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SPECIAL OVERVIEW PAPER

RAN Families, Communities & Social Care Working Group

RAN Activities on Families, Communities and Social Care

Introduction

This is a document on the key themes of the RAN Families, Communities & Social Care (FC&S) Working Group. These key themes are all topics related to:

- working with families and supporting family workers;
- working with communities and supporting community workers;
- supporting social care practitioners.

The RAN FC&S Working Group constituency comprises family and community workers as well as social care practitioners. It is currently chaired by Milla Perukangas (Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, Finn Church Aid, Finland) and Angela Antonova (Bulgarian Association of Social Workers; Network of Psychologists, Bulgaria). This working group was established in 2020 and combines efforts of the previous Youth, Families and Communities Working Group (co-chaired by Werner Prinzjakowitsch and Kelly Simcock (until July 2019) and Milla Perukangas (from July 2019 on)) and the Health and Social Care Working Group (co-chaired by Sergej Erdelja and René Zegerius).

This paper elaborates on how the key themes have been addressed by RAN throughout its existence. It includes the meetings and activities, papers, practices, and key lessons learned and recommendations identified around the three key themes. In addition, it indicates gaps that need further exploration. The paper will first elaborate on RAN activities dedicated to working with and supporting families, communities and social workers, after which it will focus on separate efforts made to support these types of practitioners.

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Main theme: Family and community support

This chapter will focus on general lessons learned and recommendations and is divided into three subthemes related to why we should work more with families and communities, how to involve and prepare communities and families in dealing with radicalised and terrorist offenders released from prison, and the role of informal actors in delivering counter- and alternative narratives.

Subtheme: Why work more with families and communities in general?

An individual's close social network is crucial in prevention, intervention and reintegration, and both families and communities are therefore key actors in this, for example, by detecting worrying signs of radicalisation. Families and communities can act as important agents of change and can provide enormous support structures for radicalised individuals who may be having doubts.

Meetings and papers

- RAN YF&C [Kick-off meeting](#), Munich, 28 January 2016. This was the first RAN YF&C meeting, which both discussed topics and established the long-term agenda of this working group and its concrete deliverables.
- RAN meeting [High-Level Conference](#), Brussels, 4 November 2019. This conference centred on the viewing of *Le Jeune Ahmed* and focused on four themes identified in the film, amongst which were family and community support.

Practices

[Fair Skills – youth cultural peer training – and the European Fair Skills approach \(Cultures Interactive\), Berlin \(Germany\)](#): This practice reaches out to young people from various at-risk communities, brings them together in one external facility, and trains them as youth-cultural workshop facilitators in a peer-learning setting (three 1-week workshops). These young, trained peer facilitators then return to their communities, form a Fair Skill youth team and hold workshops themselves. Throughout this process the young people are still coached by the Cultures Interactive team. Hence, (youth) cultures are engaged in a way that has interactive, preventive and deradicalising/rehabilitative impact with challenging groups of young people at risk.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- Strengthening the right bonds with peers and family members can provide an alternative network to the radicalised individual.
- Community engagement should be in place routinely and not just implemented after a problem arises.
- Local communities as a whole need to be upscaled; they need to be provided with support from the national level and would benefit from regular collaborations with different stakeholders from civil society as well as at policy level.

Subtheme: How to involve and prepare communities and families in dealing with radicalised and terrorist offenders released from prison

Families and communities should be prepared for the released offender's return in order to contribute to their rehabilitation process. Practitioners face a number of challenges in working with released offenders and their social environment. The absence of family and social networks around an offender is one of them, as it allows extremist groups to fill the gap in the offender's life. Other challenges include a vulnerable family system, the negative role of the media, and difficulties in cooperation between prison, probation and family support services — where the latter exist. Examples of how to work around these challenges include working with mentors and partner organisations to help rebuild their social networks and extensive family therapy to deal with broken family bonds. In addition, regular meetings, coaching and mediation are important methods to use when increasing family and community acceptance. To be able to prepare a holistic rehabilitation plan for released offenders that includes communities, it is crucial to understand the community the offender is coming back to. This helps not only to gain

a general impression of the community but also to identify key role models who could be involved in the rehabilitation of the released offender (e.g. sports trainer, community or religious leader).

Meetings and papers

- RAN Rehabilitation Manual '[Rehabilitation of radicalised and terrorist offenders for first-line practitioners](#)', 2020. This manual offers guidance to first-line practitioners regarding the rehabilitation of radicalised and terrorist offenders inside as well as outside of prison.
- Policy & Practice event '[Radicalised and terrorist offenders released from prison: involving and preparing communities and families](#)', Helsinki, 19 September 2019. This meeting discussed the challenges of and recommendations on rehabilitation processes of radicalised and terrorist offenders as given by policymakers and practitioners.
- RAN P&P and RAN YF&C Working Groups' meeting '[Radicalised and terrorist offenders released from prison: Community and family acceptance](#)', Prague, 6-7 June 2019. This meeting discussed the return of released radicalised and terrorist offenders to society and the challenges this poses, such as assessing risks and needs and preparing families and communities around them.
- RAN P&P Working Group meeting '[The role of family and social networks in the rehabilitation of \(violent\) extremist and terrorist offenders](#)', Utrecht, 6-7 March 2018. This meeting explored the challenges in using family and social networks around (violent) extremist and terrorist offenders as a resource for rehabilitation.
- Cities Conference on Foreign Fighters travelling to Syria/Iraq, 28 August 2014. The conference provided participants with the opportunity to exchange views, insights and best practices from various European cities to tackle radicalisation and increasing foreign fighter travel.
- RAN INT/EXT Foreign Fighters: Working with Individuals, Families and Communities, Before, During and After Travel, 16-17 September 2013. The fourth RAN INT/EXT meeting focused on the work of practitioners in relation to European foreign fighters and the various activities being undertaken at community level.
- RAN INT/EXT Reintegrating foreign fighters with a focus on family support structures, 26-27 May 2012. The meeting was dedicated to discussing the foreign fighter phenomenon with a focus on family support structures for deradicalisation and healthcare for families.

Practices

- **[Social Net Conferencing \(Neustart\), Vienna \(Austria\)](#)**: Neustart organises social net conferences for teenagers and young adults in prison in order to develop a mandatory plan for their future after their release. The social net conference is organised by one or two coordinators, who set up the meeting between radicalised individuals and their social nets. The plan involves support from a range of professionals and the family, in which there is individual ownership of the plan.
- **[HAYAT Germany, Berlin \(Germany\)](#)**: HAYAT is a German counselling programme that has developed methods and approaches to advise and work with parents, families and friends of radicalised persons to prevent, delay or reverse the process of radicalisation. This knowledge and experience have been transferred to the realm of violent Islamist extremism, so that counselling is now available for parents, brothers and sisters, friends, teachers, employers, and anyone who has to deal with the at-risk of being or already radicalised person.
- **[The disengagement/re-engagement path \(CAPREV\), Brussels \(Belgium\)](#)**: Centre d'Aide et de Prise en charge de toute personne concernée par les Extrémismes et Radicalismes Violents (CAPREV) has developed services to work with, amongst others, violent extremist offenders and their family members. When they work with offenders, they use the life-story approach to understand the background and family dynamics of and protective factors for the offender and their environment. This analysis informs the development of a support and rehabilitation programme and engages in different areas of life (family members, schooling, employment, relationships) that can help the individual find a place and sense of identity within society.

- **Family Counselling – Support for parents of ‘foreign fighters’ or youths at risk to be radicalised (Violence Prevention Network), Berlin (Germany)**: This practice supports parents of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and guides them in their communication process with their radicalised children. Family Counselling is designed to support parents during both the absence of their children as FTFs and the return process of their radicalised children. After parents contact Family Counselling via a special hotline, the trainers arrange to meet them so as to address their fears and explain their options for action. The counselling aims to stabilise their relationship with the young person at hand, in order to start a guided deradicalisation process, and involves the entire social and family environment.
- **Coaching for imprisoned parents (part of Praefix R programme, IfGG), Berlin (Germany)**: Through a special coaching programme for imprisoned parents, the IfGG intends to prevent violent right-wing radicalisation amongst their children. In principle, all parents are welcome who wish to intensify or stabilise the relationship with their children and improve their parenting skills. This is where coaching starts and is focused: to support the clients to strengthen the parent–child relationship, to improve their child-raising competences, and to reflect their values and attitudes, in which their parenting is embedded.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- Informal actors such as families and key communities (such as friends, religious communities, and sports and youth clubs) can be supportive actors in the rehabilitation process. They can be included in assessing needs (to reduce stigmatisation) and provide offenders with a reality check on the receptiveness of society/their community to their release.
- Work with key role models to disengage the offender rather than working with the whole family or community. Role models from communities or families are reliable partners with a personal connection or background similar to the offender; involving too many individuals in the process may cause confusion.
- Prepare and counsel families and communities in dealing with the media, for example, by preparing statements with them, as this is often a big challenge for them.
- Practitioners must gain knowledge about the “social map” of the city in order to establish in which communities the (ex-)offender was involved and therefore which communities to involve. Ensure to really engage with these communities, for example, by identifying and involving important representatives.
- Take into account that family dynamics may change during incarceration, as prison affects these to a great extent and/or constellations can change by the time the individual returns.
- Dealing with vulnerabilities in the family and restoring family bonds takes time. Family support providers should be aware that different family members have different issues and wishes, and it is always challenging to balance these for the sake of a healthy family system. Multiple levels of support can be provided:
 - providing information that helps the family to deal with stress resulting from insecurities;
 - helping the family maintain a positive relationship with the offender.
- Helping the family deal with other issues, including psychological challenges and mental illnesses. Conflict resolution methods such as mediation and restorative justice processes with an external mediator can stimulate a (healing) dialogue between family and offender: discussing difficult topics and uneasy questions can help to identify potential worries of the family.

What needs to be further explored?

- How to prepare the public on the return of released radicalised and terrorist offenders.

There is still limited experience on how communities can be better involved in dealing with this.

Subtheme: What is the role of informal actors (e.g. families and communities) in delivering counter- and alternative narratives?

Counter- and alternative messages from people within the direct social context of a (radicalised or at-risk of being radicalised) person seem to have the most effect on them. On a local level, informal actors promote counter- or alternative narratives and alternative courses of action and therefore (un)consciously limit the space for extremists to recruit.

Meetings and papers

- RAN C&N Working Group meeting '[The role of Informal Actors in delivering effective counter- and alternative narratives](#)', Helsinki, 20-21 September 2018. This meeting discussed the role of informal actors in delivering counter- and alternative narratives and built on the outcomes and discussions of the group's earlier meetings, for example, on mental biases and how to involve peers in counter- and alternative narratives.
- Issue paper '[Developing counter- and alternative narratives together with local communities](#)', 15 October 2018. This issue paper sets out an argument for addressing counter- and alternative narratives with the input of local communities, and it identifies some advice for frontline practitioners based on academic literature, good practice examples and lessons learned from adjacent fields.

Practices

- **[Jamal al-Khatib – My Path! \(Turn\), Vienna \(Austria\)](#)**: Jamal al-Khatib is a practice example of an alternative narrative campaign developed with local communities. They use the methods 'Online-Streetwork' and biographical work. Developed by a network of youth workers, filmmakers, scholars of Islamic studies, young Muslims and non-Muslims, and formers, Jamal al-Khatib is rooted in the story of a young prisoner who left the jihadist subculture in Austria and who wanted to help others making the same mistakes. The videos are available on [YouTube](#).
- **[Manchester RADEQUAL Campaign, Manchester \(United Kingdom\)](#)**: The RADEQUAL Campaign in Manchester is aimed at uniting residents from across the city to tackle prejudice, hate and extremism. It does this by adopting a co-designing approach to problem solving between communities, voluntary and community sector organisations, and statutory agencies, using the following principles called the three Cs: Challenge (identifying and understanding concerns in communities), Connect (connecting communities), and Champion (championing Manchester's reputation for equality, inclusion and celebrating diversity). It includes, for example, podcasts, videos, exhibitions and poetry storytelling.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- Local communities are great natural sources of resilience. Seek to leverage existing assets in the community (youth groups, schools, places of worship) in the organisation of campaigns as strong offline calls to action. Partnerships with local communities can help to find the right messengers for a counter- or alternative narrative.
- Prioritise developing meaningful relationships with local communities built on trust, in order to do no harm. Take care to avoid stigmatisation, and aim for shared decision-making with local community stakeholders. (For more information, see for example this [list of dos and don'ts](#) for creating a shared identity and inclusive communication or the Youth Participation Ladder in this [paper](#) for effective shared decision-making.)
- When developing a counter- or alternative narrative campaign, it can be a good idea to first target informal actors with the campaign and communicate with them. They can then influence your target audience themselves.
- Be aware of a potential backfire effect: The moment one officially includes informal actors in a campaign, they might become "formalised" and be considered less credible.

Main theme: Families

This chapter will focus on specific themes that were addressed in the context of working with families and supporting family workers. It will first focus on how to work with families and support family workers and then focus on how to work with children growing up in extremist families, including child returnees.

Subtheme: How to work with families (and family workers)

When someone becomes radicalised and behaves in an extreme way, this does not only affect the person themselves, but also their family, friends, wider social circle and society. For vulnerable individuals and their social environment, prevention challenges are:

1. detecting those who are at risk of radicalisation;
2. being able to get into contact with them and support them and their families in a change of direction;
3. supporting both the individual and their family during the disengagement process.

RAN has developed a 10-step approach to working with families. This offers support and guidance to practitioners and policymakers responsible for the prevention of radicalisation and violent extremism in family settings, especially those involving (young) children. In [the RAN ex post paper 'Working with families and safeguarding children from radicalisation'](#), the 10 steps are explained and illustrated with practice examples. Fundamental principles that form the foundation of a good family support approach are also shared in this paper.

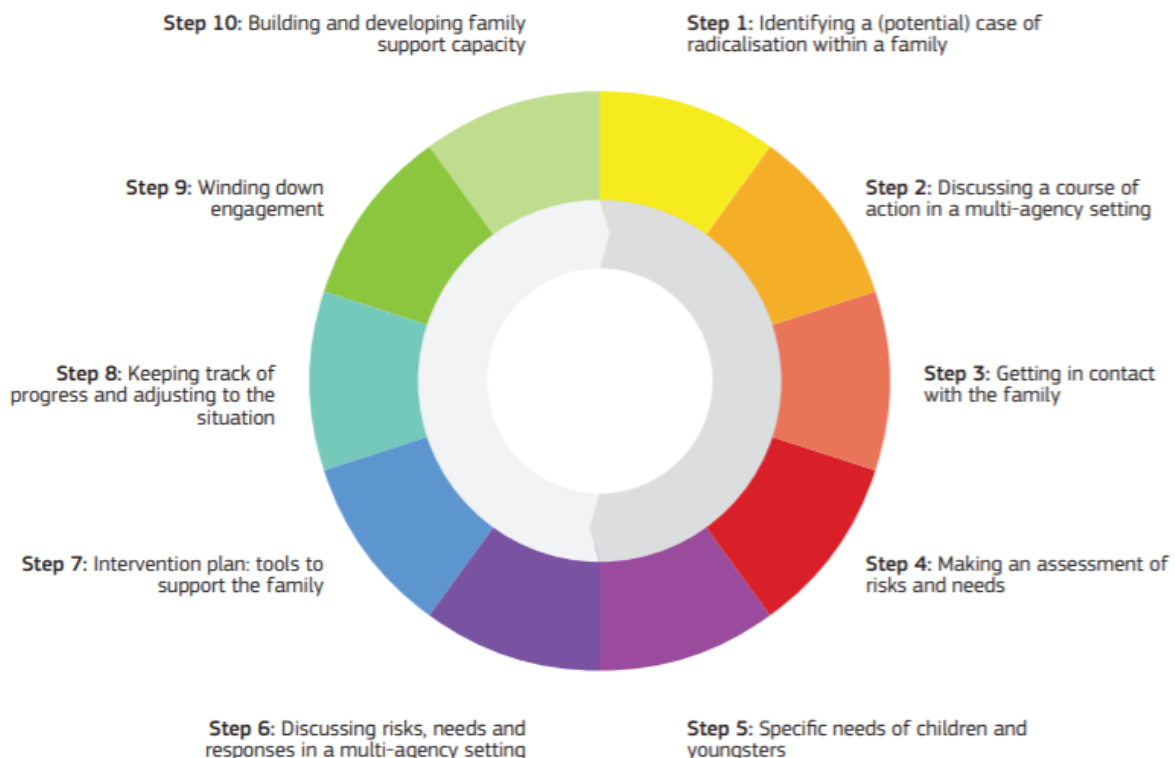


Figure 1: A 10-step approach to working with families

Meetings and papers

- RAN FC&S Working Group meeting '[Helplines and hotlines](#)', online meeting, 15-16 September 2020. This meeting discussed the different evolving trends and challenges for hotlines and helplines and explored how to work on effective communication, clear rules on confidentiality, and training and psychosocial support for practitioners.
- RAN FC&S Working Group meeting '[Challenges and solutions when working with families of foreign terrorist fighters](#)', online meeting, 29-30 June 2020. This meeting dealt with challenges that family members of FTFs are encountering in their daily lives, such as psychological issues, dealing with authorities, stigmatisation, and/or practical and legal issues, and practical tips for solution-focused support by practitioners in order to respond to these challenges.
- RAN POL Working Group meeting '[Police, families and family workers: How to foster closer engagement with families and family workers, and why](#)', Lisbon, 12-13 October 2017. This meeting brought together affected family members, family workers and police experts to see how they can cooperate together and inspire all to invest in this relationship.
- RAN YF&C and H&SC Working Groups' joint meeting '[Working with families and safeguarding children from radicalisation: Step-by-step guidance paper for practitioners and policy-makers](#)', Nice, 2-3 February 2017. This meeting aimed to discuss how to work with families in safeguarding children from radicalisation and providing recommendations for policymakers and practitioners.
- RAN YF&C Working Group meeting '[Family support: what works? Meeting on the role of family support in preventing and dealing with radicalisation in a family context](#)', Manchester, 29-30 September 2016. This meeting aimed to discuss why family support is important, when a security approach is needed and when a safeguarding approach, and how to build capacity in family support.

Practices

- **[Family support and strategic communication \(CAPRI\), Bordeaux \(France\)](#)**: This is a French organisation supporting families of, for example, FTFs, young people and practitioners. The association has set up support for families encountering concerns about a loved one adhering to a radical ideology or having left for a combat zone. They offer space for dialogue with families in the broadest sense (parents, siblings, etc.), but they also provide the opportunity to meet anyone in contact with the young person and to establish links with other professionals.
- **[Advice for parents, relatives and other affected persons with regard to Islamism \(VAJA\), Bremen \(Germany\)](#)**: Since 2012, Kitab, a team at VAJA e.V., has been working on countering radicalisation processes of youngsters in the context of fundamentalist Islamism and Salafism, by counselling parents, relatives or other persons belonging to their social circle. Furthermore, Kitab also works with directly affected persons with regard to Islamism.
- **[Aarhus model: Prevention of Radicalisation and Discrimination in Aarhus \(a collaboration between Aarhus municipality and the East Jutland Police\), Aarhus \(Denmark\)](#)**: In Denmark, family support is organised within an Info-House. The Info-House is a meeting place where, amongst others, police officers, social workers, municipality representatives, psychiatrists and crime prevention officers come together to discuss active and new cases and to draw up plans for each case. The Info-Houses are part of the Danish SSP (schools, social service and police) and PSP (police, social service and psychiatry) models. Concerned relatives or friends can contact the Info-House to report suspected radicalisation.
- **[The key-client model \(Legato\), Hamburg \(Germany\)](#)**: Legato has an acceptance-based approach and focuses on intervention work, and on providing advice to family members in particular with the key-client model. Initial contact needs to be made by a "key worker" — the one who is closest to the individual at risk / radicalised person (called the index client). This key worker can be, amongst others, a relative (parent, sibling), teacher or social worker, and is usually the one who reached out to Legato in the first place.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- Family members and close friends often (un)consciously know the underlying reasons why the individual radicalised and are therefore amongst the first to detect signs of radicalisation. Also, they are the last to break the bonds with the individual (or with whom the individual breaks the bond) in a radicalisation process, apart from the extremist group.
- The objective of family work should be to engage, build trust and form relationships over a longer period of time.
- It is important to take a systemic approach to the family, to look at families as a whole, the dynamics between family members and the influence of the social environment on the family's attitudes.
- Use an acceptance-based approach (not denouncing or rejecting the perspective and attitude of a family and/or individual at risk but using this as a starting point for engagement). This should be done at the least to start engagement with the family. By building a trust-based relationship, it is possible to slowly help the family and individual at risk to change their attitudes and beliefs.
- Use an outreaching approach of physically going into communities and (via them) making contact with families. One can, for example, attend community gatherings and organise an information session in community centres.
- Deal with professional confidentiality by setting up clear arrangements around information sharing (when, where, who, when, what) in multi-agency work. If the families think private information is being passed on to the police and intelligence service, they may be less inclined to cooperate. These arrangements can be on a need-to-know basis, but it should be clarified what this means for each partner.

Specific topic: How to include gender issues in social work in P/CVE

Awareness for gendered approaches in preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) work has gained increasing importance over the past couple of years. Within RAN, the topic was first discussed in an issue paper in 2015 about the role of women in extremist groups and deepened in a YF&C meeting on the role of gender in extremism and P/CVE. In this meeting, it was discussed that gender does not mean talking about women exclusively – rather, it means taking into account femininities and masculinities equally. There is a need for creating awareness and sensitivity around gendered approaches to prevent P/CVE projects from accidentally reinforcing gender stereotypes but rather enabling them to unpack them.

Meetings and papers

- RAN ex post paper '[The role of gender in extremism and P/CVE](#)', Manchester, 29-30 November 2018. The meeting highlighted the need to include both men and women in the discussions around gender and it explores the differences in drivers of radicalisation of men and women.
- RAN issue paper '[The Role of Gender in Violent Extremism](#)', 2015. The paper explores the different roles that women can take on in extremist groups and unravels some of the stereotypes about the radicalisation of women as well as their active role in extremist groups.
- WomEx and RAN Derad workshop, Women, Girls, Gender in Extremism – Gender Specific Approaches in Prevention/Intervention (WomEx), Berlin. The conference explored to what extent gender-specific approaches are already included in P/CVE as well as what methodological principles are and can be used.

Practices

- **Women/Girls, Gender in Extremism and Prevention (WomEx), Berlin (Germany)**: The German NGO Cultures Interactive provides gender-specific interventions with young girls and women by taking into account gender-focused methods. Moreover, WomEx offers workshops that create awareness of gender roles and supports the creation of self-reflection on one's own gender assumptions.
- MotherSchools: **Parenting for Peace (Women without Borders), Austria**: The project MotherSchools, initiated by Women without Borders, aims at empowering mothers at the community level by providing them with competence and self-confidence to spot signs of radicalisation in their children. The programme consists of a weekly workshop that also helps to create a network of women in a community.

- **Steunpunt Sabr, The Hague (the Netherlands):** This NGO is based in the neighbourhood Schilderswijk (The Hague) and offers a safe place for vulnerable women. It not only offers the opportunity to network and interact, it also provides support groups for parents whose children have left to join Daesh.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- When working with male clients, practitioners can work on the “circle of masculinity” by taking into account father–son relationships and developing an awareness for male role models in the family.
- Take into account the pictures of men that extremist groups portray: Both right-wing extremism and Islamist extremism offer the idea of being a fighter and a hero. Work on why a man is attracted to these images (e.g. absent father, lack of perspective and belonging, feeling emasculated).
- Understand the differences in why men and women join extremist groups. While men may be motivated by the points mentioned above, women tend to be more ideologically driven, motivated by seemingly humanitarian reasons or to experience empowerment.
- Be aware of underlying assumptions of P/CVE practices regarding gender: Some programmes assume that mothers are more peaceful and are better able to spot signs of radicalisation. As a consequence, fathers are often left out of P/CVE programmes while mothers play an important role. This, however, neglects the possible threat that may come from radicalised mothers. Moreover, there are many ways of feeling empowered. P/CVE programmes must not dictate to young women what empowerment means, which might drive them into radicalisation. For example, suggesting that wearing religious clothes does not go hand in hand with empowerment could make young women feel discriminated against.
- There is a need for more P/CVE projects that focus on fathers and that create a positive image of the role of men and fathers.
- Create an awareness for the unintended reinforcing of gender constructs (e.g. focusing on sports only when working with a male and on arts when working with girls).

Specific topic: How to work with children growing up in extremist families (e.g. child returnees)

Children growing up in a family with extremist influences are often vulnerable to becoming violent extremists in the long-term themselves. This relates to all children raised in extremist family settings, whether these are violent right-wing, left-wing or Islamist extremist families within the EU or returnee children. There are several potential risk factors that may lead to their own potential radicalisation, varying from being indoctrinated to being exposed to traumatic experiences or violence. Dealing with children who grow up in an extremist family is challenging and complex, and it requires adequate immediate care and long-term support from services such as child protection, schools, social care, and primary and mental health services, as well as families and communities. When an extremist family is identified, means of intervention include working with the family, counselling, trauma therapy, interventions during education and (as a last resort) removing the child from the family.

Meetings and papers

- RAN YF&C Academy '[Children growing up in extremist families](#)', 24-25 April 2019. This RAN Academy meeting aimed to transfer and disseminate lessons learned from earlier RAN meetings as well as examples of working practice on this topic amongst a broader group of (new) practitioners in the field.
- RAN Policy & Practice event '[Building resilience among young children raised in extremist environments – specifically child returnees](#)', Warsaw, 4 July 2018. This event focused on early intervention and normalisation, holistic and multi-agency approaches, and tailor-made child-centred approaches based on individual needs assessment and partnering with parents and families.
- RAN YF&C Working Group meeting '[Vulnerable children who are brought up in an extremist environment](#)', Stockholm, 21-22 June 2018. This meeting reviewed the influence (extremist) parents yield on their children and the challenges practitioners face in identifying these at-risk children. It also looked at the different practical interventions that can be used by practitioners. Finally, it outlined the lessons learned for returnee children.

- RAN Policy & Practice event '[Common P/CVE challenges in the Western Balkans and European Union](#)', Sofia, 4 April 2018. This event brought together policymakers and practitioners from the Western Balkans and the EU to discuss a number of key topics. These included the role of religion in P/CVE, local approaches to engaging with communities, multi-agency cooperation, and challenges posed by child returnees and children being raised in extremist environments.
- RAN Manual '[Responses to returnees: Foreign terrorist fighters and their families](#)', July 2017. This manual outlines responses for practitioners to FTFs and their families, returning or planning to return to their home countries within the EU from terrorist conflict zones such as Syria and Iraq.
- Issue paper '[Child returnees from conflict zones](#)', November 2016. This paper looks at ways to respond — from a practitioner's perspective — to the situation of children returning to Europe having either been born in or travelled to Daesh-held territories in Syria/Iraq as well as non-European children travelling from Daesh territory to Europe as a result of forced displacement.

Practices

- **Family support Sarpsborg, Norway:** The city of Sarpsborg works with a multi-agency approach when dealing with extremist families and provides support to the child. Their key recommendations when working with these families are having several people for a longer period of time on the same base, using motivational conversation techniques and providing trauma knowledge to all involved employees.
- **The Prevention Pyramid (GO! Koninklijk Atheneum Antwerpen), Antwerp (Belgium):** This is a holistic multi-agency approach to address the needs of the child. This multi-agency approach is based on, amongst other things, the polarisation model of Bart Brandsma, the Bateson model and the prevention pyramid of de Clerck. This multi-agency approach involves schools, local community and policymakers.

Lessons learned and recommendations – on children growing up in extremist families

- When working with extremist families, try to find a common ground with parents, and concentrate on the things you can agree on. Try to identify where the parents act in the best interest of the child, and where they potentially ignore the rights of the child.
- Exposure to trauma represents a significant risk to a child's development and overall functioning and increases the risk of physical and mental issues in the future. When dealing with childhood trauma, do not work with multiple key workers but have one identified key worker who links with the necessary services.
- If a child is reached out to individually, their parents might feel passed over and affect the process negatively by denying it completely. By including the parents in the process, a child's transition to developing a broader world view may go more smoothly.
- Recognise that there may be instances where the family itself is the risk factor. In these instances (e.g. return of FTFs and their families), it may be necessary to consider the removal of a child from a family and placement in a foster home. However, this should be the absolute last resort as the impact upon the child will be significant and unpredictable.

Lessons learned and recommendations – on child returnees

- The mental health status of parents has been demonstrated to have an adverse effect on children's emotional and behavioural presentations. Additionally, in the case of child returnees, the entire family is likely to have experienced conflict trauma; this is a considerable risk to the child's well-being. Structures such as peer groups, psychological support, and ideological or theological support for these families should be considered in order to develop a resilient family environment.
- Consider informing family support professionals about current legal and rehabilitative practice and consequences for returnees so they can provide families with the correct information. Family members are well placed to communicate this, since most returnees contact their family before returning.
- Support and expert guidance (e.g. psychological, theological, practical, pedagogical expertise) should be provided to these families' units. This can help them deal with the situation and trauma and make them aware of how they can help create a safe and stable environment for their child to grow up in.

Main theme: Communities

This chapter will focus on specific themes in the context of working with communities and supporting community workers. It will first elaborate on how to work and engage with communities in general, then focus on strengthening community resilience against polarisation and radicalisation, and then put the spotlight on working with specific groups of communities.

Subtheme: How to work and engage with communities in general

In terms of prevention, communities (such as religious and cultural communities, sports and youth initiatives, etc.) can offer a sense of belonging and challenge radical ideologies. Indoctrination works best when there are no contradictions from the immediate social environment. Activating community voices to counteract radical messages therefore helps reduce extremism and polarisation. Communities can provide early warning by identifying potentially vulnerable individuals. For example, community engagement can assist police and intelligence agencies and can provide opportunities for action against the root causes of violent extremism. At the intervention stage, communities can help conceptualise and deliver campaigns as radicalised people are more likely to listen to voices from their own community and it offers legitimacy and credibility. Community engagement can also provide potential entry points to individual networks in order to reach persons at risk. In addition, it is helpful in aspects of primary prevention as well, such as strengthening social cohesion and democracy.

Although governments and local authorities must do their utmost to prevent polarisation, extremism and radicalisation, these issues cannot be tackled effectively without community involvement. Communities need support from their authorities and authorities need to involve the communities they protect, represent and support. In establishing cooperation, both local authorities and community representatives face many challenges. RAN developed a step-by-step approach with a set of guidelines and considerations for setting up and maintaining successful collaboration between a local authority and communities. [This RAN ex post paper](#) discusses the challenges, solutions and choices at different stages of collaboration: 1) preparations, 2) establishing contact, 3) selecting partners, 4) dialogue and collaboration, and 5) responding to a crisis.



Figure 2: A [step-by-step approach](#) to working with communities

Meetings and papers

- RAN Policy & Practice event '[Engaging with communities in P/CVE](#)', Berlin, 28 September 2018. This event took up specific priority issues in the area of community engagement and P/CVE and discussed them in detail.
- RAN LOCAL and RAN YF&C Working Groups' meeting '[Engaging with Communities](#)', Prague, 22-23 February 2018. This meeting discussed the challenges, solutions and choices at different stages of collaboration: 1) preparations, 2) establishing contact, 3) selecting partners, 4) dialogue and collaboration, and 5) responding to a crisis.
- RAN POL Working Group meeting '[Successful and effective engaging with communities](#)', Oslo, 6-7 April 2016. This meeting discussed the notion that families and communities should be seen by police officers as partners and addressed the questions of how to do this and what skills and capacities are needed to be engaged and be trusted.
- RAN PREVENT - Rethinking Prevention, Utrecht, 15-16 September 2015. A mosque in the multicultural neighbourhood Lombok in the city of Utrecht was the setting for a RAN Prevent meeting that discussed guiding principles on how to deal with the growing fear, tensions and hatred in society, and how to restore trust between and within communities to prevent reciprocal radicalisation.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- Work with all communities and against all forms of extremism to avoid stigmatisation. Listen to concerns, react to them and address the perceived injustices, even if they are not genuine.
- Invest in long-term agendas, strategies, programmes and structures instead of one-off initiatives. Evaluate all steps of the programme regularly. Are all relevant actors included? Is it working? Is it credible?
- Constantly check whether your network is still up to date. The mapping of communities is a continuous effort as they are fluid, and the network should reflect this dynamic.
- Create memoranda of understanding and parameters for working with communities and community groups based on the kinds of things on which there is agreement.
- Intercultural communication and dialogue are key: In essence, local networking and community engagement are all about communication and effective personal communication styles and skills.

Specific topic: How to strengthen community resilience against polarisation and radicalisation

Extremism and polarisation thrive more readily when communities themselves do not challenge those who seek to radicalise others. In some communities, there is a profound lack of trust and confidence in the government, police and public authorities. Under such circumstances, it is difficult to build the cooperation and partnerships needed for a successful approach. Investing in community engagement and community empowerment is a key factor in preventive approaches to polarisation and radicalisation. The crucial question is how to achieve this effectively, which will be discussed in this sub-chapter.

Meetings and papers

- RAN FC&S webinar '[Preventing Polarisation by Creating a Shared Identity](#)', online meeting, 15 December 2020. This webinar dealt with ways to create a shared identity on a local level and shares the main lessons learned from the working group meeting on this topic (see below).
- RAN FC&S Working Group meeting '[Preventing Polarisation in Communities by Creating a Shared Identity](#)', joint meeting with RAN C&N, RAN LOCAL and RAN Y&E, online meeting, 10-13 November 2020. During this meeting, practitioners discussed the dos and don'ts of building a shared identity in a campaign (by practitioners, communities, authorities, etc.) or city strategy (by local authorities) to contribute to building resilience and the prevention of polarisation.

- RAN YF&C Working Group meeting '[Strengthening community resilience to polarisation and radicalisation](#)', London, 29-30 June 2017. This meeting complemented earlier discussions within RAN and within the RAN YF&C Working Group on this topic and linked to one of the four RAN Centre of Excellence roadmaps addressing the issue of polarisation, its connection with radicalisation and its daily effect on the work of first-line practitioners.
- '[RAN study visit to Northern Ireland on community engagement and resilience](#)', Belfast, 25-26 April 2017. This study visit discussed the questions of how to address sentiments within a community in order to prevent violent extremism and how to create, and maintain, a cohesive and inclusive society.

Practices

- **[Community Counteracting Radicalisation \(CoCoRa\), EU](#)**: The CoCoRa project is an Erasmus+ collaboration between five European partner organisations (from Denmark, Germany, France, Italy and Austria). It aims to contribute to a community-based PVE strategy by strengthening young people's empowerment and devotion to an active fellow citizenship, involving local communities as equal partners in developing the prevention programme, and training young participants for an intercultural ambassadorship to engage in dialogue and co-production with professionals in prevention activities. The approach focuses strongly on the inclusion of young Muslims in this process.
- **[Deradicalisation & Multiplier trainings \(180° Wende\), Cologne \(Germany\)](#)**: The initiative's key objective is to provide young people with a wide network of role models. The '180° Turn' initiative comprises a network of young people, multipliers and coaches who are trained as street workers in cooperation with our its partners. The network of young multipliers is active in the whole city and suited for tackling the phenomenon of radicalisation at its roots.
- **[Dare to be Grey, Utrecht \(the Netherlands\)](#)**: This social media campaign aims especially at reaching out to the movable middle that can be caught between black-and-white world views and is sometimes overlooked. The campaign provides a platform for sharing inspiring stories and unpacking polarised world views by focusing on the room for discussion and finding out what is held in common (the "grey" identity).

Lessons learned and recommendations

- A human-based, individualised approach is needed when strengthening community resilience, as communities are groups of individuals with distinctive thoughts, fears, frustrations and grievances. Therefore, addressing the individual needs of community members is the first step in building community resilience, and may set off a ripple effect in the community.
- A safe space for cooperation is essential in any intervention with communities or community members in order to prevent radicalisation and polarisation. This can be achieved, for example, by creating physical safe spaces on "neutral" grounds, establishing rules on how to cooperate, and engaging with the people who build relationships with, within and between communities.
- Funding from government agencies may accompany targets that are incompatible with communities working on a certain project (e.g. because the targets are unattainable, because there is great distrust towards authorities, because the targets do not allow for enough freedom for a grassroots approach). For this reason, some community initiatives are strictly against government funding. If the authority's cooperation is desirable, the accompanying targets need to be open for discussion.
- Policymakers should leave communities space to experiment and focus on development rather than try to deliver "outcomes"; where there is space for taking risks, progress will follow.
- Where communities live separately and have little interaction with each other, mistrust and prejudice are likely to grow. Integrating and mixing communities takes away the unknown and can lead to depolarisation. The starting point could also be on social media, such as in the practice Dare to be Grey above.
- Focus on the shared identity on a local level, such as with the celebration of common local traditions, shared values, inclusive local events, shared urban spaces or a shared history. In doing this, make sure to pay attention to language and rhetoric, that is, think of the importance of inclusive communication, tailoring your language to your target audience, and the use of storytelling with real stories and testimonies.

Subtheme: How to work with specific groups of communities

Where the previous sub-chapters have described general lessons learned and recommendations to take into account when working with communities, there may also be specific measures to take into account when dealing with specific groups of communities. The following paragraphs will elaborate on how to work with refugee communities, religious communities and victims.

Specific topic: Working with refugee communities

Refugees who have arrived in the EU may experience disappointment (e.g. in the system), issues with their identity and feelings of desperation and can be traumatised. Additionally, the arrival of refugees and migrants may meet opposition in the land of arrival and lead to stigmatisation of this group, which can cause further tensions and problems. This may all lead to refugees potentially being vulnerable to radicalisation. It is therefore important to learn from P/CVE lessons and incorporate these in the asylum sector.

Meetings and papers

- RAN Policy & Practice event '[Preventing radicalisation of asylum seekers and refugees](#)', Rome, 11 December 2019. The aim of this meeting was to discuss current P/CVE approaches and good practice specifically aimed at addressing the potential vulnerabilities and needs related to refugees and asylum seekers.
- RAN study visit '[PVE and CVE in and around asylum centres and within refugee communities](#)', Malmö, 13-14 September 2018. This study visit looked into how one can incorporate lessons from the prevention of violent extremism (PVE) into the asylum sector and learned from the Swedish approaches, lessons and challenges.

Practices

- **Teaching traumatised children, The Hague (the Netherlands):** Teaching traumatised children is a 2-day training workshop for school teams. The workshop is delivered in eight modules and the aim is to train teachers and other school personnel to recognise trauma symptoms in children and help traumatised children to learn and strengthen their resilience. During RAN meetings, the training was seen to be helpful in working with traumatised refugees and in protecting them from being radicalised.
- **POLRAD – the Power Of Local Role Models, Groningen (the Netherlands):** POLRAD is engaging local role models to prevent polarisation and radicalisation amongst citizens. The aim is to encourage dialogue between citizens by organising preventive activities. Local role models from different population groups have been engaged to serve as positive examples and actively contribute to the prevention of polarisation and radicalisation. Specifically, they train, engage and coach young people, Somalis, former refugees and former right-wing extremists.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- It is important to increase actions for faster and better integration of refugees in the receiving society through work and education.
- A risk-based perspective on prevention of radicalisation contributes to the distinction between four potentially more vulnerable groups amongst asylum seekers: refugees with mental health issues, rejected asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors, and unaccompanied minors turning 18+ (young adults).
- Key in implementing P/CVE in the asylum chain is providing asylum seekers with training, focusing on indicators, vulnerabilities and safeguarding.
- Concerned mothers, informal leaders and other refugees can be partners in P/CVE.
- Improve one's knowledge of the cultures, histories and general ways of living of different communities and nations. Then, create culturally informed interventions that also consider the expectations and preferences of the affected population.

Specific topic: Cooperating with religious organisations and communities within the local approach to radicalisation

There are four dilemmas that can be identified in cooperating with religious organisations and communities within the local approach to radicalisation: How can one choose the “right” religious organisations to cooperate with as a municipality? How can one assess the credibility of religious organisations? How can one start interreligious dialogue and why? How can one be an intermediary between municipalities and religious organisations? RAN developed a checklist that helps in mapping key partners and working with religious communities:

- Check if the religious organisation or community is a key partner in the local P/CVE approach;
- Look into the mission and ideology its members adhere to;
- Look into their members and followers;
- Look into their view on pluralism, inclusive or exclusive;
- Look into their funding;
- What can you find on this community in the media and their own press releases?
- Are they open to dialogue?
- What is their CVE experience?
- Do they face specific challenges within their community?

Meetings and papers

- RAN LOCAL Working Group meeting '[How to cooperate with religious organisations and communities within the local approach to radicalisation?](#)', Brussels, 8 December 2016. This meeting focused on cooperating with religious organisations and communities within the local approach to radicalisation and discussed four dilemmas around this.

Practices

- **[FHAR: Hybrid Training with Religious Community Leaders, Strasbourg \(France\)](#)**: The “hybrid training” practice was developed initially to meet the demand of the French Prefecture du Bas Rhin for involving Muslim religious leaders in the prevention of radicalisation of young people. There was therefore a need to train them and to facilitate dialogue with other professionals working with young people, especially social workers. The term hybrid means that this training aims at the creation of concrete bridges between the different actors involved with young people: teachers, social actors, religious referents and families.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- Recommendations for selecting the right partners: It is key to have a long-term strategy that clearly states why it is important to cooperate together with specific religious organisations within the local community and what the goal is. Be transparent with cooperating organisations/communities about the procedures and terms of cooperation and/or possible funding.
- Recommendations for assessing the credibility of religious organisations: Make an estimation beforehand about the role of the organisations you consider working with in the local community, who they represent, who are credible voices or key figures, and what they have already done in the field of P/CVE.
- Recommendations for starting an interreligious dialogue:
 - Do not have a hidden agenda and be clear about expectations, reasons and limits.
 - Certain knowledge is required to work with specific communities. For example, know the differences in Jihadist and Islamic ideologies when working with a Muslim community.
- Recommendations for local authorities on forming a bridge between the key religious organisations within the local community:
 - Motivation is a crucial component for both sides: Find common grounds and common goals, meet the people in their own community and learn about their needs.

- Local authorities can be facilitators for round table discussions and for dialogue. Part of this is to tell more about the legal framework and to establish clear boundaries on what the municipality can do.
- Local authorities should clearly communicate that they are also there for other issues like drop-out youth, discrimination or bad press, not only for P/CVE purposes.

Specific topic: The role of victims in strengthening the community's resilience

Recent European history has left a traumatic legacy of vast communities affected by prolonged periods of violence and thousands of victims and survivors who, despite the current absence of violence, have to deal with the rise of severely polarised societies. Victims and victims' groups can play a relevant role in promoting social cohesion and strengthening the community's resilience to violent extremism, shifting their role from silent violence recipients to peacebuilders and agents of change within their own communities, becoming owners of this process. Victims involved in strengthening social cohesion can even collaborate to enhance their own resilience and healing processes, to bridge divisions, and to bond the communities themselves as well as with the victims.

Meetings and papers

- RAN RVT Working Group meeting '[The role of victims in strengthening social cohesion after a period of violence](#)', Bilbao, 20-21 June 2019. This meeting addressed the role of victims in, amongst other things, promoting social cohesion and strengthening the community's resilience to violent extremism, and becoming agents of change within their own communities.

Practices

- **Open Fun Football Schools (Cross Cultures), Broendby and Zagreb (Denmark and Croatia)**: Open Fun Football Schools have brought thousands of children, parents, coaches, teachers and other community members together in an effort to promote peaceful religious and ethnic coexistence, gender equality, tolerance and social cohesion. The programme is addressed to families, children and youth exposed to long-term violence in post-war areas and localities once exposed to ethnic cleansing, atrocities of war and hatred.
- **Testimonies of Victims of Terrorism in the Classrooms, Spain**: With this project and the use of the voice of victims of terrorism, Spain aims to teach students about the history of terrorism in Spain (which is already included as part of the official educational study plan). The aim is also to sensitise the younger generations against violence in order to prevent radicalisation by showing the painful and senseless consequences of terrorism through the voices of those who have suffered them.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- Fostering community engagement in the peacebuilding process and involving different civil society organisations will result in a multi-perspective understanding of what happened. In addition, it will strengthen the credibility of these initiatives and the ownership feeling for all members of the community and will boost the socialisation of a culture of peace.
- Reconciliation initiatives that have a victim-centred approach, highlight the relevant roles of victims in these processes and involve the rest of the community can be an asset in the collaboration of victims and victims' groups with other civil society organisations.

Main theme: Social care

While social work is relevant to almost all aspects of the themes of the FC&S Working Group, this chapter will focus exclusively on the specific challenges for social workers in the field of P/CVE. It will first focus on the increasing need for digitalisation of social work, on the cooperation between social work and other actors, and, finally, on safeguarding social workers.

Subtheme: How can social workers do P/CVE work online?

Increasing digitalisation of all spheres of life ultimately has consequences for social work. Especially for young people, there is no real distinction between the online and the offline world anymore, and the internet has become a space that many of them visit on a regular basis. Besides many positive aspects that the internet has to offer, it also poses the danger of negative influences. In the past decade, the internet has become an increasingly prominent factor in processes of radicalisation. Therefore, the digital sphere has become an important space for social workers who try to reach out to vulnerable youth. This has implications for their practical work. Some of the outcomes of previous RAN meetings such as the RAN YF&C and RAN C&N online meeting [‘How to do digital youth work in a P/CVE context: Revising the current elements’](#) include having identified some of the challenges that social workers encounter and the skills that are essential for them in the digital sphere:

- Practitioners need to be comfortable with using the different social media platforms that are most popular and have an understanding of how they work.
- They need to be able to “speak the language of the youth online” and be able to recognise signs of radicalisation online (including use of memes, humour, etc.).
- Digital social work might change the way social workers work: Some of the work is likely to take place outside of regular working hours. Clear boundaries need to be set between private and work time.

Specific topic: Reaching out to vulnerable youth online

Reaching out to young people can be quite a challenge because this requires the identification of several crucial aspects that can be challenging for practitioners: How can vulnerable individuals be identified? How can they best be approached? How can a sustainable online relationship be established that may lead to offline counselling? The online world offers many different ways to establish trust and a conversation: via social media, chat or a video call. This mostly depends on the needs of the individuals as well as the skills of the respective practitioner. A number of lessons learned on this topic can be found on the next page.

Meetings and papers

- RAN small-scale meeting [‘\(Young\) Women’s Usage of Social Media and Lessons for Preventing Violent Extremism’](#), online meeting, 24 November 2020. The meeting aimed at discussing the vulnerabilities that are specific to (young) women and explaining how recruiters use these vulnerabilities online.
- RAN Mental Health Working Group meeting [‘P/CVE and mental health support online’](#), online meeting, 18-19 November 2020. The meeting aimed at exchanging important knowledge by practitioners from adjacent fields such as psychology and mental health that have increasingly focused on online support in the past couple of years.
- RAN YF&C and RAN C&N Working Groups’ meeting [‘How to do digital youth work in a P/CVE context: Revising the current elements’](#), online meeting, 19 March 2020. This meeting and paper are aimed at youth workers who want to (better) incorporate digital ways in doing youth work, specifically in a P/CVE setting.
- RAN YF&C expert meeting on [‘Digital youth work’](#), Copenhagen, 29 November 2019. This meeting explored digital youth work and the practices related to it as well as the challenges that practitioners encounter in engaging in it.

Practices

- **[Streetwork@Online, Germany](#)**: The project has developed an approach to translate offline streetwork to the online world for social workers and reaches out to vulnerable youth online. The project engages in discussions and conversations online with young people from Berlin between the ages of 16 and 27 (e.g. on Facebook and Instagram) to encourage critical reflections. Their main goal is to establish a trustful relationship that allows to continue the conversation in a one-on-one setting if needed.

- **Promeneurs du Net, France:** The Web Walkers programme implements a proactive approach in reaching out to young people online. Practitioners in this project connect with the target group on social media in order to support them in creating a positive online atmosphere and to encourage media literacy. Web Walkers also provides local networks for practitioners for exchanging and sharing expertise.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- If you are a practitioner working in the online sphere, trying to reach a certain target group (young people, girls/boys, etc.): Create an action plan in advance. Define who you want to reach and how you are planning to do so.
- Implement different channels of outreach to get in touch with vulnerable youth: Websites are often addressed to a rather older target group compared to interactive tools such as apps, games, etc.
- To be able to reach out to the target group, it is recommended that practitioners be more familiar with the different social media platforms as well as the ways that young people behave online.
- Be honest about who you are online: Most experiences have shown that it is advisable to act openly and transparently.
- Don't try to "lecture" youth online and try to understand that ideological components may not be as important as emotional or personal components.
- Online social services must be available for as long as possible, also outside of regular office hours. This of course impacts the way social workers operate and creates a capacity issue for them.
- Experiences from the field of mental health have shown that not all disorders can be treated online and that many patients as well as practitioners still prefer face-to-face conversations. Digital social work can therefore work as a bridge to transform online discussions into an offline setting.
- Create a network of actors you can rely on in case of doubt about radicalisation: This can include law enforcement, social youth welfare services or intervention deliverers.

What needs to be further explored?

- How to translate an online conversation into an offline counselling relationship: Online interactions can be anonymous and less binding; thus, it is easier to lose touch. It can be challenging to establish a long-term working relationship.

Subtheme: How to overcome challenges for social workers in P/CVE

Working with radicalised individuals can be challenging for mental health and social care practitioners. Challenges for them are, amongst others, cooperation and information sharing with police and intelligence services as well as criticism fuelled by the media on how mental health and social workers do their job. Also, ethical questions may come to the forefront for social workers that address, amongst others, mental health issues, such as about their inability to genuinely assure patients of confidentiality or their complicity in the perpetuation of stigma. This sub-chapter provides guidance to deal with these challenges.

Meetings and papers

- RAN H&SC and POL Working Groups' meeting '[Help the Helper – Safeguarding the well-being of mental health and social care practitioners](#)', online meeting, 25-26 March 2020. During this meeting, participants from both working groups discussed the challenges they encounter and formulated practical guidelines on how to ensure the well-being of these professionals.
- RAN HEALTH Working Group meeting '[Ethics for Mental Health Professionals Working in P/CVE](#)', online meeting, 16-17 June 2020. In this meeting, mental health professionals working in P/CVE discussed the ethical challenges they are confronted with in their daily practice.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- Create a culture of professionals looking after each other and themselves (with room for peer support in case of challenges and a healthy lifestyle).
- Supervision and intervision (the opportunity to reflect on cases and challenges encountered amongst colleagues) should not be organised ad hoc but arranged structurally and in a safe environment.
- Security as well as mental health and social care professionals should receive mutual training to enhance cooperation and understanding.
- Assign one person to talk to the media, for example, when the media reports on one of your clients or the work of your organisation.
- Be aware of ethical questions and principles in your work, for example, when it comes to respect, responsibility, integrity and competences as a social worker.

Specific topic: Evaluation of family and social care interventions

Evaluation and planning are integral to any intervention in P/CVE. Historically, evaluation of such practices has been considered problematic for two reasons: the reliance on professional judgement rather than measurement tools, and the limited concern for justifying intervention in view of achieving an outcome. However, recently, for reasons of financial, governance, security and professional developments, evaluation of, for instance, social care interventions has become the norm and is an expected element of intervention planning.

Meetings and papers

- RAN Manual '[Peer and Self Review Manual for Exit Work](#)', January 2020.
- RAN H&SC paper '[Methods of evidence-based approaches: assessment and CVE/PVE](#)', December 2018.
- RAN YF&C Working Group meeting 'The evaluation of family support', May 2018.

Practices

Looking for more inspiration? In the [RAN Collection](#), all included practices (projects, tools, strategies, etc.) elaborate on how they evaluate their programme or intervention.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- There is not just one form of family support or social care programme and intervention. Each programme has a different context and target group and uses different methods. Therefore, they have different strengths and weaknesses. Evaluation should recognise this diversity.
- The goal of the evaluation should be clearly defined before the measurement system is established. Differentiate, for instance, between:
 - *network analysis*: assess the collaboration and knowledge of and satisfaction with the intervention with other stakeholders;
 - *process analysis*: improve the transparency on the working process and methods;
 - *concept evaluation*: assess the coherency of the theory of change;
 - *impact analysis*: map out indicators and measure the effectiveness of the intervention.
- Use the SMART framework for all interventions (i.e. Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely). This helps you to define your goals beforehand and to measure your success afterwards.
- The evaluation of training (as opposed to the evaluation of intervention) is a key element in the competence of staff to engage in preventing/countering radicalisation and extremism work. Training should meet the needs of staff, it should evolve over time, it should be based on case studies, it should draw on the experiences of other disciplines and it should be delivered in multiple modes.
- Evaluation should involve pre- and post-measures to account for changes occurring during the intervention. Multiple tools can be used for this purpose (psychometric tests, interviewing, etc.).

What needs to be further explored?

Evaluation of family support and social care remains a topic that more information is needed on from a practical perspective. Evaluation is important to improve working methods and with that improve the effectiveness of the work itself.

Subtheme: How does social work fit in a multi-agency structure in P/CVE?

P/CVE requires a holistic approach that takes into account all relevant actors who are involved in a case. Social and health workers have key responsibilities in supporting local authorities, police and education professionals in safeguarding and providing care and support to individuals, families, relatives and communities. Their roles lie in supporting and safeguarding, sharing relevant information (keeping in mind professional secrecy and confidentiality), and building awareness of the need to involve first- and second-line health workers and social workers.

Meetings and papers

- RAN H&SC Working Group meeting '[Embedding social and health care workers into institutional structures](#)', Munich, 6-7 June 2018. In this meeting, practitioners explored the ways in which multi-agency working structures can be put in place to better equip policymakers and practitioners for P/CVE.
- RAN H&SC issue paper '[Multi-agency working and preventing violent extremism I](#)', 2018. This paper introduces different models of multi-agency working, discusses the importance of threat and hazard specification (i.e. specifying the threat of concern), and summarises key lessons learned from RAN meetings.
- RAN H&SC Working Group meeting '[Multi- or cross-cultural approaches to preventing polarisation and radicalisation](#)', Dublin, 4-5 July 2017. This meeting addressed the topic of growing polarisation leading to violent extremism. A key issue for this meeting was the role of social and healthcare professionals in relation to bridging the gap.
- Study visit to Helsinki '[A holistic local approach to preventing radicalisation in Helsinki](#)', Helsinki, 8-9 June 2017. This meeting for local coordinators looked at how the city of Helsinki developed 'Safe Helsinki' taking a holistic approach to P/CVE.
- RAN H&SC Handbook '[How to set up a multi-agency structure that includes the health and social care sectors?](#)' Copenhagen, 18-19 May 2016. This paper sets out guiding principles on how to create multi-agency structures that include the health and social care sectors with practical steps and insights that are helpful for these sectors when working together with other key sectors in P/CVE.

Practices

- **[Multi-professional Anchor work, Helsinki \(Finland\)](#)**: Anchor work refers to multi-professional collaboration, the purpose of which is to promote the well-being of adolescents and prevent crime and violent radicalisation. Anchor work is carried out by a multi-professional anchor team including practitioners from the police, social services, health services, and education and youth services.
- **[The Danish SSP system, Denmark](#)**: The Danish SSP (Schools, Social Services, Police) collaborative system organises local and municipal crime preventive efforts in support of children and adolescents (and families, if appropriate). All SSPs have the same basic setup: the three central units (school, social services and police) work together in the SSP system.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- Multi-agency working approaches are vastly different across the EU, with some rather formalised models aligning with the legislative action of national strategies, while others are ad hoc and informal, following bottom-up initiatives, such as the two practices listed above. Most multi-agency working models include practitioners from local authorities, police and security services and often health, social care, youth and community workers, civil society organisations, schools and others.

- Key barriers include limitations in trust as well as awareness and knowledge gaps amongst practitioners of each other's roles and responsibilities.
- The RAN [Handbook](#) on multi-agency working outlines five vital steps for a functioning multi-agency approach: 1) map the relevant agencies and start networking, 2) invest in the relationships, 3) share information and conduct assessments together, 4) appoint a case owner and intervene, and 5) evaluate the cooperation and follow-up.

Specific topic: Including sports in a P/CVE strategy

Sports could have a very important yet ambiguous role in P/CVE. Taking part in sports-related activities can have a significant impact on physical and mental health and enhance a sense of belonging and togetherness. These effects can work out in different, even opposite ways when talking about radicalisation. On the one hand, there is need to be cautious of extremist recruitment in sports associations. Well-known examples are hooliganism and certain combat sports. An atmosphere of strong (identitarian) group dynamics combined with a cultus centred around violence could provide a fruitful environment for extremist recruiters. On the other hand, sports activities also serve as very beneficial tools in building resilience against extremist ideas and in the rehabilitation of offenders. Sports can be beneficial in P/CVE on several levels; they can foster more self-confidence, channel aggression and create a social network away from the more extremist ones.

Meetings and papers

- RAN YF&C Working Group meeting '[The role of sports and leisure activities in preventing and countering violent extremism](#)', Lisbon, 6-7 March 2019. This ex post paper addresses both the positive and negative aspects of sports in P/CVE. It focuses on the responsibilities of clubs, associations and coaches in reacting to problematic behaviour as well as providing proper guidance for their young members.
- RAN consolidated overview '[The role of sports in violent right-wing extremist radicalisation and P/CVE](#)', 2021. This paper addresses both the dangers and the opportunities of sports in the realm of P/CVE, with a focus on violent right-wing extremism. Three trends are distinguished: sport-focused interventions, partnerships with sports clubs to work on youth resilience, and incorporating sports elements in larger P/CVE programmes.

Practices

- **[Spiel dich frei!](#), Germany:** The organisation RheinFlancke was founded to fight discrimination and racism as well as to provide equal opportunities to young people lacking access to education and opportunities to participate fully in society. Spiel dich frei! is an innovative combination of sports, political education, theatre plays and music, aiming to prevent the radicalisation of young people in schools.
- **[Hooligan](#), Poland:** As football hooligans in Poland are involved in incidents of hate speech, racism and violence, their connection with violent right-wing extremism is becoming clearer. This organisation educates young people about the consequences of such offences and promotes positive attitudes during sporting events through meetings (with athletes and sport clubs), presentations and sports activities.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- Train the coaches. Good role models for youngsters are key, so support them to be able to build up long-term relationships
- Use sports as a tool in projects about positive self-development for youngsters and communities, rather than openly framing it as an anti-radicalisation tool.
- Do not only focus on the physical aspect of sports, but provide space for moral aspects, critical thinking, mentoring, and other social and youth work elements.
- Look beyond combat sports. To reach as many young people as possible, it is necessary to broaden the scope and consider all kinds of relevant mass sports events, for example, in soccer, depending on a given context or country.

What needs to be further explored?

- A gender-sensitive approach may be needed. Much work is focused on young men, while women also play an important role in extremist groups and organisations. Additionally, extremist ideologies typically promote stereotypical gender roles, like strong men and women as housewives. It could be explored how not to reproduce these roles in a masculine environment like combat sports.