



How To Design Impact Evaluations of CVE Programs:

*A Practical Guide for Southeast Asian
Civil Society Organizations*





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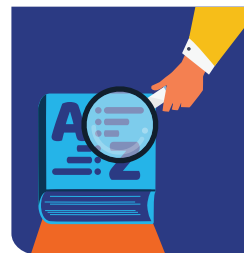
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Introduction

Over the four years since the formation of SEAN-CSO in 2016 we have been working on how best to evaluate CVE programs in Southeast Asia. It is intended to offer practical advice to civil society organizations about how to develop an evidence-based approach to the evaluation of CVE programs.

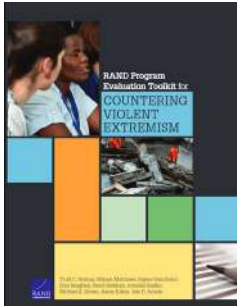
Our aim here is to offer a practical step-by-step guide to assist civil society organizations in Southeast Asia to navigate the use of existing booklets and toolkits to assess the effectiveness of CVE programs.



This booklet is intended to complement other CVE toolkits recently, in particular

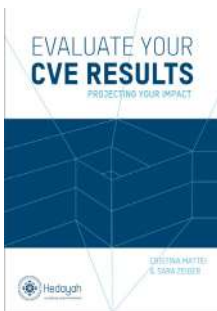
- The RAND toolkit

<https://www.rand.org/pubs/tools/TL243.html>



- The Hedayah evaluation toolkit

<https://bit.ly/HedayahImpactFramework>



- The USIP introduction to evaluation

<https://bit.ly/USIPMeasuringUp>



- The International Alert and UNDP toolkits

https://bit.ly/PVE_ImprovingImpactProgrammingToolkit_2018



In introducing this toolkit, we would like to acknowledge that evaluations can be expensive and difficult to implement, especially when it comes to data collection. They need time and expertise that civil society organisations often feel that they do not have, and sometimes they need incentives to recruit and reimburse participants. We strongly recommend that impact evaluations are fully-costed into the project proposal budgets.

This will allow civil society organisation to either hire independent evaluators, or to find resources to conduct evaluations in-house.



Typically this means allocating between

5% & 10%

of the total cost of the project to supporting impact evaluation





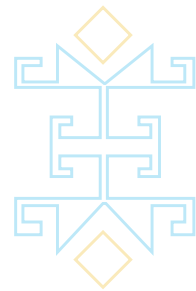
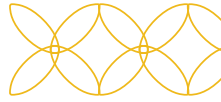
Step 1

Uncovering Assumptions



The most important question asked by CVE practitioners during evaluation capacity building workshops is

How do we know if our program reduces violent extremism?



This is one of the simplest, and at the same time the most difficult, questions to answer. The reality is that it is very hard, if not impossible, to reliably measure developments in violent extremism at any one point in time and space. This is because of the complexities and lags involved and also because of the secretive nature of the activities of terrorist organisations and counter-terrorism agencies. In recognising this it is clear that we need to establish an alternative method to understand the impact of CVE interventions. What we are proposing here is a clear and simple approach built upon understanding the assumptions, and the evidence underlying the assumptions, about the relationship between the program's objectives and violent extremism.



In order to determine whether a CVE program is able to have a significant impact on violent extremism two things are required:

1. *Delineating the assumptions that underpin it, explaining what the program aims to achieve and how this is meant to reduce violent extremism;*
2. *Finding the empirical evidence behind the assumptions.*

Example.

Based on the brief description provided, we identify what are the program assumptions and the existing evidence about it.



Program description

The project aims to train and support former terrorists in Indonesia who are released from prison after serving their sentence to create small businesses and to integrate them and their families in the community when they leave prison. The project provides re-integration through individual and group social support including family support where appropriate.



Assumptions about risk factors of radicalisation

Lack of social, economic and family re-integration makes former terrorists more likely to re-offend when they leave prison.



Example of existing research evidence

An article published in 2015¹ suggests that vocational skills, social skills and domestic skills (that is, the ability to successfully raise a family) are among the key critical areas in rehabilitating Indonesian inmates charged with terrorism. The findings are based on interviews with 43 former terrorists and religious activists inside and outside prison in Indonesia.

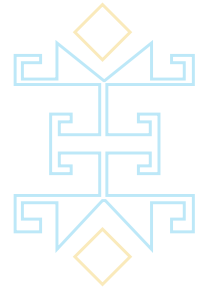
¹ <https://jtr.st-andrews.ac.uk/articles/10.15664/jtr.1154/>



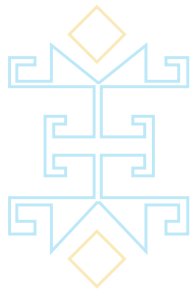


Step 2

Developing The Program Logic

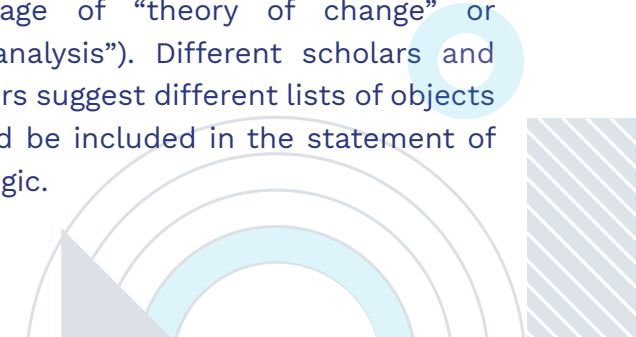


A clear statement of program logic represents the foundational cornerstone of effective evaluations



Put very simply, the program logic consists of a clear and complete articulation of what the objectives of the program are, and how the objectives will be achieved. When properly thought-out the program logic should be sufficiently clear and simple that it can be expressed in graphical terms. It is essential to know what the goals of the program are, in order to be able to assess whether the program has achieved them. This is a simple concept, but one which is surprisingly overlooked by many CVE practitioners across the world. It makes sense intuitively that if we don't know where exactly we want to go, it is impossible to assess whether we have gone to the right place, and if we have taken the best route.

There are many different approaches to program logic (sometimes also described in the language of “theory of change” or “logframe analysis”). Different scholars and practitioners suggest different lists of objects that should be included in the statement of program logic.



We propose a simplified version of setting-out the program logic that includes just four key components:

1. Resources

Do you have physical facilities, staff, materials, equipment, or funding?



2. Activities

Are you planning to do communication programs, undertake education or training, provided counselling, or other group activities?



3. The program's target population

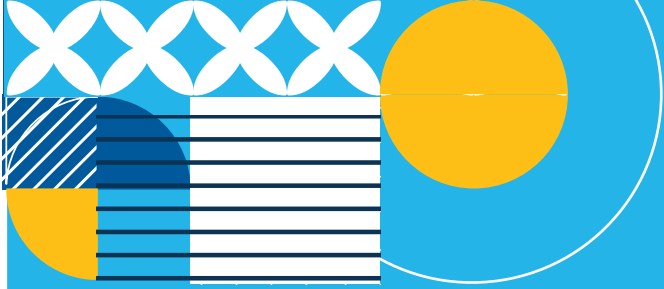
How is the target group defined in terms of, gender, community, ethnicity, nationality, profession, religion, and so forth? Are they individuals at risk of being radicalised into violent extremism, or communities that influence individuals at risk of being radicalised into violent extremism?



4. Program Outcomes

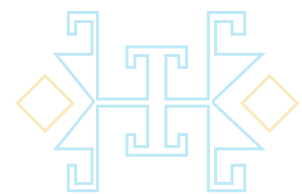
What is the program aiming to change? Is it, for example, proposing to decrease prejudice levels, increase knowledge levels, decrease levels of anger, increase employment levels, or increase levels of trust in institutions?

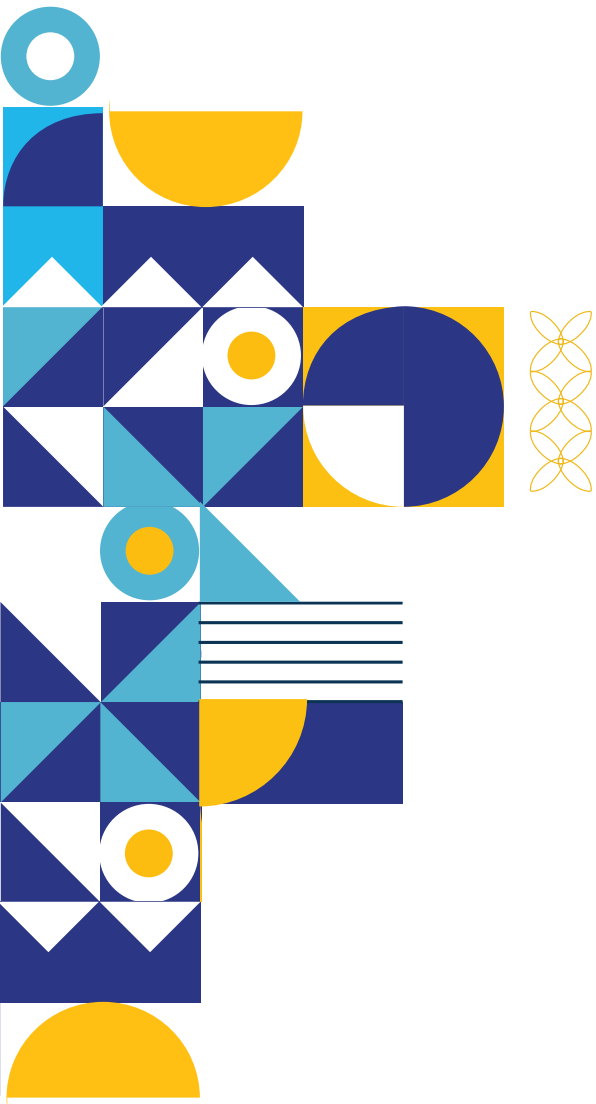




Step 3

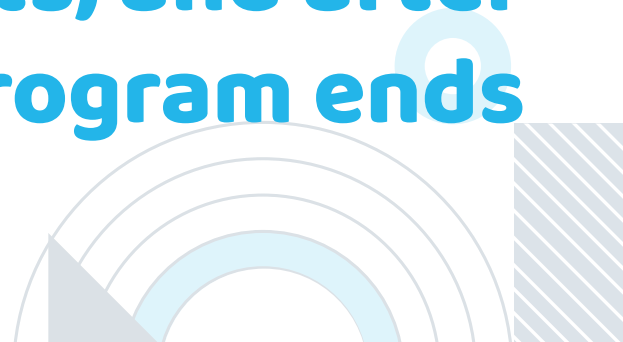
Collecting The Data





When and where do we collect the data?

Evaluations should always consider, whenever possible, collecting data from program participants before the program starts, and after the program ends



This is very important because it allows you to observe whether your program caused any change among the participants. This method is commonly referred to as pre-/post-intervention (where our intervention is the CVE program) evaluation. Whenever possible, we suggest always collecting pre and post intervention data also from a group that did not participate in the program but is similar in the composition of the participating group (also called “intervention group”). This group of people who are not participating in the program is called a comparison group (or is sometimes referred to as the “control group”).

There are, of course, often great challenges to engaging communities and other target groups to become comparison groups. Collecting data can be an expensive and time consuming task, and it is difficult enough to do it among the program participants. Unfortunately, because it is so difficult it is very often not even attempted. Why should we go to the trouble of recruiting a comparison group among people who are not even participating in our programs? The answer is simple: without a comparison group we have little certainty about what our intervention is actually achieving. We need to include a comparison group that has not, or at least not yet, participated in the program, for it to be possible to know with reasonable confidence whether any change in the target population is due to the program or is simply due to other contextual factors.

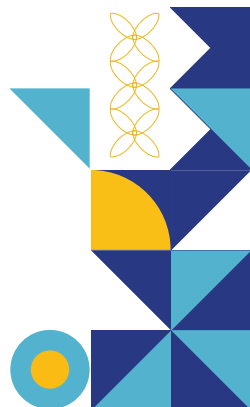
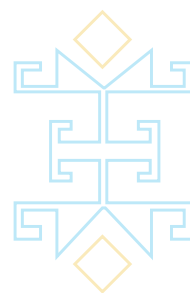
Finding a comparison group can be hard, and it can also be ethically challenging because you are asking participation from people who are not even receiving the benefits of your program.

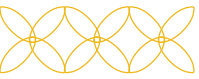
For this reason, we suggest employing a practical technique that can help you to identify your comparison group called:

Staged Delivery

The technique of staged delivery is very simple, and it consists of dividing your participants in two groups:

the first group will participate in your program first, and the second group will participate in your program after the evaluation is completed.





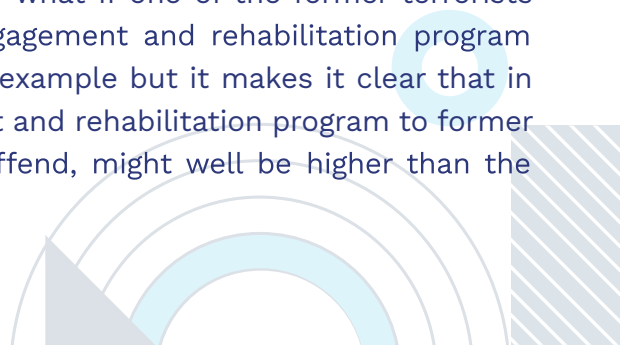
In this way, the second group will function as a comparison group during the evaluation. Ideally, you should be able to make sure that the two groups (intervention and control group) are as similar as possible. Taking into account a number of relevant factors, for example:

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Very similar gender ratio</p>  | <p>Age</p>  | <p>Attitudes to violent extremism</p>  |
| <p>Ideology</p>  | <p>Religiosity</p>  | <p>Income</p>  |
| <p>Ethnic background</p>  | <p>Education</p>  | <p>Professional status</p>  |



Be mindful that these are just some examples and there may be other factors you need to consider. The more similar the two groups are, the more rigorous the evaluation will be.

The use of comparison groups is naturally easier in primary CVE programs, and more complicated in secondary and tertiary programs where for example staged delivery of CVE programs can increase the risk of violence and terrorism. For example, let's imagine you have to evaluate the impact of a disengagement and rehabilitation program among a group of former terrorists. One might decide to use a staged delivery design, implementing the program among half of them, and using the other half as your control group until the end of the program. And then, once the program is finished, the intervention can be delivered to the control group. However what if one of the former terrorists assigned to the control group re-offends before the disengagement and rehabilitation program is delivered to them? This is, admittedly, a rather simplistic example but it makes it clear that in some case the ethical risks of not delivering a disengagement and rehabilitation program to former terrorists, with the risk of increasing their chances to re-offend, might well be higher than the benefits of conducting a rigorous evaluation.





Exercise box

Please read the following program description and design an evaluation.

The program “living together” aims to reduce prejudice against religious minorities in six Muslim villages in East Java. The program consists is built around 10 meetings at the local library with Muslim villagers, where Christian and Hindu religious leaders discuss their religious traditions with the villagers. Forty villagers will attend the meetings in each village.

Where and when will you collect the data?

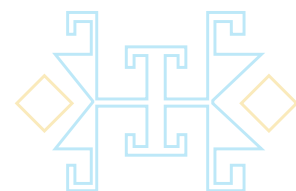
What samples will you use to collect the data?





Step 4

Understanding The Data



Impact evaluations aim to capture the extent to which a program achieved the desired change in the target population. Going back to the program logic, you need to have your outcomes clearly framed before you decide how you want to measure them. For example, if your program aims to decrease the level of prejudice against a religious minority (for example, Ahmadiyah), you need to identify a good tool to measure and examine prejudice against Ahmadiyah among your participants. This will be your outcome measure, and it will tell you how well your program has enacted the expected changes in the target population.

Broadly, we can identify two types of outcome measurement tools: qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative tools aim to understand why there was (or wasn't) a change, and how the change happened and was perceived by the participants. Interviews and focus groups are the most common qualitative tools. Quantitative tools, by contrast, aim to measure levels of attitudes and behaviours and to attribute a number to them. This will allow you to measure, for example, attitudes like prejudice on a scale from 1 to 10. Questionnaires are the most commonly used measurement tools of this type. Likert scales are typically used for the answers: they typically have 5, 7 or 10 points that are used to allow the respondent to express how much they agree or disagree with a particular statement. To sum up, the choice to use quantitative or qualitative measures depends on the questions that your evaluation wants to answer. If you want to know how much change your program achieved in a target population, you should use quantitative tools. If you want to know how and why your evaluation affected (or didn't affect) change among your target audience, you should use qualitative methods.



Once you have collected the data, you need to analyse it

To analyse interviews and focus group data, the easiest way is to start by identifying the recurring themes in what participants say. Themes are recurring sentences, or ideas, that are associated with a specific outcome measure. To analyse pre-/post-intervention quantitative data, the easiest way is to determine the levels of your outcome measure before and after the intervention, and check whether there was any change.

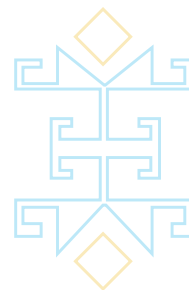




The participants in your program and the comparison group must be assessed separately. We recommend that it is generally best to utilise a research specialist to analyse the data. In most cases, quantitative researchers will be able to quickly and efficiently conduct the data analysis. Qualitative analysis can often take longer than to conduct than quantitative analysis, particularly if the results are not relatively clear-cut. This is another reason for seeking to incorporate quantitative measurement where possible.

Collaboration between universities and civil society organisations can open great opportunities for researchers, who will be able to apply their knowledge to real world problems and to use new data for teaching and research purposes (when possible), and opportunities for civil society organisations, which will be able to evaluate with more precision the impact of their programs. Existing toolkits provide some instructions to analyse data, for example Appendix B of RAND’s toolkit.

(<https://www.rand.org/pubs/tools/TL243.html>, p.105), titled “Analyze Your Program’s Evaluation Data”)



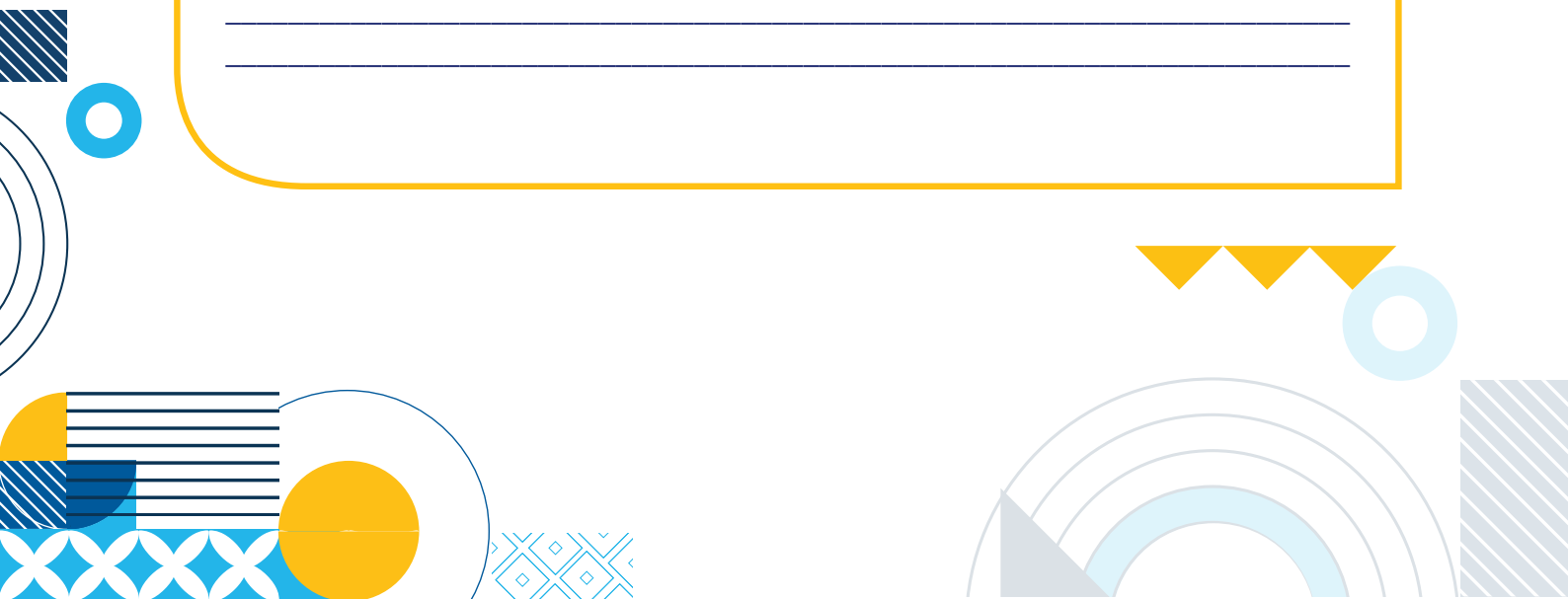


Exercise box

Please try to analyse the following evaluation of a CVE program and tell how you would interpret the data.

The program “living together” aims to reduce prejudice against Ahmadiyah in an Indonesian village where there were instances of violence between members of the Ahmadiyah community and other villagers. The program consisted of 10 meetings at the local library with non-Ahmadiyah villagers. 50 villagers attended the first 9 meetings, but only 20 attended the final meeting. The evaluation assessed the average level of prejudice against Ahmadiyah on a scale from 1 (low prejudice) to 5 (high prejudice) before and after the program. The average level of prejudice was 4 before the first meeting, and the average level of prejudice was still 4 after the final meeting. Individual interviews conducted after the program revealed that Ahmadiyah members had attacked a villager in a near district between the 9th and the 10th meeting, the reason why only 20 villagers attended the last meeting is that they went to attend to an anti-Ahmadiyah rally.

Given this information, do you think that the program worked?
If yes / no, why?





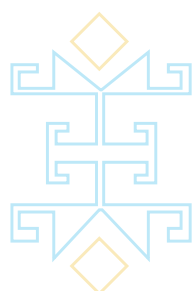
Evaluation framework and library of tools to assess key P/CVE issues



There is consensus in the CVE field that scholars and practitioners have been slow to meaningfully benefit from evaluations to the extent that they could and should be able to do so. There is also a growing consensus about how the field of CVE can build cumulative knowledge and improve understanding about what works in preventing violent extremism. Accumulating evidence about what works in CVE means that policymakers and practitioners will be informed in their decisions by coherent and stable evidence. The lack of current consistency in the measurement tools used to assess the impact of CVE programs prevents us from being able to accurately compare outcomes and understand what works, where and when.

In this toolkit we are seeking to build on this scholarship to propose an evidence-based approach to CVE evaluation, and to establish a common set of resources to assess the impact of CVE programs. These resources are meant to assess attributes that in the literature are considered risk factors of radicalisation to violent extremism. It is important to acknowledge that no single one of these factors is unequivocally associated with violent extremism across different contexts. However, such risk factors underpin most CVE programs in Indonesia and across the rest of Southeast Asia.

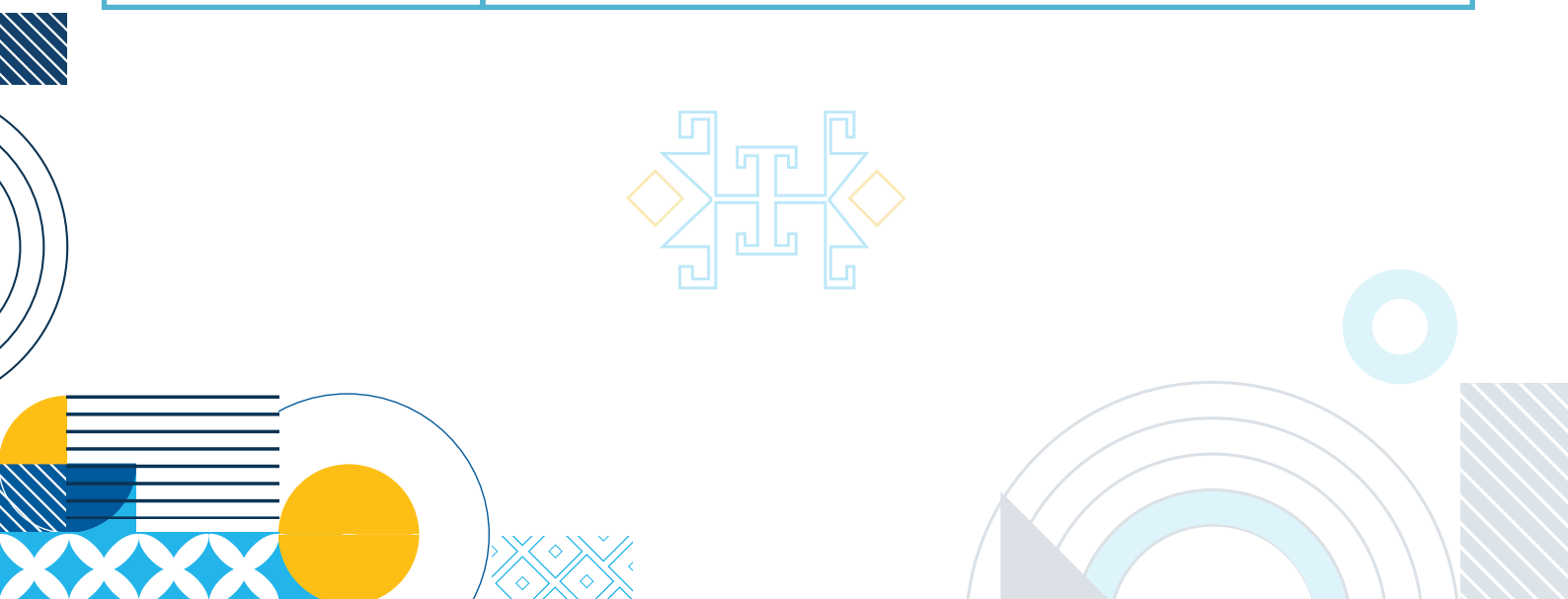
The table contained here is not meant to be exhaustive. It builds on the theoretical framework that we created in our previous systematic scoping review of radicalisation factors:
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1057610X.2018.1505686?journalCode=uter20>





To find information about each of the scales, simply search on Google title, authors and year of publication, and you will find the relevant publication online. The publication includes the wording of the questionnaire in English language.

| Risk factors | Suggestions of measurement tools |
|--|--|
| <p>Push factors</p> <p>perceived inequality, injustice, victimization</p> | <p>Vile World scale (Stankov, Saucier, & Knezevic, 2010)</p> <p>Major experiences of discrimination scale or the everyday scale (Williams et al., 1997)</p> <p>Trust in police scale (Williams et al., 2016)</p> <p>Rosenberg’s set of questions on trust in people (Rosenberg, 1956)</p> <p>Hansard audit of political engagement (Hansard Society, 2016)</p> <p>Political efficacy (Craig, Niemi, & Silver, 1990)</p> <p>Regime based trust (Craig, Niemi, & Silver, 1990)</p> |



| Risk factors | Suggestions of measurement tools |
|--|--|
| <p>Ideological factors</p> <p>anger to the West, religious ideology, etc.</p> | <p>West: Sins of the Western nations (Stankov, Higgins, Saucier, & Knezevic, 2010)</p> <p>Extremism and violent extremism (Iqbal et al., 2016)</p> <p>Divine Power (Stankov, Saucier, & Knezevic, 2010)</p> <p>Anti-Semitic conspiracy theories (Swami, 2012)</p> <p>Sympathy for violent radicalisation and terrorism (SyfoR) scale (Bhui et al., 2014)</p> <p>Extremist statements (Vergani et al., 2019)</p> <p>Grievance, activism, and radicalism scale (McCauley, 2007)</p> <p>Religious orientation (Ghorbani, Watson, Zarehi, & Shamohammadi 2010)</p> <p>Religiosity (Purnomo and Suryadi 2017)</p> |
| <p>Emotions</p> <p>anger, other negative emotions</p> | <p>Positive and negative affect schedule (PANAS) (Watson et al., 1988)</p> <p>Harrington’s frustration discomfort scale (2005)</p> <p>Measures of anger, aggression, and violence (Ronan et al., 2013)</p> <p>Emotional stability scale (Chaturvedi and Chander, 2010; Williams et al., 2016)</p> |

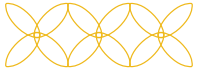


| Risk factors | Suggestions of measurement tools |
|---|---|
| <p>Meaning in life</p> | <p>Meaninglessness (Neal & Groat, 1974)</p> <p>The Meaning in Life Questionnaire (Steger, Frazier, Oishi and Kaler, 2006)</p> |
| <p>Personality traits and other personal psychological factors</p> | <p>Revised religious fundamentalism scale (Altemeyer and Hunsberger, 2004)</p> <p>Moral disengagement (Pelton, Ground, Forehand and Brody 2004)</p> <p>Critical openness (Sosu 2013)</p> <p>Reflective scepticism (Sosu, 2013)</p> <p>Integrative complexity (e.g. Savage et al., 2014; Liht and Savage, 2013)</p> <p>Measures of attachment (Stein, 2017)</p> <p>Self-efficacy scale (Sherer, Maddux, et al, 1982)</p> <p>Powerlessness (Neal and Groat, 1974)</p> <p>Outgroup hostility (Amjad and Wood 2004)</p> <p>Sense of control (Lachman and Weaver, 1998)</p> <p>Death Anxiety (Lester & Abdel-Khalek 2003)</p> <p>Social Dominance Orientation (Pratto et al, 2013)</p> |



| Risk factors | Suggestions of measurement tools |
|---|---|
| <p>Social factors</p> <p>alienation, social isolation, lack of belonging</p> | <p>Jessor and Jessor social alienation scale (Jessor and Jessor, 1977)</p> <p>Social isolation measures (e.g. Zavaleta et al., 2017)</p> <p>UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau & Cutrona, 1980)</p> <p>Loneliness (Hays and Di Matteo, 1987)</p> <p>Social isolation (Dean, 1961)</p> <p>Identity fusion (Whitehouse, 2014)</p> <p>Sense of belonging (Hagerty and Patusky, 1995)</p> |
| <p>Resilience to violent extremism</p> | <p>Brief resilience coping scale (e.g. Sinclair and Wallston, 2004)</p> <p>The BRAVE-14 Standardised Measure for Youth Resilience to Violent Extremism (including measures of connectedness – Grossman et al., 2014).</p> |
| <p>Attitudes to violence and crime</p> | <p>Indicators of criminal behaviour (Davies et al., 2017)</p> <p>Proviolence (Stankov, Saucier, & Knezevic, 2010)</p> |





Glossarium

CVE

Countering violent extremism

CVE program

A set of related measures or activities aiming at countering violent extremism in a certain group or context

Intervention

Generic term used to define an action or process of intervening to bring about change in a certain context

Outcome measure

Tools to assess the impact of interventions aimed at changing or modifying attitudes or behaviours relevant to CVE

Primary CVE interventions

Primary interventions are interventions implemented with general populations in the absence of any specific evidence of the presence of radicalisation and violent extremist ideas. For example, primary interventions might target school children, young people or other groups among the general population.

Program logic

Clear and complete articulation of what the objectives of the program are, and how the objectives will be achieved

Secondary CVE interventions

Secondary interventions are interventions implemented with at risk individuals or groups in response to evidence of there being a risk of radicalisation and violent extremist ideas, but before there has been full radicalisation into violent extremism or terrorism resulting in violent and criminal behaviour. For example, secondary interventions might target young people belonging to social groups that show sign of radicalisation and support for violent extremism.

Tertiary CVE interventions

Tertiary interventions are interventions implemented after a person or group has engaged in acts of violent extremism or terrorism. For example, tertiary interventions might target former terrorists in prison or after release from prison.





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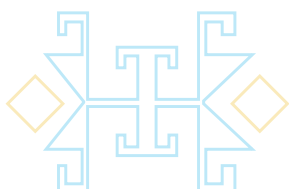
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