

EX POST PAPER

RAN LOCAL What projects and initiatives should be supported by local authorities? And why?

RAN LOCAL Athens, 23-24 May 2016

Summary

The second meeting of RAN LOCAL in Athens focused on how to choose the interventions and projects to invest in to counter violent extremism on a local level. In this paper some starting points on how to decide which interventions and projects fit the local situation and match with the overall strategy, how to get the needed political support and funding and how to evaluate what projects should be prolonged or best not.

Introduction

Most countries have a national countering violent extremism (CVE) strategy. In some Member States this national strategy provides an outline for the whole country and is coordinated from the national level. In other Member States the national strategy provides an outline for the development of specific local or regional CVE. In one way or another the CVE strategy will have to be translated into actions on the local or regional level¹.

But how to choose which actions will be taken once the strategy is drafted? In this paper starting points for local, regional and national coordinators of CVE policy on how to decide which interventions and projects fit the local situation and match with the strategy; on how to get the needed political support and funding; and on how to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and projects. The latter to establish if they are worth investing in or if they should best (not) be prolonged.

¹ For the RAN in CVE tailor-made interventions, adapted to local circumstances, are key: Each individual at risk is different which calls for a case-by-case approach. Besides internal factors, external factors such as the individual's social environment and the local circumstances need to be taken into account to provide effective support.

Choosing interventions and projects

For a CVE strategy to be effective, it should be translated into several tangible actions. And these actions should fit the local situation and add to achieve the goals set within the strategy. Some considerations which can help choosing the actions e.g. interventions and projects.



No intervention is an island

1. Broad or specific strategy

The first consideration to make is whether the intervention or project is embedded in a broad range of projects and initiatives, including those concentrating on the breeding ground of radicalisation and violent extremism, support at risk youth, integration and an inclusive 'we'- society or fits within a strategy consisting of specific projects on the prevention of radicalisation. Both are equally well. Just make sure you know the strategic field the intervention will be implemented in. For example if the intervention is part of projects targeting radicalisation, the interventions will be quite focused and narrow-ranged. This might mean

coordination with other adjacent fields like integration or discrimination is needed. If part of a broader approach of for example youth prevention, the interventions might be less targeted on a specific group or person but more generalistic, which asks for coordination of the attention towards individual cases of radicalisation.

Tips

- Check if the intervention is going to be part of a broad strategy or specific targeted strategy.
- Realize that the strategic setting of the intervention asks for different considerations to be made (e.g. specific needs coordination with adjacent fields, broad means special attention to not individual cases or groups.
- A broad strategic setting might mean CVE interventions are not named as such, but could still add to preventing the process of radicalisation. For example anti-discrimination campaigns or interventions might help certain persons to feel less marginalized. The feeling of marginalization is considered to be one of the many elements of the breeding ground for radicalisation.

2. Prevention

Since CVE policy is a mostly preventive policy, another way of looking at CVE interventions is to distinguish between the type of prevention they provide. Prevention as such

has many layers. Prevention means to stop something from happening, but there is general prevention of for example discrimination or specific prevention of a terrorist attack but also more individualized prevention of a person at risk to radicalise. To add to the effectiveness of the interventions planned in regard of CVE policy it helps to establish per intervention what type of prevention is intended. This way it is easier to overlook the goal you want to achieve with this intervention. Also the interventions can be better placed in an general overview.

There are several models used to categorise interventions towards a type of prevention. During the meeting of RAN LOCAL in Athens we used the pyramid of Deklerck for categorising the CVE interventions and projects of the CVE strategies of the cities and regions of the participants. The participants, local or regional coordinators of CVE strategies, were all very positive about this model. It helped to give an overview of the several CVE interventions and gave revealing insights in the set up of the total of CVE interventions in a specific region or city.

Although already provided in the EX ANTE paper see the annex for the theory of the pyramid of Deklerck for your convenience.

Tips

- Use a theoretic model – for example the prevention pyramid of Deklerck – to categorise the different CVE interventions you are using. This helps to provide an overview of the total of

interventions and gives insight in possible blind spots. It also helps you to fit the newest intervention into the CVE strategy.

- If you know what kind of prevention you are trying to achieve with your intervention or project this helps to be very specific about the expected effect or outcome of the intervention. This will manage expectations and gives input for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the intervention.

3. Political support and funding

Every policy planner or CVE coordinator knows that it is not always easy to get (local) political support for CVE interventions. Especially interventions which will not show immediate effect or those which are of a more general preventive nature might need some extra convincing. And political support is crucial for getting the needed funding.

In every city or region the way to get political support will differ. During the meeting in Athens we discussed the matter of political support extensively. Participants shared their successes and setbacks. Some general tips can be distilled from this discussion.

Tips

- To get political support make sure the interventions or projects you are suggesting are part of an overall strategic set up and if possible be very

transparent about the aim of the interventions and projects

- Politicians are concerned when they know vulnerable and young people citizens need help. Use local examples.
- Consider to involve city councillors in meetings and activities you are organizing. This way they can see for themselves what the problems are and what is needed.
- To get political support is a process. Start building your strategy with its needed actions (e.g. interventions and projects) step by step by implementing projects. Do not focus on direct political support but on the substance of the strategy and its actions.
- Work with the different local or regional key actors for example the police, youth services and schools. Create a general policy with them. If you get the support from all partners, this helps to get the political support.
- Sometimes it is easier to get support for a pilot project. You may want to pilot a project or intervention first and then use the results to get political support for this project on a long term basis.

Evaluation

For everybody who works in CVE the great question of how to best evaluate the effectiveness of the CVE interventions has not been answered yet. Partly this comes with the fact that most of the projects and

interventions are of a preventive nature. And how do you proof that something did not happen. On the other hand there are so many CVE related problems and terrorist attacks lately that there is such pressure to act and intervene that evaluation is not always on top of the to do list.

Please, find for inspiration purpose, the description of a process the city of Rotterdam (NL) started to find ways to evaluate their CVE projects and interventions.

Rotterdam wished to evaluate their CVE related interventions and projects. They were looking into a way of establishing which projects and interventions they should keep supporting and which ones not. They were looking for a way to involve outcomes of relevant research. Therefore they decided to ask four young academics (mostly assistant professors) to help them with the evaluation.

First they visited the academics to explain the idea. All of them were very willing to cooperate and happy to share their outcomes with the policy advisors of the city of Rotterdam.

Then they asked the academics to write a paper with their theoretical vision on CVE and successful projects and interventions.

The outcomes of these papers were to be shared during a one day workshop in which the academics would meet with the in CVE

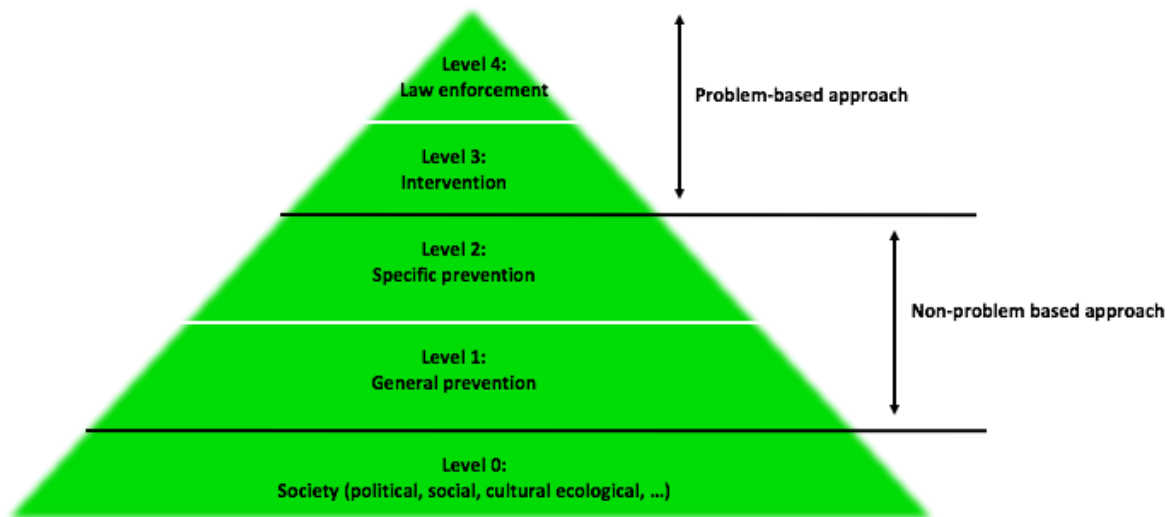
policy planners of the City of Rotterdam. In this workshop the interventions and projects of Rotterdam would be challenged against the outcomes of their research.

During the workshop the academics all presented their papers and the outcomes were discussed. Afterwards the different interventions were challenged with the research outcomes of the academics in small groups consisting of a mix of policy planners and academics. At the end of the day the mixed groups were then asked to formulate do's and don'ts and give feedback on the projects and interventions that were discussed.

Finally, this workshop did not only provide Rotterdam with a lot of insights from the academics regarding their CVE strategy and the corresponding projects and interventions, it also gave the academics a real and tangible insight in the practice of countering violent extremism.

ANNEX 1 Prevention Pyramid Johan Deklerck

The pyramid of Deklerck is used for preventive actions in schools but can be used to rank local preventive actions as well. Deklerck defines 5 types of preventive levels on which actions can take place. The actions can range from very early prevention to law enforcement.



Level 0 Society: The national and the global status quo and development is not something you can greatly influence from the local level. However, you can take stock of what is happening on a national or even world wide level and how this might effect the local situation (for example the migration crisis or the rise of Daesh). It is good to know who you need to contact if a national crisis might effect your local situation, where you can get information, and invest in useful contacts outside your local framework.

Level 1 General prevention: The local habitat and culture have impact on the actions of the inhabitants of the city/town/region. If people feel safe and included most of them will engage with their (local) environment in a positive way and be more resilient against polarising views. Actions of the local authorities with positive messages, trainings on skills and knowledge of professionals and general inclusiveness interventions can be seen as actions on the general prevention level.

Level 2 Specific prevention: Actions that target specific possible problems in order to prevent them. For example anti-discrimination campaigns, awareness raising of possible radicalisation among youth or the dangers of violent extremism.

Level 3 Intervention: An action targeting a specific situation, or targeting one or more specified persons. For example talking to family members of a right wing radicalised young men or team up with the community against the possible recruitment for Daesh around the local mosque.

Level 4 Law enforcement: Law enforcement can prevent the actual planned criminal act to happen if they can come into action before the act is carried out.