

RAN POLICY PAPER

Developing a local prevent framework and guiding principles - Part 2

Introduction

Tackling radicalisation and preventing violent extremism is a major challenge that must be addressed if we are to safeguard security and democratic values. It is one of the pillars of the EU's counter-terrorism policy and increasingly a priority for the EU, for national governments and for local authorities. This is especially the case in the aftermath of recent terrorist attacks, and in the light of increasing polarisation and radicalisation. The scale and scope of the foreign terrorist fighter (FTF) phenomenon, with several thousand men, women and children travelling to join ISIL, represents an unprecedented security challenge. Now there is the prospect of foreign terrorist fighters returning to their countries of origin, or traveling to destinations of their choice within the EU. Terrorist attacks within several EU Member States are designed to sow fear, panic and societal division which extremists can exploit to mobilise further support for their cause.

Preventing violent extremism at the local level is crucial. This paper builds on the insights of and complements the RAN paper *Developing a local prevent framework and guiding principles* published in November 2016 by adding information from cities rather than replacing recommendations. Cities participating with select guidance include: Vienna, Vilvorde, Antwerp, Aarhus, Copenhagen, Helsinki, Strasbourg, Augsburg, Düsseldorf, Hesse, Rotterdam, Zoetermeer, Delft, The Hague, Oslo, Larvik, Fredrikstad, Larvik, Gothenburg, Malmö, Örebro, Leicester and others involving the Nordic Safe Cities initiative.

This paper is written by **Magnus Ranstorp**, RAN CoE. It is based on reflections by local prevent coordinators and frontline practitioners representing over 30 cities across Europe. The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Commission or any other institution, or the official views of the participant municipalities and their local coordinators or fieldworkers.

FOREIGN TERRORIST FIGHTERS (FTF)

PREVENTION ISSUES

AN OVERVIEW

Departed FTFs

Austria 300
Belgium 470
Denmark 145
Finland 90
France 1,900
Germany 940
Ireland 40
Italy 150
Norway 90
Spain 222
Sweden 300
United Kingdom 850

Gender



80%

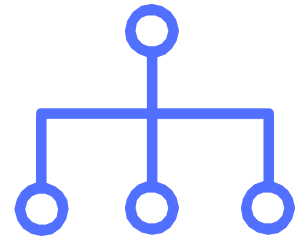


20%

RAN Returnee Manual



Risk assessment



Prosecution

Minors

Reintegration

EMERGING ISSUES

FTF RETURNEES

German study of 784 cases

- 61% German citizens
- 10% returned disillusioned
- 48% returned to radical groups
- 25% of returnees & 22% parents cooperated with authorities
- role of feeder groups significant
- 162 cities but only 13 cities with 10 or more FTFs

Swedish study of 267 cases

- 76% are men & 24% are women
- 70% are resident in segregated areas
- 80% come from four cities
- 75% are Swedish citizens and 34% born in Sweden

Norwegian study of 137 cases

- 88% are men & 12% are women
- Only 21% born in Norway
- 68% involved in crime (46% violent)
- 86% radicalized after 2011

CHAPTER ONE

ESTABLISHING AN ACTION PLAN OR STRATEGY

PREVENTION ISSUES



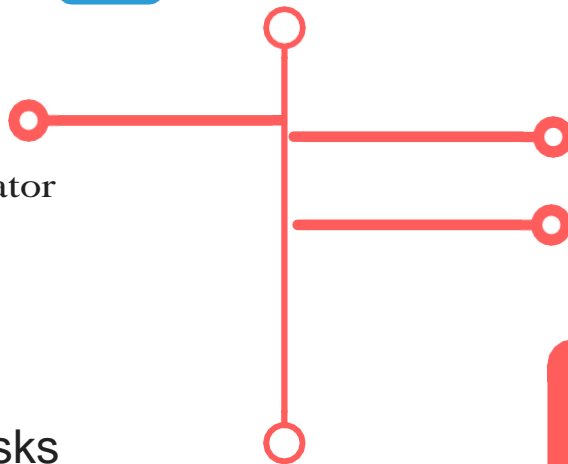
Checklist



Appoint
Local Coordinator



Initial tasks



Align local action plan
with national strategy

Observe & assess visible
local risk indicators

- Communicated threats
- Extremism on social media
- Closed/open extremist meetings
- Spread of propaganda
- Extremist demonstrations
- Citizen patrols (Soldiers of Odin, etc)
- Signs of radicalization
- Travel to terrorist conflict zones
- Recruitment activities
- Intimidation & threats against journalists and local politicians
- Signs of polarisation

Map outrisk factors
for local areas
(see next page)

- Socio-economic factors
- Psycho-social factors
- Normative influencing factors

- Clarify terminology (radicalisation, extremism)
- Use existing structures of cooperation
- Be clear about mandate
- Clarify needs of government agencies, focus & define responsibilities among different partner actors, create understanding of different mandates and work.
- Establish police liaison procedure and situational threat assessment picture.
- Create process for meetings on action plan
- Request a needs assessment and prioritisation of prevention efforts from different agencies.
- Establish priority areas, goals of intervention, the target groups and courses of actions/methods.
- Articulate action to be taken and rationale behind it.
- Identify positive resource persons and specialized expertise among staff & within local communities
- Integrate evaluation procedures (with consultancies and/or academics)
- Develop a communication strategy for prevention and the Action Plan. Produce a 2-3 brochure providing advice to the public and relevant actors what to do when there are concerns of radicalization and violent extremism.



Mapping local risk factors

This framework provides elements needed for an analysis of the dynamic risk factors in local neighborhood

Societal

- Socio-economic factors
- Psychosocial factors
- Normative factors

Individual

- Norm-breaking / Anti-social
- Criminal behaviour

Violence-based conflicts

- Gang violence
- Honor-based revenge
- Rioting/social unrest

Socioeconomic factors

- Educational level
- Unemployment
- Limited financial resources
- Crowded housing conditions
- Stigmatisation
- Social welfare claimant
- Economic segregation
- Political marginalization
- Societal disorganization
- Low access to ordinary systems
- Health levels

Psychosocial factors

- Identity
- Migration
- Foreignness
- Psychosocial health
- Experience of violence
- Anomi

Normative influencing factors

- Criminal systems
- Clan-based structures
- Customary law
- Religious-based systems
- Structural violence



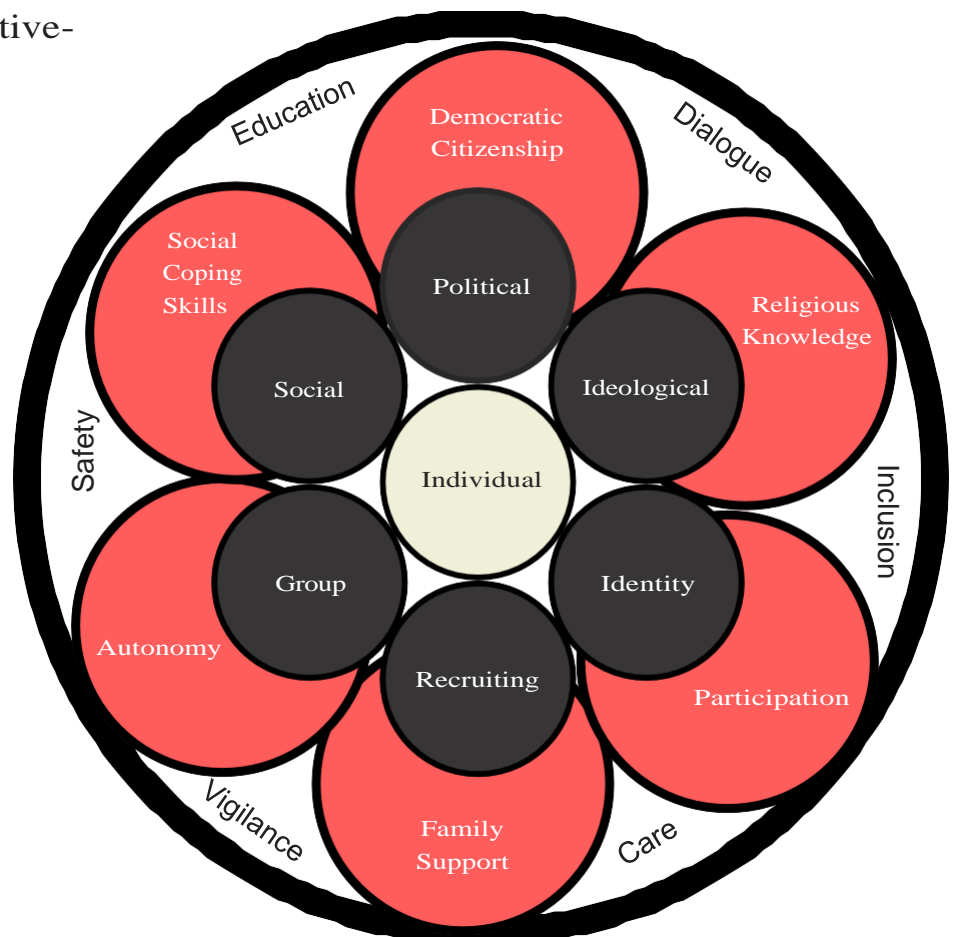
Source: Maria Wallin, Gothenburg 2014

Kaleidoscope of risk-protective- and promotive factors

A RAN Issue paper on root causes identified nine thematic risk factors interacting like a kaleidoscope:

- individual social-psychological (1) such as anger and a sense of injustice;
- social factors (2) as marginalization and discrimination;
- political (3) creating a narrative of 'us versus them';
- ideological factors (4) such as a salafi-jihadi interpretation of Islam and dissatisfaction with foreign policies;
- culture and identity crises (5) reinforced by standing between cultures;
- psychological trauma (6) such as PTSD;
- group dynamics (7) such a friends who are active in a violent extremist network;
- recruitment strategies consisting of groomers (8);
- social media (9)

Another RAN issue paper on protective and promotive factors mapped out these according to the nine thematic themes (in graph) providing an overview of intervention areas.



CHAPTER TWO

CREATING A MULTI-AGENCY STRUCTURE



Multi-agency cooperation - key issues

- Political backing on a local level
- Legal basis and information-sharing protocol
- Organisation and decision-making process

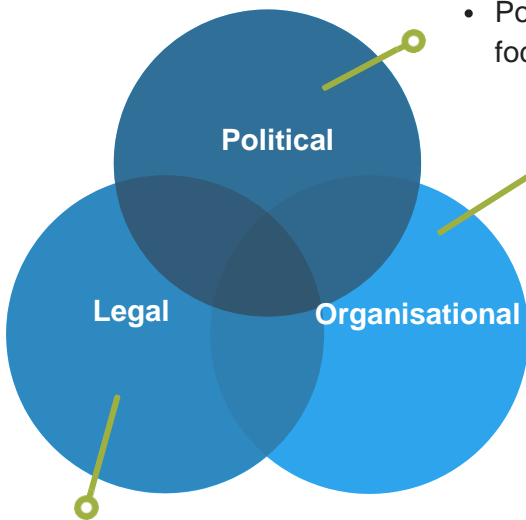
- Multi-agency structures and working processes are crucial for early and effective **identification** of individuals at-risk, improved **information-sharing**, **joint decision-making** and **coordinated action**.
- This cooperation between multiple agencies needs to be **clearly structured** with regular meeting points and discussions on cases on an individual basis to agree on appropriate courses of action for individuals vulnerable to radicalisation or involved in violent extremism.

WHO IS INVOLVED?

- Multi-agency structures vary due to different legal and statutory requirements. Often it involves collaborative structure between local authorities, police and other statutory partners (such as education, social services, child protection services, youth service and even offender management services). This collaborative structure often pre-exists and one agency chairs the meetings.

CHALLENGES

- Getting a city council to agree on objectives, target groups & budget
- Political resistance by politicians with competing agendas or those who focus on populist votes instead of safeguarding against radicalization



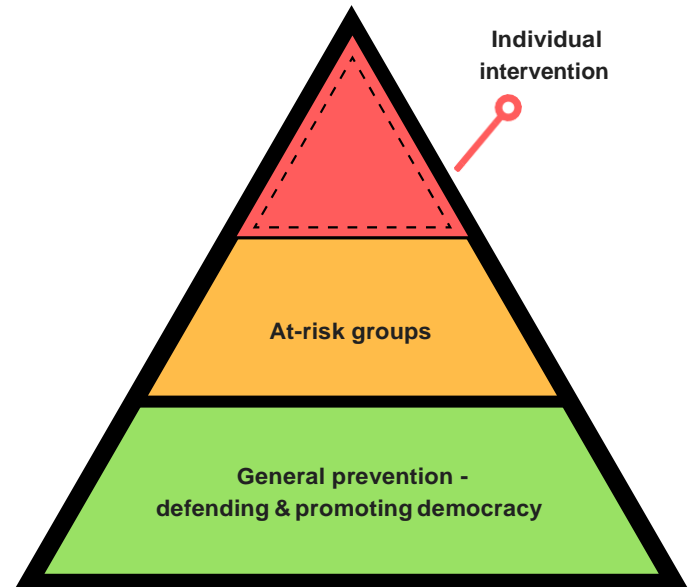
- Getting the right mix of people around the table, including stakeholders with different and possibly diverging approaches, interests and competences.
 - If there are too many actors, it's sometimes hard to work on a specific topic.
 - Professionals not trusting each other and not understanding each other's work processes and thus, not trusting how information, if shared, will be used. People "hide" behind legislation even when legislation would allow for information sharing.
 - Professionals not understanding how tackling radicalisation mirrors existing safeguarding and social care pathways, or seeing it as only the responsibility of counter-terrorism police.
 - Lack of guidelines and support by management on information sharing.
 - Continuity of personnel and trust issues: those responsible for radicalisation within their organisation often change organisation or change job within.
- Barriers to information-sharing on individuals.
 - Limited legal means to compel participation for individuals who are 18 years or older.



Developing an action plan

- Ensure the plan is a proportionate reflection of the risks and offers inclusive solutions without unfairly stigmatising individual communities
- Align the focus-areas according to the prevention triangle and intervention areas.
- Distinguish between general crime-prevention and democracy-promoting and CVE-relevant and CVE-specific interventions.
- Action Plans are individual and context-specific but measures are developed across the three intervention areas in the prevention triangle.
- Ask each participant in multiagency setting to provide suggestions for intervention.

Prevention triangle



Structure of Action Plan

Provide a detailed schematic of measures across five areas:

- measures
- who is responsible for delivery
- who are the collaboration partners in delivery
- period of intervention
- follow-up & evaluation (expected effects)

Structure of Action Plan Report

- Executive Summary
- Current extremist situation and reporting
- Background on radicalisation & violent extremism
- Recommendations: to strengthen coordination (structure & multiagency process); and individual measures across different levels of intervention. Provide a rationale for each measure, explaining why it is necessary as well the expected outcome.
- Follow-up & evaluation

-
- In **general prevention** the target group is broad-based. This level of general prevention is primarily concerned with developing social skills, involvement in society and sense of responsibility among children and young people. Activities include issues such as democracy-promoting, critical-thinking skills in educational settings and strengthening general protective factors within society. Measures are designed to strengthen social resilience in society.
 - Prevention efforts targeting **at-risk groups** are directed at people who are vulnerable to radicalisation and at risk of recruitment for terrorist or extremist purposes. Typical initiatives are contact points for support services, mentors and parental coaches. This level does not work with broad target groups, as the general preventive level does, but with specific problems, groups and individuals. The objective is to reduce the number of people at risk of radicalisation through activities that strengthen the individual's social skills and positive relations.
 - **Individual prevention** efforts are directed at individuals who are active in extremist environments and are at risk of becoming violent or becoming involved themselves with other criminal activities. The focus here is on individuals and typical initiatives involve preventative dialogue, rehabilitation from prisons and exit strategies.

Key guiding principles

- As a minimum the action plan should consider: (1) the vision/target of the action plan; (2) how the multi-agency prevention is organised locally; (3) who to contact in cases of concern; (4) how radicalisation concerns are assessed /analysed and addressed.



Political backing on local level

- It is important that the core partners have the determination to tackle violent extremism together and that they receive full political backing.
- Reach a **common agreement to budget directly** for prevention, thereby providing unity of purpose and showing that the city stands together against radicalisation and violent extremism.
- **Allot certain amounts to specific tasks** in preventing radicalisation, for example innovation of new methods or expansion into new areas of preventing radicalisation. Cooperating on concrete projects is useful as it develops a common understanding of concepts, aims and objectives.
- To achieve political backing, a **local risk assessment** should be produced and communicated to local political figures – including the risks of not addressing the problem.
- Establish a **strategic group** that links politicians and intervention partners.
- **Invite local politicians to attend meetings** occasionally; they may well decline, but a rejected invitation is better than no invitation! The strategic group should provide feedback to local politicians. Provide feedback to the political leadership through close and frequent updates on the situation and annual reports about achievements and challenges. This secures political agreement and support, ensures that the measures remain focussed and targeted and that there are the necessary resources.



Legal basis

- Establish **clear-cut agreements about respective roles** and limitations to these roles for all actors involved.
- An **Information Sharing Agreement (ISA)** should be signed by all organisations and departments represented at the multi-agency group. There may be legal obligations for information sharing that you can incorporate (i.e. prevention and detection of crime, safeguarding young people). If there is no existing legal framework, then you will be reliant on the enthusiasm and commitment of the group's members to sign up; this can prove difficult.
- **Test the agreement/agreed process** with a case.
- **Appointing specialised caseworkers** who then get the necessary training and experience in dealing with radicalisation and violent extremism issues, both for individuals and families. If necessary contacting national legislators about making necessary changes in the respective judicial areas.



Organisation

- Make use of the **existing cooperation models** benefitting from established networks, collaborative relationships and routines.
- **Establish a multiagency coordination unit with relevant authorities**, involving persons with particular qualities required for constructive cooperation.
 - If the structure is **strategic** (e.g. municipality heads) then you need personalities who can resolve difficult situations and drive policy change within the organisations. They need to be 'invested' in the CVE strategy, even if they have been brought to the table unwillingly – this may require sharing restricted information with them to make them fully aware of the local threat/risk. This can be a persuasive tactic with strategic leads. They need to know what risk they carry and what the impact of not addressing it would be.
 - If the structure is **operational** (day-to-day operations), then these personalities must be dynamic and self-motivated. Take the time to find the right people and try not to appoint based purely on role; one apathetic personality can slow down progress for the whole group. The structure must be representative of the departments and organisations relevant to delivery of your CVE strategy: health, mental health, police, municipality (community safety), safeguarding (social welfare, adults and children), education (from early schooling through to university) representatives, CVE manager/coordinator, prisons, youth services.
- **Develop an action plan with specific tasks** attributed to individual persons/departments. Ensure that the plan is approved by the strategic partnership board. Where possible, make this plan (or its general themes, names removed) public so there can be no accusation of secrecy/lack of transparency.
- Provide an **organisational chart**. Establish a processing plan on how cases are handled within this multi-agency structure.
- Ensure a **common language** is used and there is shared understanding of **mandate** and **how the different agencies work**.
- Create a **screening tool** that is user-friendly and effective.
- Some invest in **multi-professional work** instead of multi-agency work, as the best work method when it comes to helping offenders or other at-risk individuals. The distinction is important. Multi-professional usually refers to professionals working together as a team whereas multi-agency work usually refers to professionals coming together when needed, but otherwise work in their separate organisations.
- **Develop a strategic partnership board** that involves representatives from multiagency structure and other outside intervention partners (NGO's, etc).
- Ensure that **funding to programmes** is not spent only on **coordination** but also on **implementation**.
- Provide resources for **networking events** bringing together prevention partners.
- **Set your goals in the beginning** – this will help your evaluation afterwards. Consult IMPACT or consultants for evaluation mechanism from the outset.

CHAPTER THREE

CONTACT & ADVISORY POINT (HOTLINE/HELPLINE)

PREVENTION ISSUES

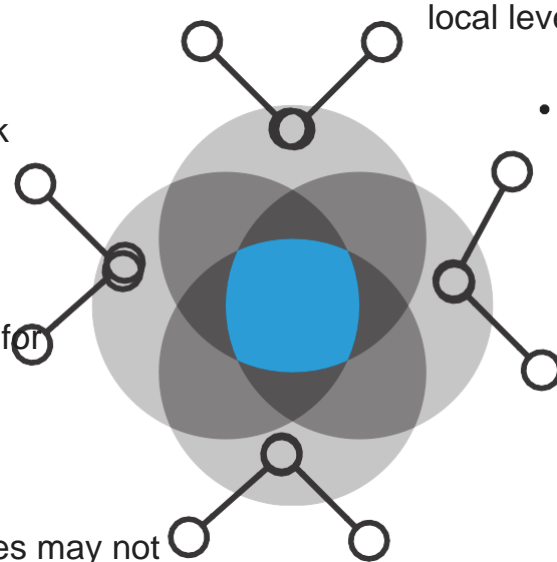


- Hotlines/helplines are often operated by different actors, such as municipalities, government agencies or civil society organisations
- Contact and advisory point functions vary according to mandate - whether they operate with police or independently as an NGO

Purpose

- Provides psychological support and advice to families
- Provides a protective factor as families' first contact point and is available 24/7.
- Deep emotional bonds and supportive relationships within families are important when dealing with radicalised individuals.
- Families often feel alone and abandoned

Challenges

- 
- Necessary budget for sustained work
 - Are hotlines/helplines best organised at national or local level, or both?
 - Make clear distinction between helpline and hotline as it conflates risk assessment & general advice to professionals
 - Credibility, especially among different ethnic/cultural communities
 - Establishing procedures for risk evaluation & intervention
 - Lack of trust to turn to local authorities. Fear of prosecution of family members or fears that children will be removed from parental custody
 - Local communities may not be aware that the hotline/helpline exists
 - Handling information volume during crisis or social tension



Key guiding principles

- Look for **existing structures** (e.g. existing helpline for social concerns/safeguarding for parents). A generic single point of contact (e.g. a **multi-agency safeguarding hub**) can deal with a range of issues, radicalisation being just one of them.
- Another option is to create a **multi-agency partnership network** (schools, counselling centres, detention work, etc) – use existing networks to make contact within communities.
- **Create one entry-point** rather than several - this makes risk assessment and guidance easier.
- All helplines work on the principle that in cases of **immediate danger, law enforcement agencies are notified** and cooperated with.
- Avoid, if possible, setting up hotlines/helplines within security structures. This will be important in order to establish trust in helplines/hotlines.
- Assess **urgency of the response time if urgent**, it should be within 24 hours.
- An **NGO can become a useful ‘intermediary’ advisory contact point** to provide parents access to local government institutions, from the police to social services.
- Beyond helplines/hotlines, **establish parallel contact points within the community** and faith-based organisations - this will be valuable during social tensions.
- **Networking can create trust in communities** using existing crime-prevention network and expanding from there into communities and minority-communities.
- **Finances for helplines/hotlines should cover at least three years.** This sustained resource period will provide longevity and stability of intervention efforts including necessary staff costs.



Toolbox & advice

Staff should be properly trained and have specific professional competences:

- Operating hotlines require **linguistic and cultural skillsets** to create trust and psychological support, to provide expert counseling on how to act and who to turn to in a given situation.
- To **recognise signals** and create a procedure to handle calls: provide training to current first liners, professionals. **Develop dynamic risk assessment tools** that balance **risk factors and protective factors** at individual personal level, family situation, social factors, motivational factors and ideological/cultural factors.
- Ensure staff have experience with support calls and **treatment of trauma and torture victim support**. Foreign fighters are often traumatised and suffer from PTSD and mental health issues.
- **The first call is critical – build trust**. It often has the character of emergency advice. Follow-on calls take the form of assessing family background and dynamics, advice and family counseling.
- **Be transparent about what happens next**, provide feedback. Focus on trust-building and gradually introduce extremism issues.
- **Be precise about what you can and cannot do** (also remain practical, e.g. hours of contact). Consistency is crucial to ensure trust – say what you do, do what you say.
- Be transparent about what happens when someone calls the helpline/hotline, especially with regards to the **possibility of anonymity** and the **level of police involvement**. Callers must be made aware that in serious cases police involvement may be necessary.
- Family counselling should focus on parents to prevent them feeling lost or alone. Support to families should **avoid giving parents ammunition so they can argue with their children on theological grounds**. Instead they should try to coach the parents to ask and be curious rather than be judgmental.
- Establish **clear guidelines and agreements** on how to deal with serious cases when **NGO-operated helplines/hotlines** are approached.
- Invest in wide, consistent and sustained **awareness raising campaigns** to ensure community members and individuals know where to go for help.
- Invest in **local marketing campaigns** about what the helpline/hotline is all about in different languages and through different community events, local press and seminars. Think through **distribution points**.

CHAPTER FOUR

ROLE OF MENTORS

PREVENTION ISSUES



Role of mentors

- to guide and be positive force
- a role model motivating the individual and others to turn away from their destructive lifestyle & strengthen their resilience against the allure of extremism
- empowering personal change
- monitoring change in individual

Who are mentors?

- Youth workers
- Sport coaches
- Parents
- Community police officers
- Religious leaders
- Formers

Personal qualities?

- Authenticity
- Authority and strength
- Trustworthy
- Respect of the client
- Listening skills

Challenges

- Poor match between mentor and mentee.
- Must overcome reluctance to speak to mentor from a different ethnic, cultural or religious background.
- Lack of boundaries surrounding mentoring. Difficult to finish mentor-mentee relationship.
- Lack of clarity of the mentor's role. The mentor quickly becomes a "fix-it-all" solution.
- Developing a consistent, effective methodology to mentors and across mentor corps.
- Inability to recognise mental health issues.
- Make sure mentors are trusted by everyone, including other professional actors.
- Mentorship is not a career and few are paid full-time employees.
- Transparency issue with NGO mentors. Some keep difficult issues "in-house" to ensure financial support from donors/government funding. Some are "pop-up" NGOs that seek funding and consequently motives, quality and longevity are called into question. Some enlist services of former jihadists/extremists and it is difficult to know if they return to or retain ties with extremists.



Key guiding principles

- **Mentors should not always be the first choice**; many issues can be dealt with using existing frameworks (health, mental health, etc.); mentors should be reserved for those cases where one-to-one intervention is necessary.
- **Some caution is called for with NGO mentoring schemes** and there is a need to get a clear picture of the organisation's objectives, affiliations and required professional background to handle difficult personal backgrounds/problems.
- **Formers can be used** in appropriate cases as powerful voices in preventing and countering radicalisation. This needs careful monitoring so that mentors do not return to extremist milieus.
- **Mentors should have trust in the professional network** so they can be accurate in their references (e.g. if the mentor has no trust in the follow-up that is done by the police because they will treat an individual badly, he or she will not refer this individual to the police)
- Consider **using people in the direct network of the at-risk individual** for guidance and support as they take less time to build up a relationship and confidence. **Establish reporting obligations** (what to report, what not, and to whom) and do not leave this to the discretion of the individual mentor.
- **Mentors should be treated 'inclusively'** and not just as a tool for intervention. Establish national networks where good practice can be shared and emerging risks and threats can be updated.
- **Some local coordinators caution against NGO mentors** as some can have unclear intentions, unclear allegiances and lack the required professional background needed for handling difficult personal backgrounds/problems.



Toolbox & advice

- **Mentors should be vetted** (security checked) to ensure there are no hidden risks in their involvement, or connections to existing extremist groups. **Vetting and security checks need to be interdisciplinary.** It is not sufficient to simply check past police records alone.
- Mentors may be criticised from within their own communities, or even at risk of violence, and this should be taken into consideration – **their anonymity is important.**
- **Make sure mentors feel safe** (e.g. where can they go if they are threatened?).
- Look for a combination of personal and professional qualities. **Create a team of mentors that is diverse in gender, ethnic background and professions**, so that there is as wide a range to choose from when matching mentor and mentee. **Trainer personality is more important than methodological issues.** If the mentor corps is too narrow, it will not be possible to match or switch a mentor if the intervention fails.
- Establish a pool of mentors to fit individual solutions. **All mentors should receive the same training and methods**, which they combine with their personality and professional background to both intervene and act as a role model.
- Provide training for mentors: it is important to distinguish their own views from their 'professional' behaviour. **Create a training manual** to be used as training and reference guide for mentors.
- **Make sure mentors equip mentees with social skills** and become independent within a set timeline – otherwise the relationship can continue indefinitely.
- **Improve the match between mentor and mentee.** Mentors should have profound understanding of cultural and religious background.
- Working directly with young people requires a positive approach. **Focus on guiding and asking the right questions in order to support individuals finding their own solutions.**
- Distinguish between professional and individual private behaviour (e.g. what if a mentor is addressed to aspects in his/hers personal life?)

CHAPTER FIVE

ROLE OF MENTAL HEALTH

PREVENTION ISSUES



Role of psychologists and mental health - key issues

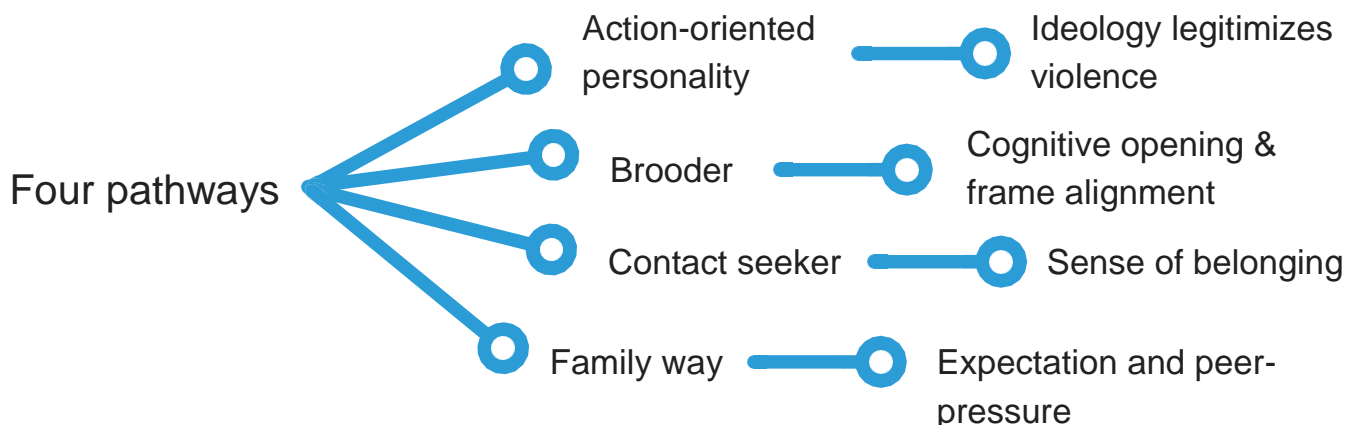
- Psychological risk assessment & counseling
- Screenings & therapy sessions
- Mental health care workers such as psychiatric nurses are important in the assessment process
- Children & youth psychiatric issues require specialised skills often lacking in social workers & psychologists
- Mental health issues in youth appear differently than in adults and are often misdiagnosed or not diagnosed at all

Antisocial personality problems

Often individuals drawn towards violent extremism suffer from a combination of complex socio-psychological problems such as:

- Lack of empathy
- Risk-taking behavior
- Excitement seeker
- Lack problem-solving skills
- Masculinity norms
- Centrality of violence
- Poor social skills
- Lack critical thinking skills
- Low impulse control

Socio-psychological pathways into extremism



Source: Swedish Security Service, 2010

Challenges

Other government agencies may work against client's best self-interest, which limits psychotherapy outcome

Limited, long waiting times or no access

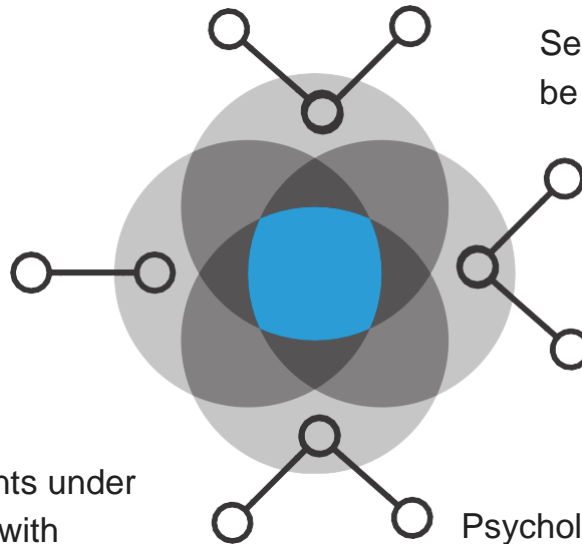
Secrecy/confidentiality may be barrier to cooperation

Creating positive cooperation between psychologist and client can take a long time

Finding the right expertise & background when dealing with returning FTFs

Making assessments under difficult conditions with individuals not interested in cooperation

Psychologists often involved in later stages and not in decision-making process



Key guiding principles

- **Involve psychologists early on in a multi-agency setting** to receive multiple perspectives on cases from other agencies.
- **It is critical to have access to a range of psychologists:** for mentoring parents, for assessing traumas, for managing acute crises. E.g. when parents are notified of their child's death, for supervision of staff/mentors/parental coaches, for assessing the broad psychological health of a family (parents and siblings of a radicalized youngster) thus enabling a holistic approach to the whole family.
- **A mental health questionnaire/vulnerability assessment** should be used to effectively **screen out false signals** and determine how a case should be handled and by whom.
- **Greater involvement of psychologists at all levels** - not only in treatment, but in policy making, setting up and programming interventions, training, quality assurance and research.



Toolbox & advice

- Ensure that the psychological/psychiatric focus on young people reflects the different symptoms/needs from adults (men and women).
- Psychiatric personnel play important role in detection of mental health issues such as **trauma in young people**.
- There is a **need for clear models/theories of change**, strong **evidence based methods** and substantial and **standardised training**.
- Increase knowledge and awareness of radicalisation in those who work face-to face with the patients (therapy or in the institutional environment). It is not enough that one or two experts in the institution has this knowledge. **Those working directly with patients need to know what to look for and what different indicators means.**
- **Explore evidence-based methods that combine trauma treatment with risk assessment and therapy methods** (Life Psychology, Risk-Need-Responsively, Signs of Safety, etc.).
- Psychologists involved need to have experience with the target group and relevant specialised training and knowledge. Psychologists need to have **intercultural and/or intercultural expertise**.
- **Adopt practices** from the field of violence and **criminology**.

CHAPTER SIX

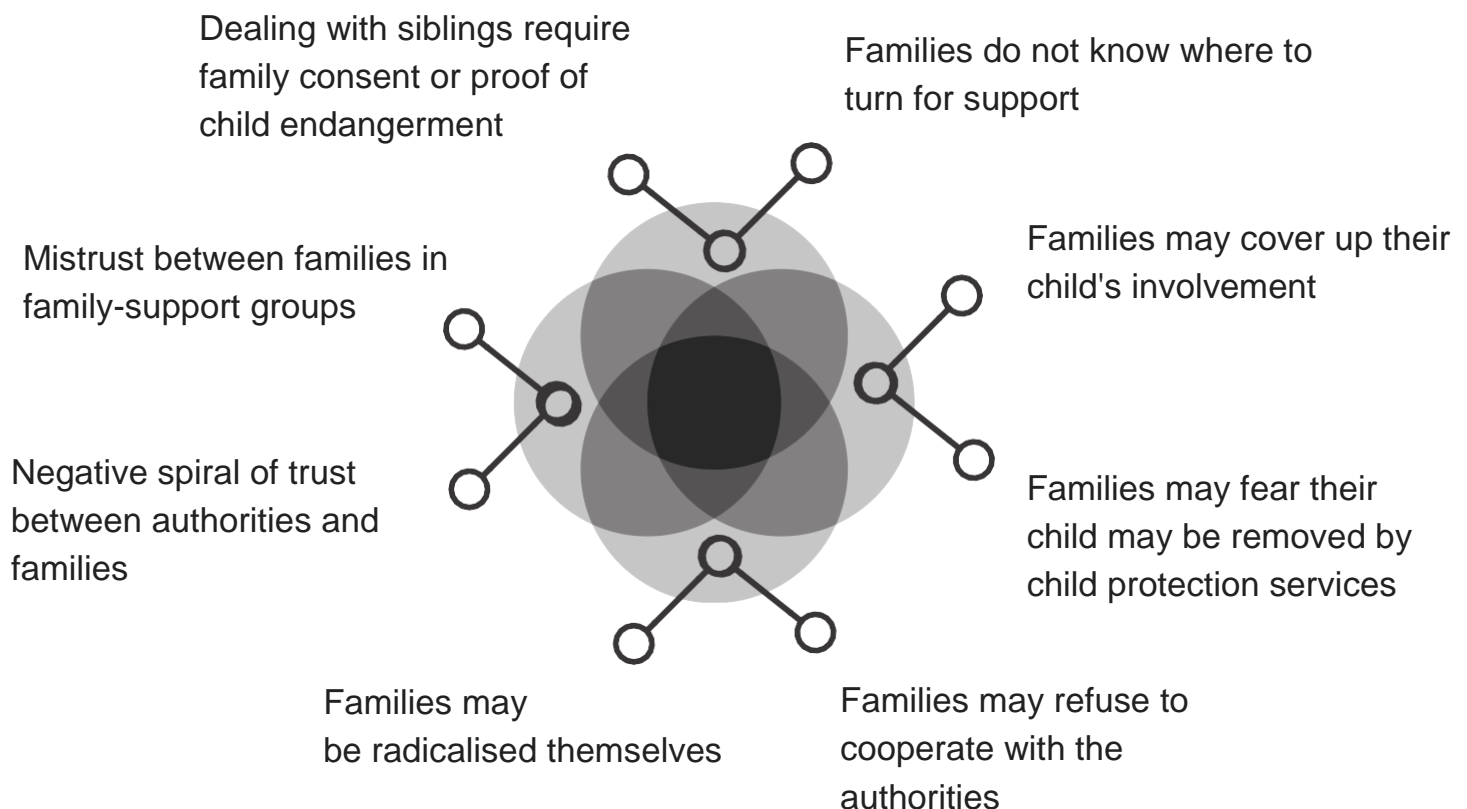
FAMILY SUPPORT & INTERVENTION MODELS



Key issues

- Families are often the first to detect worrying signs of radicalisation and can provide key forms of support to, and have a positive influence on a person at risk.
- The deep attachments and emotions in a family are a strong source for countering radical ideals.
- Families can be part of the problem. Dysfunctional families and the absence of fathers have been observed to be a contributing factor for cases of radicalisation.
- Families are often partners in signaling, preventing and protecting individuals at risk.
- If a young person is incarcerated in prison, families are an important resource in the reintegration and rehabilitation process.

Challenges





Key guiding principles

- **Adopt a tailored customised approach for individual families** by creating a multi-agency response and action plan. For example, bring in family/individual therapists (create family support networks and specialised guidance), mentors, arrange practical support for the individual to apply for work/school placement etc.
- Work with other partner agencies to develop **a shared understanding of how and when information will be shared and the thresholds**.
- For radicalisation in the family to be a social service issue, the **symptoms of radicalisation** must be in line with **the “usual” risk parameters of neglect, abuse, violence etc.**
- **Good communication flow** between the various institutions is important. This can be achieved preferably by spearheading action through **one primary task force**.
- Establish **specific contact persons** for the family.
- Be aware of the danger that family members may “take over” the mentor to solve their own problems.
- Consider facilitation of **family support networks** as meeting points for parents in similar situations. However, be aware that sometimes people are ashamed or still too angry to share their emotions with other families who are in the same situation.
- There is no one-size fit all models for family intervention. As such, it is crucial to have **different methods for different family structures** as variance in family backgrounds: (socio-economic, religious, cultural) will require diverse approaches.
- It is important to develop staff skill sets handling different **religious and cultural backgrounds** in their relation-building work.



Toolbox & advice

Preparation and first meeting

- **Obtain a detailed family history** and get an overview of the family's socio-economic status. This includes **mapping out the resources** already in contact with the family. (e.g. social security services, police, child services).
- **Determine first contact:** if police, social services, or both make first contact and visit the family, determine who takes the lead and the desired outcome from meeting the family.
- **Observe family dynamics and signs of dysfunctional relationships.** Build trust and a relationship with family. **Be transparent and avoid secrecy.** Don't get 'stuck' between families on the one hand and police on the other hand; be clear about your actions from the local authority's perspective.
- **Show understanding if parents try to protect their children** by lying (the parental role is fundamental, regardless of how 'close' you are to them).
- Assess the parents' thoughts/concerns (potential support) for the radicalised child/young adult, including their needs for external support. Experience indicates that this should be assessed in the family home by a combination of social workers and police. Establish contact and identify the problem. Hold direct conversation right away. This builds trust.
- Start assessments early and **keep responses proportionate.** Explain that **process takes time and will likely involve setbacks.**
- Point out **one point of contact for the families;** don't crowd their living room.

Throughout process (I)

- Exercise patience, be persistent and offer help several times; focus on the needs of families and accept their grief and ambivalence over the situation.
- **Set practical boundaries for support at the outset** and clearly defined goals when and **how engagement needs to wind down.**
- **Debrief families** after 'hurtful' incidents (such as attacks against foreign fighters).
- **Focus on the family needs instead of the risks.** Understand the family dynamics at play.
- **Focus on the social and emotional issues** (while not ignoring the role of ideology), it works with an identity model, which helps to figure out underlying social problems – feelings of alienation, frustration, exclusion, lack of perspectives, etc.
- Point out to family that interventions **can help youngsters and their parents get closer** and improve their communication and conflict management.

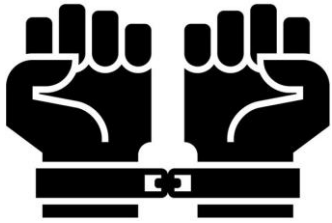
Throughout process (II)

- Provide **guidance for how to maintain contact** with the individual who has travelled (e.g. via Skype or social media).
- **Engaging the entire family as a group** provides important clues as to why the individual left and the degree of willingness by the family to play a constructive role in intervention.
- When a family 'loses' someone who becomes a foreign fighter, make sure you do not only target the parents, but also the **siblings**. They appear to be a group at risk of radicalisation themselves.
- Put in place protective measures for the family **to guard against other radicalisation attempts by those still** in country. For example, other radical persons with ties to the individual who has travelled might attempt to marry sister or radicalise other family members.
- **Consider providing courses targeted at socially vulnerable parents** and relevant relatives with a focus on **strengthening parental roles and skills** in everyday life, and increasing knowledge of rights, duties and norms in society. **Focus on their resources as a parent, not on faults or failures.**
- Provide space for **empowerment of mothers** to have confidence in their parenting skills and deal with difficult issues such as radicalisation.
- **Focus on the gender perspective.** Mothers typically play a key role in families as care providers. They know their children closely and can provide a protective role.
- **Provide female role models and mentors.**
- Prepare for a combination of gender and convert issues.
- **Consider crisis counselling** – with additional long-term counselling on how to cope with the situation. **Break the cycle of isolation.**
- The family might need **assistance to handle the media.**
- **Never provide contact details of families to the media or researchers.** Do pass on requests or messages to the families and let them decide. Do not appear to 'favour' one family above another: stay neutral, don't always ask the same family to make public statements. Be neutral, explain to families that often accuse each other that everyone can expect the same kind of support.

CHAPTER SEVEN

REINTEGRATION (AFTER PRISON)

PREVENTION ISSUES



Key issues

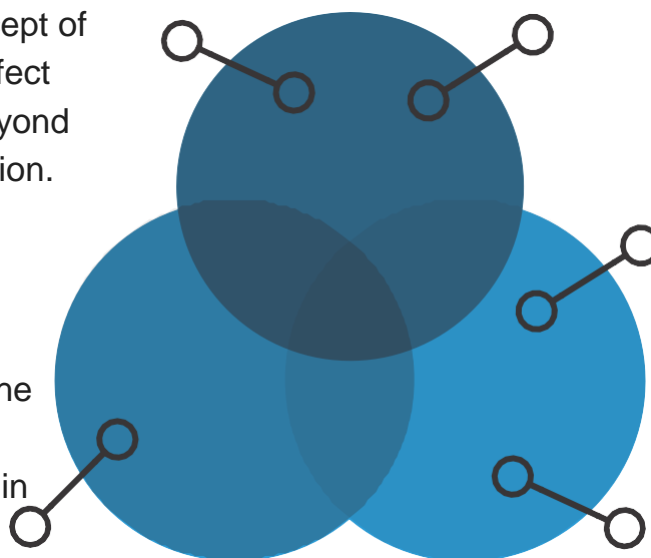
- Families, positive social resource persons, civil society organisations, social workers and mentors play a crucial role in ensuring individuals do not fall back into their old, destructive behavior.
- Reintegration begins inside prison and involves psychological counseling and religious discussion.
- Mentors can play a crucial role in reintegration. They also play practical role in guiding the individual in contact with authorities.

Challenges

Prisons are 'places of vulnerability' and radicalised individuals tend to interpret every perceived injustice and all experiences of powerlessness or humiliation as confirmation of their ideology and their concept of the enemy. This can affect rehabilitation efforts beyond the period of incarceration.

It may be challenging to get prisons, police and local municipality systems to work together. It is not always possible to share sufficient information between prison rehabilitation and local authorities.

Local authorities may be surprised by the release of prisoner. The release can create significant turbulence in local milieus among criminal gangs and extremists.



There is a crucial phase of vulnerability after release. Old group structures and peer pressure

Risk of individual moving somewhere else (outside municipal jurisdiction) upon release.



Key guiding principles

- **Model exit programmes using elements of existing crime prevention** and exit from criminal gangs, as the same kind of principles often apply in extremism cases.
- **Consider establishing a mentor programme in prison** for those motivated to reject extremism. It needs to be based on an established methodology of exit programmes.
- **Mentors should have a lot of knowledge on religion** because many of the returnees wish to explore their religious and ideological convictions.
- **Exit-programs run by NGOs** cannot be implemented without access to the required social services, e.g. adequate housing, employment, education. There **needs to be established coordination**.
- Allow access to other inmates and **prison visits**, this is an important part of helping them to stay in contact with their families and friends.
- Provide access to **psychological/mental health treatment** both inside prison and after release.
- **Link the local level with what happens in prison:** provide frameworks where actors from the local level can already reach out to prisoners prior to their release.
- **Ensure availability of the same mentors working during imprisonment** and involve positive resource persons from their social environment. It is essential to prepare inmates for life outside prison and to transfer what they have learnt to their future day-to-day life and to anchor it there.
- **Establish a local network with practitioners from prison, police and municipality** to discuss issues such as transfer systems and release issues in preparation for release.



Toolbox & advice

- **Use ordinary ongoing exit programmes in combination with a mentor. Do not separate the two** but combine them for maximum effect and coordination.
- **Establish contact immediately with released prisoners** to ensure good aftercare and to make a qualified assessment of their situation and degree of radicalisation.
- Engage released prisoners in **meaningful work and education**.
- Make use of the confinement and provide an alternative contact to introduce different perspectives and to **promote positive influences by offering a reliable relationship and trustful social interaction**.
- **Take the local context into account** as some measures will have already been tried and failed or seemed successful: build upon this while the prisoner is in jail.
- **Be clear about ultimate responsibility for risk assessment**.
- **The prisoner's reason for exiting extremism may not be the same as for entering it in the first place.** Underlying reasons may differ and they need to be explored.
- **The reason for exiting is seldom ideological but is usually related to practical and social reasons.**

CHAPTER EIGHT

SOCIAL MEDIA



Key issues

- Social media offers a unique insight into a radicalised person's views and social network.
- Social media offers tool for engagement with a radicalised person.
- Social media provides tool for dissemination of counter and alternative narratives.
- Alternative narratives strengthen the feeling of belonging at local level and strengthen resilience against radicalisation.
- It is easier to engage and include community members around positive social narratives

Challenges

Role and impact of local authorities in delivering counter and alternative narratives

Huge amounts of extremist propaganda material on social media makes it difficult for municipalities to follow and monitor



Creating an online prevention that supports offline intervention

How to reach out and engage with target group

How to offer online prevention tools and interventions that resonate with the target group.

Finding the credible (and representative) voices and ensuring their safety



Key guiding principles

- Get teachers, social workers, street workers informed about the role of social media, both in terms of recruitment and radicalisation and effective prevention efforts.
- Ensure that communities themselves are involved in the development of counter narratives.
- Create innovative partnerships to 'tool up' civil society partners with skillsets to create their own material.
- Establish collaboration with national and international partners for exchange of methods, experiences and training.
- Engage with and support civil society online initiatives to prevent radicalisation and raise awareness and foster a critical approach to online information.
- A community engagement plan should be developed and an attempt made to map those people or groups who are best-placed to reach the target audience (at-risk individuals or groups)
- Once those credible voices are found, it is important to give them the skills and training they need: social media, mainstream media (you may want them to speak on your behalf in the press), building websites, generating web traffic and followers, amplifying messages.
- Digital skills are essential as an integral part of education at an early age. This involves how young people should engage in source criticism, 'net etiquette' and critical thinking skills. Adults and parents could play an active role on social media to engage with young people who may show digital signs of extremism.
- Consider creating digital youth teams focusing on digital awareness/training/education.
- Creativity is essential. Work with young and innovative filmmakers.



Toolbox & advice

- Encourage a peer-to-peer approach
- Consider reaching radicalised youth online to establish offline counselling.
- Draw on the examples of good practice in your municipality to evidence positive narratives.
- Exchange extremists' social media *nom de guerre* between partner agencies to be able to track online behavior.
- Engage with the youth to be informed about reach and impact of online messaging
- Engage as much as possible with those who are active online in terms of incitement, hate speech, and radical messages to also be able to challenge these messages offline.

CHAPTER NINE

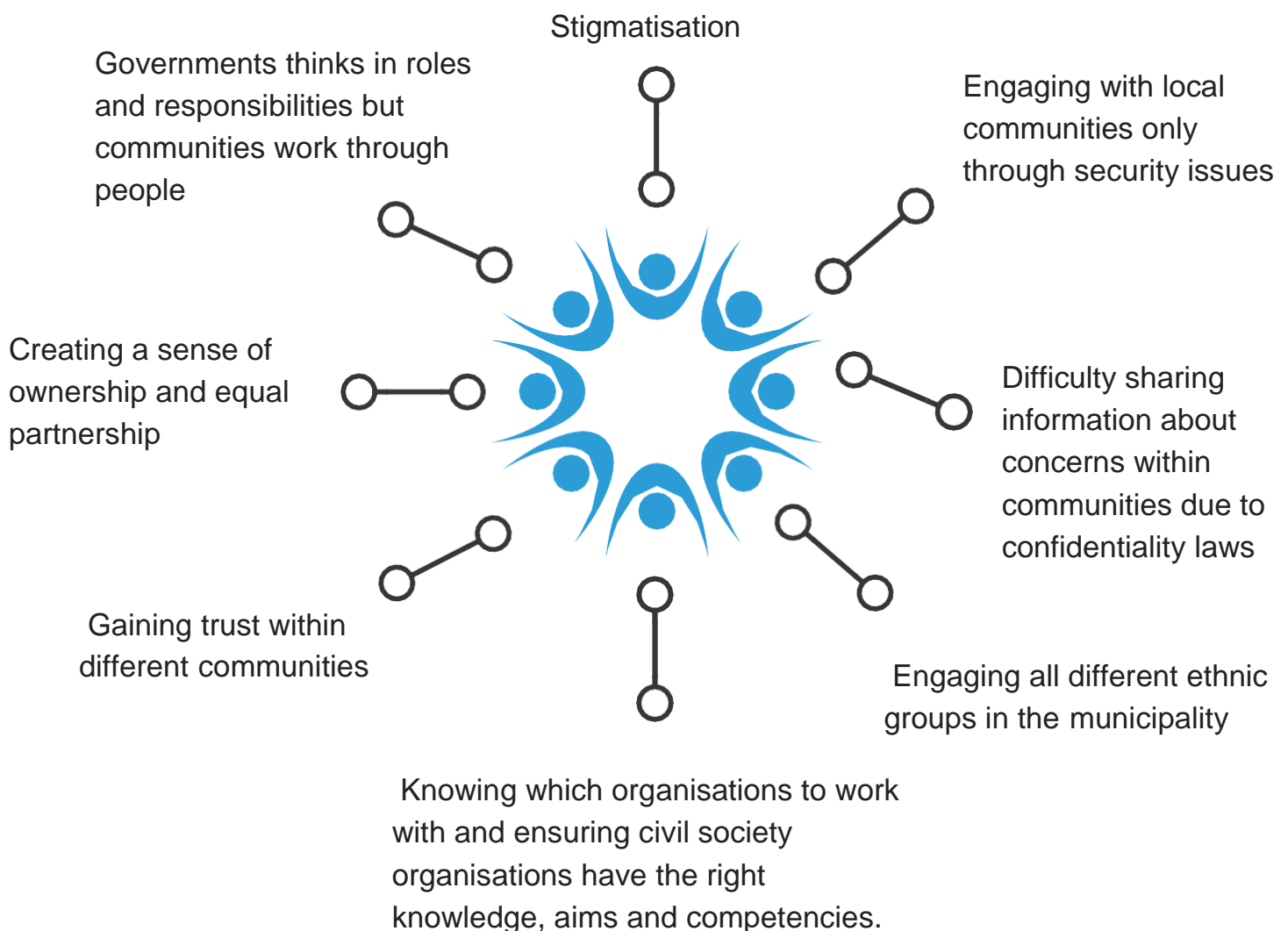
ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITIES & CIVIL SOCIETY



Key issues

- Supporting and working with vulnerable communities is essential.
- Extremists are good at tapping into identity issues, the need to belong and the disconnect between some communities and the society they live in.
- Communities need to recognize there is a problem with extremism.
- Communities and faith communities can be best described as a complex ecology, constantly dynamic, changing and rich in diversity. As such, they need to be approached in customised way.

Challenges





Key guiding principles

- **Support debate & dialogue** between groups and communities.
- **Community policing** is one of the keys to community engagement.
- Establish and foster “**open doors**” in the municipality where people can come and share their concerns and thoughts.
- Ensure **civil society actors know their role** in preventing violent extremism. Help **build broad networks** that engage in a constructive dialogue with the authorities and are able to play a role in confronting social tensions and radicalisation.
- **When the political climate is highly charged, delegate responsibility to civil society actors**, who are embedded in local areas, where at risk youth and risk environment are situated.
- To find the right groups, you should **attend their community events** and **listen to the problems those communities have concerns about**. Recognise that CVE will be low on their list of priorities and respect this fact.
- **Establish local networks of contacts** at neighbourhood level. Mobilise as many partners as possible, each in their own capacity.
- **Establish a social media messaging thread for civil society networks** which allows for quick-time dissemination of info and commentary. This can be used to dispel myths or get important messages to this cohort of community activists. It also allows community members to ask questions and get fast responses from partners (and of course, each other).
- **Develop a community action plan** as a tool for delivering community-based initiatives with minutes of the meeting published online, so discussions are available to all.
- Establish **cooperation with housing associations**. These associations know residents and can provide positive social change for locals through homework cafés, job coaching, health events, etc.
- **Knowledge of local conditions and culture is important** in preventing violent extremism. At times statements and actions interpreted as worrisome may simply be due to the lack of cultural understanding and knowledge of local communities among employees of municipal services and police.
- **Allow space for communities to identify their own roles** and specific involvement in mainstream initiatives.



Toolbox & advice

- **Engage in dialogue** with key organisations and figures in local communities.
- **Develop criteria for partners and for inclusion.** Who is invited to the table and who is not?
- **Provide training and courses** to local actors.
- Civil society groups should be **invited to participate in community panels** (either as a community reference group or scrutiny panel) so that they can see the CVE work being undertaken locally and have a voice in its application. If they're involved in this manner, then they will be stronger advocates of your work and – if you have the right people around the table – can help open doors and build confidence. This is why it is important to bring 'gateways' and not 'gatekeepers' to the table
- **Arrange open discussion-events** with representatives from the police and municipality, sometimes on specific issues.
- **Establish interfaith roundtable discussions.**
- **Invest in intercultural and inter-religious dialogue** with an emphasis on local level which contribute to social cohesion.
- **Fund dialogue education and training** of people from different backgrounds and beliefs
- **Address genuine grievances, concerns and perceptions of injustice.** These should be treated for what they are.
- **Don't be afraid to talk to your "opponents"** – they might not be opponents after all.

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Useful resources and relevant projects

RAN CoE Collection of Practices

The RAN Collection of Approaches and Practices presents a set of seven practitioners' approaches in the field of prevention of radicalisation, each illustrated by a number of lessons learned and selected practices and projects. The Collection supports the actions proposed in the EU Commission Communication *Preventing Radicalisation to terrorism and Violent Extremism: Strengthening the EU's Response*. The Collection should be considered as a practical, evolving and growing tool, where practitioners, first liners and policy makers may:

- draw inspiration from,
- find examples adaptable to their local/specific context, and
- identify counterparts to exchange on prevention experiences

To date, the Collection of Practices contain over 100 promising practices. As a work in progress, the RAN Collection will continuously be adjusted and enhanced with new practices from EU Member States and EEA member countries.

IMPACT

IMPACT Europe is an EU-funded project of 14 European partners focusing on evaluation methods and an online knowledge base on radicalisation. The project provides practitioners methods for designing, planning, implementing and evaluating interventions. IMPACT identified a number of lessons in evaluation:

- The necessity to differentiate between prevention and de-radicalisation goals.
- The discrepancy between behavioral and attitudinal objectives.
- Short-term intervention goals sometimes hinder long-term effectiveness.
- Intervention may yield unintended outcomes that may be counterproductive.

IMPACT stresses that these lessons learned span different phases of the CVE project life cycle and their evaluation design and mechanisms take into account these lessons. Practitioners are encouraged to think about what kinds of evaluation they need, and the IMPACT tool provides them with the mechanism to think through evaluation methods and apply these from the outset of the specific prevention programme.

The Austrian Extremism Information Centre (AT)

The centre was established in December 2014 and operated by bOJA – Federal Network for Open Youth Work. This Extremism Information Centre is staffed by a six-person multi-professional team operating in five languages (German, English, Turkish, Arabic and Farsi). It provides advice and referral to family counselling, open youth work, labour market services and also offers face-to-face counselling. It is open between 10a.m. and 3p.m. on weekdays.

Hayat (DE)

The German helpline Hayat started in 2012, and has counselled 290 cases (as of 1 September 2016). The programme offers advice to parents and close relatives, primarily to ensure that they do not feel lost and alone. They support them on an emotional level and give them advice about what to do and how to talk with their children.

The goals of Hayat are to:

- try everything possible to make them voluntarily refrain from traveling abroad;
- if they are already abroad: try to stop them from active combat and make them return;
- assist persons to return and integrate to a safe social environment that respects universal human rights.

Rotterdam Radicalisation Contact and Advisory Point (NL)

The purpose of this initiative is to provide the opportunity for civilians, local civil servants and others to ask questions about radicalisation or to inform the authorities about possible radicalising individuals or group of people. Reports are investigated and assessed by a team of experts. Necessary interventions are then defined in order to create a “custom-fit” individual approach.

Aarhus Municipality Infohouse (DK)

In Aarhus, the “Infohouse” is both the contact point and the place where there are well-established law enforcement screening procedures. Information is exchanged between the police and various municipal departments, resulting in coordinated risk assessments and intervention plans. .

Method Manual on Mentoring, Parent Coaching and Family-Support (2016) (DK)

In Danish CVE initiatives mentors and methods are provided to those in direct contact with young people aged 14 to 20 years old. These mentors are trained in the methods of Life Psychology, Signs of Safety – work with vulnerable children and their parents – and Solution-based Intervention, and are made available through training and method manual. For example, in Aarhus, there are 21 mentors (2014) that are used in combination with psychological support.

The Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration (SIRI) has developed this method manual aimed at developing consistent methods for practitioners in educating and handling mentors in the context of prevention of violent extremism.

The German Violence Prevention Network (DE)

The German Violence Prevention Network provide their trainers with a one-year AKT® trainer (anti-violence and competence trainer) course to help those working with young people in face-to-face work to handle their relationship skills. In the method of Verantwortungspädagogik® (Education of Responsibility), Violence Prevention Network has identified a way to address people who have affiliated themselves with anti-democratic structures without humiliating them, thus facilitating their re-integration into the democratic community.

The basic premise of Verantwortungspädagogik® and of the deradicalisation training AKT® consists in drawing upon cooperation to facilitate people's learning of specific competencies that make it possible for them to distance themselves from inhuman ideologies. This occurs in an environment that accords respect to the person concerned and deploys a method that critically scrutinises the ideology. The AKT® training consists of flexible modules involving biography work, civic education and work in the field of anti-violence that Violence Prevention Network has already repeatedly endorsed in the past specific for various target groups and a variety of settings.

Danish Dignity Institute (DK)

The Danish Dignity Institute is one of the first places in the world to offer treatment to torture victims. They provide extensive trauma treatment to refugees and to foreign fighters using cognitive programmes, and anger management and evidence-based methods using Risk Need Responsivity. This programme combines trauma treatment with a range of cognitive and behavioural methods.

Aarhus Model and Life (DK) Psychology

Aarhus municipality has collaborated with Professor Preben Bertelsen from Aarhus University, who has developed the training programme for the mentors, based on his theory/method of Life Psychology. It is a cognitive programme oriented toward training the mentees' individual life skills. The principles of Life Psychology are also used in other interventions, such as the family support groups.

The Dutch family support unit (NL)

NCTV (coordination organisation within Dutch government responsible for counter-terrorism, crises and cyber security) has established a family support unit. This unit functions independently to ensure credibility and has six case managers supported by a pool of experts which provide the following service:

- coaching families in dealing with a radical family member.
- keeping in touch with family members in Syria/Iraq.
- contact with school, work friends, etc.
- offering care and information in case of the death of family member.
- advising to parents and municipalities in lighter cases of radicalisation

Mother's School (AT)

Mother's School is a concept developed by Sisters Against Violent Extremism (SAVE) in Austria that empowers women and supports mothers to learn how to deal with radicalisation. The courses aim to build the mothers self-esteem and courage as well as the tools to enable them to guide their children away from extremism. It also provides the mothers with a platform where they can discuss freely, without guilt and shame, with other parents who share similar problems and experiences.

Heroes (DE)

HEROES is a project for gender equality and against suppression in the name of honour. The target audiences are young men aged between 14 and 18, with an immigrant background. In weekly sessions, patriarchal paradigms are discussed as well as values of German society. The young men reflect their own positions on topics like honour, manhood and gender equality. After one year training the HEROES give workshops in schools to share their experiences (peer-to-peer approach).

Circle of Security (NO)

The Circle of Security is a relationship-based early intervention programme designed to enhance attachment security between parents and children. Focusing on how parent/child relationships can be strengthened, this unique approach teaches parents and those helping them new ways to understand and respond to children's needs and behaviour.

The Haaglanden Safety House (NL)

Since March 2014, the Haaglanden Safety House has dealt with all cases of individuals leaving for or returning to Syria/Iraq. This unit holds a case-by-case discussion involving regional municipalities, the police, the NCTV, the Bureau Jeugdzorg Crisis Intervention Team, and the Child Care and Protection Board. A personal action plan is drawn up for each individual to ensure they no longer represent a danger to society.

Key points:

- The regional approach involving other municipalities allows for uncovering links of behavior (links between wives of different travellers, or crime or employment activities) that would otherwise not be made.
- Developed 'potentially violent person' pilot scheme to screen returnees.

ISD – Counter Narrative Handbook (2016) (UK)

This Handbook, funded by Public Safety Canada through the Kanishka Project, was created by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) to help anyone looking to proactively respond to extremist propaganda with counter-narrative campaigns, and is intended as a beginner's guide for those with little or no previous experience of counter-narrative campaigning. It takes readers through the main stages of creating, launching and evaluating an effective counter-narrative campaign

Hedayah – Counter Narratives Library

The Library is intended to be a tool to provide content and material to front-line practitioners and civil society working in the counter-narrative space to prevent violent extremism. The key objectives of the Counter-Narrative Library are:

- Establish a comprehensive portal where governments, front-line workers and civil society can access information used to counter the narratives of all forms of violent extremism
- Provide practitioners with the most relevant and recent content to counter existing threats
- Promote good practice sharing and provide practitioners with relevant resources and tools to counter the narrative of violent extremists