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EX POST PAPER

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Evaluating the impact of testimonies by victims of terrorism

Practitioners and policymakers agree that evaluation is a fundamental part of programmes and initiatives targeting the prevention and countering of violent extremism (P/CVE). However, it is a complex task, and the participation of victims of terrorism poses an extra challenge. Practitioners must manage personal factors (e.g. preconceptions of 'rational' storytelling), expected/unexpected audience reactions and tackle the empirical challenges of measuring the impact on the target, including subsequent behavioural changes and the analysis.

Testimonies must be evaluated using a basic red line: the 'do no harm' principle. Participation in a P/CVE programme should not introduce a source of extra harm for a victim, nor, by extension, an action resulting in secondary victimisation. If it is deemed that the P/CVE programme might have negative consequences, it should not be implemented.

This paper highlights the importance of evaluating testimonies, and provides practical recommendations to support practitioners in developing the evaluation process. It includes step-by-step guidelines and a summary of the main challenges. It also presents three potential scenarios of prevention of radicalisation where testimonies could be used: online, in schools and in prisons. Finally, experiences from both prevention and adjacent fields are analysed, in terms of their objectives, structures and application. All this material could prove a valuable source of inspiration for future initiatives.

Why evaluate?

Structural and professional evaluation of the methodology is crucial for practitioners wishing to benefit from the use of testimonies in P/CVE programmes.

- Practitioners need evidence of what works and what does not — this knowledge can feed into future initiatives.
- Practitioners must learn **how** various elements work or do not work. Although they can anticipate how a certain strategy might work, evaluation of the experience can offer unexpected indications. The feedback also provides a space for reflection that can advance the whole programme by increasing current knowledge and broadening the research scope.
- Practitioners are required to support evidence-based decisions at strategic and operational levels. They need empirical support to make crucial decisions or chart re-planning processes — or to push policymakers to do so.
- Practitioners must support the effectiveness or impact of their claims in an academic context. Evaluation can be used to boost professional development through publications and reports.

Evaluation: step by step

Preparation is a vital part in the development of an evaluation strategy. The following step-by-step guideline covers a number of key questions: what practitioners need to evaluate, how prevention works in different socio-demographic contexts, which causal mechanism models can be applied, and what suitable indicators and tools will be used to evaluate the impact of testimonies.

1. Preliminary considerations

Firstly, practitioners should bear in mind that evaluation involves academic research: a study of the literature on existing work. Moreover, evaluation should be formative and should take into account the evaluation's object and context.

Secondly, practitioners must determine whether they have to evaluate an entire programme or a specific intervention. A programme (strategy, action plan, local approach, etc.) contains the overarching policy principles and strategies for P/CVE, as well as a number of interventions with the same goal.

Interventions are specific activities and methods (e.g. mentoring interventions) with a fixed aim, aimed at a particular target group (e.g. building resilience and disengaging from the extremist mindset).

Practitioners embarking on their first evaluations should focus on interventions, which provide a straightforward and better demarcated starting point for evaluation ¹.

2. Address crucial questions

Before discussing the methodology further, a number of relevant questions should be considered.

- What specific problems does the project address? Why is the use of testimonies the correct approach for tackling these problems?
- How do the testimonies and their main messages work to increase understanding and raise awareness in the target group?
- How do the project staff reflect on their pedagogical work?
- What effect are practitioners hoping to achieve by using testimonies?
- How does the testimonial programme transfer their educational and preventive knowledge to related fields?
- How does the programme or specific intervention cope with the central challenges of its field?

¹ Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). (2018). *Guideline evaluation of PCVE programmes and interventions*. RAN ex post paper. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/ms_workshops_guidelines_evaluation_of_pcve_programmes_and_interventions_july_2018_en.pdf

3. Describe the project

All relevant elements must be described, including the goals of the intervention. In the description, practitioners should not overstate or oversimplify; the process they are managing is complex. If the evaluation is external, the external evaluators should be involved in the whole process.

A correct evaluation method will include a description of some of the following elements.

- Goals of the intervention: e.g. for remembrance, to respect the memory of a violent past, or to promote resilience.
- Goals of the evaluation: to describe the project, to understand the project (e.g. backed up by scientific evidence), to learn about or improve its contents and implementation, to understand what makes it work, and to show its effects on the target.
- Evidence needed: plausible explanation, demonstrated change, independently proven causality, transferability and enduring impact.
- Data collection: both qualitative and quantitative. Practitioners need to know which data are already available through tools like Google analytics, and which data are lacking and need to be collected.
- Resources: costs, time constraints, required skills and available capacity. It is crucial to be pragmatic in this description.
- Ethical considerations: observe the 'do no harm' principle so as to prevent secondary victimisation.

If the objective is prevention of radicalisation, practitioners should include the reconstruction of the way in which prevention works in the different contexts in a P/CVE programme. To do so, they must first determine whether the prevention is primary, secondary or tertiary ².

- Primary prevention focuses on early prevention of radicalisation; it typically features awareness-raising and resilience-building. It is aimed at the general public or defined larger groups in society (parents, teachers, schoolchildren, etc.). These types of interventions and programmes often concentrate on all kinds of vulnerability-related social issues, rather than on radicalisation alone. As such, evaluating them specifically on their effectiveness to prevent radicalisation is challenging.
- Secondary prevention provides interventions for individuals showing signs of radicalisation and vulnerability regarding this particular process. They have not yet acted upon this vulnerability by engaging in criminal acts (i.e. they are in the pre-criminal category).
- Tertiary prevention works with individuals who have engaged in illegal, criminal activities related to violent extremism and terrorism. They are viewed as radicalised individuals and are in the criminal justice system. Consequently, interventions focus predominantly on deradicalisation or disengagement, to prevent cases of reoffending.

In addition, since the messages are tailored to the audience, practitioners using testimonies in their programmes and interventions must carry out a preliminary study of the victims' profiles and review the key points of their storytelling, if they are to be effective rather than counterproductive.

To conclude the description section, causality — proven causality, in particular — must be considered. This is the most demanding aspect of evaluation. Practitioners may observe certain circumstances or events, but how can they ascertain whether these really contribute to a particular circumstance? Understanding how things are likely to change would be helpful for the intervention — this entails selecting a theory of change. It is important to describe this prior to carrying out the evaluation, so it will be discussed in the following section.

A theory of change is an evidence-based theory that can help practitioners clarify the input, output, outcome and impact of their campaign, as well as the causalities linking the various elements. Practitioners must establish their purpose: what they want to achieve and what is realistic ³. The theory of change should explain why a practitioner's strategy will help them to meet certain goals. Practitioners must remain honest about causal mechanisms. Although evaluation is commonly expected to provide answers, practitioners must set realistic expectations.

The more specific and targeted the goals, the higher the chances of achieving them. Practitioners must define how they will utilise the campaign evaluation (how they will use the findings, what they should lead to). Ultimately, the campaign goal, the theory of change and the purpose of evaluation will define what type

² Gielen, A. J. (2017). Countering violent extremism: a realist review for assessing what works, for whom, in what circumstances, and how? *Terrorism and political violence*, 1-19. doi:10.1080/09546553.2017.1313736.

³ Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). (2019). *Monitoring & Evaluating counter- and alternative narrative campaigns*. RAN C&N ex post paper. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-c-and-n/docs/ran_cn_ex_post_evaluating_campaigns_berlin_210219_22_en.pdf

of evaluation is best suited to each case. The assumptions underlying the theory of change can be reviewed during the testing phase ⁴.

The models of causal mechanisms are based on three pillars: education, reflection and integration. From these pillars, different models are derived: providing knowledge, evoking reflective thinking by providing knowledge, evoking reflection on oneself, and social integration ⁵.

4. Establish suitable indicators

Following the initial preparation for the evaluation, practitioners must determine suitable indicators to measure the degree of success of the initiative. This is achieved using objective and subjective measurements. The objective measurement is based on how individuals perform a task, whereas the subjective measurement refers to the individuals' expression of their experience.

Based on this idea, the following indicators used for P/CVE online campaigns can also be applied when analysing other P/CVE programmes based on testimonies.

- Awareness. This refers to the number of individuals that have been reached. In an online context, it means the number of impressions and reach or video views, and demographic information such as age, gender and geographic location. In an offline context, this is about the number of individuals who participated in a programme or attended a victim's conference. A simple survey can produce the demographic data mentioned above.
- Engagement. This relates to the number of individuals' interactions. In an online context, it refers to likes, comments or shares, whereas in an offline context, it might be measured through individuals' participation in debates, workshops or critical discussions. Engagement is a valuable indicator, because it provides information about the interest generated by the voices of victims.
- Impact. Impact is a qualitative indicator — and the most relevant one, because it helps practitioners understand whether they have reached their goals. It is also the most complex to measure, requiring a clear definition of the aims beforehand and a sophisticated strategy to obtain the desired information. As impact is based on what individuals say about the programme, this information can be obtained through comments published in social networks or expressed on an informal debate, or planned as part of a set strategy, such as a survey ⁶.

5. Select more than one method

Every intervention has different goals: structuring and clustering these goals is necessary when selecting an appropriate evaluation method. Practitioners must establish a common categorisation, considering the process of evaluation itself (how it is implemented, the context/environment, the training materials and the trainer themselves), the output and the impact.

⁴ Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). (2019). *Monitoring & Evaluating counter- and alternative narrative campaigns*. RAN C&N ex post paper. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-c-and-n/docs/ran_cn_ex_post_evaluating_campaigns_berlin_210219_22_en.pdf

⁵ Langer, J. *Approaches and challenges to the evaluation of pilot projects on prevention of radicalization*. German Youth Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.dji.de/en/the-dji.html>

⁶ Jimenez, M. (2019). *Evaluating the impact of testimonies of victims of terrorism*. Remembrance of Victims of Terrorism Working Group. Unpublished manuscript submitted for publication.

Available tools for evaluation ⁷

1. Case studies
2. Comparisons/Benchmarking
3. Contribution analysis
4. Cost-benefit analysis
5. Cost-effectiveness analysis
6. Cross-sectional data analysis
7. Data mining
8. Descriptive statistics
9. Desk-based research and literature review
10. Focus group
11. Interviews
12. Longitudinal
13. Meta-analysis
14. Network analysis
15. Objectives and options analysis
16. Observation
17. Policy scientific approach
18. Qualitative data analysis
19. Quasi-experimental designs
20. Randomised control trials
21. Realistic evaluation
22. Stakeholder analysis
23. Surveys

Studying the output requires the use of quantitative tools: Google analytics, feedback forms, comments and shares in social network, and existing databases all provide evidence of how the intervention is used. Impact analysis is based on an understanding of abstract concepts: the feelings generated by the intervention, the level of knowledge or eventual behavioural changes. Taking the context into account is vital: for example, in certain circumstances, individuals will not speak freely, and face-to-face interviews might be preferable to focus groups.

Recent practitioner experience indicates that evaluation of P/CVE programmes calls for a mixed approach, using both quantitative and qualitative methods. For example, balancing qualitative research based on focus groups or in-depth interviews with quantitative surveys would result in a complete validation. Impact Europe offers an evaluation toolkit in which practitioners can decide on a method based on the kind of initiative they aim to develop. It allows for specification in terms of type, approach, focus, data used and purpose, and can even compare two methods so users can select the most suitable one.

6. Establish a feedback loop

Returning to the project to implement feedback immediately is a useful strategy for alerting practitioners about positive and negative points at an early stage. Even short feedback loops will enrich an ongoing project. Rubrics — a combination of indicators used to measure complex realities — are required.

Central challenges in evaluating testimonies

Evaluation is not a simple task: as mentioned earlier, personal, ethical and practical factors play a role in the design of a strategy. It is also a field under construction: both existing and pilot initiatives can offer an indication of which areas are in need of extra development. This section identifies some of the most common practitioner challenges in evaluating testimonies and offers advice on tackling them.

⁷ See Impact Europe online (<http://www.impact.itti.com.pl/index#/guide/repository>).

1. Evaluating the suitability of testimonies

When evaluating testimonies, practitioners must take into account a number of factors. Analysing them all calls for an awareness of the complexity of dealing with emotions, human objectives and varied cultural contexts.

- Effectiveness of the storytelling. Victims are also witnesses of historical events, and credibility is key in their testimonies. Practitioners can evaluate this by asking the audience if, for example, they have broadened their knowledge about a given fact, following a testimony. The presence of emotions is convenient and effective, in fact the storytelling should be based on human beings. In terms of evaluation, practitioners must include any material supporting the testimonies, such as photography or videos. The more comprehensively fleshed out the material is, the more powerful it is.
- Overcoming obstacles of the past. When the P/CVE programme is based on historical events such as the Holocaust, practitioners face an initial difficulty: historical facts are often perceived by students or the general public as 'distant', necessitating that the practitioner generate or stir interest by making the subject relatable, for instance, by discussing how one could deal with a given situation personally. If the audience contains students, for example, powerful testimonies are those that feature children, are set in familiar places and explore relatable topics; easily recalled stories are also effective.
 In other words, the audience often needs prior knowledge and context, and as evaluators, practitioners must ascertain whether the audience understand the testimonies, whether they have prior knowledge of the topic, and whether they will need extra resources. Moreover, practitioners should include questions about whether testimonies have helped to clarify abstract events and highlight their human dimension.
- Observe the 'do no harm' principle. Asking victims about their level of satisfaction, their perception of the audience's interest and their willingness to participate again in similar activities allows practitioners to measure the impact of the initiative on victims. Another interesting idea that remains to be researched and developed is that participation in P/CVE programmes could form part of the personal recovery process for victims. Insight into all these issues will feed back to practitioners to aid them in respecting the 'do no harm' principle, a sensitive point that requires careful consideration.
- Dealing with controversial situations. Testimonies can sometimes trigger unexpected reactions or difficult situations, especially in the context of secondary and tertiary prevention (e.g. students who identify with perpetrators or justify their violent actions). In these cases, practitioners must evaluate how victims and practitioners handle negative or potentially harmful comments — especially in the online context — and gauge whether the victims' prior training is adequate for coping with the given situation.
- The influence of personal and external factors. As highlighted in other RAN papers ⁸, practitioners hoping to generate empathy between the audience and the credible voices (in this case, the victims') must take into consideration personal factors (gender, age, religious and socioeconomic background) and external factors (geographical position or historical background). As evaluators, practitioners should include these factors in the evaluation and examine their influence. For example, practitioners should observe if women tend to identify with female survivors and men with male survivors, if a given victim profile (mother, widow, brother, etc.) affects the impact on the audience, if young people tend to identify with young people, or if age is not a decisive factor. The more precise the indicators are, the more accurate future programmes can become.

Summary

To evaluate a testimony effectiveness, practitioners should consider:

- the credibility and effectiveness of the victim's storytelling
- the creation of interest around historical events
- the 'do no harm' principle
- resources for managing controversial subjects and difficult situations
- the influence of personal and external factors.

⁸ Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). (2018). *Delivering effective testimonies*. Remembrance of Victims of Terrorism (RVT) ex post paper. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-rvt/docs/ran_rvt_delivering_effective_testimonials_20-21_09_2018_en.pdf

2. Timing in data collection

As with financial resources, time is a valuable resource in evaluation. Practitioners must draw up a schedule, bearing in mind that they should start as early as possible. Furthermore, practitioners must make other important time-related decisions: for example, whether to implement a 'before and after' evaluation method, or to opt for a short-term or long-term evaluation. Besides these general considerations, issues related to the kind of programme, the context and the financial resources will also play a part in the final decision.

Before and after testimonies are the most appropriate times to carry out the evaluation process. Specifically, in school contexts, asking students for their input before and after testimonies are presented allows them to identify significant changes in their perception. Pre- and post-surveys may include questions about the phenomenon in general (to gauge the level of knowledge about terrorism and victims, for example) as well as questions on their personal opinions about the use of political violence or their personal views about victims of terrorism. These latter questions can be repeated in the pre- and post-surveys, and will facilitate a comparison of the answers, and consequently, an understanding of the change in their perceptions.

A key point to consider is the period between the pre- and post-survey, as this determines whether it will be a short-term or a long-term evaluation. Both of these feature advantages and disadvantages.

Short-term evaluation allows practitioners to measure the pure, direct impact of testimonies. It is logical to seek information from the audience immediately on any primary emotions generated (sadness, compassion, empathy, hate, etc.) in both open- and closed-ended questions. Results can prove useful for future prevention activities: for example, if part of the audience manifests a desire for revenge, the next initiative could contain messages against revenge. In practical terms, it should be easier than a long-term evaluation: it is shorter, and the data collection reduced and easier to analyse. The main disadvantage of this method is that it cannot be used to measure behavioural changes in the long-term, and so might be appropriate for examining specific interventions (e.g. an online campaign) under the umbrella of a wider programme.

Long-term evaluation is necessary when managing an ambitious, comprehensive programme slated to achieve structural or behavioural changes, for example, or an initiative included in an educational curriculum. In this case, practitioners concentrate not only on the immediate effects (which may be of interest) but also on how long these effects prevail and whether they are considered correct, desirable behaviour. The emotional as well as intellectual impact are important for practitioners. The resources required (time, infrastructure, participants, etc.) are greater in a long-term strategy. This method often features the problem of not obtaining significant results, at least in the first steps of evaluation.

An unexplored possibility that could yield interesting results entails comparing answers from the target group with answers from a group that has not participated in a programme with testimonies.

With reference to data collection and measurement, a pioneer initiative in the field of resilience is highly relevant: the Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM-R) and the Adult Resilience Measure (ARM-R), developed by the Resilience Research Centre (Canada) ⁹. These are defined as self-reported measures of socio-ecological resilience, in categories for children (aged 5 to 9), youth (aged 10 to 23) and adults (aged 18+).

This tool has one particular feature that is of great interest: across the age groups, it measures the protective factors (individual, relational, communal and cultural) which may help to increase their resilience. The scales and tools may be used before and after measurement as part of an experimental and quantitative evaluation ¹⁰.

3. Selecting the best method

Evaluation is a complex task, so seeking simple strategies could prove counterproductive. It may be tempting to evaluate the easy indicators alone, but this will yield inadequate results. In order to advance and tackle difficult challenges, creative and refined solutions are needed.

Not all methods require the same skills, time and cost. Practitioners should consider various factors: the size of the sample, the necessity of hiring experts to develop certain steps or students to participate in different ways, and the

⁹ See CYRM\ARM online (<http://cyrm.resilienceresearch.org>).

¹⁰ Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). (2018). *Guideline evaluation of PCVE programmes and interventions*. RAN ex post paper. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/ms_workshops_guidelines_evaluation_of_pcve_programmes_and_interventions_july_2018_en.pdf

time frame needed in order to run the evaluation. Planning is crucial and the plan has to be realistic — honesty in acknowledging the limitations of the method is essential.

Summary

Pre- and post-evaluation seem to be the best way to detect relevant changes in the sample. Before choosing the best method, practitioners must consider the complexity of the task and the practical limitations in terms of skills, time and cost.

4. Designing a questionnaire

Before designing a questionnaire, practitioners must clarify what evidence is needed for their evaluation. It may be summarised in:

- a plausible explanation that the intervention may work
- demonstrated change
- independently proven causality
- transferability
- enduring impact (checking if the results still stand after a longer time).

The questionnaire should be designed by evaluation professionals, who are aware of the correct formulation of the questions required to obtain measurable data. They should collaborate with practitioners, who on their part, must establish the objectives they want to achieve. In fact, describing the objectives is crucial for achieving significant results. They can be summarised in terms of the following ¹¹.

- Outcome. The formulated results practitioners want to achieve. When possible, this takes the combined form of quantitative items (presented with numbers, percentages and graphs to provide an indication of trends or patterns) and qualitative ones (using anecdotes, quotes and case studies to provide in-depth understanding and context).
- Output. The measurable, tangible and direct products of the activities. It includes participants and individuals trained to intervene, methods used and indicators established.
- Impact. The long-term effect, as seen in a drop in the number of incidents or terrorist attacks, for instance. This is usually the ultimate goal of P/CVE intervention. It is often very difficult to determine to what extent a single intervention or programme has contributed to the overall impact, but the likelihood can be presented.

Questionnaires should be also tested for length (not too short, nor too long), and clarity and comprehensibility (not ambiguous); they must be respectful and appropriate for the selected audience profile.

5. Complexity of the analysis and follow-up

Practitioners have expressed concerns over how the results of such evaluations can be interpreted, and how to assess whether they have met the goals of the project. It is a crucial point, given that decisions made by policymakers will hinge upon this interpretation.

Another point of complexity concerns the long-term effects of P/CVE programmes. Even in cases where an evaluation is positive, it is not easy to measure whether the beneficial impact will continue in the near future and in the long run. To ensure they have addressed this issue, practitioners should consider follow-up actions as part of a broader programme of victim testimonies.

Finally, the results of the evaluation must be presented in an appealing way, adding extra value.

Summary

Designing a good questionnaire is directly linked to the level of clarity regarding the evidence required and the objectives of the P/CVE programme. Interpreting the results is a crucial step that will shape the subsequent decisions made by policymakers.

¹¹ Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). (2018). *Guideline evaluation of PCVE programmes and interventions*. RAN ex post paper. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/ms_workshops_guidelines_evaluation_of_pcve_programmes_and_interventions_july_2018_en.pdf

Overview: how to evaluate P/CVE programmes with testimonies

1. Determine certain preparatory aspects:
 - evaluate either a concrete intervention or a complete programme
 - determine what specific problems the P/CVE initiative aims to resolve
 - determine if victims' testimonies are the appropriate approach, and why.
2. Describe the project and the objectives:
 - intervention goals
 - evaluation goals
 - the evidence needed
 - data collection:
 - quantitative and qualitative
 - data already available as well as that lacking/missing
 - time
 - resources:
 - cost
 - time
 - skills
 - capacity
 - ethical considerations
 - reconstruct how prevention works according to context:
 - primary prevention
 - secondary prevention
 - tertiary intervention
 - define a possible theory of change.
3. Establish suitable indicators:
 - awareness:
 - number of individuals reached
 - socio-demographic data
 - engagement:
 - number of individuals' interactions
 - level and characteristics of participation
 - impact:
 - credibility and effectiveness of victim's storytelling
 - creation of interest about historical events
 - respect of the 'do no harm' principle
 - resources to deal with controversial situations
 - influence of personal and external factors: gender, age, victim's profile, historical background
 - eventual behavioural changes.
4. Select a mixed method:
 - mix qualitative and quantitative tools
 - choose a short-term or long-term evaluation
 - consider the pre- and post-evaluation.
5. Establish a feedback loop:
 - set up a schedule or time frame where feedback is sought and received as soon as possible.
 - write a rubric according to the objectives
 - plan follow-up actions
 - consider transferability to the decision-making process.

Three settings for testimonies

Schools, prisons and the online world are three arenas where P/CVE programmes use testimonies. It is possible that anyone in any of these settings may become a focus of radicalisation; therefore, prevention is key. As described previously, practitioners should take into account the levels of prevention in each context.

Schools

Schools play a central role in the prevention of violent radicalisation for a number of reasons. Apart from the fact that the great majority of children attend primary school, a large number of young people receive upper secondary education. Schools are a fundamental arena for societal education and learning about citizenship — they also serve as a forum for social debate, through which social (or individual) problems and phenomena are discussed and resolved ¹².

Before choosing an approach, practitioners must consider the local context, e.g. past violent experiences in the community, recent structural changes (refugees, immigration, etc.) or situations of vulnerability linked to social exclusion. This section outlines how to evaluate testimonies held in schools as part of the curriculum.

Testimonies

Victims of terrorism frequently deliver testimonies in schools. Typically, these individuals have personally experienced a terrorist attack or had an experience of war. The testimonies should not be an isolated activity in the classroom, but rather should form part of the educational curriculum and goals, e.g. building resilience in victims and students, learning to discuss societal challenges, and for remembrance of victims.

Additionally, testimonies may be integrated into educational programmes oriented towards restorative practices, where positive values are promoted through complex contexts and violent backgrounds. Practitioners must take into account the legacy of transgenerational trauma (a family's history of trauma across generations, in the form of neglect, emotional abuse, etc., with mental health impacts) and the risk factor of revictimisation.

For this testimonial experience to prove successful, teachers must have worked with students on this topic in advance, and this effort must be recognised.

Indicators

The indicators for successful testimonies can be designed by considering the impact that the stories should have on the students and schools. For students, it is possible to calculate the numbers present in the classrooms, how many students engaged with victims (as an example of a part of a broader programme) and how many activities were linked to victims; their willingness to participate in this kind of experience again can also be measured. Furthermore, teachers and schools can gauge the general atmosphere, such as the decrease of hate speech or bullying, the level of acceptance, the enhanced knowledge about terrorism and the deeper understanding of the victims. The sustainability of these potential changes is another relevant factor.

On the other hand, the victim's opinions could also be considered a relevant, measurable factor. Victims can provide input on the interest they perceived, the level of respectfulness and the quality of questioning, as well as the revictimisation that must be avoided in future interventions.

Finally, parents are also actors of interest. They can be consulted about how they prepared their children to participate in this kind of initiative: this information gives practitioners an idea of the effects of the intervention outside the limit of the school, too.

Tools

In terms of tools that may be used for evaluation in schools, practitioner engagement before and after testing is required. Apart from a quantitative analysis to measure general participation, open-ended questions are a relevant tool for pupils, teachers and victims seeking more detailed information. Moreover, evaluation can incorporate creative activities, e.g. writing a letter to the victim or recording a video explaining their experiences — both creative ways to involve students in the evaluation process. Participant observation (a method used in prisons) is another field to explore, especially with older students who can debate with a certain degree of autonomy.

¹² Finish National Agency for Education. (2018). *Prevention of violent radicalisation in schools and educational institutions*. Helsinki: Erweko. Retrieved from https://www.oph.fi/download/189578_OPH_Ekstremismi_esite_210x210_englanti_VERKKO.pdf

Prisons

Described as 'potential incubators for radicalisation and recruitment by violent groups'¹³, prisons are increasingly concerned with the prevention of radicalisation. Owing to the higher number of recent criminal prosecutions and convictions of terrorism-related offences and of returning foreign terrorist fighters, prison staff operate on the front lines of the counterterrorism and countering violent extremism challenge¹⁴.

This environment could be appropriate for implementing P/CVE programmes with testimonies used as a base for resilience strategies. This is high-risk and involves an enormous amount of preparation, but the current climate calls for P/CVE measures to be taken.

Testimonies

Not all victims can meet with prisoners. They must first be professionally trained to share similarities with perpetrators. If there are no victims willing to participate, a witness or other individual connected with the victim can take their place.

Making this kind of programme appealing to victims is challenging for practitioners. It is not easy to overcome certain ideas, e.g. that prisoners are rewarded for participating in such programmes. There are, however, a number of ways to tackle this task.

- Practitioners can underline how this testimony would fulfil a logic or quality that victims appreciate, such as the chance to learn or to understand. They should also clarify that this represents a personal choice, with no promises, rewards or financial retribution.
- Victims' reactions after a terrorist attack vary: some become isolated, others desire to move on, and still others seek to understand why it occurred. Some choose to join preventive initiatives: this option requires a different mindset. It is important to connect with the language and outlook of the target group, without transmitting the idea that the practitioner is a teacher. Connecting with the most difficult or negative leaders in the room will complicate work in these kinds of programmes.

The training of prison staff is a crucial point: they are in need of some kind of accreditation granted by a body that will provide them with a broader understanding of perpetrators' motivations, of the balance between external and internal stakeholders, and of the connection with external groups coming into the prison. Financial resources are required for this training.

Indicators

Qualitative indicators play a key role in prison environments: positive responses to testimonies, agreement to hold differing views, (re-)engaging in the process or learning how to implement the experience in future situations.

Tools

Two main tools are proposed. Firstly, participant observation in small groups, which can be carried out using open-ended questions, a method used in other contexts like schools. It may result in broaching previously unexplored territory. Secondly, individual biometric tests that identify distinctive, measurable characteristics (psychological and behavioural) used to label and describe individuals. Above all, practitioners must remain at the helm of the evaluation process and create alliances with social workers, bearing in mind that prisoners' movements require a great deal of preparation.

Furthermore, interventions in prisons should be linked to a broader PVE or deradicalisation programme in prison, and therefore, also be in line with other VE assessment tools already in use.

Online

The internet is a promising distribution channel for P/CVE actions, including testimonies. The internet allows access to a broader audience, and it is a relatively easy — and measurable — means of dissemination. Furthermore, this dissemination is less time-consuming and less resource-intensive for the victim, who need only give the testimony

¹³ United Nations and the Rule of Law. (2016, January 11). Countering Violent Extremism in Prisons – A New Challenge for United Nations Peace Operations. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/13703-2/>

¹⁴ Global Center on Cooperative Security. (2018). Countering violent extremism in prisons. Project Synopsis. Retrieved from https://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/18Sept_CVE-P-Program-Description.pdf

once, during the recording ¹⁵. The internet also carries some risks: the unknown audience and context of viewing, and the unpredictable reactions of users.

Testimonies

The most suitable victim profile for an online testimony depends on the group practitioners wish to reach, e.g. a certain peer group of students at school or a wider audience in a social network. Apart from the actual testimony, the format must also be determined (video, podcast, audio, songs, clips, online portals, blended learning, etc.). As with all testimonies, the strategy must be described and justified.

The subsequent steps are to speak the language of the group and to reach the target. Online testimonies used in classrooms should be part of the educational curriculum and facilitate the initiation of dialogue, e.g. allowing students the opportunity to become involved in a decision-making initiative and imagine what they would do in certain situations.

The 'do no harm' principle is especially insecure in online testimonies, because practitioners lose control of the reactions. They have to pay attention to the comments, and if necessary, hire communication specialists.




Indicators

Online campaign goals differ depending on the target. Quantitative indicators linked to awareness and engagement — the number of views, clicks, comments or minutes used to view testimonies — are easily measurable. Qualitative indicators vary from the level of knowledge about the topic to the impact of individual testimonies.

Tools

The online context allows for a variety of tools to measure the impact. Quantitative data can be easily collected through free tools, such as Google Analytics. With reference to qualitative tools, comments are an accessible resource, while open-ended questions are difficult to ask and monitor.

¹⁵ Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). (2016). *Handbook: Voices of victims of terrorism*. RAN VVT handbook. Amsterdam. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-rvt/docs/ran_vvt_handbook_may_2016_en.pdf

Testimonies	Possible objectives	Quantitative indicators	Qualitative indicators	Tools
<p>Schools</p> 	<p>Building resilience in both victims and students</p> <p>Keeping alive the memory of the past</p> <p>Remembrance</p> <p>Engagement in topics of radicalisation and terrorism</p>	<p>Number of students</p> <p>Students who would repeat the experience</p> <p>Follow-up actions connected to victims</p> <p>Occurrences of acts of hate speech and bullying (school climate)</p>	<p>Impact of testimonies (feelings, reactions, etc.)</p> <p>Content of letters</p> <p>Perceptions of victims: level of interest and attention perceived</p> <p>Parents' opinions</p>	<p>Before and after questionnaires</p> <p>Open-ended questions</p> <p>Creative activities: writing letters, recording videos, etc.</p>
<p>Prisons</p> 	<p>Broader understanding of perpetrators' motivations</p> <p>Retaining a link with the external group and monitoring how to influence it in the long term</p>	<p>Initial number of participants</p> <p>Number of participants that continue in the programme</p>	<p>Positive responses</p> <p>Agreement</p> <p>(Re-)engaging in process or learning how to realise the experience in future situations</p>	<p>Participant observation</p> <p>Biometric tests</p>
<p>Online</p> 	<p>Using online testimonies as an educational resource</p> <p>Using target language as a strategy to approach the group</p> <p>Counter violent/terrorist content on social networks</p>	<p>Number of views, comments, clicks, etc.</p> <p>Amount of time that testimonies are being watched</p>	<p>Impact of testimonies (feelings, reactions)</p> <p>Level of knowledge</p>	<p>Metric online tools</p> <p>Comments</p> <p>Open-ended questions</p>

Examples of existing evaluations

This section contains examples of different levels of satisfaction in the field of evaluation.

Open University, Netherlands¹⁶

Description	Indicators	Evaluation method	Observations
Video testimonies of Holocaust survivors used at schools. The objective is to study the use and concept of video interviews as a 'thermometer' in current World War II memory culture	<p>Quantitative: search terms in portal to learn main interests, the most watched interviews</p> <p>Qualitative: impact, emotional reactions, active dialogue (what question would you ask a World War II survivor?)</p>	<p>Focus groups</p> <p>Database questions asked during World War II guest lectures in schools</p> <p>Web statistics interview portal</p> <p>Survey of portal users</p> <p>YouTube views and comments</p>	<p>Searching and selected interviews before watching at school requires prior knowledge. Perhaps expectations are formed by cultural memories</p>

University of Navarra, Spain¹⁷

Description	Indicators	Evaluation method	Observations
Design and development of a sociological experiment to measure the impact of victim testimonies of ETA terrorism on a sample of 225 university students in Navarre. The objective was to ascertain whether the messages transmitted by the victims changed the recipients' perception of terrorism, its consequences and the victims themselves; and identify the characteristics of the most effective testimonies, both in terms of the victim profile, and in relation to the channels used and the reactions observed	<p>Quantitative: number, age and gender of students, regional participants, number of testimonies, level of knowledge and interest about terrorism and victims, changes of opinion detected</p> <p>Qualitative: emotional reactions</p>	<p>A variant of the deliberative survey adapted to the characteristics of the initiative</p>	<p>Concrete insights about the influence of gender and the victim profile. Possible transferability to communication campaigns</p>

¹⁶ See The Open University online (<http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/>)

¹⁷ See the University of Navarra (<https://www.unav.edu/en/home>)

Finally, adjacent fields appear to serve as a useful source of good practices — examples are mentioned below.

Author/institution	Description	Indicators	Evaluation method	Observations
<p>Live Democracy!, German Youth Institute ¹⁸</p>	<p>Pilot project promoting democracy that contains a unit focused on prevention of far-right extremism and radicalisation</p>	<p>Quantitative: number of participants and stakeholders, financial resources invested, participation in related activities and workshops</p> <p>Qualitative: impact, behavioural changes, transferability to the field of youth work and services</p>	<p>Online survey</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews</p> <p>Group discussions</p> <p>Document analysis</p> <p>Participant observation</p>	<p>Pilot projects need a new perspective added to the overall process, including evaluation</p>
<p>Institute for Conflict Research, Belfast ¹⁹</p>	<p>Group of different projects, from social mediation to the use of arts as a medium of transformation, to promote social change and social justice in contexts of conflict or post-conflict</p>	<p>Attitudinal and behavioural change</p> <p>Violence prevention/reduction</p> <p>Improving communication between internal and external stakeholders</p> <p>Confidence</p> <p>Capacity</p> <p>Social inclusion</p> <p>Reflective societies</p> <p>Community cohesion</p>	<p>Baseline, mid-term and final monitoring</p> <p>External data sets and responses, quantitative and qualitative,</p> <p>Ethnographic participant observation</p>	<p>The applicability of this experience in P/CVE programmes includes impact on participation, protection, relief and recovery activities</p>

¹⁸ See Live Democracy! online (<https://www.demokratie-leben.de/>).

¹⁹ See the Institute for Conflict Research online (<http://conflictresearch.org.uk/>).