes, which include spreading religiously radical propaganda without proving their intent also demonstrates that the state takes a punitive approach to dealing with non-violent males and females (an increase by 5.3%). While cases from the media illustrate that women are sentenced for long period of times up to nine years even when they have the intent to commit a crime but they did not.

Furthermore, my hypothesis on the lack of professionals and stable funding for rehabilitation centers was confirmed by the state official's testimonies in the media accounts. My hypothesis on the lack of consistent local implementation was vividly confirmed by the media accounts and through my experiment of calling rehabilitation centers. Additionally, interviews with Kakimov, Shaumetov, and Denisenko proved that local actors create their own rehabilitative methodologies. Despite the absence of social support for non-violent radical women in the design of the program, local variation leads to inclusion of such support on a case by case basis. Media accounts confirmed social, political and economic marginalization of women who were not able to get employed or were subject to constant security checks.

Altogether, the deradicalization of women does not differ from the methodologies employed for men, apart from relying on female-theologists. Furthermore, despite a growing allocation of budget for PVE, centers on the ground have difficulties to train qualified experts, to provide systematic employment opportunities, or to offer financial help to the wives of radicalized persons in prison, thus they tend to rely on religious communities for help. There is a need to implement a systematic financial assistance so it can become a persuasive and dominant pull factor of deradicalization. The state should take into consideration that differentiating among different branches of Salafism can be beneficial to the overall efforts on deradicalization rather than radicalization.

To overcome further radicalization of women, Kazakhstan can also invest more in women's empowerment to increase female self-agency and decrease the chances of radicalization. Successful deradicalization should be included in the CVE programs, and should be a priority for women, especially all those who returned from Syria due to the high numbers. Based on the examples of Morocco, Kazakhstan can come up with training women as preachers and not only as theologists. As the example of UAE demonstrates, Kazakhstan can also establish a military female college – for women to be involved in the security aspects and have a say in deradicalization practices from a military and theology perspectives. Deradicalization should not be left to uncontrolled improvisation and should include a gender-sensitive approach to produce better results, for this it is absolutely necessary to work out a national de-radicalization program similar to the strategies implemented throughout the world.

Based on Cook's (2010) six criteria for an effective deradicalization and rehabilitation program, I can state that: some centers such as "Ak Niet" and "Shanyraq" adopt a risk, need, and responsivity principle by working differently female risk groups, which is mostly done either

through a theological/psychological approach or a security one. Cognitive behavioral interventions/interpersonal sensitive approach, according to the heads of the centers, are also offered by the providers since establishing trust with non-violent female radicals is one of the first and most important steps in deradicalization and rehabilitation. However, there is a lack of high quality of training staff, which is illustrated by the low number of deradicalized individuals throughout the years in both prisons and outside of them. In relation to deradicalization of non-violent radical women, there is no data at all. High treatment integrity is difficult to achieve due to the ambiguity of the policy itself. Whereas the conducive setting is offered non-systematically throughout the country, some centers offer employment opportunities or provide help with legal issues for released women, while others – do not have the required assets or professionalism to include it in their self-written methodology. As such, there has to be an official deradicalization and rehabilitation policy separate of the PVE and CVE state programs which will lead to a more efficient, better monitored, and more successful rehabilitation program based on an improved central methodology.

Within this research I attempted to make the following three contributions to the theory:

1) Design and implementation of de-radicalization of women: empirical evidence shows that de-radicalization is not "a one size fits all", each level of radicalization depends on a case by case basis, for example due to regional diversity, and the availability of center's resources to be able to modify women's ideology and behavior; it provides empirical evidence that the low rates of successful deradicalization programs can be associated with the policy's faulty design (criminal justice bias and emphasis on deterrence and punishment) and improper implementation (lack of funding and expertise, improvisation at the local level as well as further marginalization instead of socialization). Interviews with the heads of rehabilitation

centers highlight the importance of including social support in rehabilitation. Absence of a single body and policy responsible to control and guide rehabilitation on the ground leads to corruption and misuse of funds.

2) Following on from this claim, deradicalization and rehabilitation of religious radicals are effective in the long term only when they are supported and advanced by broader society, not only by the state or security officials. Therefore, marginalization and stigmatization of persons following unpopular religions should be reduced.

3) My analysis of the two state programs shows that gender bias is present in the design of the policy and in its implementation, because the state does not see deradicalization of women to be different from men, and thus the non-inclusion of any gender in the programs rests on the practice of these centers that have mostly worked with radical males in prisons – institutions, which have been built for men. Therefore, women-centered and women-staffed rehabilitation centers are needed for effective deradicalization and rehabilitation of women.

In short, I agree with recommendations of the UN Women report and the IOM report, reviewed in Chapter 2, that making deradicalization and rehabilitation of women effective requires redefinition of gender roles in Kazakhstani society by empowering women instead of treating them as threatening and unwanted.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Acessibility of the Rehabilitation Centers in Kazakhstan

Name	Address/Region	Accessibility
1. Public Foundation: Information-consultative group "Perspective"	Almaty +77272619580 +7727 3933172 http://www.perspektiva-group.kz/	Unavailable and a wrong number The center no longer operates URL does not work
2. Public Foundation: "Center for Assistance to Victims of Destructive Religious Religions of Almaty Region"	Taldykorgan, Almaty region +77282242425	Was transferred given a different number, of Taldykorgan's akimat for further inquiries about local tender

3. Public Foundation "Center for Assistance to Victims of Destructive Religious Movements"	Kokshetau, Akmola region 87162780193	Consultation are accessible via phone. Consultations are accessible physically on the ground
4. Public Foundation "Center for Assistance to Victims of Destructive Religious Religions in Atyrau Oblast"	Atyrau, Atyray region West 87122324014	Unavailable
5. Public Association "Center for Religious-Psychological and Legal Consultation"	Karagandy 870269785990 www.stop-sekta.kz	No assistance Private numbers belong to new owners URL works
6. Public Foundation "Nur-Mura"	Shymkent, Southern Kazakhstan 87252339251	No answer
7. Public Association "Investigation of aggressive cults"	Taraz, Zhambyl region South 87262436283	Not operating Stopped working in this field 3 years ago
8. Public "Association of practicing psychologists of Kazakhstan"	Kostanay North 87142547379 87142540955 87773020420	Referred to a different center: 87142540955 - No answer
9. Non-governmental institution: Center for Social Research and Center for Social and Psychological Aid " Victoria" - for victims of destructive sects	Karagandy North 87212515128, 8-702-401-53-20;	No answer when calling the Hot line
10. Public Association "Insight – Koz zhetu"	Petropavlovsk North-east 87152462188 8777 2868123	No response/unavailable

11. Public Association "Ikhtiyar"	Aktobe, Aktyubinsk Province +77132214344	Unavailable/ cell phone numbers owned by new owners
12. Public Association "Edinstvo"	Ust-Kamenogorsk Western +77232261829	Unavailable
13. Private Institution: Information-Consultative Center "Zharyk "	Aktobe West 87132546768	No answer
14. Public Opinion Center "Aina"	Aktau, Mangystau region 87292500546,	No answer
15. Republican Rehabilitation Center "Ak Niet"	Astana +77776586767	Yes, when calling the director Hard to find, reside in anonymous apartment blocks
16. Analytical center "Ansar"	Aktobe +77132744750	Offers assistance via hotline and on the ground
17. Center for Assistance to Victims of Destructive Religious Religions "Shapagat"	Atyrau +77122329259 Akimat's hotline +77122467473 https://bit.ly/2HwVK5A	Called the akimat, consultants were at a conference at 14:13 on April 26th. One can come physically for the consulltation but was warned that everyone is on a working trip and will be available on Saturday along with experts from Shapagat
18. Public Association "Nurly Bilim"	Karaganda +77212784342	Online and physical consultations

Appendix 2. Bias in the Media Stories about Deradicalization in Kazakhstan

#	Agency	Media Type	Date	URL	Cooptation, Ban or Propaganda?
1	Kazakh TV	State owned	11.01.16	https://bit.ly/2qYhFwy	Propaganda of state efforts in addressing DR through DR centers; Criminal justice bias – convicted for using online propaganda
2	Forbes Kz	Foreign	25.07.17	https://bit.ly/2DBmHqM	The portrait of a radical has not changed since 2013; Propaganda and agitation used as main tools; Mechanism of DR are being "hidden"
3	Azzatyq	Foreign	25.07.17	https://bit.ly/2tFBmMU	Marginalization of wives and children of convicted radicals: placed on black list, being monitored and checked on; No financial or social help from the state
4	Kazislam	State owned	14.08.14	https://bit.ly/2Jt9z5K	Counter-propaganda of radical ideology through consultations and psychological, theological and legal in DR centers
5	Zakon.kz		17.07. 17	https://bit.ly/2FhUvFH	Individual DR programs are implemented in DR center "Victoria", where people also get legal assistance to receive documentation to get state benefits and to be trained for jobs
6	Tengri news	Quasi State owned	29.01.18	https://bit.ly/2DMxrmx	State plans to ban students of religious studies to receive their education abroad
7	Aktobe Times	State owned	30.04.16	https://bit.ly/2Jv43zJ	Woman convicted for attempting to recruit people into a terrorist cell and for

					spreading radical propaganda
8	Aktobe Times	State owned	03.11.17	https://bit.ly/2q ZIwIf	Local variation: Authorities in Aktobe employed 10 former radical females and wives of convicted radicals to sew clothes for kindergartens; Pull factor of de-radicalization
9	Moi Gorod	State owned	14.11.17	http://mgorod.k z/nitem/v-atyrau-39-uchenic-ne-puskayut-v-shkolu-iz-za-nosheniya-platka/	The city has a list of parents who belong to alternative traditions; their children – girls, are not allowed to wear hijabs to school according to the law; The parents will have to pay a fine
10	KTK	Quasi	14.11.17	https://bit.ly/2q ZZs1o	No single body is willing to respond to the woman returnee from Syria, no clear information what awaits her – trial or rehabilitation
11	Central-Asia news	Regiona l	27.11.17	https://bit.ly/2Jt YOjo	The state is working on a cyber-security document against extremist propaganda, currently monitors and bans concerning literature online
12	Tengri news	Quasi	20.03.15	https://bit.ly/2K dPrpk	The state announces increasing radicalization of women, separate propaganda work is announced to work with this "risk group" – "Women and religion" seminars and "Kyz zhibek" clubs
13	NIAC	State institutio n	11.11.16	https://bit.ly/2K g3pa9	Propaganda of women's involvement in public life as a counter-radicalization effort; use of "feminization of extremism" in Kazakhstan's context
14	Almaty TV	State	29.01.18	https://bit.ly/2Jv	Propaganda of radical females

				bt63	as careless and brutal mothers and thus breaking the traditional and family norms of Kazakhstan's society
15	Aktobe Times	State owned	02.03.18	https://bit.ly/2H U7jYa	Propaganda of tragic consequences of female radicalization