



The Religious and Social Logic of Terrorism Financing

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Abstract

Terrorism persists not simply because of its violence or ideology but because the networks that sustain it are embedded in the everyday relations of markets, politics and faith. This article analyzes the social logic of terrorism financing by integrating sociological theory with recent research on the



misuse of charity, informal value transfer systems and digital currencies. Empirical evidence from Kazakhstan and Central Asia is combined with international examples of *hawala* systems, crowdfunding platforms and cryptocurrency campaigns. The study highlights three levels of analysis: micro-level interpersonal trust and kinship ties, meso-level religious and ethnic communities, and macro-level transnational networks supported by states and ideologues. The findings underscore the need for counterterrorism policies that address social and theological drivers alongside financial controls. Religious literacy, interfaith dialogue and inclusive economic development are identified as critical components of sustainable prevention. This study reconceptualizes terrorism financing as a morally legitimized social process by showing how religious obligation and social capital translate trust into transnational resource flows.

Keywords: terrorism, financing, social logic, religion, risk society, cultural capital, theology, radicalization, Bourdieu, Žižek

Introduction

Terrorist campaigns rely on steady funding to plan attacks, purchase weapons, pay operatives, spread propaganda and maintain safe havens. Estimates suggest that between US \$500 billion and \$1.5 trillion of illicit money is laundered annually, while the “budget” of global terrorism is between five and twenty billion dollars (Napoleoni, 2003). Much of this money flows through opaque channels in the informal economy (Makarenko, 2004). Public and academic debates often frame financing as a technical problem of tracing cash or blockchain transactions, yet sociological and theological perspectives show that money moves because it is embedded in social relations and moral frameworks. Religiously motivated donors may believe they are fulfilling a sacred duty by supporting an insurgency, and intermediaries can cloak transfers in charity (Albrecht & Osei, 2021). Analyses that ignore these dynamics risk treating symptoms rather than causes. The purpose of this article is to identify the social determinants of terrorism financing and to explain their ideological and religious underpinnings. We treat financing not as an autonomous criminal enterprise but as a multilayered social process shaped by kinship, cultural capital, theological narratives and risk governance. We employ Bourdieu’s theory of capitals, which emphasizes that economic, cultural and symbolic resources circulate through social fields (Bourdieu, 1986), Beck’s concept of the risk society, which argues that modern societies are preoccupied with managing hazards they themselves create (Beck, 1992), and Žižek’s differentiation between subjective, systemic and divine violence (Žižek, 2008). These frameworks allow us to theorize how financing operates across micro, meso and macro levels. Religious actors play a dual role in this process. On the one hand, religious charities, mosques and pilgrimage networks have been exploited by extremist groups to collect donations and move funds (FATF, 2015). On the other hand, theologians and grassroots believers are crucial for countering radical narratives and delegitimizing violence (Orynbeckov, 2024). The argument here is not that religions *cause* terrorism but that religious authority and symbolism can be instrumentalized in the service of political projects (Agbibo, 2021). Throughout the article we illustrate these points with examples from Kazakhstan and Central Asia as well as comparative cases from Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

The scope of this article is twofold. Substantively, it seeks to integrate sociological and theological analyses of terrorism financing. Methodologically, it combines theory with empirical data from financial monitoring agencies, media reports and scholarly research. It is not a comprehensive survey of all financing techniques; instead, it focuses on how social relations and religious ideas legitimize and facilitate the flow of money to violent actors.



Methods

This study adopts a qualitative, multi-method approach that integrates both theoretical frameworks and empirical data. Three analytical lenses are synthesized to examine terrorism financing: Pierre Bourdieu's concept of social and symbolic capital, which explains how cultural and religious credentials confer authority in social fields (Bourdieu, 1986); Ulrich Beck's risk society thesis, which highlights how modern hazards and insecurities reshape behavior (Beck, 1992); and Slavoj Žižek's typology distinguishing subjective, systemic and "divine" violence (Žižek, 2008). These theories inform a multilayered analysis at the micro, meso and macro levels. Empirically, the research draws on secondary data from financial monitoring agencies, legal statutes, media reports and scholarly literature. Key sources include Kazakhstan's financial intelligence unit reports and case studies of illicit funding schemes in Central Asia (Abdulkarimova & Aubakirov, 2019; Bismanov, Muratjan, & Akimzhanov, 2013). Comparative data from international organizations such as the Financial Action Task Force and United Nations provide statistics and typologies of financing methods (FATF, 2015; United Nations CTED, 2022).

Qualitative case studies were used to examine specific incidents: for example, diaspora donations to conflict zones, the exploitation of COVID-19 relief charities by extremist networks, traditional hawala transfers that move funds without formal banking, and online campaigns soliciting cryptocurrency for militant causes (Basit & Fatima, 2021; Passas, 2007; Uwhoreye & Adekunle, 2025). These cases illustrate how interpersonal trust, notions of religious duty and group identity inform financial flows. Triangulating multiple sources and perspectives helped mitigate biases and ensure a robust understanding. The expanded analysis also incorporates a socio-legal review of counter-terrorism financing frameworks and cross-regional comparisons to situate the Central Asian findings within global trends. Case selection followed two criteria: (1) credible public documentation (FIU/IO reports, court cases, and peer-reviewed studies) and (2) clear linkage to the micro/meso/macro framework. Kazakhstan and Central Asia function as an analytic case showing how post-Soviet religious regulation, migration ties, and informal economies shape both donor motivations and concealment practices; comparative cases test whether the same social mechanisms recur elsewhere.

Results

Micro-level: trust, kinship and religious obligation – At the micro level, terrorism financing relies on interpersonal relationships built on trust, reciprocity and shared belief. Donations are often solicited within families, clans or small religious circles where economic transactions are intertwined with moral obligations. In Kazakhstan, investigations revealed that relatives of militants transferred money for travel and equipment under the guise of family support (Bismanov et al., 2013).

Similar patterns have been documented in diasporic communities across Europe and the Gulf, where remittances to conflict zones are justified as almsgiving (*zakāt*) or obligatory charity. The U.S. Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) advisory on informal value transfer systems notes that *hawala* brokers operate on trust and reputation: a client deposits funds with a local broker, who instructs a counterpart abroad to pay the beneficiary, leaving minimal paper trail (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2003). This traditional system is attractive to those seeking anonymity and resonates with long-standing mechanisms of mutual aid (Passas, 2007).



Religious narratives amplify these ties. Extremist recruiters frame contributions as acts of piety, promising spiritual rewards for financing *jihad* (Soliev, 2023). Misinterpreted notions of martyrdom and divine mandate persuade individuals that donating to violence is morally superior to supporting secular charities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, groups in South Asia and the Middle East launched appeals for relief funds that were ultimately diverted to extremist causes (Basit & Fatima, 2021). The moral imperative to help co-religionists in times of hardship made some donors less critical of where funds actually ended up. Notably, studies of terrorist networks have found that bonds of kinship and friendship often underpin recruitment and support, reinforcing the importance of micro-social dynamics (Sageman, 2004).

Meso-level: religious communities, charities and symbolic capital – At the meso level, terrorist financiers exploit institutions that command high symbolic capital – mosques, madrasas, churches and charitable NGOs. Religious leaders possess the authority to certify projects as legitimate and to mobilize congregations. Case studies from Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia show how seemingly reputable charities have channeled funds to militant groups in Syria and Yemen (Giraldo & Trinkunas, 2007). In India, certain fringe organizations solicited donations for ostensibly cultural projects that in fact financed anti-minority violence (Albrecht & Osei, 2021). In many countries, philanthropic organizations are exempt from strict financial scrutiny, making them attractive conduits for illicit donations.

Social capital within congregations further accelerates fundraising. For example, a trusted community intermediary may pool small donations after prayers or via a closed messaging group and then move funds through a hawala broker or informal courier, leaving little formal documentation. According to sociological theory, social capital derives from membership in a network and produces mutual obligations and solidarities (Ritzer & Stepnizki, 2018). In tight-knit religious communities, donors trust that their contributions will be used for pious purposes, and potential whistleblowers risk ostracism if they question the use of funds.

This creates opportunities for intermediaries to siphon money to extremist clients under the cover of community charity. Crowdfunding platforms have extended these dynamics into the digital sphere: a 2022 Project CRAAFT briefing warned that radical groups use popular online crowdfunding sites to camouflage their fundraising campaigns among legitimate causes (Reimer & Redhead, 2022). Regulations targeting major financiers may miss the many small contributions that collectively sustain violence.

Macro-level: transnational networks, technology and state involvement – At the macro level, terrorism financing is embedded in transnational networks that connect wealthy patrons, diaspora communities, front companies, banks and even cryptocurrencies. Some states tacitly support militant proxies for ideological or geopolitical reasons, while others turn a blind eye to fundraisers operating within their borders (Napoleoni, 2003). Transnational charities and humanitarian organizations have at times been infiltrated by extremist elements, enabling funds to cross borders under the guise of relief efforts (United Nations CTED, 2022). The Financial Action Task Force reports that crowdfunding sites, online games and payment processors are increasingly used to raise and move money beyond regulators' reach (FATF, 2023). Digital currencies add another layer: the Islamic State's Khorasan Province reportedly received cryptocurrency donations ranging from a few dollars to tens of thousands, which were laundered through both regulated and high-risk exchanges (TRM Labs, 2025).



The *risk society* framework helps to explain why these networks continually evolve. As governments impose stricter controls on banks and charities, financiers shift to technologies and informal channels that reduce their exposure. Meanwhile, the systemic violence of inequality and marginalization can drive sympathizers to support groups that promise justice or empowerment, whether framed in secular or religious terms (Freeman, 2016). Without addressing these structural grievances, enhanced financial surveillance may merely displace the problem. Indeed, research on the crime–terror nexus shows that terrorist organizations can adapt by engaging in or partnering with organized crime to fund their activities, blurring the line between ideological and criminal enterprises (Makarenko, 2004; Marrero Rocha & Ruipérez Canales, 2022).

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that terrorism financing cannot be reduced to the technicalities of money laundering; it is a social process anchored in trust, identity and theological narratives. Bourdieu's theory of capitals helps explain how symbolic and cultural resources confer legitimacy on financial flows – donors contribute not only money but also status and recognition to those who mobilize them (Bourdieu, 1986). The risk society thesis underscores the adaptive nature of financing networks under regulatory pressure (Beck, 1992).

Žižek's analysis reminds us that violence must be understood in context: financial support for extremism is often seen by its perpetrators as a response to perceived injustices or as the fulfillment of a sacred duty (Žižek, 2008). Religious ideas occupy an ambivalent place in this landscape. On one hand, as noted by analysts of violent extremist movements, organizations such as Boko Haram, Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood blend utopian visions, collectivist identity and claims of divine mandate to inspire their followers (Agbibo, 2021). The capacity of such groups to inspire donors stems from deeply rooted beliefs that transcend rational cost–benefit calculations. Yet religion also offers resources for peace and resilience. Interfaith dialogues and gender-inclusive community programs can empower women and moderate faith leaders to challenge extremist narratives (OSCE, 2013).

International bodies like the OSCE have urged governments and civil society to expose false religious pretexts and promote cooperation among faith communities to curb extremist funding (OSCE, 2002). A robust theological critique of terrorism – grounded in scripture and mainstream jurisprudence – can further undermine the legitimacy of fundraising appeals that misuse religion.

Building on these insights, several policy and practical implications emerge regarding how societies can combat the financing of terrorism: Legal Frameworks and Anti-Terrorism Financing Laws: Central Asian states and the international community have developed extensive legal frameworks to criminalize and punish terrorist financing. In Kazakhstan, for example, Article 258 of the Criminal Code explicitly outlaws the financing of terrorist or extremist activities, and dedicated anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) laws provide the legal basis for identifying and freezing illicit assets (Bismanov et al., 2013; Abdulkarimova & Aubakirov, 2019).

These efforts are part of a broader global regime initiated by the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (1999) and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001), which obliged all states to criminalize terrorism financing and cooperate in preventing it (United Nations CTED, 2022). In response, countries around the world have established legal and institutional mechanisms – from specialized financial monitoring units to regulations on non-profit organizations – to detect and disrupt suspect transactions.



Within Central Asia, Kazakhstan and its neighbors aligned their national laws with FATF recommendations and underwent mutual evaluations by the Eurasian Group (EAG) to improve compliance (Abdulkarimova & Aubakirov, 2019). Globally, instruments such as targeted financial sanctions, asset forfeiture, and cross-border financial intelligence sharing have become standard tools to combat terrorism financing. However, implementing these measures remains challenging in regions with limited regulatory capacity or high levels of corruption. Even where strong laws exist on paper, enforcement can be uneven.

The adaptability of terrorist financiers means that legal frameworks must be continually updated – for instance, to cover newer modalities like crowdfunding and cryptocurrency – and applied in coordination across jurisdictions.

Strengthening the rule of law and closing legislative loopholes, both nationally and internationally, is essential for reducing the space in which terrorist financiers operate (FATF, 2015). In practice, closing loopholes is uneven because FIU capacity, legal harmonization, and corruption risks vary across jurisdictions; however, incremental gains are realistic through risk-based NPO oversight and stronger cross-border financial intelligence sharing. Still, legal measures alone cannot suffice if they are not coupled with community trust and human intelligence; overly aggressive enforcement without outreach may drive financial activity further underground. Digital Surveillance and Financial Intelligence Units: Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) and digital surveillance technologies play an increasingly central role in identifying terrorism financing networks. FIUs – specialized agencies that receive and analyze reports of suspicious financial activity – have been established in over 150 countries and cooperate through the Egmont Group to share intelligence.

These units are investing in advanced data analytics and network analysis techniques to map the complex webs of transactions that might indicate terrorist financing (Leuprecht & Walther, 2018). Social network analysis of financial data can help reveal clusters of donors and intermediaries that would not be apparent through isolated transaction reports. For example, a pattern of frequent small transfers from disparate locations to a common beneficiary might be flagged by algorithms where traditional oversight would miss it. Private sector tools and public-private partnerships are also proving vital: blockchain analytics firms have helped trace cryptocurrency flows linked to ISIS and other groups (Chainalysis, 2021).

Machine learning and artificial intelligence are being deployed to detect anomalies in financial behavior that could signal extremist fundraising. Nevertheless, significant challenges remain. As one recent study notes, gaps in intelligence sharing and lack of regulatory harmonization across borders hinder the global response (Uwihoreye & Adegunle, 2025). Terrorist financiers exploit jurisdictions with weaker surveillance and move funds through encrypted or informal channels where digital monitoring struggles to penetrate. This calls for greater international cooperation and capacity-building so that all countries' FIUs, including those in Central Asia, can effectively utilize digital surveillance tools. It also raises civil liberties concerns: governments must balance aggressive monitoring with privacy rights and guard against misuse of financial surveillance.

Overall, empowering FIUs with technology, training and inter-agency collaboration can significantly enhance the detection of illicit finance, provided these powers are exercised judiciously.



Community-Level Resilience and Prevention Strategies: Countering the social logic of terrorist financing requires bottom-up strategies. For example, mosque committees and local councils can publicly vet fundraising campaigns, publish simple receipts/reports, and run short awareness sessions on how to verify charities before donating (OSCE, 2002; Orynbeckov, 2024).that build resilience within communities. Many donors who support extremist causes do so because they are swayed by narratives of grievance or religious duty circulating in their social milieu. To prevent such radicalization of charitable giving, grassroots engagement is key.

Programs that improve religious literacy and promote moderate interpretations of faith can inoculate communities against extremist propaganda (Orynbeckov, 2024).

For instance, educational initiatives in Kazakhstan’s schools and mosques aim to teach critical thinking and authentic theological principles that debunk the distortions used by recruiters. Empowering local religious leaders to speak out against violent interpretations of *jihad* or martyrdom has proven effective in undercutting the moral appeal of terrorist fundraising.

Another important strategy is fostering open dialogue and trust between authorities and civil society. When community members understand the risks of unwittingly funding extremists – for example, through unvetted charities or informal collections – they are more likely to exercise caution or report suspicious activities. Civil society organizations, including youth groups and women’s associations, can be partners in spreading awareness about the legal and ethical implications of terror financing. Economic development and social inclusion initiatives also play a preventative role: by addressing underlying grievances such as poverty, unemployment and political exclusion, these efforts reduce the pool of people who might view violent movements as the only solution to their community’s challenges.

International bodies emphasize that a “whole-of-society” approach is needed, integrating counter-terrorist financing measures with broader countering violent extremism (CVE) programs (Uwihoreye & Adekunle, 2025). For example, the OSCE and UN have recommended multi-stakeholder coordination where law enforcement works alongside educators, religious scholars and social workers to intercept extremist influence at the source (OSCE, 2002). Ultimately, strengthening community resilience – through education, interfaith cooperation and socioeconomic support – diminishes the fertile ground in which extremist financiers recruit their donors and couriers.

Role of Women in Counter-Radicalization and Charitable Oversight: Women have a critical yet sometimes underappreciated role in countering the financing of terrorism. As mothers, spouses, educators and community organizers, women are often well placed to notice early signs of radicalization and intervene before individuals become involved in illicit activities. Counter-radicalization programs in Central Asia and elsewhere have begun to specifically engage women – for instance, “Mothers’ Schools” and women’s mentorship networks – to build vigilance and resilience at the family level. Women leaders in religious and charitable organizations can also serve as a bulwark against extremist exploitation. Research and policy forums highlight that when women participate in the governance of mosques, Islamic charities or local NGOs, there is often greater transparency and accountability in how funds are collected and spent (OSCE, 2013).

This is partly because extremist movements (especially those with misogynistic ideologies) tend to sideline women; therefore, elevating women’s voices in community decision-making can help detect and prevent the covert channeling of resources to violent groups. International initiatives have recognized the empowerment of women as a key component of preventing violent extremism, including its financing.



The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, for example, has implemented programs in the Sahel region to strengthen women's roles in community vigilance against terrorism financing (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2023). Of course, women can also be perpetrators or facilitators in some cases – for instance, women have served as fundraisers and propagandists for certain terrorist organizations.

Thus, gender-responsive approaches to counter-terrorism financing must address both sides and they must counter female radicalization and recruitment by extremists, while also leveraging the positive influence of women as peacebuilders and watchdogs in their communities. In practice, this means ensuring that counter-financing policies and outreach efforts are inclusive of women's perspectives and that barriers to women's participation in the security sector and civil society are removed. By treating women as equal partners in designing and implementing prevention strategies, societies gain a powerful ally in disrupting the social networks that sustain terrorist financing.

Comparative Case Studies from Other Regions

Although this study focuses on Central Asia, the religious and social logics of terrorism financing observed there have parallels in many other parts of the world. A brief look at other regions illustrates both common patterns and unique contextual factors:

Africa: This region is analytically useful because weak governance and conflict economies often allow militants to blend religious-duty narratives with coercive taxation and criminal revenue. Terrorist organizations in Africa have long leveraged local grievances, transnational kinship ties and informal economies to fund their activities.

For example, Boko Haram in Nigeria has raised money through a combination of local donations (often justified by members as *zakat* for defending Islam), kidnapping ransoms, and contributions from sympathizers across the border in Cameroon and Niger (Agbiboa, 2021). In East Africa, al-Shabaab in Somalia has effectively "taxed" communities under its control and skimmed funds from Islamic charities and Somali diaspora remittances.

These groups exploit the strong communal obligations and religious solidarity in their societies – the same social capital that binds communities can be manipulated to extract resources for violence. At the same time, weak state oversight and pervasive informal trade (such as smuggling networks) in some African regions facilitate the movement of cash and goods that benefit extremists.

The adaptability seen in Central Asian networks is mirrored in Africa: when Kenyan banks tightened regulations, al-Shabaab shifted to cash couriers and *hawala* transfers; when certain charities were banned, new front organizations emerged. This underscores that the fight against terror financing in Africa, as elsewhere, must combine financial controls with efforts to address the underlying conflicts and governance issues that militants exploit (Agbiboa, 2021).

Southeast Asia: This region shows how long-standing religious networks and charities intersect with newer online fundraising tools, offering a useful comparison for institutional and digital pathways. The financing of terrorism in Southeast Asia reveals a mixture of international linkage and local innovation. Groups like Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) in Indonesia and Malaysia built on pre-existing religious study circles and charitable foundations to raise money, often receiving sizable infusions from Middle Eastern donors and Al-Qaeda during the early 2000s (Lakshmi, 2022).



Before the 2002 Bali bombings, JI operatives funded their operations through a blend of licit and illicit means: businesses and membership dues on one hand, and on the other hand robberies and cash funneled from abroad via couriers (Lakshmi, 2022). More recently, Islamic State affiliates in Southeast Asia have used social media and online platforms to solicit support under the guise of humanitarian campaigns for conflict zones like Syria or the Southern Philippines. The region's experience demonstrates the continuity of certain tactics – for instance, charities and close associates remain key sources – as well as shifts to new platforms as technology advances.

Southeast Asian governments, in response, have bolstered their legal regimes and banking surveillance, but they face the challenge of widespread use of cash and the need to coordinate across a diverse region. The social dimension is evident in cases like the 2019 revelations that several Indonesian charitable organizations were fronts for extremists; these entities relied on the public's trust and religious obligation to give *sedekah* (alms), highlighting the importance of community awareness in disrupting such schemes (Lakshmi, 2022).

Latin America: This region highlights the crime-terror convergence in porous border zones and diaspora-linked fundraising, illustrating how illicit markets can subsidize ideological violence. While Latin America has not been a primary theater for Islamist terrorism, it has nevertheless been an important region for terrorist financing activities, especially via the convergence of terrorism and organized crime. A well-documented example is the Tri-Border Area of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay, which has a large Middle Eastern diaspora population and a history of weak financial oversight. Islamist groups such as Hizballah (Hezbollah) have leveraged local businesses, charities and the illicit trade in this region to generate funds that are sent back to the Middle East (Giraldo & Trinkunas, 2007). Funds are raised through means like the proceeds of counterfeit goods, drug trafficking revenues, or donations collected from community members under the pretense of religious charity. The profits are then laundered through currency exchanges or bulk cash smuggling. These activities persist in part because corrupt officials and porous borders make the Tri-Border Area a relatively safe haven for underground finance.

Latin American insurgent groups provide another comparative point: organizations such as the FARC in Colombia, while Marxist-Leninist (not religious) in ideology, sustained themselves through social and familial networks involved in narcotics trafficking – again demonstrating that strong communal or clan ties can underpin financing (Makarenko, 2004). The Latin American cases reiterate that wherever regulation is lax and communities have cross-border linkages, terrorist or criminal financiers will find opportunities. They also show that terrorist financing is not confined to any one religion or ideology – the methods often reflect pragmatic exploitation of whatever social and economic structures are available in a given locale.

Conclusion

Terrorism financing is inseparable from the social and religious worlds in which it is embedded. Money flows through kinship networks, congregations and digital platforms because donors believe in a cause and trust intermediaries. Purely economic or law-enforcement measures alone cannot disrupt these streams as long as they retain moral legitimacy in the eyes of participants.



Comprehensive strategies must therefore combine financial surveillance with social and theological interventions: strengthening religious education, supporting interfaith dialogue, addressing systemic injustices and investing in community resilience (Orynbeckov, 2024; Uwihoreye & Adekunle, 2025). By understanding the religious and social logic of financing, policymakers and scholars can design more nuanced and humane approaches that protect security without stigmatizing entire faith communities. Ultimately, cutting off the financial lifeblood of terrorism requires cutting off the moral legitimization that sustains it.

Limitations and Future Research: Like many studies on illicit networks, this analysis has limitations that must be acknowledged. It relies heavily on secondary data and publicly reported cases; truly clandestine financing techniques likely remain hidden from view. The focus on Kazakhstan and Central Asia provides regional specificity but may not capture all dynamics present in other contexts. Additionally, establishing causal linkages between broad factors (like poverty or education) and individuals' propensity to fund terrorism is challenging – indeed, evidence for a direct connection is mixed (Krueger & Malečková, 2003). Future research should incorporate ethnographic fieldwork within affected communities to gain first-hand insight into why and how people become involved in financing terrorism.

Engaging theologians from diverse religious traditions could enrich understanding of how faith doctrines are misused or can be mobilized for peace. Further study is also warranted on the impact of emerging technologies such as non-fungible tokens, decentralized finance (DeFi) platforms, and other fintech innovations that might be exploited by terrorist financiers. Finally, researchers should evaluate the effectiveness of new counter-measures – for example, stricter non-profit oversight or women-led prevention initiatives – in different cultural settings. Such studies would help refine global strategies to ensure they are both effective and respectful of the communities they intend to protect.

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