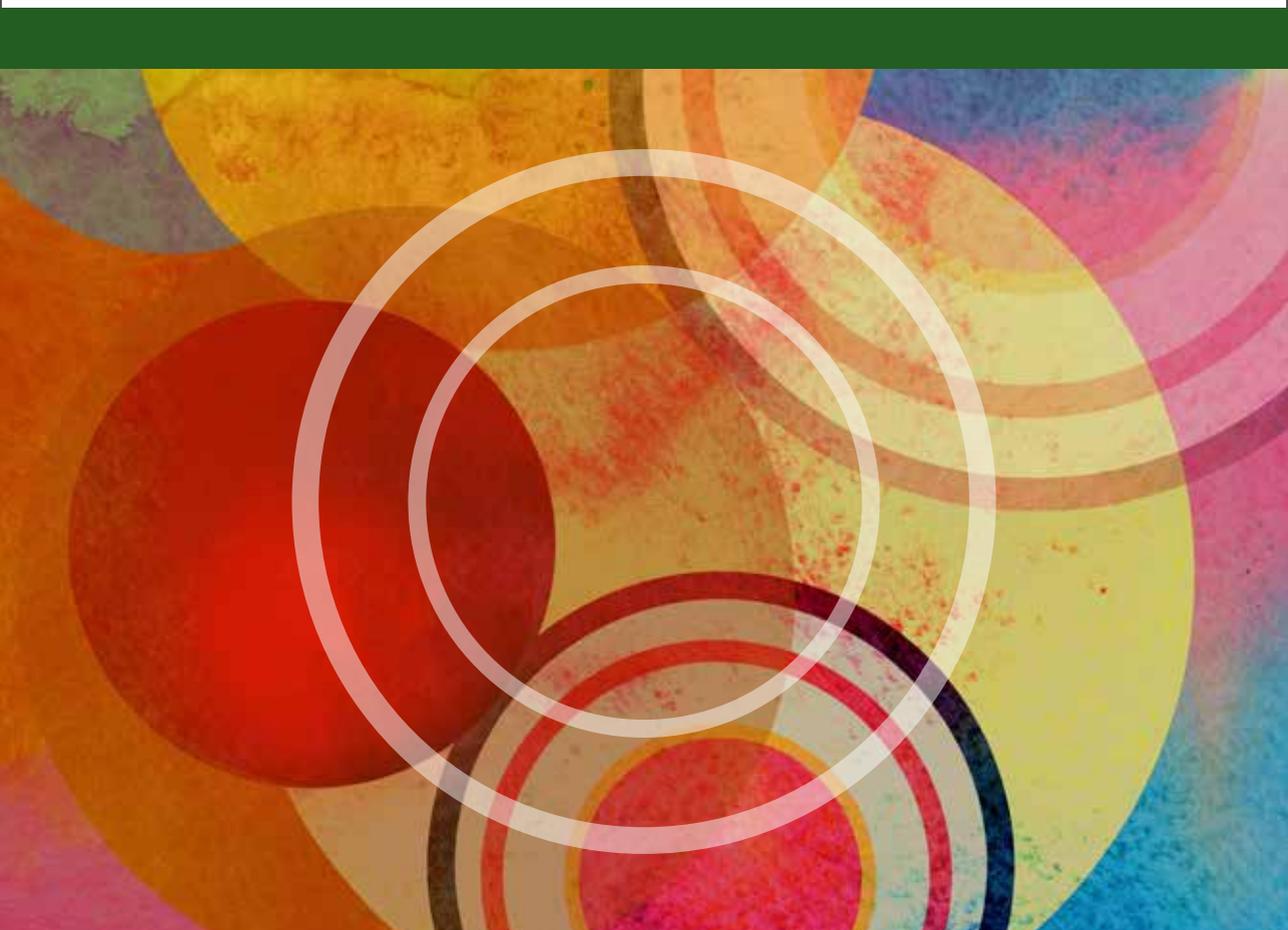


# **Non-custodial Rehabilitation and Reintegration** in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization That Lead to Terrorism

A Guidebook for Policymakers and Practitioners in South-Eastern Europe



Organization for Security and  
Co-operation in Europe

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>ATU</b>	Action against Terrorism Unit
<b>CREST</b>	Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats
<b>CIo</b>	Chair-in-Office
<b>CRC</b>	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>CSO</b>	civil society organization
<b>CTED</b>	UN Counter-Terrorism Committee, Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate
<b>CVE</b>	countering violent extremism
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FO</b>	field operation
<b>“FTF”</b>	“foreign terrorist fighter”
<b>GCTF</b>	Global Counterterrorism Forum
<b>ICCPR</b>	UN International Convention on Civil and Political Rights
<b>ISIL</b>	Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant
<b>LISC</b>	local integrated security cells
<b>MC DOC</b>	Ministerial Council Document
<b>NGO</b>	non-governmental organization
<b>NPO</b>	non-profit organization
<b>NRM</b>	national referral mechanism
<b>ODIHR</b>	OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
<b>PTSD</b>	post-traumatic stress disorder
<b>P/CVERLT</b>	preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism
<b>PVE</b>	preventing violent extremism
<b>RAN</b>	Radicalization Awareness Network
<b>RCC</b>	Regional Cooperation Council
<b>R&amp;R</b>	rehabilitation and reintegration
<b>RCMP</b>	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
<b>SAFIRE</b>	scientific approach to finding indicators of and responses to radicalization
<b>SNC</b>	social network conference
<b>TRAP-18</b>	Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol
<b>TNTD</b>	Transnational Threats Department
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	UN Development Programme
<b>UNICRI</b>	UN Inter-Regional Crime Institute
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UNOCT</b>	UN Office on Counter-Terrorism
<b>VERA</b>	violent extremism risk assessment
<b>VERLT</b>	violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism

# Glossary

This glossary serves to clarify key terms used in this guidebook. The definitions are for this guidebook only and are not official OSCE definitions.

**Alternative measures** — a range of measures that might be employed as an alternative to pre-trial detention or post-conviction incarceration for individuals charged with, or convicted of, terrorism-related offenses. These measures can vary depending on the jurisdiction. In the pre-trial context, they might include bail, house arrest, electronic monitoring, conditional release that may require checking in with law enforcement or other criminal justice authorities. In the post-conviction context, alternative measures might include some of the same measures used in the pre-trial context, as well as probation or judicial supervision, daily reporting, electronic home monitoring, suspended or deferred sentences, community service, and restitution.

**Community** — women, men, social groups, and institutions that are based in the same geographic area and/or have shared interests.

**Civil society** — a diverse body of non-governmental actors, communities, and formal or informal associations that engages in public life in order to advance shared values and objectives.

**Civil society actors** — members of the community, including women, youth, and religious and other community leaders, including those who are well positioned to provide impactful and long-lasting contributions to the well-being of society.

**Countering violent extremism** — proactive, non-coercive actions to counter efforts by violent extremists to radicalize, recruit, and mobilize followers to violence, as well as actions to address specific factors that facilitate and enable violent extremist recruitment and radicalization to violence. CVE efforts do not include intelligence gathering or performing investigations for the purpose of criminal prosecution.

**Counter-terrorism** — policies, laws, and strategies developed by state actors and implemented primarily by law enforcement and intelligence agencies, and sometimes by the military, aimed at killing or capturing terrorists, thwarting terrorist plots, and dismantling terrorist organizations.

**Custodial** — this term refers to prisons and other detention settings in which an individual's freedom of movement is restricted by judicial order.

**Disengagement** — a social and psychological process whereby an individual's commitment to, and involvement in, violent extremism is reduced to the extent that he or she is no longer at risk of involvement and engagement in violent activity. This process involves a change in behaviour (no longer using or justifying the use of violence) but it does not necessarily involve a change in an individual's commitment to a radical or extremist cause.

**Deradicalization** — the process of changing an individual's belief system so that he or she rejects violent extremist ideology and embraces mainstream, non-violent values. It implies a fundamental change in understanding resulting from activities intended to help individuals renounce radical or extreme ideas, beliefs, and groups with a link to violence.

**Former violent extremists, "formers"** — individuals who have disengaged from a path to violent extremism and radicalization that leads to terrorism and who can play a useful role in raising awareness and communicating credible counter-narratives.

**Gender perspective** — awareness and consideration of differential needs, experiences, and status of women and men based on sociocultural context.

**Intervention programming** — programmes that target "at-risk" audiences and seek to intervene in a person's pathway to terrorist radicalization before the line of criminal activity is crossed. They are typically voluntary and include psychosocial support, mentoring, theological/doctrinal debate, and education and/or employment training and support. In a public health context, this is known as "secondary prevention" and is the focus of P/CVERLT referral mechanisms.

**Non-custodial** — this term refers to R&R programmes delivered outside of the prison context, such as in communities or as part of alternative measures.

**Prevention programming** — programmes designed to build community resilience against VERLT and social cohesion to resist the appeal of VERLT. These programmes target non-radicalized communities and come in a variety of forms. In a public health context, this is known as "primary prevention".

**Probation** — a key part of the criminal justice system that is designed to regulate the behavior of suspects and offenders by requiring them to be monitored to some degree. Typical probation activities and interventions include supervising behavior, offering guidance, and providing material, psychosocial, educational,

and other assistance. Probation has twin objectives: to promote the social inclusion of suspects or offenders, and to contribute to community safety.

**Radicalization that leads to terrorism** — the dynamic process whereby an individual comes to accept terrorist violence as a possible, perhaps even legitimate, course of action. This may eventually, but not necessarily, lead this person to advocate, act in support of, or engage in terrorism.

**Rehabilitation and reintegration (R&R) programming** — programmes that target individuals radicalized to violence (including but not limited to terrorist offenders) and sometimes also their families, as well as those who have not entered the prison system but who may demonstrate some level of support for violent extremism, including those who have returned from territory held by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)-Da'esh. R&R programmes may take place within prisons, outside custodial settings, in communities, or as part of probation services. Programmes may offer educational and vocational training, counseling, employment opportunities, and ideological re-education. In a public health context, this is known as “tertiary prevention”.

**Risk and needs assessment** — a process that involves the systematic gathering and interpretation of information pertaining to an individual to provide data for properly trained professionals to assess the likelihood that a specific individual will engage in harmful action, the nature and severity of the harm, and the needs of the individual that, if addressed, can reduce the risk.

**Risk assessment tool** — a framework for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to assist with decision making that provides a non-discriminatory method for examining the likelihood and severity of harm based on available information from multiple sources.

**Whole-of-society approach** — an approach to P/CVERLT advocated by policymakers and practitioners that envisions a role for multiple sectors and civil society actors in prevention, intervention, disengagement, and R&R programmes.



## Foreword

Headlines across the OSCE region confront us with the grim reality every day. Violent extremism and terrorism are a constant threat to peace and security. They seek to undermine the very values on which the OSCE is based — values such as tolerance, inclusion, and diversity. To protect our values and our citizens, we need to respond to violence when it occurs but ideally prevent violence before it occurs.

The return of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) and their families is a challenge that is high on the list of current concerns in many OSCE participating States. Ensuring that these individuals who may or may not merit prosecution and incarceration can eventually reintegrate into society is a major security and human rights issue. In addressing the problem, governments need to be equipped with appropriate tools that allow effective and human rights-compliant policies and programmes. The OSCE is helping to advance and support good practices around these and related issues.

This guidebook is part of a series produced by the Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU) in the OSCE Secretariat's Transnational Threat Department. It focuses specifically on rehabilitation and reintegration programs outside of the prison setting and is designed to complement many of the existing tools that focus on prison-based efforts. The guidebook highlights the important role of communities and non-governmental actors and sets out key principles to help guide the development of programs and initiatives. It was written with the countries of South-Eastern Europe in mind, drawing on consultations with OSCE Field Operations and other key stakeholders in the region. However, many of the notions put forward in the guidebook are relevant to other regions as well.

We anticipate that this guidebook and related publications will prove valuable resources for policymakers and practitioners who are working to help support radicalized individuals to disengage from violence and foster peaceful and secure communities.



**Thomas Greminger**  
Secretary General  
OSCE

# Executive Summary

Countries across the OSCE area are increasingly focusing attention on how to operationalize a comprehensive approach to addressing the threats posed by terrorism and violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT) that balances traditional counter-terrorism measures such as arrest, detention, and restriction of movement with various measures to prevent and counter VERLT. These latter measures include prevention, intervention, and rehabilitation and reintegration (R&R) policies and programmes.

**The concept of R&R is receiving increasing attention** from policymakers, practitioners, national governments, and multilateral bodies for a number of reasons. These include the rise in terrorism prosecutions that has led to an increase in the number of individuals associated with VERLT serving prison sentences, many of whom will eventually be released into a community, typically at a relatively young age; the increasing recognition of the critical role that multiactor R&R initiatives can play in minimizing terrorism-related recidivism; the growing number of individuals returning from conflict zones in Iraq and Syria who may have been radicalized to violence but may not end up in prison; and the realization that many countries do not at present have programmes in place to support R&R efforts.

**R&R initiatives can be divided into two broad categories:** those focused on the prison setting, where terrorist or violent extremist offenders are serving sentences, and those focused on non-custodial settings, where R&R programmes target not only former offenders but also individuals who have been associated with terrorism and VERLT but who have not been convicted of related offences. With its focus on the non-custodial space, this OSCE guidebook seeks to complement the many tools that have been developed to support prison-based R&R efforts. It offers a resource for countries, in particular in South-Eastern Europe, to draw on as they grapple with how best to address the R&R needs and challenges outside of the prison environment.

**Written to support the development of comprehensive, non-custodial R&R programmes, this guidebook:**

- Discusses issues related to the legal and policy frameworks that underpin non-custodial R&R programmes;
- Enumerates some of the common elements and issues to consider concerning the process for developing and implementing such programmes;
- Outlines some of the different categories of interventions or support — including psychosocial, socioeconomic, and ideological support — that these programmes

- should provide to address the often diverse needs and vulnerabilities of those who become involved in violent extremism;
- Identifies the array of government and non-governmental intervention providers that often contribute to R&R efforts, their variety reflecting the diversity of risks and needs of the beneficiaries of these programmes;
  - Addresses how to operationalize effective multiactor information sharing and collaboration;
  - Highlights some of the training and other capacity requirements and challenges – at both the institutional and individual levels – that countries may face; and
  - Discusses the importance of ensuring that non-custodial R&R initiatives take into account gender and age sensitivities, particularly given the unique needs and risks, and thus challenges, that women and children can present.

While recognizing the need to develop tailored, context- and conflict-sensitive approaches to the challenge, the guide identifies **a series of principles that should underpin all non-custodial R&R efforts:**

- Political leaders need to explain the value of R&R programmes to often skeptical publics;
- R&R programmes should address all forms of VERLT;
- Emphasis should be given to disengagement from violence (changing behaviour), rather than to deradicalization (changing beliefs), although an individual's ideological perspectives should not be ignored;
- Multiactor and multisector involvement is essential;
- The proportionality and continuity of R&R initiatives are important;
- R&R initiatives should navigate and mitigate stigma while avoiding creating the impression that the beneficiaries of R&R programmes are being given special treatment;
- Efforts should be made to prepare and engage communities whose involvement in and support for R&R programmes are critical to their success;
- R&R approaches should be sensitive to and address the often unique needs of women and children;
- R&R programmes should rely on existing capacities, but strengthen them when necessary; and
- All R&R programmes should incorporate a theory of change, the advantages of which include making it easier to measure impact.



# 1. Introduction

Violent extremism and terrorism are, fundamentally, repudiations of the democratic values of tolerance, respect, inclusion, and diversity that underpin the work of the OSCE. Although the 57 participating States of the OSCE experience different types and levels of threats associated with transnational terrorism, all have confirmed their commitment to work together to tackle violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT).

States within the OSCE area continue to face the multifaceted challenges associated with preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (P/CVERLT). These include addressing the factors that lead to violent extremism; detecting and preventing homegrown attacks; managing the return of “foreign terrorist fighters” (“FTFs”) and family members from conflict zones; and facilitating the peaceful re-entry into society of terrorist and violent extremist offenders. Addressing different aspects of these challenges has been a priority for recent OSCE Chairs-in-Office (CiOs), including Switzerland,<sup>1</sup> Serbia,<sup>2</sup> Germany,<sup>3</sup> Austria,<sup>4</sup> Italy,<sup>5</sup> and most recently Slovakia.

During the March 2019 OSCE Counter-terrorism Conference in Slovakia, participants stressed the importance of multiactor, multisector, and multilevel collaboration within each country to tackle VERLT. They stressed the importance of rehabilitating and reintegrating back into society former terrorism offenders and returning “FTFs” and family members, noting that “individuals are often returning back into the same environments which enabled their radicalization to terrorism in the first place. It is imperative that we find the right mix of responses to protect society and to help those willing to redeem themselves.”<sup>6</sup>

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1 See, for example, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office (CiO), *The Chairmanship Interlaken Recommendations*, 29 April 2014, <https://www.osce.org/cio/118146?download=true>.

2 See, for example, OSCE, *Ministerial Declaration on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism*, 4 December 2015, <https://www.osce.org/cio/208216?download=true>.

3 See, for example, OSCE, *Declaration on Strengthening OSCE Efforts to Prevent and Counter Terrorism*, 9 December 2016, <https://www.osce.org/cio/288176?download=true>.

4 See, for example, OSCE/ CiO, , *Recommendations from the 2017 OSCE-wide Counter-Terrorism Conference on “Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism”*, Chairmanship’s Perception Paper, May 2017, <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/327731?download=true>.

5 OSCE/ CiO, *The Reverse Flow of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs): Challenges for the OSCE Area and Beyond*, 10–11 May 2018, Rome, <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/377557?download=true>.

6 OSCE, “As Terrorism Trends Are Evolving, We Need to Work Together to Stay One Step Ahead—Main Message from Opening of OSCE Conference in Bratislava”, press release, 25 March 2019, <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/415163>.

**Effective and sustainable rehabilitation and reintegration (R&R) programmes are essential to addressing VERLT over the long-term**, and, as underscored in Canada’s national strategy for countering radicalization to violence, these programmes can complement the work of “security and policing agencies in monitoring, investigating, and building a case for criminal proceedings. Disengagement programmes, which are aimed at those who have become directly involved in ideologically-motivated violence . . . are another way of mitigating the potential threat posed by these individuals.”<sup>7</sup> R&R is an area receiving enhanced and increasingly urgent attention from States across the OSCE region for a number of reasons.

The first is the rise in terrorism prosecutions. Since the September 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, the counter-terrorism legal framework has progressively expanded, which has led to an increase in the number of terrorist offenders serving prison sentences.<sup>8</sup>

Second is the relatively short length of the prison sentences for terrorist offenders in some parts of the OSCE area. Since 2015, in South-Eastern Europe alone, dozens of individuals have been convicted of terrorist offenses and have served or are serving prison sentences. South-Eastern Europe, however, has some of the shortest terrorism-related sentences on the continent,<sup>9</sup> with offenders likely to spend only around seven years in prison, on average.<sup>10</sup>

Third, and related, many individuals associated with terrorist activity will eventually be released from prison, typically at a relatively young age, and will re-enter society. These former inmates will need support if they are to become peaceful and productive members of society. In some cases, relocation to different cities or communities should be considered.

Fourth is the growing recognition of the critical role that R&R initiatives, drawing on expertise and other contributions from multiple institutions and actors across a variety of sectors and disciplines, can play in minimizing terrorism-related recidivism.

Fifth is the growing number of individuals returning from conflict zones in Iraq and Syria who may have been radicalized to violence but who, for a variety of reasons, may not end up in prison. For example, some may escape conviction

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7 Public Safety Canada, *National Strategy on Countering Radicalization to Violence*, 2018, pp. 16–17, <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/ntnl-strtg-cntrng-rdclztn-vlnc/index-en.aspx>.

8 Sarah Marsden, *Reintegrating Extremists: “Deradicalisation” and Desistance* (New York: Palgrave, 2017), p 7.

9 Adrian Shtuni, “Western Balkans Foreign Fighters and Homegrown Jihadis: Trends and Implications”, *CTC Sentinel*, August 2019, p. 21, <https://ctc.usma.edu/app/uploads/2019/08/CTC-SENTINEL-072019.pdf>.

10 Vlado Azinovic, *Regional Report: Understanding Violent Extremism in the Western Balkans*, British Council, June 2018, p. 7, [https://www.britishcouncil.me/sites/default/files/erf\\_report\\_western\\_balkans\\_2018.pdf](https://www.britishcouncil.me/sites/default/files/erf_report_western_balkans_2018.pdf).

because of the challenges in producing witness testimony that establishes the presence and role of the accused in a conflict zone.<sup>11</sup> The successful re-entry into society of these returnees is both a security and a humanitarian imperative. A number of countries in the OSCE area, including in South-Eastern Europe, are currently confronted with this challenge.

The final reason for the increasing attention being paid to R&R is the recognition that many countries do not have programmes in place to support R&R efforts. Some countries lack the expertise, resources, and other capacities — at both the institutional level and the professional and practitioner level — needed to develop, implement, and sustain such programmes. For example, some countries in South-Eastern Europe and other parts of the OSCE area suffer from chronically understaffed institutions — such as corrections and psychosocial care — in terms of both numbers of staff and specialized expertise. Those countries also lack trust among different actors and a culture of multiactor collaboration, which are often key ingredients to developing a comprehensive approach to R&R.<sup>12</sup> According to a study published in 2017, although strategies and plans exist on paper, progress in developing and implementing R&R programmes in South-Eastern Europe has been uneven.<sup>13</sup>

R&R initiatives can be divided into two broad categories: those focused on the prison setting, where terrorist or violent extremist offenders are serving their sentences; and those focused on non-custodial settings, where R&R programmes target not only former offenders but also individuals who have been associated with terrorism and VERLT but who have not been convicted of related offences. To date, multilateral bodies and other organizations have paid most attention to the prison setting, in the process generating a variety of guidelines and frameworks, good practices, and training programmes aimed both at preventing prisons from becoming hotspots for VERLT and at supporting R&R programmes targeting terrorist offenders and those who may have become radicalized while incarcerated (see Annex 1).

With its focus on the *non-custodial* setting, this OSCE guidebook seeks to complement these efforts. It offers a resource for countries, in particular in South-Eastern Europe, to draw on as they grapple with how best to address the R&R needs and challenges outside of the prison environment. Notwithstanding this focus on the non-custodial space, this guidebook recognizes the importance

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11 Ibid.

12 Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), *A Waiting Game: Assessing and Responding to the Threat from Returning Foreign Fighters in the Western Balkans*, 2017, <https://www.rcc.int/pubs/54/a-waiting-game-assessing-and-responding-to-the-threat-from-returning-foreign-fighters-in-the-western-balkans>.

13 Shtuni, "Western Balkans Foreign Fighters", p. 21. See also Albina Sorguc, "Bosnia Has Plan, But No Money, to Fight Radicalization," *Detektor*, December 28, 2018, <http://detektor.ba/en/bosnia-has-plan-but-no-money-to-fight-radicalisation/>.

of R&R initiatives conducted to help offenders while they are still in prison and notes that R&R is a fundamental human rights principle for the prison setting.<sup>14</sup>

The recently published OSCE/ODIHR guide on addressing the “FTF” challenge within a human rights framework outlines some the basic parameters of these initiatives. For example, the guide notes they should seek to ensure that individuals disengage and redirect their futures away from VERLT, which may reduce any threat they pose, and in some cases help others to disengage; be comprehensive, voluntary, careful not to reinforce stigmatization, and attentive to direct or indirect discrimination; and reflect the gender-specific needs and challenges of reintegrating women (as well as men) back into a highly contested societal context.<sup>15</sup>

This guidebook builds on what is in the OSCE/ODIR guide by providing policymakers, practitioners, and local actors with practical guidance on what issues to consider, challenges to overcome, partnerships to develop, expertise to mobilize, and capacities to strengthen when developing programmes to support disengagement and resocialization not only of returning “FTFs” and family members who are not prosecuted, but also of violent extremist offenders who have served their prison sentences. This guidebook is also relevant for the development of programmes for individuals who are subject to alternative measures, such as probation or judicial supervised released, suspended or deferred sentences, community service and restitution, and peace bonds.<sup>16</sup>

While recognizing the need to develop tailored, context-sensitive approaches to the challenge, this guidebook highlights **a series of principles that should underpin all non-custodial R&R efforts:**

- Political leaders need to explain the value of R&R programmes to often skeptical publics;
- R&R programmes should address all forms of VERLT;

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14 Article 10.3 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides that “[t]he penitentiary system shall comprise treatment of prisoners the essential aim of which shall be their reformation and social rehabilitation”.

15 OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Civil Rights (ODIHR), Guidelines for Addressing the Threats and Challenges of “Foreign Terrorist Fighters” within a Human Rights Framework, [hereinafter, OSCE/ODHIR FTF Guidelines], September 2018, pp. 61–62, <https://www.osce.org/odihr/393503>. These guidelines also provide, *inter alia*, that such initiatives should be “based on individualized risk and needs assessments that take into account, among other things, personal motivations, the nature and level of their involvement in violent acts and potential victimization they may have experienced themselves; and are firmly embedded in broader VERLT prevention measures that effectively address the grievances and structural social conditions conducive to terrorist radicalization”. See p. 53.

16 For a discussion on the use of administrative measures in terrorism and VERLT cases, see, for example, UN Counter Terrorism Executive Committee (UNCTED), *Concern at Potential Risks Posed by the Forthcoming Release of Imprisoned FTFs*, UNCTED Trends Alert, July 2018, [https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Trends\\_Alert\\_July\\_2018.pdf](https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Trends_Alert_July_2018.pdf); and Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), *Initiative to Address the Life Cycle of Radicalization to Violence: Recommendations on the Effective Use of Appropriate Alternative Measures for Terrorism-Related Offenses*, September 2016, <https://www.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/Lifecycle%20Toolkit-documents/English-Effective-Use-of-Appropriate-Alternatives.pdf?ver=2016-09-13-141050-207>.

- Emphasis should be given to disengagement from violence (changing behaviour), rather than to deradicalization (changing beliefs);
- Multiactor and multisector involvement is essential;
- The proportionality and continuity of R&R initiatives are important;
- R&R initiatives should navigate and mitigate stigma while avoiding creating the impression that the beneficiaries of R&R programmes are being given special treatment;
- Efforts should be made to prepare and engage communities whose involvement in and support for R&R programmes are critical to the programmes' success;
- R&R approaches should be sensitive to and address the often unique needs of women and children;
- R&R programmes should rely on existing capacities, but strengthen them when necessary; and
- All R&R programmes should incorporate a theory of change in order to help measure impact.

The publication is written for **policymakers** who are working to craft P/CVERLT policies, strategies, action plans, and programmes. It is also intended to raise awareness of the challenges and key issues to consider and to underscore the importance of collaboration between policymakers and practitioners when developing and operationalizing programmes focused on non-custodial R&R. It suggests ways to overcome the challenges and to strengthen collaboration.

The guide is also written for **local actors**. These include municipal and other subnational authorities, local practitioners and professionals, and civil society actors, who should become involved in the design and implementation of non-custodial R&R programmes. This guidebook illuminates the spectrum of issues to be considered and questions to be asked when designing and operationalizing such programmes.

Following this introductory first section, Section 2 explains the key concepts in this guidebook. The section begins by examining the nature and scope of terms such as “radicalization that leads to terrorism”, and then outlines the spectrum of policies and programmes that fall within the domain of P/CVERLT.

Section 3 describes the growing interest in R&R and the ongoing debates about whether its objective should be “disengagement” or “deradicalization” or a combination of the two. Section 3 also clarifies how non-custodial R&R programmes differ from P/CVERLT interventions focused on individuals in the non-criminal space, and how the non-custodial version is impacted by its custodial counterpart.

Section 4 focuses on the legal and policy frameworks that would enable the development and implementation of timely, appropriate, and tailored non-custodial R&R programmes and measures.

As Section 5 explains, the process of developing and implementing non-custodial R&R programmes tends to involve consideration of a group of key issues and common elements. At the same time, it is important to recognize that these initiatives come in variety of different shapes and sizes, informed, *inter alia*, by their specific targets (including individuals and family and other community members) and by relevant local societal, cultural, and historical contexts, community relationships, and capacities.

Section 6 outlines some of the different categories of interventions or support that these programmes provide to address the diverse needs and vulnerabilities of those who become involved in violent extremism. These include psychosocial, socio-economic, and ideological support.

The focus in Section 7 is on the intervention providers—a diverse array of professionals, practitioners, and other actors from various disciplines both within and outside of government. They include “formers”; psychologists, psychiatrists, and other psychosocial care providers; religious counselors; civil society organizations (CSOs); probation officers; and family members. This diversity makes it more likely that the array of complex issues that have led an individual down the path to VERLT can be addressed appropriately.

Section 8 addresses one of the most complex issues associated with operationalizing and sustaining non-custodial R&R interventions: enabling effective multiactor information sharing and collaboration. The section presents examples of how this has been achieved in different countries in the OSCE area.

Section 9 highlights some of the comparative advantages of government and non-governmental actors in non-custodial R&R programmes and emphasizes the need to ensure an appropriate division of labor between them in order maximize their contributions and a programme’s impact.

The capacity requirements and challenges — at both the institutional and the individual levels — that countries may face as they look to develop and sustain non-custodial R&R programmes is the subject of Section 10. The discussion makes clear that in the absence of certain baseline capacities, countries will struggle to deliver specialized, targeted interventions and other services associated with a comprehensive approach to non-custodial R&R.

Section 11 discusses the importance of ensuring that non-custodial R&R initiatives take into account gender and age sensitivities, particularly given the distinct needs of women and children and the unique risks they face. This section enumerates some specific ways of responding to the challenges that women and children may pose.

Section 12 identifies a series of principles that should underpin all non-custodial R&R efforts.

This guidebook was informed by the experiences of, and the lessons learned from, a variety of initiatives in numerous OSCE participating States and by existing R&R handbooks, guidelines, and manuals, most of which focus on the prison R&R context. Many of the latter are listed in Annex 1. Annex 2 presents examples of different types of non-custodial R&R programmes across the OSCE area that handle VERLT cases; these descriptions underscore one of the guide's recurring themes: there is no one-size-fits-all approach to the design and implementation of these programmes.



## 2. Key concepts

### 2.1 Understanding violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism

There are different legal, policy, and academic definitions of “terrorism”, “radicalization to violence”, and “violent extremism”. These serve different purposes and have not always been aligned. Efforts to enhance international cooperation and share and promote good practices have, at times, been hampered by these differences.

In fact, “**violent extremism**” is rarely defined, but generally refers to acts of violence that are justified by or associated with, an extremist religious, social, or political ideology. If anything, the concept of violent extremism is broader and more expansive than terrorism, because it accommodates any kind of violence, as long as its motivation is deemed extremist.<sup>17</sup>

According to the Council of Europe’s Venice Commission, in order to qualify “*stirring up of social, racial, ethnic or religious discord*” as ‘extremist activity’, the definition should expressly require the element of violence.”<sup>18</sup> Neither the United Nations nor the European Union has an official definition of “violent extremism”. However, the UN Secretary-General’s 2015 Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism does state that “violent extremism encompasses a wider category of manifestations and there is a risk that a conflation of the terms [“violent extremism” and “terrorism”] may lead to the justification of an overly broad application of counter-terrorism measures, including against forms of conduct that should not qualify as terrorist acts.”<sup>19</sup>

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17 See Andrew Glazzard and Martine Zeuthen, *Violent Extremism*, GSDRC Professional Development Reading Pack, No. 34, February 2016, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a0895ae5274a31e000002c/Violent-extremism\\_RP.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a0895ae5274a31e000002c/Violent-extremism_RP.pdf); and Peter Neumann, *Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation that Lead to Terrorism: Ideas, Recommendations, and Good Practices from the OSCE Region*, OSCE, 28 September 2017.

18 Council of Europe, Venice Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), “Opinion on the Federal Law on Combating Extremist Activity of the Russian Federation,” Opinion no. 660 / 2011, adopted by the Venice Commission at its 91st Plenary Session (Venice, 15-16 June 2012), para. 36, [https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD\(2012\)016-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD(2012)016-e).

19 UN General Assembly, Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism: Report of the Secretary-General, Seventieth Session, A/A/70/674, 24 December 2015, [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/674](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/674).

**“Radicalization”** refers to the process by which an individual increasingly espouses or supports ideas considered to be extremist. Radicalization is typically caused not by a single influence, but by a complex mix of factors and dynamics. It is a concept with different interpretations. In some cases, the term is used in a manner that suggests an implicit link between radical ideas and violence. This is problematic, both because not all who hold radical (or extremist) ideas will engage in or support violent action, and the ability to hold ideas — regardless of their nature — is enshrined as a fundamental human right.<sup>20</sup>

Moreover, as the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media remarked in 2012, “there is no security without free media and free expression. . . . Media should not be criminalized for contributing to the public debate. On the contrary, the media can have a decisive protective role in society by informing the public about the dangers of terrorism and raising awareness about this constant threat”.<sup>21</sup>

The OSCE is mindful of the need to exercise great care when using certain terms in the field of counter-terrorism. The OSCE explains **“radicalization that leads to terrorism”** as “the dynamic process whereby an individual comes to accept terrorist violence as a possible, perhaps even legitimate, course of action. This may eventually, but not necessarily, lead this person to advocate, act in support of, or to engage in terrorism”.<sup>22</sup> In line with this understanding, the OSCE intentionally uses the term **“violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT)”**, which implies that some instances of violent extremism and radicalization may not lead to terrorism.

## 2.2 Programmes and strategies to prevent and counter VERLT

**The term “preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (P/CVERLT)”** refers to a spectrum of policies, programmes, and interventions intended to prevent and counter extremism

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20 The right to freedom of opinion and expression is protected by Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It stipulates that that everyone has the right to hold opinions without interference. Furthermore, freedom of expression also protects the expression of views and ideas that disturb, offend, or shock – which would surely include views and ideas that some people may consider radical or extreme.

21 OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, “OSCE Media Freedom Representative Welcomes Russian Supreme Court Decisions Protecting Public Discussion of Terrorism, Extremism”, press release, 13 February 2012, <https://www.osce.org/form/88117>.

22 OSCE, *Preventing Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Community-Policing Approach*, February 2014, <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/111438?download=true>. A joint publication of the OSCE/SiO and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Warsaw.

related to terrorist radicalization. This framing adopted by the OSCE puts the emphasis on the link between radicalization/extremism and acts of terrorism. In this way, the OSCE explicitly underscores the importance of preserving fundamental freedoms when working to prevent these security threats.

Preventing and countering VERLT is non-coercive in nature (e.g., it does not involve arrests, investigations, and prosecutions). Instead, its focus is on preventing and countering processes of radicalization that may lead to terrorism; addressing and reducing grievances and structural social, economic, and political conditions that may be conducive to violent extremism; assisting those already radicalized to terrorism to disengage and reintegrate into society; and building community resilience to VERLT.

As such, P/CVERLT is different from “**counter-terrorism**,” which refers to the suite of activities undertaken primarily by law enforcement and intelligence agencies, and sometimes by the military, “aimed at thwarting terrorist plots and dismantling terrorist organizations” and criminal justice responses that investigate and bring to justice those who have committed terrorist crimes.<sup>23</sup> While P/CVERLT national strategies and plans of action are primarily designed and driven by state authorities, their implementation is typically not limited to national government actors and includes a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including local and other subnational authorities, civil society, and the private sector. As such, P/CVERLT efforts can be best understood as programmes and policies that **complement** traditional counter-terrorism approaches.

Other analogous or overlapping terminology used in the international community include “countering violent extremism” (CVE), “preventing violent extremism” (PVE), and “preventing and countering violent extremism” (P/CVE). P/CVE is a broad umbrella term that covers activities implemented by governmental and non-governmental actors seeking to prevent or mitigate violent extremism through non-coercive measures that are united by the objective of addressing the drivers of violent extremism. Development organizations and practitioners, in particular, have individual preferences for applying the terms “PVE” or “CVE”. For example, “PVE” has gained more traction within the United Nations (outside of the Security Council and its relevant subsidiary bodies such as the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate) and among development agencies. Its emphasis is on addressing and mitigating, often with development tools and interventions, enabling conditions and root causes of terrorism, such as weak governance, exclusionary social or economic structures, and inadequate education.<sup>24</sup> However, there is often little difference

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<sup>23</sup> Neumann, *Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalisation that Lead to Terrorism*, pp. 71–72, <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/346841?download=true>.

<sup>24</sup> UNGA, Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

in the specific objectives and actions on the ground between PVE and CVE.<sup>25</sup> As with P/CVE, PVE and CVE both have proactive and preventative efforts at their core. In fact, according to the UN Development Programme, “a distinction can usually be drawn between CVE, which is focused on countering the activities of existing violent extremists, and PVE, which is focused on preventing the further spread of violent extremism”, but “in practice, initiatives will frequently work on both aspects, with a combined approach.”<sup>26</sup> This is particularly so in the context of programmes or interventions focused on the disengagement from VERLT and re-entry into society of individuals who may have been involved in or otherwise had exposure to terrorism or VERLT.

The spectrum of activities, programmes and types of engagements that fall under P/CVERLT is wide and encompasses efforts at the international, regional, national, subnational, community, and individual level.<sup>27</sup>

At times, P/CVERLT policymakers and practitioners have struggled to draw clear boundaries between P/CVERLT programmes and programmes launched within well-established fields such as development, human rights, poverty alleviation, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, governance, and education. Both types of programmes are designed to counter factors that can fuel violent extremism in specific locations: extremist social networks, mentors radicalized to violence, revenge seeking, the pursuit of status, and a host of other motivating, enabling, and structural factors. Such efforts generally aim to target individuals specifically identified as “at risk of” or “vulnerable” to being drawn to violence, as well as those who have radicalized to extremist violence or otherwise had some association with terrorism or VERLT.<sup>28</sup>

Three common ways to categorize P/CVERLT programming are by **type**: awareness and trust building, training, dialogue, and strategic communications; by **beneficiaries**: community/group (including family) or individual; and by **function**: prevention, intervention, and R&R. The distinctions between these categories, it should be emphasized, are useful for planning and evaluation purposes but they are seldom clear-cut, especially in practice. For instance, some programmes may fall under more than one functional area or type.

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25 European Commission, EU Operational Guidelines on the Preparation and Implementation of EU Financed Actions Specific to Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Third Countries, RUSI and CIVPOL, November 2017, [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/eu-ct-cve-guidelines-20171213\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/eu-ct-cve-guidelines-20171213_en.pdf).

26 UN Development Programme, *Journey to Extremism in Africa: Drivers, Incentives, and the Tipping Point For Recruitment*, 2017, <http://journey-to-extremism.undp.org/content/downloads/UNDP-JourneyToExtremism-report-2017-english.pdf>.

27 Georgia Holmer and Peter Bauman, *Taking Stock: Analytic Tools for Understanding and Designing P/CVE Programs*, US Institute of Peace, August 2018, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2018/09/taking-stock-analytic-tools-understanding-and-designing-pcve-programs>.

28 James Khalil and Martine Zeuthen, *Countering Violent Extremism and Risk Reduction: A Guide to Programme Design and Evaluation*, Whitehall Report, RUSI, 8 June 2016, [https://rusi.org/sites/default/files/20160608\\_cve\\_and\\_rr.combined.online4.pdf](https://rusi.org/sites/default/files/20160608_cve_and_rr.combined.online4.pdf).

**Prevention programming** is typically designed to build community resilience against VERLT and social cohesion to resist the appeal of VERLT. These programmes, which target communities not radicalized to violence, come in a variety of forms. For example, they can involve teaching peace and tolerance; promoting human rights and good governance; vocational training and mentoring; raising awareness about the threat of violent extremism in schools and neighborhoods; public information campaigns and community debates on sensitive topics; interfaith and intrafaith dialogues; youth and women’s empowerment programmes; building the capacity of teachers and community leaders to engage in P/CVERLT efforts; media messaging and counter-narrative campaigns; and building trust between communities and law enforcement. In a public health context, this is known as “primary prevention”.

**Intervention programming** typically targets at-risk<sup>29</sup> audiences and seeks to intervene in a person’s pathway to terrorist radicalization before the line to criminality has been crossed. The programmes are typically voluntary and might include one or of the following: psychosocial support, mentoring, family counselling, cultural or recreational activities, theological/doctrinal debate, education and employment training and support, and referral mechanisms. These are classified from a public health perspective as “secondary prevention”.

**R&R programming** targets individuals radicalized to violence (including but not limited to terrorist offenders) and possibly their families, as well as those who, for various reasons, have not entered the prison system but who may demonstrate some level of support for violent extremism, including those who have returned from territory held by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)-Da’esh. R&R programmes may take place within prisons or in non-custodial settings such as in communities or as part of probation services, which can be either prison- or community-based. Often geared towards re-entry into society, R&R programmes may include one or more elements such as religious, psychological, or family counselling; vocational training and job placement; education; cultural and recreational activities; and mentoring.

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29 The identification process for “at-risk” individuals and groups runs into a variety of obstacles and sensitivities. Indicators used to identify “at-risk” individuals should be carefully considered to avoid harmful implications, such as wrongful identification that may lead to stigmatization or marginalization.



# 3. Distinctive features of non-custodial R&R

This section explores the concept, practice, and distinctive features of non-custodial R&R. It begins by discussing the growing interest in R&R generally, then describes the ongoing debate about what should be its objectives, moves on to review its differences from and similarities to P/CVERLT interventions that target individuals who have not committed a crime, and concludes by explaining how the non-custodial version of R&R is impacted by its custodial form.

Countries across the OSCE area are increasingly focusing attention on how to operationalize a comprehensive approach to addressing the threats posed by terrorism and VERLT that balances traditional counter-terrorism measures such as arrest, detention, and restriction of movement with various P/CVERLT measures that include prevention, intervention, and R&R policies and programmes.

## 3.1 The growing interest in R&R

The **concept of R&R, in particular, is receiving heightened attention** from national governments and subnational authorities, from civil society and other non-governmental actors, and from multilateral bodies such as the United Nations, the Global Counterterrorism Forum, the European Union, and the Council of Europe. (The reasons for this growing interest are enumerated in Section 1 of this report.)

In recent years, tailored R&R programmes focused on terrorism and VERLT have gained traction: some target incarcerated violent extremists; others work with individuals transitioning from prison back into society; and a third category focuses on individuals who have had some contact with terrorism or VERLT, but who either have not been charged with or convicted of a crime (but may be subjected to “administrative measures”) or are looking to disengage from a violent extremist group. Increasingly, these programmes are being leveraged to support those returning or relocating from Iraq or Syria who are not prosecuted and are assessed to require support to re-enter their community.

R&R programmes vary in terms of their targets, components, intervention providers, and the volitional nature of participation. Some are led by governments, others by CSOs and other non-governmental actors, and still others involve a public-private partnership. (Annex 2 presents examples of different types of programmes.) Most cover a range of interventions that might include ideological and/or psychosocial counseling, vocational training, job placement, housing, education, and cultural or recreational activities. Because the targeted individuals and their families will have a range of vulnerabilities and needs, whether practical, psychosocial, and/or ideological, a single actor or institution is unlikely to be able to address them all. Thus, and as is discussed in Section 7, an approach that allows for the involvement of a diversity of practitioners and professionals has often been implemented.

## 3.2 Objectives: disengagement vs. deradicalization

Typically, R&R programmes (in both non-custodial and custodial settings) have one or both of two objectives: *disengagement* (i.e., persuading programme beneficiaries to forswear the use of violence — a behavioural change) — or *deradicalization* (i.e., changing beneficiaries’ ideology or beliefs — a cognitive change).<sup>30</sup>

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), disengagement-related interventions typically “consist of a variety of activities including: psychological counselling and support; cognitive-behavioural programmes; social work interventions; faith-based debate and dialogue;

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<sup>30</sup> For a discussion of the differences between and the pros and cons of each, see, for example, Marsden, *Reintegrating Extremists*, and Daniel Koehler, *Understanding Deradicalization Methods, Tools, and Programs for Countering Violent Extremism* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2016).

education; vocational training; creative therapies; physical therapies (e.g. yoga, sport, exercise); family activity; and social, cultural and recreation.”<sup>31</sup> In contrast, deradicalization interventions tend to rely heavily on specially trained religious scholars; mentors; psychologists, psychiatrists, or other mental health professionals; and “formers”.

Defining the goal of an R&R programme — whether to bring about a change in the mindset or in the behaviour of the targeted individual — is important, not least for evaluation purposes (see Section 5.7). Moreover, some goals may be harder to achieve than others. Many experts assert that R&R interventions focused on changing behaviours are likely to be more feasible, cheaper, and more effective than programmes that seek to change beliefs.<sup>32</sup> Others, however, assert that “the role of ideology and attitude” is so important that “leaving [beliefs] aside might create a higher risk of recidivism.”<sup>33</sup>

Another school of thought is that R&R programmes should embrace *both* objectives. The European Commission’s Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN), for instance, argues that “an approach to reintegration that focuses solely on deradicalization misses the crucial fact that desistance from extremist and terrorist groups is predicated on a host of reasons that go beyond ideology. These reasons include disillusionment with the efficacy of violence, falling out with compatriots, and the attractions of a regular life. Conversely, factors such as peer pressure and fear of retaliation from former comrades may also form obstacles to ceasing involvement in extremist or terrorist groups.”<sup>34</sup>

One initiative with this dual focus is the Danish Aarhus programme. It seeks to change violent extremist views and behaviours while providing a comprehensive support structure to enable reintegration into society, recognizing that “successful re-entry in all areas of social life is crucial to prevent violent extremist and other criminal behavior; psychological or social problems may drive an individual back into the arms of extremist movements, even though he or she has changed his or her opinion of the validity of extremist ideology.”<sup>35</sup>

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31 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Handbook on the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons* (Vienna: UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 2016), p.78, [https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal\\_justice/Handbook\\_on\\_VEPs.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/Handbook_on_VEPs.pdf) (hereinafter UNODC VEP Handbook).

32 Ibid., p. 71.

33 Koehler, *Understanding Deradicalization Methods*, p. 232.

34 EU Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN), Centre of Excellence, *Foreign Fighter Returnees and the Reintegration Challenge, RAN Issue Paper, November 2016*, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/ran-papers/docs/issue\\_paper\\_foreign\\_fighter\\_returnees\\_reintegration\\_challenge\\_112016\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/issue_paper_foreign_fighter_returnees_reintegration_challenge_112016_en.pdf).

35 Tinka M. Veldhuis, *Reintegrating Violent Extremist Offenders: Policy Questions and Lessons Learned, George Washington University Program on Extremism Occasional Paper*, October 2015, p. 5, <https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2191fi/downloads/Veldhuis.pdf>.

But not everyone agrees with this two-pronged approach. For example, the OSCE/ODIHR guidelines for addressing “FTF” challenges within a human rights framework states that R&R efforts “should focus explicitly on ‘disengagement’ from terrorism or violence rather than more amorphous notions of ‘de-radicalization’ that aim to change ideologies or beliefs.”<sup>36</sup> This is because international human rights standards guarantee that everyone has the right to adopt a belief and hold opinions without interference.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, deradicalization that aims at changing individual opinions or beliefs poses inherent human rights risks; and an approach that seeks disengagement from violence appears more consistent with the OSCE’s concept of VERLT as described in Section 2.1.

Regardless of the goal, R&R programs require an understanding of how and why someone became involved in VERLT in the first place, with the reasons diverse and generally extending beyond the embrace of a particular ideology. Thus, such programs need to be flexible and tailored to the specific background and motives of the individual.

## 3.3 Using a public health lens to compare tertiary R&R and secondary P/CVERLT interventions

With the growing recognition of the extent of the damage that VERLT can inflict on society as a whole, preventive approaches to VERLT are increasingly drawing on lessons from the field of public health, which has traditionally been linked to preventing diseases and promoting healthy behaviours and environments.<sup>38</sup> Among these lessons is the importance of identifying practical and protective

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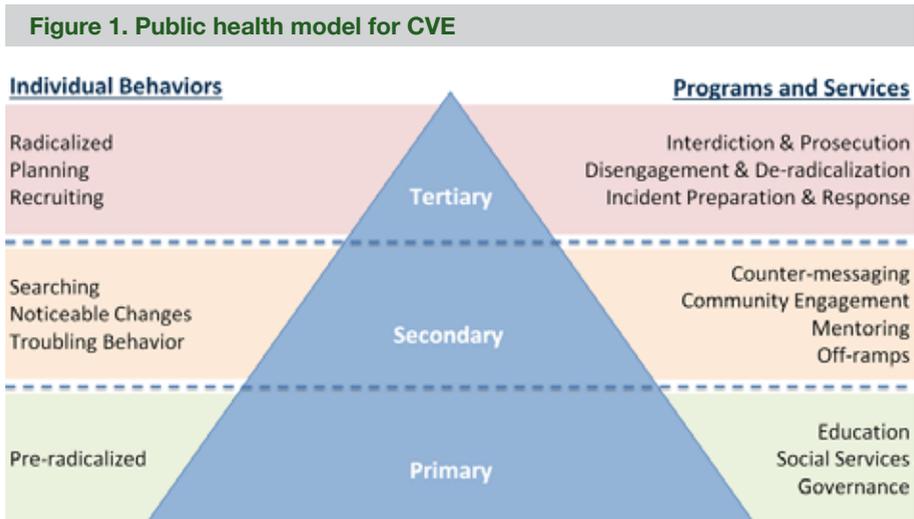
36 OSCE/ODHIR, *FTF Guidelines*, p. 61. See also UNODC *VEP Handbook*; and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), “Radicalization in Detention: The ICRC’s Perspective”, 11 July 2016, <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/responding-radicalization-detention-icrc-perspective>.

37 See Articles 18 (1) and 19 (1) of the UN’s International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). International human rights standards also protect the expression of views and beliefs that some may consider radical or extreme, unless that expression is connected to violence or another unlawful act (such as incitement) as defined in accordance with international law.

38 As elaborated in a recent OSCE P/CVERLT guide focused on referral mechanisms, some experts suggest that gang violence–reduction frameworks, as well as public health models, may be useful for the purpose of developing and grouping P/CVERLT programming. See OSCE, *Understanding Referral Mechanisms in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization That Lead to Terrorism and Violent Extremism: Navigating Challenges and Protecting Human Rights—A Guidebook for South-Eastern Europe*, 2019, pp. 37–39, <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/418274?download=true> (hereinafter, OSCE, *Understanding Referral Mechanisms*); David P. Eisenman and Louise Flavahan, “Canaries in the Coal Mine: Interpersonal Violence, Gang Violence, and Violent Extremism through a Public Health Prevention Lens,” *International Review of Psychiatry* 29, no. 4 (August 2017): 341–49, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28805121>; and YouthPower, “Promising Practices in Engaging youth in Peace and Security and P/CVE,” September 2017, <https://static.globalinnovationexchange.org/s3fs-public/asset/document/Peace%20and%20Security%20Brief%209-21-17%20PRINT%20FINAL-OK.pdf?dV0v5HTaHk3AnPea6AL3145G5xblJ2A0>.

interventions to manage potential threats that can have a positive impact on the daily lives of individuals.<sup>39</sup> A public health approach also offers opportunities for multipurpose programming, avoiding stigma, and leveraging public health resources (such as a mental health professionals and social workers) that a law enforcement approach does not allow.

Given these benefits, the three-tiered public health model depicted in Figure 1 is increasingly being applied to P/CVERLT. *Primary prevention* consists of “community-level strategies that mitigate modifiable risk (e.g., availability of violent extremist media) and leverage protective factors (e.g., parenting support, social network, expectation management, religious knowledge, and education)”. *Secondary prevention* “may include strategies directed at individuals who have been identified as having some characteristics that render them at elevated-risk for violent extremism, such as exposure to violent extremist ideologies or proximity to a radicalized social network.” *Tertiary prevention* “may involve strategies directed at individuals who have already adopted violent extremist ideologies or are in contact with violent extremists, but are not engaged in planning or carrying out acts of violence.”<sup>40</sup>



SOURCE: Jonathan Challgren et al., *Countering Violent Extremism: Applying the Public Health Model*, 1st ed. (Georgetown University, Center for Security Studies, National Security Critical Issues Task Force, 2016), <http://georgetownsecuritystudiesreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/NSCITF-Report-on-Countering-Violent-Extremism.pdf>. The terminology used in the figure does not necessarily correspond with that of the OSCE.

39 Stevan Weine and David Eisenman, *How Public Health Can Improve Initiatives to Counter Violent Extremism*, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), University of Maryland, 5 April 2016, <https://www.start.umd.edu/news/how-public-health-can-improve-initiatives-counter-violent-extremism>.

40 Ibid.

In this model, non-custodial R&R programmes fall into the tertiary prevention category, not least because of the level of radicalization of the individuals they target, whereas P/CVERLT interventions focused on those individuals who have not committed a crime fit more comfortably within the category of secondary prevention. This is not to say, however, that they do not share similarities, especially in terms of the tools and approaches they employ. **Similarities** include the following:

1. A reliance on a diverse range of professionals, including psychologists, psychiatrists, or other mental health professionals; religious, youth, and other counselors; mentors (including “formers”); teachers; social and municipal workers; and police;
2. Building trusted relationships among the practitioners and professionals and between them and the clients is important;
3. A proscribed or recommended intervention must follow a multidimensional assessment of an individual’s needs and risks;
4. The multiple actors involved must share information and cooperate, but they must also respect the privacy and data protection rights of beneficiaries and handle their sensitive information confidentially;
5. Well-trained staff and adequate resources are required to ensure sustainability;
6. Flexibility must be built into the programme design in order to enable a programme to adapt to unforeseen circumstances; and
7. Engaging not only with the individual, but also, where appropriate, with his or her family, local community, and/or peer network is important.

Despite these and other similarities, important differences exist. R&R programmes, whether in the custodial or non-custodial setting, often present a distinct set of issues and challenges that stakeholders should be mindful of as they look to develop R&R initiatives.

These **differences** include the following:

1. Compared with the beneficiaries of P/CVERLT interventions, the beneficiaries of non-custodial R&R efforts are more likely to be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or other forms of trauma as a result of their exposure to violence and are typically further along the path to VERLT. As a result, R&R programmes **may require more specialized training and engagement on psychological, ideological, and theological issues than prevention-focused programmes will.**
2. Because the beneficiaries of R&R programmes will often be seeking to start their life anew in communities they left — with some having spent time in prison — they typically **will require more intensive and sustained support on a range of practical issues to facilitate their re-entry into society.** This support might include housing, education, vocational training, and job placement.

3. In working with individuals returning from conflict zones, including in Iraq and Syria, who do not end up being prosecuted, R&R programmes will **need to address, through tailored interventions, the unique needs of returning family members, including women and children.**<sup>41</sup>
4. Individuals in need of non-custodial R&R support (including those exiting prison, returning from conflict zones, or perceived as having had ties to terrorism or VERLT) are **more likely to feel stigmatized and to be rejected and discriminated against by the communities to which they are hoping to return.** These factors can make it more difficult to develop the trusted relationships between, on the one side, the individual and, on the other side, the local practitioners and the receiving community more broadly — relationships that are critical for effective and sustained R&R efforts. As a result, those factors, unless mitigated, can complicate efforts to enable individuals to access critical psychosocial, education, housing, and vocational support.
5. Given their low appetite for risk-taking, **national security agencies and local law enforcement may be reluctant to share information and responsibility with community-level actors, including local government and civil society, that are often critical to any R&R effort.** This reluctance may be accentuated in the case of R&R efforts targeted at individuals returning from conflict zones, given the real or perceived security risk they pose; and
6. The success of non-custodial R&R programmes focused on former terrorist offenders depends in large part on the offenders' experiences while incarcerated.

## 3.4 Prisons and non-custodial R&R

In addition to providing humane and secure conditions, consistent with international standards, including those outlined in the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Mandela Rules),<sup>42</sup> prison services are expected to work towards the disengagement of violent extremist (and other violent) offenders from future violence and, by doing so, to prepare them for their social reintegration into the community.<sup>43</sup> Inhumane detention

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<sup>41</sup> See Section 11 for a discussion of the need to develop programmes that are gender- and age-sensitive.

<sup>42</sup> United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (The Nelson Mandela Rules), 2015, <https://cdn.penalreform.org/wp-content/uploads/1957/06/ENG.pdf>. See also OSCE/ODIHR and Penal Reform International, *Guidance Document on the Nelson Mandela Rules: Implementing the Revised Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners*, 2018, <https://www.osce.org/odihr/389912?download=true>.

<sup>43</sup> International human rights standards require States to ensure that the penitentiary system is directed towards the reformation and social rehabilitation of prisoners. See ICCPR, Article 10(3). Further, those standards require States to ensure that prisoners are protected from torture and other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment. This includes indefinite or prolonged solitary confinement, a practice some countries continue, including with terrorist offenders. See UNODC *VEP Handbook*; and Global Center on Cooperative Security (GCCS), *Compendium of Good Practices in the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders*, October 2018, p. 7, <https://www.veocompendium.org/download.html>.

conditions not only undermine the likelihood of post-release R&R, but also increase the chance of recidivism.<sup>44</sup>

The transition from prison back into society should start in prison, with violent extremist offenders (like all other prisoners) being treated fairly and consistent with the rule of law, and receiving support to prepare them socially and psychologically, as well as practically, for re-entry into society.<sup>45</sup>

As noted in the introduction to this report, with the rising number of terrorist offenders, the heightened recognition of how prisons can serve as incubators of VERLT, and the importance of providing this segment of the prison population tailored R&R support, which should continue after release, multilateral bodies, governments, and non-governmental organizations have developed a number of guides, frameworks, and good practice documents focused on these issues in the context of preventing and countering terrorism and VERLT.<sup>46</sup>

Further, although in some countries in the OSCE area violent extremist offenders have access only to the same rehabilitation programmes available to the general prison population,<sup>47</sup> a number of other OSCE participating States have developed specialized programmes tailored to what many argue are the unique needs of a person who has been classified a terrorist. These have typically involved training prison staff in assessing the risks of the violent extremist offenders, providing offenders with one-on-one counselling on religious or ideological issues, engaging with family and community leaders, and establishing links with community organizations in order to ensure the offender continues to benefit from the programme after release.<sup>48</sup>

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44 UNODC *VEP Handbook*.

45 EU RAN, *Approaches to Violent Extremist Offenders and Countering Radicalisation in Prisons and Probation*, RAN Prison and Probation Practitioners' Working Paper, 2016 (hereinafter RAN P&P Practitioners' Working Paper, 2016), [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran\\_pp\\_approaches\\_to\\_violent\\_extremist\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran_pp_approaches_to_violent_extremist_en.pdf).

46 These include: RAN Prison and Probation Working Group, *Approaches to Countering Radicalisation and Dealing with Violent Extremist and Terrorist Offenders in Prisons and Probation*, 2019 (hereinafter RAN P&P Practitioners' Working Paper, 2019), [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran\\_wrk\\_pp\\_pract\\_3rd-2018\\_20190606\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran_wrk_pp_pract_3rd-2018_20190606_en.pdf); UNODC *VEP Handbook*; Council of Europe, *Prison: A Breeding Ground for Radicalisation and Violent Extremism?*, 2018, <https://book.coe.int/en/human-rights-and-democracy/7602-prison-a-breeding-ground-for-radicalisation-and-violent-extremism.html>; Council of Europe, *Guidelines for Prison and Probation Services Regarding Radicalisation and Violent Extremism*, 2016, [https://rm.coe.int/16806f3d51](https://rm.coe.int/16806f3d51;).; and Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), *Rome Memorandum on Good Practices for Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent Extremist Offenders*, 2012, <https://toolkit.thegctf.org/en/Rehabilitation-and-Reintegration/Detail/id/70>. GCCS, *Compendium of Good Practices*.

47 See, for example, Canada and the United States.

48 Examples of such programmes include ones being implemented in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Spain, and the United Kingdom. For information on relevant programmes in these and other countries in the European Union, see EU RAN, "Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism Prison and Probation Interventions," 2018, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/ran-best-practices/docs/prison-and-probation-interventions\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-best-practices/docs/prison-and-probation-interventions_en.pdf).

Planning for post-release programmes should begin while an offender is still incarcerated and should involve close cooperation with the inmate himself or herself. This approach recognizes the importance of creating continuity between custodial and non-custodial programmes and of maximizing opportunities for offenders to have their risks and needs accurately assessed and appropriate interventions identified, ideally by a multidisciplinary team of experts.<sup>49</sup> At least six months before release, practitioners should begin “working with the ex-offenders *inside* the prison” while “continuing to fulfill their counselling role *outside* of it, to secure a lasting, trustful relationship and to maintain stability.”<sup>50</sup>

The United Nations and other organizations have identified a series of **additional steps that should be considered when preparing violent extremist offenders to return to their communities**. These steps, which can impact the implementation of post-release R&R measures, include:

1. Developing transition programmes that encourage close partnerships between families, CSOs, and other actors within the community to which the violent extremist offender will be returning (or entering for the first time, in the case of offenders who move to new locations) and whose trust, engagement, and support will be essential to any post-release R&R efforts; and
2. Conducting awareness-raising efforts and otherwise engaging with the receiving community in order to reduce stigma and erode prejudices around those labeled “terrorists”; ensuring the security of the released prisoner (and his or her family and friends) when there is credible threat; and imposing post-release conditions that are proportionate and balance the need to ensure community safety with opportunities for disengagement.<sup>51</sup> On the latter point, research suggests that stringent supervision or overly restrictive control measures such as reporting obligations and assigned residency orders can create barriers to offenders finding employment and, more broadly, re-entering and reintegrating into the community.<sup>52</sup>

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49 GCCS, *Compendium of Good Practices*.

50 EU RAN, *The Challenge of Resocialisation: Dealing with Radicalised Individuals During and After Imprisonment*, RAN Ex Post Paper, November 2018, p. 6, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran\\_pp\\_dealing\\_with\\_radicalised\\_individuals\\_06\\_112018\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran_pp_dealing_with_radicalised_individuals_06_112018_en.pdf).

51 UNODC, *Key Principles and Recommendations for the Management of Violent Extremist Prisoners and the Prevention of Radicalization to Violence in Prisons*, 2016 [https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal\\_justice/Summary-of-recommendations-on-VEPs.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/pdf/criminal_justice/Summary-of-recommendations-on-VEPs.pdf); Council of Europe, *Handbook for Prison and Probation Services Regarding Radicalization and Violent Extremism* (hereinafter “Council of Europe Handbook”), 2016, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322100931> ; and GCCS, *Compendium of Good Practices*.

52 Brian A. Jackson, Ashley L. Rhoades, Jordan R. Reimer, Natasha Lander, Katherine Costello, and Sina Beaghley, *Practical Terrorism Prevention Reexamining U.S. National Approaches to Addressing the Threat of Ideologically Motivated Violence*, RAND, 2019, p. 191, n. 25, [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR2647.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2647.html).



# 4. Legal and policy framework

Human rights-compliant R&R measures and programmes, including ones that target individuals outside of the prison context, are essential not only to preventing acts of violence in the near term but also to building overall community-level resilience to VERLT. As such, and as the Global Counterterrorism Form (GCTF) and other international bodies have recommended, the concept of R&R, both within the context of a criminal justice response to VERLT and as part of a broader approach, should be embedded in relevant legal and policy frameworks, including national action plans for P/CVERLT.<sup>53</sup> For those individuals who have been charged with criminal activity, the relevant legal and policy frameworks should embrace the notion that their R&R back into society is no less important than punitive measures.

Such frameworks should not just be limited to the criminal justice setting. Rather, they should **feature a number of components that would enable the development and implementation of timely, appropriate, and tailored R&R programmes and measures outside of that setting that take into account age and gender**. These components might include:

1. Stressing the importance of conducting a professional and objective assessment of the risk each individual may pose to society and his or her needs and vulnerabilities;
2. Recognizing the need for a “whole-of-society” approach to the challenge that allows a diversity of government actors (both national and local) and non-governmental actors (including CSOs and the private sector) to contribute and encourages collaboration between and among them;
3. Ensuring appropriate steps are taken to address the unique needs of children and women;
4. Emphasizing the importance of monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of these programmes — and making these evaluations widely accessible; and

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<sup>53</sup> GCTF, *Addendum to The Hague-Marrakech Memorandum on Good Practices for a More Effective Response to the FTF Phenomenon*, September 2016, Rec. 6, [https://toolkit.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/En/16Aug01\\_ENGLISH\\_Addendum\\_to\\_The\\_Hague-Marrakech\\_Memorandum.pdf](https://toolkit.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/En/16Aug01_ENGLISH_Addendum_to_The_Hague-Marrakech_Memorandum.pdf).

5. Underscoring the importance of ensuring these programmes are subject to appropriate oversight and are implemented in compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law.<sup>54</sup>

Further, rather than focusing narrowly on a single-form of VERLT, such as that linked to or inspired by ISIL-Da'esh or other jihadi terrorist groups, **any such framework should address all forms of VERLT, including those related to right-wing and ethno-nationalist motivations.**<sup>55</sup> Not only is this approach likely to be warranted from a security perspective, particularly given the increasing concerns over non-Islamist extremist violence in a number of countries in the OSCE area, but also it is less likely to stigmatize those involved in the R&R programmes, whether the intended beneficiaries, their families, community members, or practitioners and professionals. The lower the risk of stigmatization, the higher the prospect of the R&R programme receiving support from those whose cooperation is critical to its success.

In addition to ensuring that the concept of non-custodial R&R is embedded in the relevant national legal frameworks and strategies — in the process making clear who will be eligible to benefit from R&R programmes outside of the prison context — **governments should consider elaborating specific policies or guidelines aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of any such R&R efforts.** These policies or guidelines should include provisions that:

1. Clarify the objectives of the programme or intervention, describing its aims and the procedures to be followed, in the interest of transparency;
2. Outline the roles and responsibilities of the multiple stakeholders (from civil society as well as from government) involved in R&R work;
3. Emphasize the need for a variety of interventions and services to meet different psychosocial, practical, and other needs and vulnerabilities of the men, women, and children who might benefit from such programmes;
4. Underscore for post-prison programmes the importance of ensuring human rights-compliant prison conditions, recognizing the different ways in which a humane prison environment is likely to contribute to initiating a successful disengagement intervention that can continue post-release;<sup>56</sup> and

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54 See, for example, UNSC, Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), 2018 Addendum to the 2015 Madrid Guiding Principles, Guiding Principle 5 (hereinafter UNSC Madrid Addendum), [https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/2018-Addendum-to-the-2015-Madrid-GuidingPrinciples\\_as\\_adopted.pdf](https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/2018-Addendum-to-the-2015-Madrid-GuidingPrinciples_as_adopted.pdf); and GCCS and International Centre on Counter-Terrorism—The Hague (ICCT), *It Takes a Village: An Action Agenda on the Role of Civil Society in the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Those Associated With and Affected by Violent Extremism*, 2018 [https://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/GC\\_It-Takes-a-Village\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/GC_It-Takes-a-Village_WEB.pdf); and Global Security Exchange (GSX), "10 Steps to Strengthening Rehabilitation and Reintegration for Terrorism Offenders, Foreign Terrorist Fighters, and Victims of Violent Extremism", <http://www.icanpeacework.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/GSX-Ten-Steps-to-Strengthening-Rehabilitation-and-Reintegration-2017.pdf>.

55 This is particularly relevant for a region such as South-Eastern Europe where extremist violence comes in variety of forms, with radicalization to violence often the result of historical and lingering ethnic tensions, but where governments have often narrowly linked VERLT to the Islamist strain and the phenomenon of "FTFs" who traveled to conflict zones in Iraq and Syria.

56 EU RAN, P&P Practitioners' Working Paper, 2019, pp. 17–18.

5. Enable information sharing between and among those government and non-governmental actors involved in these programmes while protecting the privacy and other human rights of their beneficiaries, clarifying under what circumstances what sort of information will be shared with the police, intelligence, or security services in order not to undermine the trust between the beneficiary and R&R actors.

With respect to this last provision, collecting and sharing personal information inevitably constitutes an interference with the right to privacy and thus needs to be based in law, to be necessary, and to be proportionate to the risk.<sup>57</sup> Governments have an obligation to ensure that there is a clear legal basis (with implementing policies and protocols as required) that clarifies what kind of information can be shared, between whom, who has access to the information, when they have access, and what kind of protections and safeguards apply. Highly sensitive information such as health-related data or protected client-lawyer communications require heightened protections.

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<sup>57</sup> ICCPR, Article 17.



# 5. The process

As is the case for P/CVERLT measures more broadly, there is no one-size-fits-all solution to the R&R challenge. There are, however, a number of common elements and issues to consider concerning the process for developing and implementing such programmes. This section lays out a series of six key steps in that process.

## 5.1 Map the ecosystem

As an initial step, a **careful mapping** of existing resources and capacities should be undertaken in order to understand the ecosystem of actors that could be leveraged for R&R efforts. This mapping should identify:

1. The target audience (e.g., former violent extremist offenders and/or returning “FTFs” and family members who are not subjected to the criminal justice system) and objectives for an R&R programme or programmes;
2. Which professionals and community members (e.g., social workers, mental health providers, teachers, counselors, mentors, religious leaders, and family members) are best placed — for example, due to their expertise and/or trusted relationships with the relevant individuals, families, and/or communities — and willing to participate in R&R initiatives;
3. Whether any existing programmes focused, for example, on P/CVERLT or tackling gang violence, could be adapted for R&R purposes;
4. What additional resources, expertise, and training are needed;
5. Levels of trust between law enforcement and non-law enforcement professionals and between the police and the relevant communities, noting where trust is low and needs to be strengthened;<sup>58</sup>
6. Existing relevant information sharing and data protection practices and protocols, as well as regulatory data protection gaps that may need to be closed; and
7. Community attitudes towards rehabilitating and reintegrating individuals who have been convicted of terrorism offenses or have had some connection with terrorism.

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<sup>58</sup> Ensuring the requisite trust is in place can pose a particular challenge in post-conflict settings and multiethnic communities.

In some cases, there may already exist multiactor or other primary- or secondary-prevention efforts involving practitioners from a variety of disciplines that could, in principle, be leveraged for R&R (tertiary prevention) purposes. Indeed, there are benefits to avoiding the creation of parallel intervention structures. However, given the political and national security sensitivities that can exist with respect to some non-custodial R&R cases (e.g., former terrorist offenders and returning “FTFs” and family members), some caution may be warranted before relying on the same programs and providers.

In some countries, such as Denmark, France, and Germany, many of the same structures and professionals are relied upon for handling the full spectrum of individualized P/CVERLT interventions.<sup>59</sup> In others, such as Canada and the United Kingdom, they are not. The risks of trying to use the same programme for both secondary and tertiary interventions were highlighted by a recent example in Canada. There, a local multiagency hub that focused on individuals in the non-criminal space almost collapsed when it was asked to handle a highly sensitive case involving a returnee from the conflict zone in Iraq and Syria: the trust between, on the one side, the local police and, on the other side, the non-law enforcement community-based intervention providers and members of the community that had been developed to enable the launch of the hub was ruptured, with some providers threatening to walk away from the hub at the prospect of being asked to handle the more sensitive cases, which they feared might undermine their other work and relationships with members of the community.<sup>60</sup>

## 5.2 Conduct a comprehensive, individualized risk and needs assessment

A second step involves ensuring that any such programme **conducts or relies on comprehensive, individualized assessments of the risks and needs** of the beneficiaries. The importance of such assessments has been underscored by the UN Security Council, the GCTF, the Council of Europe, and RAN. Such assessments can allow for the development of tailored responses that “take into

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<sup>59</sup> See, for example, *Anne-Sophie Hemmingsen, An Introduction to the Danish Approach to Countering and Preventing Extremism and Radicalization*, Danish Institute for International Studies, 2015, <https://www.ft.dk/samling/20151/almdel/reu/bilag/248/1617692.pdf>; and EU RAN, *Prevention of Radicalisation in Germany*, Ex Post Paper, 6-7 June 2016, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/ran-papers/docs/ran\\_study\\_visit\\_prevention\\_radicalisation\\_germany\\_6-7\\_062016\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/ran_study_visit_prevention_radicalisation_germany_6-7_062016_en.pdf).

<sup>60</sup> Phone interview with local Canadian practitioner, June 2019.

account the participants' life histories, personalities, [and] cognitive skills",<sup>61</sup> address the beneficiaries' needs, "are commensurate with the risk, and avoid (further) radicalizing the targeted individuals, members of their family, or local communities."<sup>62</sup> The GCTF, in acknowledging the need for the development of contextualized assessment tools, has noted that **any such tool should take into account the participant's age, gender, mental health, and other relevant identity markers.**<sup>63</sup>

According to RAN, one can gain an **understanding of the individual's "needs, narratives and networks using specific risk assessment methods for violent extremism."**<sup>64</sup> More specifically, issues to explore include gaining insight into the individual's (1) commitment and motivations to violence; (2) level of adherence to an ideology that supports violence; (3) capacity to commit violence; (4) social context and intention; and (5) psychosocial and practical needs. In the case of those who have returned from the conflict zones in Iraq and Syria, their motives for leaving the conflict zones need to be understood.

Needs and challenges to be addressed will vary depending on the individual, but they are likely to include post-traumatic stress and trauma, anxiety, loss of meaning in life, disillusionment, aggression, potential feelings of guilt or shame, lack of job opportunities, stigma from community and/or society, difficulties in resolving conflict peacefully, and contextual learning about religion and/or politics. There is no shortage of existing tools that have been developed to assess both terrorists and extremist offenders in a prison environment or to screen individuals already radicalized to violence for risks and needs.<sup>65</sup> However, few tools focus specifically on violent extremism, and even fewer have been tested

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61 EU RAN, *Foreign Fighter Returnees and the Reintegration Challenge*, Ran Issue Paper, p. 9, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/ran-papers/docs/issue\\_paper\\_foreign\\_fighter\\_returnees\\_reintegration\\_challenge\\_112016\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/issue_paper_foreign_fighter_returnees_reintegration_challenge_112016_en.pdf).

62 GCTF, *Good Practices on Addressing the Challenge of Returning Families of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs)*, Good Practice 5, September 2018, [https://www.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/Framework%20Documents/GCTF-Good-Practices-on-Returning-Families-of-FTFs\\_ENG.pdf?ver=2018-09-25-101427-323..](https://www.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/Framework%20Documents/GCTF-Good-Practices-on-Returning-Families-of-FTFs_ENG.pdf?ver=2018-09-25-101427-323..)

63 Ibid.

64 EU RAN, *Foreign Fighter Returnees and Reintegration Challenge*, p. 9.

65 For a thorough review of relevant risk assessment tools, see RTI, *Countering Violent Extremism: The Application of Risk Assessment Tools in the Criminal Justice and Rehabilitation Process*, literature review prepared for the First Responders Group at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Science and Technology Directorate, February 2018, [https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OPSR\\_TP\\_CVE-Application-Risk-Assessment-Tools-Criminal-Rehab-Process\\_2018Feb-508.pdf](https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OPSR_TP_CVE-Application-Risk-Assessment-Tools-Criminal-Rehab-Process_2018Feb-508.pdf). These and similar risk assessment tools have had fairly limited testing and have been criticized by some for trying to predict the unpredictable. See, for example, Rita Augestad Knudsen, "Measuring Radicalization: Risk Assessment Conceptualisations and Practice in England and Wales", *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* (August 2018), <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/19434472.2018.1509105>. For a comparison of the relevant assessment tools see, for example, Liesbeth van der Heide, Marieke van der Zwan, and Maarten van Leyenhorst, *The Practitioner's Guide to the Galaxy - A Comparison of Risk Assessment Tools for Violent Extremism*, ICCT, September 2019, [https://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/29Aug19\\_Formatted\\_ThePractitionersGuidetotheGalaxy-1.pdf](https://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/29Aug19_Formatted_ThePractitionersGuidetotheGalaxy-1.pdf). (The objective of this paper "is to enable policymakers and practitioners to better navigate the often muddy, copyrighted, and expensive waters of the world of risk assessment of violent extremism—as well as to facilitate their decision-making process when it comes to determining what approach is best suited to their needs"); and Monica Lloyd, *Extremism Risk Assessment: A Directory*, CREST (Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats), March 2019, <https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/extremism-risk-assessment-directory/>.

and verified.<sup>66</sup> For example, VERA-2 was developed to apply to different types of violent extremists, terrorists, and unlawful violent offenders motivated by religious, political, or social ideologies; it is being used in several countries, generally in post-conviction high-security settings with individuals convicted of extremist violence. The EU RAN Centre of Excellence Returnee 45 model was developed specifically for assessing foreign terrorist fighters as a framework to guide general investigations into the motivation, commitment, and other risk factors that exist in an individual. The United Kingdom developed ERG+22 (Extremism Risk Guidance) for use in its Prevent and Channel Programme, and IR46 is a Dutch tool used for multiagency assessments in “safety houses”. TRAP 18 (Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol) exists to track the long-term prognosis of individual actors; and HCR 20 is a commonly used model to assess the risk of violence without a specific focus on extremist violence.

Although those developing non-custodial R&R programmes for P/CVERLT may wish to draw on relevant existing tools, which typically share a few indicators by which to assess an individual’s level of extremism, with the underlying approach ranging from “structured professional judgement” to “self-questionnaires”, **they should ultimately rely on an approach to risk and needs assessment that is informed by and adapted to the local context and is most likely to resonate within the relevant communities.**<sup>67</sup>

To this end, and recognizing that carelessly designed and implemented risk assessment tools can wrongfully single out individuals, stigmatize and alienate beneficiaries and communities/groups in society, and thus undermine non-custodial R&R efforts, **steps to consider when elaborating (and then applying) any assessment tool include:**<sup>68</sup>

1. Tailor the assessment tool to the different categories of potential beneficiaries, with distinct frameworks used, where necessary, for women and children;
2. Ensure a balanced focus on the risks to be mitigated, the resilience factors to be strengthened, and the needs to be met;<sup>69</sup>
3. Emphasize factors that are linked to the targeted population, such as the complexity and size of the population and the resource level and capacities of the particular country, municipality, or community;

66 Violent extremism-related risk assessment is a relatively young field that requires further evaluation and learning. See, for example, Global Center on Cooperative Security, *Recommendations for the Consideration of the Counter-Terrorism Committee in the Adoption of the 2018 Addendum to the Madrid Guiding Principles*, November 2018, p. 3, [https://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/18Nov28\\_Recommendations-Addendum-Madrid-Principles.pdf](https://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/18Nov28_Recommendations-Addendum-Madrid-Principles.pdf).

67 For a discussion of the risk assessment tools and P/CVELT, see, for example, the OSCE *Understanding Referral Mechanisms*, pp. 80–83.

68 For illustrations of some “good and promising practices in the effective and appropriate assessment of VEOs and radicalization to violent extremism,” see, for example, Christopher Dean, Sebastien Feve, and Eelco Kessels, *Countering Violent Extremism in Prisons: Good Practices Guide*, Global Center on Cooperative Security, August 2018, pp. 11–13, <https://www.veocompendium.org/download.html>.

69 See, for example, Marsden, *Reintegrating Extremists*, pp. 16–17.

4. Reflect the wider political, cultural, and social contexts;
5. Consult with local practitioners both on the development of any tool and on the application of it in individual cases to ensure multiple sources of information underpin any assessment;
6. Avoid using labels such as “violent extremist”, “terrorist”, or “returning foreign fighter” and ensure that those making any assessment are trained to be nuanced and avoid overgeneralizations;
7. Ensure the assessment tool or framework is broadly applicable and *not* specific to a single ideology or religion;
8. Avoid gender and other biases, generalizations, and stereotypes;
9. Involve properly trained psychosocial care providers and/or other appropriate professionals, including the police or security services, where necessary; and
10. Ensure that that the assessment is informed by and linked to available interventions and support services to ensure that the necessary counselling, practical help, and other resources are available to address the identified risks, vulnerabilities, or needs.

The need for tailored assessments in the non-custodial R&R space is underscored by the diversity of cases presenting in just one category: returnees from the conflict zone in Iraq and Syria. The male, female, and child returnees represent a diversity of backgrounds, motivations, and experiences. For example, family members of “FTFs” “may be victims, perpetrators, witnesses, or a combination of these.”<sup>70</sup> Much attention has recently centered on the issue of the precise involvement in terrorist activities of women who traveled to the conflict zone and were married there; the role played by children has also become particularly salient recently. In short, individuals in this broad category present a complexity of needs and potential risks that can require both humanitarian and security responses.<sup>71</sup> (See Section 11 for a fuller discussion of the unique needs of women and children.)

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<sup>70</sup> GCTF, *Returning Families Good Practices*; and OSCE/ODIHR *FTF Guidelines*, Sections 3.7 and 3.8.

<sup>71</sup> European Parliament Parliamentary Research Service, *The Return of Foreign Fighters to EU Soil: Ex-Post Evaluation*, 2018, p. 5, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/621811/EPRS\\_STU\(2018\)621811\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/621811/EPRS_STU(2018)621811_EN.pdf).

## 5.3 Enable multiactor information sharing and cooperation

A critical ingredient in creating comprehensive, tailored assessments —and in ensuring that non-custodial R&R efforts are effective — is the **sharing of information among the multiple actors** that may have relevant information on an individual case. This information should be reviewed as part of an assessment and included when designing an intervention or support plan.

Information sharing, however, faces several obstacles. Different professional and ethical frameworks and goals, including for psychosocial care providers and religious and other counselors, can make information sharing difficult. In addition, the right to privacy is enshrined in human rights law and data collection and storage principles must be respected.<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, the police and security and intelligence services may be reluctant or unable to share information with actors that do not traditionally have access to sensitive, let alone classified, information.

The existence of trusted, personal relationships or informal networks can sometimes overcome this resistance or otherwise enable the necessary information sharing on an ad hoc basis. However, because of the inevitable turnover in personnel over the course of a programme, and the need to protect personal information and abide by privacy laws, **transparent guidelines or other frameworks (including, where feasible, legislative ones), as well as oversight and independent review processes, should be put in place.** These could help facilitate the sharing of information), knowledge, and expertise and appropriately protect information to allow multiple actors from different agencies, organizations, and professions to assess an individual case together on a more systematic basis.<sup>73</sup>

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72 The right to privacy requires that personal data is collected and processed fairly and lawfully, stored only for specified and legitimate purposes, not used in a way incompatible with those purposes, and protected from disclosure to unauthorized persons. Highly sensitive data (such as health-related data and information on religious and political beliefs) requires particular protections. See OSCE, *OSCE Guidebook on Intelligence Led Policing*, TNTD/SPMU Publication Series, vol. 13, July 2017, <https://www.osce.org/chairmanship/327476>.

73 In Denmark, for example, the police, schools, and the social service agency — the three pillars of the locally led P/CVERLT efforts — are permitted to “share information about an individual if necessary to cooperation in crime prevention or to cooperation between the police, the social services and social psychiatry and mental health authorities in their efforts to help socially vulnerable individuals. Information may not, however, be shared for the purposes of criminal investigations.” See Hemmingsen, *Danish Approach to Countering and Preventing Extremism*, p. 15. In Belgium, a legal framework enables the horizontal and vertical sharing of sensitive information surrounding individuals. However, the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism has questioned “the legal basis for the gathering of data, the access for individuals including children and their legal guardians to information which is held about them, the ability to challenge the accuracy of such data, the legal basis upon which such data is shared within and between agencies at all levels of government (e.g., local integral security cells, local task forces, and the National Task Force), and the inclusion of such data in intelligence databases without sufficient measures of rigor, protection, consistency and oversight being applied.” See UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Human Rights and

The framework, which could be, but need not be, enshrined into law, should make clear to both professionals and programme beneficiaries “which kind of information is shared, when, with whom, and for which reason, and in which kind of cases security agencies must be involved.”<sup>74</sup> Among the conclusions of a March 2019 Berlin workshop on tertiary prevention organized by the German Council on Foreign Relations was that “[t]ransparency regarding obligations and limits of information-sharing is a necessary basis for trust-building between all involved actors,” particularly “where a client is worried about the protection of personal information that he or she revealed to a counselor. By proactively informing the client about the mentioned obligations and limits, concerns and misconceptions regarding sharing of data can be addressed and dissolved.”<sup>75</sup>

Information sharing among the multiple actors that may be involved in individualized P/CVERLT interventions poses an array of challenges, three of which are particularly pertinent in the non-custodial R&R context:

1. The need to involve additional categories of professionals (e.g., probation and/or intelligence services); the EU RAN encourages states to consider setting up structures to enable the sharing of information with and among these additional stakeholders;<sup>76</sup>
2. The reluctance of law enforcement officials to share information about and responsibility for cases with potential national security implications with professionals outside of law enforcement; and
3. The heightened reticence of non-law enforcement professionals to become involved in such cases given the increased security and other risks.

## 5.4 Develop a tailored plan that is informed by the assessment

The next step in the process involves the **development of a tailored plan that is informed by the assessment**—ideally, a plan that is elaborated by all relevant stakeholders in close cooperation with the intended beneficiary of the plan so that he or she feels ownership over the process. Where possible, those

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Counter-Terrorism: UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms While Countering Terrorism Concludes Visit to Belgium”, 31 May 2018, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23164&LangID=E>.

74 Sofia Koller, *International Tour d’Horizon of Tertiary Prevention of Islamist Extremism, InFoEx Workshop, Berlin, March 26–27, 2019, German Council on Foreign Relations*, p. 6, <https://dgap.org/en/think-tank/publications/dgapreport/international-tour-dhorizon-tertiary-prevention-islamist>.

75 Ibid.

76 EU RAN, *Responses to Returnees: Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Their Families, RAN Manual* (hereinafter RAN Returnee Manual), July 2017, p. 4, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/ran\\_br\\_a4\\_m10\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/ran_br_a4_m10_en.pdf).

with trusted relationships with the individual (e.g., teachers, mentors, family members, counselors, and other members of the relevant community) should be involved.

As noted above, potential beneficiaries of non-custodial R&R programmes will likely present a diversity of vulnerabilities, risks, and needs — ranging from ideological to psychosocial, vocational, financial, religious, educational, and familial. Some may have had limited involvement in or exposure to terrorism or VERLT; others may remain radicalized and have undergone military training and present a sufficiently high risk to public safety as to warrant continued law enforcement surveillance or other monitoring. Some may have families and communities interested in playing a constructive role in the re-entry process; others may have been rejected by or ostracized from their communities; and still others may have families that may be promoting violent extremism or for other reasons would not play constructive roles in the R&R process. Some may require specialized counseling or other P/CVERLT interventions; others may need only basic psychosocial or other support available to the general population.<sup>77</sup>

Given this diversity, non-custodial R&R measures could include one or more of a number of different types of interventions, including “mental health support, skills building, basic education, healthcare, employment assistance, legal assistance, economic support, social support, local community dialogues and outreach.”<sup>78</sup> (See Section 6 for a fuller discussion of types of interventions.) The support provided, however, should be proportionate to the needs and vulnerabilities of the individual. **“Over intervention” (i.e., providing too much or too many different kinds of support) should be avoided, because it presents its own challenges**, such as stigmatizing the individual, complicating the task of building trust between government practitioners and the individual and his or her family, closing the cognitive space needed for rehabilitation and disengagement, and needlessly creating a sense of alarm in the relevant community, whose cooperation and support can be critical for successful re-entry. Those overseeing R&R programmes should regularly assess whether the interventions are proportionate or whether a programme may be doing more harm than good, and then should adjust the level of intervention accordingly.

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<sup>77</sup> <https://thedefensepost.com/2019/02/12/us-minnesota-deradicalization-program-inside-look/>

<sup>78</sup> GCTF, *Returning Families Good Practices*, Good Practice 6.

## 5.5 Identify a lead actor

Where multiple actors are involved in a particular case, it is important to **identify a lead actor** — or “case owner” — to coordinate the different actors and activities involved in the individual case and to serve as the dedicated point of contact with the concerned individual, family, and broader community. Although the police or other security actors are likely to be involved in cases of tertiary (as opposed to primary and secondary) prevention, particularly those involving returning “FTFs” and family members from conflict zones, they may not be best suited to assume a lead role. Having the police take the lead can risk undermining efforts to build trust with members of the community, whose sustained cooperation and engagement will be critical to ensuring the success of the R&R effort and who may be reluctant to engage with the police, whom they may associate with a security mission and who may lack community-engagement training and tools.

Perhaps even more importantly, and has often been the case, the individual targeted may have had negative experiences with the police or the state more broadly and thus have limited trust in law enforcement and other state institutions. In these situations, if the R&R effort is not handled with sensitivity — for example, by identifying a social worker or CSO to initiate and lead the engagement, which, depending on the type of case, may commence with a knock on the door — the necessary repairing of trust may remain elusive.<sup>79</sup> Depending on the level of risk involved and the extent to which CSOs or social workers are comfortable being proactive (as opposed to the latter’s usual preference for responding to a request for support), this engagement could be initiated together with the police, as has been the practice in some municipalities.<sup>80</sup>

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79 However, a key issue here centers around access: CSOs, in order to intervene, need to have a “way in”, because unlike the police their mandate to work with an individual or their family is likely voluntary. Being in touch with the parents, for instance, can be a good first point of access.

80 This is the practice in some cities in countries such as Canada, Denmark, and Sweden.

## 5.6 Communicate the goals and benefits of the programme

Another key step in the process involves **effectively communicating the goals and benefits of R&R measures** to, on the one hand, a public that may see them as too “soft” for dealing with terrorism and, on the other hand, to the targeted individuals and communities that may view them as potentially stigmatizing.<sup>81</sup> Further, depending on the type of interventions and other support offered in a non-custodial R&R setting — and the extent to which these same services are available to the wider population — R&R programmes may generate feelings of resentment towards the targets of such programmes based on the perception (and perhaps the reality) that those who have had some association with terrorism or violent extremism are getting better treatment than those who have not.

**Developing and implementing a strategy for mitigating both sets of concerns is critical.** This strategy should include having all the stakeholders involved in the programme “pro-actively communicate their methods and goals, provide feedback on the effectiveness and acceptance of their programs in the target group, and share successful examples of their efforts, as well as outlining the limits of their work” while sharing details of the tools they use “to reach parts of the public sphere that hold strong reservations or a dismissive attitude towards this work”.<sup>82</sup>

The skeptical public should be persuaded that investment in R&R measures is an important element of a comprehensive strategy to prevent and counter terrorism. Rather than helping “terrorists”, it represents a “smart way to work on reducing the risk of recidivism, and on working with former terrorist offenders to prevent future violence committed by others”<sup>83</sup> and to avoid radicalization to violence of others in the relevant communities. Given the growing number of terrorism-related offences that come with relatively short sentences (due in part to the fact that many are for non-violent crimes such as providing material support) and the relatively young age of most released terrorist offenders, failing to invest in interventions to facilitate offenders’ disengagement from violence and peaceful re-entry into society would be shortsighted at best.

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81 Tina Wilchen Christensen and Tore Bjørgo, *How to Manage Returned Foreign Fighters and Other Syria Travelers*, Research Report, No. 1, Center for Research on Extremism (C-REX), University of Oslo, 2018, <https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/publications/c-rex-reports/how-to-manage-foreign-fighters-c-rex-research-report.pdf>.

82 Koller, *Tertiary Prevention of Islamist Extremism*, p. 8.

83 Jesse Morton and Mitch Silber, *When Terrorists Come Home: The Need for Rehabilitating and Reintegrating America's Convicted Jihadists*, Counter Extremism Project, 2018, p. 34, [https://www.counterextremism.com/sites/default/files/CEP%20Report\\_When%20Terrorists%20Come%20Home\\_120618.pdf](https://www.counterextremism.com/sites/default/files/CEP%20Report_When%20Terrorists%20Come%20Home_120618.pdf).

Creating a **plan to reduce the stigma that typically surrounds a released (former) extremist and those being asked to support his or her re-entry is also important.** For example, how the programme is presented (e.g., as a counter-terrorism initiative, a criminal justice measure, or a civil society or resilience-building programme) to the individual and wider community matters, with “different terminology [having] different implications for how the individual is perceived by the community” and thus also for how willing the community is to support the individual.<sup>84</sup>

Community members may be reluctant to work with government authorities on the R&R of “FTFs” and their families who are not prosecuted upon their return, fearing that engagement with the government could increase the likelihood of legal action being taken against a returning family member and might enhance the risk of stigmatization.

Stigma may also need to be addressed in the workplace so as to prevent discrimination that could have an impact on hiring and workplace safety, which could in turn impede rehabilitation.<sup>85</sup> As the GCTF has recommended, a communications strategy should include “programs to increase the capacity and knowledge of families who are receiving returning family members[, which] can help assuage these concerns and aid with rehabilitation, socialization, and addressing trauma.”<sup>86</sup>

Finally, practitioners involved in delivering R&R interventions in the community can feel stigmatized or pressure from their peers or members of the community because they are being held responsible for their clients’ actions. To mitigate this risk, reaching clear agreement on the roles and responsibilities of those involved in such interventions and creating space for practitioner self-reflection and professionalization can be helpful.<sup>87</sup>

Beyond stigma, there are both practical and security-related barriers that may need to be overcome. On the former, as Sarah Marsden has underscored, “even where an individual is motivated to disengage, they face significant challenges: finding a job, developing a new social network, or even getting a bank account can be problematic. Acknowledging society’s role in supporting reintegration is therefore central to supporting successful long-term desistance.”<sup>88</sup>

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84 Veldhuis, *Reintegrating Violent Extremist Offenders*, p. 9.

85 *Invisible Women: Gendered Dimensions of Return, Rehabilitation and Reintegration from Violent Extremism* (hereinafter *Invisible Women*), International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN) and UNDP, January 2019, <http://www.icanpeacework.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/ICAN-UNDP-Rehabilitation-Reintegration-Invisible-Women-Report-2019.pdf>.

86 GCTF, *Returning Families Good Practices*, Good Practice 19.

87 Violence Prevention Network and the RecoRa Institute, *The Art of Seeing Promise over Risk: Perspectives from the European Practice Exchange (EPEX)*, 2019, <https://www.issuelab.org/resources/35086/35086.pdf>.

88 Marsden, *Reintegrating Extremists*.

On the latter, fear of retribution and ostracization from the community can be a significant barrier to social reintegration. Where appropriate, measures to protect the safety of the beneficiaries of R&R programmes, as well as family members, may be required. These might include temporary relocation or witness protection measures. Among other things, the anonymity that accompanies relocation can help former prisoners avoid constantly confronting their past, including their ties to extremist groups, and assist them in developing a stable identity. Additionally, beneficiaries should be shielded from any undue media attention to ensure their ongoing R&R process is not jeopardized.<sup>89</sup> However, if conducted in accordance with the principle of “Do No Harm”, media attention to the issue can highlight the unique challenges facing returning “FTFs” and their families (and others who may have had some association with violent extremism), thereby encouraging empathy and reducing stigma in communities.

### 5.7 Monitoring and evaluation

A critical step involves **ensuring appropriate monitoring and evaluation of the non-custodial R&R intervention**, while recognizing the challenges in measuring the impact of such programmes. As is the case for much of the P/CVERLT field, there is limited evidence-based knowledge of what works and what does not when it comes to R&R. Lacking a firm evidentiary foundation, these programmes are often “implemented on a trial and error basis”;<sup>90</sup> “more evidence . . . [is] needed to understand what supports positive outcomes and determine how progress might be assessed.”<sup>91</sup> Reasons for the lack of evidence include the limited number of publicly accessible assessments of R&R efforts; the complexity of the issues involved, including a lack of clarity about what supports disengagement from violence or other positive change; data collection challenges; a lack of insight into what actually takes place in R&R interventions; and difficulties in measuring success, which are sometimes the result of a lack of clarity in what the intervention is seeking to achieve.<sup>92</sup>

To help build this evidence base, while facilitating the periodic review of a programme’s implementation and effectiveness, evaluation mechanisms should

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89 GCCS, *Compendium of Good Practices*, p. 50.

90 Veldhuis, *Reintegrating Violent Extremist Offenders*, p.9.

91 CREST, *Deradicalisation Programmes: An Introductory Guide* 29 Jan. 2019, <https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/deradicalisation-programmes-introductory-guide/>.

92 See, for example, Liesbeth van der Heide and Bart Schuurman, “Reintegrating Terrorists in The Netherlands: Evaluating the Dutch Approach,” *Journal for Deradicalization*, no. 17, (2018/19), <http://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/179/134>; and Wilchen Christensen and Bjørge, *How to Manage Returned Foreign Fighters*.

be incorporated into the design of the intervention, and the resulting evaluations should be made publicly available, where possible.

To begin with, those responsible for developing non-custodial R&R programmes should ensure the design of each intervention (or wider programme) is driven by a theory of change that explains how the proposed approach relates to the intervention's aims and outcomes. Theories of change, which should shape the programme's aims (e.g., attitudinal, motivational, and/or skills-related), help determine the design of the programme and whether it is effective in achieving its intended outcomes, as well as facilitating the measurement of progress along the way.<sup>93</sup>

Clearly articulating what non-custodial R&R programmes are aiming to achieve is vital to effective evaluation, which in turn is critical to mobilizing sustained funding and public support for this work. Further, it is important to enable progress to be assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure the intervention continues to address what are likely to be the changing needs of the individual. It is also important to acknowledge the potentially significant societal, cultural, and other barriers confronting those hoping to disengage from VERLT when assessing the impact of any interventions.<sup>94</sup>

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93 See, for example, CREST, *Deradicalisation Guide*.

94 See, for example, Adrian Cherney, "Evaluating Interventions to Disengage Extremist Offenders: A Study of the Proactive Integrated Support Model (PRISM)," *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* (2018), <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/19434472.2018.1495661?needAccess=true>; A.J. Gielen, "Exit Programmes for Female Jihadists: A Proposal for Conducting Realistic Evaluation of the Dutch Approach," *International Sociology*, (2018), <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0268580918775586> ; Koehler, "Understanding Deradicalization Methods"; and Marsden, *Reintegrating Extremists*.



## 6. Interventions

As this report has already emphasized, “interventions able to offer a comprehensive range of activities can better address the diverse needs of those who become involved in violent extremism.”<sup>95</sup> The precise nature and scope of interventions will vary considerably depending on the category or categories to which the intended beneficiaries belong. Categories include (1) convicted violent extremist offenders leaving prison, for whom the R&R process should commence as early in the sentence as possible and at least six months prior to release; (2) individuals radicalized to VERLT who have not passed through the criminal system; and (3) individuals (and family members) returning from the conflict zones who have been not prosecuted. Even within those categories the nature and scope of interventions will vary, and ideally each intervention will be tailored to the assessed needs, vulnerabilities, and risks of each individual.

Despite the need for customization of interventions, it is almost invariably the case that “interventions able to offer a comprehensive range of activities can better address the diverse needs of those who become involved in violent extremism.”<sup>96</sup> Moreover, it is possible to identify, broadly speaking, five types, or baskets, of intervention support. These are socio-economic support; psychosocial support; theological or ideological support; family counseling; and recreational and cultural support. Some baskets may be needed for every category of individual, such as those that provide job training, jobs, housing, and social welfare support. Other baskets are likely to be especially relevant to certain categories. For example, those returning from conflict zones may be more likely to require psychosocial support to address trauma and other mental health issues related to their exposure to violence. Moreover, as with those former violent extremist offenders returning to their communities, R&R programs for returnees should seek to include relevant family or other community members, including for the purpose of building a support structure for the individual that can act as a safety net in case of future crisis.

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<sup>95</sup> CREST, *Deradicalisation Guide*, p.3.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

## 6.1 Socio-economic support

**Material support to improve an individual's socio-economic situation will help foster reintegration and reduce the likelihood of recidivism.** This type of support might include assistance with education, housing, vocational training, skills development, job placement, and medical care. Where appropriate, the relevant municipality or other appropriate authority, in cooperation with prison authorities, probation agencies, or other relevant stakeholders, could develop this support package for violent extremist offenders upon their release from prison, for those seeking to disengage from violent extremist groups, and for those entering (or re-entering) their jurisdiction who may have had some connection to violent extremism.<sup>97</sup>

Vocational training and skills development can be vital, but if they do not lead to a job then the intended beneficiary may experience significant frustration, which might disrupt or derail his or her R&R process. Similarly, education must be linked to increased opportunities for civic engagement if frustration is not to fester.<sup>98</sup>

Practitioners and other experts with experience in the R&R field emphasize the need to **tailor vocational training and employment assistance to the local context and the interests of the individual.** The jobs or other support provided should be comparable to what others in the receiving community have access to in order to prevent resentment from building within the individual. In addition, “gendered or cultural assumptions about what kind of work women (and men) can or should do” should be avoided; and any job training and skills development efforts should not be initiated in a vacuum but be informed by labor market assessments.<sup>99</sup> More broadly, partnerships with the private sector should be considered in order to help catalyze sustainable economic and employment development in the communities into which beneficiaries of R&R programmes are returning (or relocating). Local businesses could be engaged to help determine the pressing needs of the local economy and the potential for new sectoral development and vocational training for men and women.<sup>100</sup>

97 See, for example, GCTF, *Addendum to the Hague-Marrakech Memorandum*, GP 4.

98 See, for example, Georgia Holmer and Adrian Shtuni, *Returning Foreign Fighters and the Reintegration Imperative*, Special Report, United States Institute of Peace, p.7, <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2017-03/sr402-returning-foreign-fighters-and-the-reintegration-imperative.pdf>; Sophie Edwards, “In Somalia, Better Education Alone Is Not Enough to Challenge Extremism,” *DEVEX*, 2 December 2016, <https://www.devex.com/news/in-somalia-better-education-alone-is-not-enough-to-challenge-extremism-89246>; and Liz Hummer, “Youth and Consequences: Unemployment, Injustice and Violence”, Mercy Corps, February 2015, <https://www.mercycorps.org/research-resources/youth-consequences-unemployment-injustice-and-violence>.

99 *Invisible Women*, p. 111.

100 GSX, “10 Steps”.

The dangers of fostering resentment exist not only among beneficiaries but also within the wider local community. Particularly in the context of a struggling economy in which unemployment is high and employment opportunities are few, care needs to be taken to avoid inadvertently creating the perception that the beneficiaries of R&R programs are being provided with more opportunities than law-abiding members of the community. Giving (or even being perceived to be giving) former violent extremist offenders or returnees from conflict zones preferential treatment, including in relation to others who may have had some involvement with other criminal activities, can create grievances among those community members, who may feel that they are being unfairly disadvantaged.<sup>101</sup>

## 6.2 Psychosocial support

**Various forms of psychosocial support can facilitate reintegration and disengagement from VERLT.** Those in need of such support include not only individuals traumatized by violence (e.g., as a result of having lived in a conflict zone) but also those suffering from anxiety or depression or otherwise requiring mental health support. Although there is no direct causal link between mental illness and violent extremism, there is increasing evidence that poor psychological adjustment is a factor in the radicalization to violence of youth.<sup>102</sup>

UNODC, the Global Center on Cooperative Security, and other organizations that have studied the issue have identified numerous types of psychosocial support that might be helpful, depending on the needs of the beneficiary. These include (1) facilitating behavioural change; (2) enhancing coping and emotional management skills; (3) promoting critical and complex thinking, problem solving, and decision-making skills; (4) improving relationships; (5) building self-esteem; (6) facilitating personal potential, development, and growth; (7) addressing beliefs and ways of thinking that support violence; (8) improving self-knowledge and understanding; (9) healing emotional pain and resolving confusion; and (10) addressing identity issues.<sup>103</sup>

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101 GCCT and ICCT, *It Takes a Village*, p. 24.

102 This is borne out by recent studies. For example, a 2016 police review of the 500 cases dealt with by the United Kingdom's Channel programme found that 44 per cent of the individuals involved were assessed as being likely to have vulnerabilities related to mental health or psychological difficulties. See Vikram Dodd, "Police Study Links Radicalisation to Mental Health Problems", *Guardian*, 20 May 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/may/20/police-study-radicalisation-mental-health-problems>. According to a former head of a local PREVENT team in the United Kingdom, a significant portion of these cases relate to autism-type cases, with some linked to schizophrenia, bipolar conditions, and mental health conditions due to substance abuse, with all these individuals already known to relevant mental health or other support agencies for reasons other than concerns related to radicalization, violent extremism, or terrorism.

103 GCCS, *Compendium of Good Practices*, p. 29; and UNODC, *VEP Handbook*, Section 5.8.

As is typically the case with other types of non-custodial interventions, the individual needs to be open to the idea of entering a counseling process. In some cases, clients may, for cultural or other reasons, not be open to psychosocial support; cultural sensitivity “is thus important for building trust before offering any support service. To this end, it can be beneficial to include cultural facilitators before and during the therapy or counseling sessions.”<sup>104</sup>

### 6.3 Theological or ideological support

R&R efforts should not seek to change an individual’s belief system, and the precise role of religion and ideology in P/CVERLT can raise a number of controversial issues, depending on the national and local context.<sup>105</sup> Nevertheless, a number of different interventions **focused on theology or politics** have been deployed, increasingly as part of a multidimensional approach to R&R. Such interventions can take many forms ( e.g., one-on-one or group counselling), but should only be used if the individualized assessment demonstrates that the individual’s mindset needs to be addressed; no attempt should be made to coerce someone to change their beliefs or ideology.

These interventions have been described in a variety of relevant compendiums, guides, and other frameworks that have focused primarily on the prison or probation setting but are also relevant to the non-custodial R&R context.<sup>106</sup> Although by themselves such interventions are unlikely to persuade an individual to disengage from violent extremism or terrorism, they can nonetheless serve a number of often interrelated purposes. For example, they can (1) expand the beneficiary’s worldview to include different perspectives and interpretations; (2) create a cognitive opening to allow for disengagement from violent extremists, groups, or causes; (3) help maintain a positive sense of self and associated sense of purpose, meaning, self-worth, and belonging through a strengthened religious identity; and (4) help develop a broader, more contextualized understanding of religion and challenge views and justifications for violence, including us-vs.-them and other black-and-white thinking.<sup>107</sup>

104 Koller, *Tertiary Prevention of Islamist Extremism*, p. 6.

105 Those issues included the extent to which the separation between church and state allows the government to fund projects with a religious component; interference in individuals’ legally protected religious or other beliefs; and the role that religion or ideology plays, if any, in radicalization to VERLT. See RAN P&P Practitioners’ Working Paper, 2019, p. 11.

106 These frameworks include RAN P&P Practitioners’ Working Paper, 2019; GCCS, *Compendium of Good Practices*; UNODC *VEP Handbook*; RAN Centre of Excellence, *Approaches to Violent Extremist Offenders and Countering Radicalisation in Prison and Probation*, 2016, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran\\_pp\\_approaches\\_to\\_violent\\_extremist\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran_pp_approaches_to_violent_extremist_en.pdf) (hereinafter RAN P&P Practitioners’ Working Paper, 2016”); and Council of Europe *Handbook*, p. 8.

107 Ibid.

As underscored in the UNODC handbook on the management of violent extremist prisoners, religious interventions should avoid focusing on a specific theological doctrine and instead should be based on teaching broad principles of diversity, peace, and tolerance. Although there is little evidence to suggest which types of religious interventions have contributed to R&R, the Council of Europe and the RAN Prison and Probation Practitioners' Working Group, among others, have identified a number of elements that have shown promise. These include:

1. Interventions that address practical and psychosocial R&R needs;
2. One-on-one interventions that look to expand the beneficiary's worldview to include different perspectives and interpretations, and that focus, not on religion, but on critical engagement with violent extremist ideologies and on the abuse of religion;
3. Group dialogue sessions that reflect real-life situations in which people with different views, including on religion, politics, and/or foreign policy, coexist and constructively explore their differences in views and opinions; and
4. Interventions that involve the continuous study of evolving narratives and ideologies, as well as perceived grievances and aspirations.<sup>108</sup>

## 6.4 Family counseling

A fourth category of intervention that is often a core component of a post-custodial R&R programme is family counseling.<sup>109</sup> This provision of such support recognizes (1) the need to ensure that R&R efforts focus beyond the individual who may have been radicalized to VERLT or had some contact with terrorism; (2) the unique role that family and peer networks can play in disengagement from violence and reintegration into the community; and (3) how establishing or re-establishing meaningful relationships with family members or peers can contribute to effective R&R.<sup>110</sup>

Family counseling can be provided by a range of actors, whether NGOs, children protection or other social workers, community police officers, or mental health workers. It typically involves engagement — whether on an individual basis or with the family as a whole — with the parents, other relatives, or peers of the

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108 See, for example, Council of Europe *Handbook*, p. 43; and RAN P&P Practitioners' Working Paper, 2019, p. 24.

109 Family counselling typically includes peers as well.

110 On the role of the family in P/CVERLT see, for example, RAN, *Collection of Approaches and Practices, Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism, Family Support*, 2019, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/ran-best-practices/docs/family\\_support\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-best-practices/docs/family_support_en.pdf); The Commonwealth, *Supporting Families in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism*, 2017, <http://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/ComSec%20CVE%20and%20Families%20Presentation.pdf>; Daniel Koehler, *Using Family Counseling to Prevent and Intervene Against Foreign Fighters: Operational Perspectives, Methodology and Best Practices for Implementing Codes of Conduct*, Middle East Institute, 2014, <https://www.mei.edu/sites/default/files/Koehler.pdf>.

relevant individual and is usually part of a wider effort to look at the family and peer networks of the individual and assess where the bonds need strengthening, where intrafamilial conflicts lie, and which relationships can be leveraged. Where family and peer interactions play an important role in radicalization to VERLT, as they do in South-Eastern Europe, involving the family and peers in R&R is particularly important.<sup>111</sup> However, before doing so it is important to assess whether and which family members and peers are likely have a positive or negative influence on the individual's resocialization.

The objectives of family counseling might include helping family members to (1) maintain or develop a positive relationship with the individual; (2) manage the stigma, shame, and/or security risks that might be involved with continued or renewed association with the individual, particularly when he or she has been released from prison or returned from a conflict zone; and (3) deal with the psychological challenges or mental illness that the individual might be facing.<sup>112</sup>

## 6.5 Recreational and cultural support

A fifth category of intervention involves **sports, theatre, arts, or music**. As is the case with R&R efforts in the prison context and in community-focused P/CVERLT engagements, recreational and cultural opportunities can play an important role in non-custodial R&R efforts. They provide avenues for individuals to express themselves, increase their confidence, and create positive relationships with others and facilitate healing.<sup>113</sup> They can also provide an alternative form of support when traditional psychosocial support services are unavailable.

Although such support is unlikely by itself to lead to disengagement from terrorist or other forms of violence, it can make a significant contribution to disengagement, including by providing compelling alternative narratives.<sup>114</sup> As UNODC has highlighted, sports and the arts “offer a valuable means of talking about differences and diversity, and of underscoring common histories, experiences and hopes for many people. Drama and the arts can provoke critical thinking and discourse on shared histories and experiences that may cross political boundaries. Sports can also be a powerful uniting force. Sports,

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111 Azinovic, *Regional Report*, pp. 13–14; and RCC, *Waiting Game*, p. 10.

112 EU RAN, Centre of Excellence, *Collection of Approaches and Practices*.

113 GCTF, Detention and Reintegration Working Group Workshop on Education, “Life Skill Courses and Vocational Training for Incarcerated Violent Extremist Offenders, Co-Chairs’ Summary”, 7–8 October 2015, <https://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/15Nov18-GCTF-DRWG-Co-Chairs-Summary-Workshop-7-8-October-Nairobi.pdf>.

114 Hedayah and the Global Center on Cooperative Security, *Thinking Outside the Box: Exploring the Critical Roles of Sports, Arts, and Culture in Preventing Violent Extremism*, policy brief, February 2015, <http://www.hedayahcenter.org/Admin/Content/File-23201692017.pdf>.

arts and culture can also help develop . . . positive means of understanding and addressing grievances and tensions that can contribute to a support for violent extremism.”<sup>115</sup>

Over the past decade, researchers have pointed to the significant role that sports interventions have played in the rehabilitation of individuals radicalized to terrorism,<sup>116</sup> especially when “targeted at those who are searching for group belonging, and a sense of identity.”<sup>117</sup> Moreover, sports-based interventions can offer a way of connecting those delivering the interventions with young people who are detached from their communities and schools; once established, those connections may then offer opportunities to engage with and ultimately educate individuals radicalized to violence.

Art therapy workshops, including those led by both counselors and religious leaders, are becoming increasingly popular in R&R efforts. They “‘use a variety of art forms,’ including ‘visual art, music, drama, movement, and dance,’ to ‘act as a gentle entry into discussions’ about the circumstances that led people to extremist violence. These circumstances are often difficult to talk about, and art provides an easier medium to bring them to the surface. Art therapy also allows extremists to ‘step out of the frame of the prevailing circumstance,’ helping them to recognize and reframe their life experiences, and allow CVE practitioners the opportunity to positively impact that reframing.”<sup>118</sup>

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115 UNODC *VEP Handbook*, p. 89.

116 Cara Richardson, Paul A. Cameron, Katherine M. Berlois, “The Role of Sport in Deradicalisation and Crime Diversion”, *Journal for Deradicalization*, no. 13 (Winter 2017/18): p. 31, <http://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/123>.

117 Sarah Marsden, Kim Knott, and James Lewis, *Countering Violent Extremism: An Introduction: Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats*, 2017, <https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/countering-violent-extremism/>.

118 Jake Shapiro, *Faith and Art: Innovation in CVE* (blog), International Center for Religion and Diplomacy Blog, 15 August 2018, <https://icrd.org/faith-and-art-innovation-in-cve-opinion/>.



# 7. Intervention providers

As the preceding section makes clear, a range of interventions have been used across different settings to support R&R, reflecting the varying needs of the targeted individuals and the context-specific nature of the interventions. Some non-custodial R&R programmes focus on a single type of intervention, whereas others are more comprehensive in nature and may integrate multiple forms of support into a single programme. Regardless of the structure of a particular programme, and as highlighted throughout this guidebook, R&R efforts will typically need to rely on contributions from a broad range of professionals, practitioners, and other actors from a number of fields from within and outside of government, drawing on a wide range of expertise and leveraging the trust and credibility of actors within the community into which the individual is to be integrated.<sup>119</sup> All of this is to help ensure that the complex issues that may have led the individual down the path to VERLT can be addressed appropriately.

Depending on the nature of the programme and the risks and needs of the individual, intervention providers might include one or more of the following: psychologists, psychiatrists, or other mental health professionals; “formers”; social workers; youth services aftercare experts; family members; probation workers; and police officers. Depending on the context, these actors will have different tasks, mandates, and objectives, and these differences may pose a challenge to information sharing and other forms of cooperation and may make it both more important but also more difficult to clarify the different roles and responsibilities. This section provides a series of brief overviews of the contributions that *some* of these actors can make in the non-custodial R&R sphere. Determinations on which intervention provider(s) should be involved in which cases will depend on a number of factors, including their capacity (including the capacity to be engaged over a sustained period of time on the particular case) and their access to and credibility with the individual and, where appropriate, his or her family.

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<sup>119</sup> Marsden, *Reintegrating Extremists*, p. 15.

## 7.1 “Formers”

Those who have been involved in VERLT, particularly those who have gone through an R&R process, may possess “a unique capacity to act as empathetic mentors”<sup>120</sup> and can offer “dramatic evidence of the benefits of change”.<sup>121</sup> Their credibility with individuals who wish to leave VERLT behind, together with their ability to “speak the same language,” can make them effective in helping to build trust with the individual (as well as with the wider community) and in facilitating his or her involvement in prosocial and democratic groups or organizations.<sup>122</sup> “Formers” can understand the processes associated with the progression into and out of violent extremist organizations and are thus often well-placed to identify and accurately assess indicators of risk as well as the needs of the individual.<sup>123</sup>

Although a number of R&R programmes include or are even led by “formers”, some caution is warranted before involving them.<sup>124</sup> For example, there needs to be sufficient time between their disengagement process and their involvement in the disengagement of others. In addition, being a “former” does not mean someone is necessarily able to teach others about alternative conflict resolution. Rather, the ability of a “former” to contribute to the R&R of others is likely to depend on his or her skills and qualifications apart from his or her identify as a former violent extremism. Further, while “formers” are often seen as credible voices, “exit” work often requires more than counter-narratives, particularly when clients are ideologically motivated.<sup>125</sup> As with all those involved in delivering R&R interventions, “formers” should be carefully vetted and then interviewed and prepared before engaging, and ideally their efforts should be guided by a multidisciplinary team.<sup>126</sup>

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120 Morton and Silber, *When Terrorists Come Home*, p. 34.

121 GCTF, *Rome Memorandum*, 9–10.

122 For a discussion of the role of formers in P/CVERLT see, for example, Marina Tapley and Gordon Clubb, *The Role of Formers in Countering Violent Extremism*, ICCT, 2019, <https://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/ICCT-Tapley-Clubb-The-Role-of-Formers-in-CVE-April2019.pdf>.

123 Morton and Silber, *When Terrorists Come Home*, p. 34.

124 See, for example, Kathy Gilsinan, “Should We Listen to Former Extremists?,” *Atlantic*, 9 September 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/09/risks-former-extremists-fighting-extremism/597583/>.

125 E-mail interview with official from the Violence Prevention Network, September 2019.

126 For some considerations to take into account when working with “formers”, see Council of Europe *Handbook*, Paragraph 163.

## 7.2 Religious mentors and counselors

Beyond their value in helping to engage those individuals who may have used religious justifications for their actions or who are “wishing to change the direction of their lives in a religious sense”,<sup>127</sup> religious mentors and counselors can serve other non-custodial R&R functions. Depending on the particular situation and their level of training, they can offer general psychosocial and spiritual support; build relationships with the individual’s family; and identify contacts within their networks that can assist with employment, housing, and educational opportunities.<sup>128</sup> Where possible, religious mentors and counselors should work closely with trained psychologists or other mental health professionals to understand better the individual’s psychological makeup, which might include evolving views towards VERLT. R&R programs should be able to work with all relevant religions within a community, not just one.

As with so many other R&R providers, the key to the success of religious mentors and counselors is building a relationship of trust with the individual and, where appropriate, relevant family members or other community members. A trusting relationship is essential for meaningful interactions and for creating the cognitive opening in the individual to allow for change.<sup>129</sup>

When involving religious mentors and counselors, a particularly challenging issue can be balancing their pastoral role alongside their role as a critic or challenger of violent extremist beliefs. Some are unable to manage or balance both roles and prefer to focus on one or the other. Some can be effective in both of these roles (and manage to strike an effective balance between them) but there is a danger that a mentor’s pastoral role can be undermined if the mentor is or is perceived to be too critical and too challenging, which can increase mistrust and suspicion.<sup>130</sup>

Much has been written recently about the role that religious actors can play in prison-based R&R and the importance of initiating any religion-focused interventions in the prison setting. However, as is true of many different aspects of custodial R&R work, and as underscored by the EU RAN’s EXIT and Prison and Probation Working Groups, “the job is far from finished when the

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127 RAN P&P Practitioners’ Working Paper, 2019, p. 12.

128 GCCS, *Compendium of Good Practices*, p. 49; RAN P&P Practitioners’ Working Paper, 2016, p. 22; UNODC *VEP Handbook*, Sec. 8.8.

129 UN Inter-Regional Crime Institute (UNICRI), and Government of Spain, *Building on the GCTF’s Rome Memorandum: Additional Guidance on the Role of Religious Scholars and Other Ideological Experts in Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programmes* (undated), [https://toolkit.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/En/UNICRI\\_SPAIN\\_Religious\\_Scholars\\_in\\_Rehab.pdf](https://toolkit.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/En/UNICRI_SPAIN_Religious_Scholars_in_Rehab.pdf)

130 E-mail interview with forensic psychologist who is a former member of specialist P/CVERLT team in the UK prison and probation service, September 2019.

person is released; the intervention is even more important once the person is experiencing the challenges of returning to society first-hand.”<sup>131</sup>

Religious actors or institutions can lend much support and stability to families and ex-offenders alike, not only through providing spiritual guidance but also by starting the process of inclusion or reinclusion of ex-offenders into faith communities and fostering forgiveness and hope in both the receiving communities and ex-offenders.<sup>132</sup>

### 7.3 Psychologists, social workers, and other psychosocial service providers

Because “reintegration reflects the process of becoming embedded in a network of social relations, most straightforwardly through a deepening commitment to wider community, social networks, and family,” psychosocial providers often play a critical role in R&R programmes, including in non-custodial settings.<sup>133</sup> As with other professionals involved in R&R work, in some instances they operate as part of a multiactor team and in other cases receive referrals from law enforcement, the municipality, or another source.

Psychologists, psychiatrists, or trauma counselors can assist, including by prescribing anti-depressant and/or anti-anxiety medications, in situations where individuals may have returned from conflict zones suffering from PTSD or other forms of trauma, or may have undergone adjustment reactions such as depression and anxiety. When individuals distance themselves from a violent ideology and cut ties with a violent extremist organization, they can become depressed and abuse alcohol or drugs. Individuals and their family members may need psychological or medical attention or specific assistance in resocializing, which will require evidence-based interventions, supervision, and monitoring. In many cases, the individual may have been a victim of abuse, trauma, or exposure to violence prior to the engagement in or association with VERLT; this earlier experience may well mean that the individual requires mental health treatment or other support regardless of their involvement with VERLT.<sup>134</sup>

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131 EU RAN, *The Role of Religion in Exit Programmes and Religious Counselling in Prison and Probation Settings*, Ex Post Paper, October 2017, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran\\_pp\\_role\\_of\\_religion\\_in\\_exit\\_programmes\\_10-11\\_10\\_2017\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran_pp_role_of_religion_in_exit_programmes_10-11_10_2017_en.pdf).

132 EU RAN, *Challenge of Resocialization*.

133 Marsden, *Reintegrating Extremists*, p. 11.

134 E-mail interview with a professor of psychiatry with experience working on P/CVERLT issues in a number of contexts,

For their part, social workers, in addition to assisting individuals in developing critical thinking skills and moving away from a black-and-white worldview, can help individuals (and, where appropriate, family members) address their practical needs, which if left unaddressed can impede R&R efforts.<sup>135</sup> These needs may include finding a house, securing employment, and developing a “healthy” social network. In some cases, landlords and employers may be reticent to engage with these individuals given the stigma, fear, and anger that can be associated with their offence or behaviour and the perceived security risks they may pose.

Beyond supporting the individual himself or herself, social workers can support the needs of the individual’s family, including by helping family members cope with the situation and the stigma and perceived security risks that may be involved, and offering guidance on how best to interact with and support the individual.<sup>136</sup>

## 7.4 Civil society organizations

Because R&R is an individual, psychosocial process that requires the sustained engagement and involvement of local communities, families, and other supportive social networks, CSOs have a unique contribution to make. In part because they are not part of the government, CSOs often have the trust of and access to VERLT-affected individuals and communities in ways that government officials do not; this can facilitate the type of sustained engagement with the individual and wider community that has been found to be a key ingredient in effective non-custodial R&R work.<sup>137</sup>

CSOs, if they are already servicing their communities, may be the first community actors to come into contact with individuals released from prison or returning from conflict zones, particularly women and children. The United Nations has recognized CSOs’ comparative advantages, including in the health, social welfare, and education sectors and in terms of knowledge of and access to local communities, and has encouraged governments to engage with them when designing and implementing R&R strategies and programmes.<sup>138</sup>

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September 2019.

135 GCCS, *Compendium of Good Practices*, p. 7

136 See, for example, the Dutch family support unit, <https://www.landelijksteunpuntextremisme.nl/english>.

137 See, for example, OSCE, *The Role of Civil Society in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: A Focus on South-Eastern Europe*, 2018, <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/400241?download=true>; and GCCT and ICCT, *It Takes a Village*;

138 UNSC, Madrid Addendum, Principle 11.

When it comes to non-custodial R&R, CSOs, can offer religious counseling, legal aid, psychosocial support, vocational training, educational opportunities, and sensitization to help weary communities understand how the R&R of convicted terrorists or returnees benefits the wider community in the long term. In some instances, CSOs are among the few service providers that participate in both the custodial and non-custodial phases of P/CVERLT R&R. As such, they can be uniquely placed to ensure a smooth transition between the phases.<sup>139</sup> In fact, UNODC has recognized the important role that CSOs (and communities more broadly) play here, noting how a “a robust and effective reintegration process, working in close partnerships with civil society organizations and communities, will facilitate the former violent extremist prisoner’s transition back into society, demonstrating continuing good will and providing an important support structure for the former violent extremist prisoner at a potentially challenging time.”<sup>140</sup> Women-led CSOs in particular are critical to recognizing and addressing the gender dimensions of R&R, including the impacts of sexual and gender-based violence and the specific needs of female “FTFs” and other associated women and children.

CSOs are active in R&R work in a number of countries in the OSCE area, sometimes working in close partnership with and receiving funding from the government. However, this close relationship has proven to be the exception rather than the norm. There are a number of reasons for this, depending on the context. In some cases, CSOs have been reluctant to engage in this space because of the potential legal and security risks associated with engaging with a convicted terrorist, an individual who has otherwise radicalized to VERLT, or an individual who has returned from a conflict zone. In other cases, CSOs may lack the necessary P/CVERLT expertise or knowledge to engage. In some instances, national governments (and security and law enforcement actors in particular) have been reluctant to include non-governmental actors in what they perceive to be sensitive, high-risk cases involving potentially dangerous individuals. In still other cases, national governments have not provided CSOs with the necessary legal clarity or political or financial support to facilitate their involvement.<sup>141</sup> Thus, as a recent mapping of CSO involvement in P/CVERLT in South-Eastern Europe found, CSOs, despite their recognized comparative advantages, are not involved in R&R work. They are “not working with returning foreign terrorist fighters . . . and/or their families and are not participating in individualized interventions with members of a community identified as being ‘at risk’ of radicalization to violent extremism.”<sup>142</sup>

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139 GCCT and ICCT, *It Takes a Village*, p. 3.

140 UNODC *VEP Handbook*, p. 128.

141 GCTF, *Returning Families Good Practices*, Good Practice 18.

142 Eric Rosand, *Civil Society Organisations in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in the Western Balkans: Mapping Report*, Forum MNE, February 2019, [https://organizingagainste.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/regional\\_report.pdf](https://organizingagainste.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/regional_report.pdf).

Despite the comparative advantages CSOs can bring to R&R work, some caution may be required as to involving them in the R&R process. “Not every CSO has the credibility, legitimacy and long-standing relationship with communities and governments to carry out such work” and, as is addressed below, “many lack basic resources and the capacity to take on specialized work related to [preventing and countering] violent extremism.”<sup>143</sup> In some cases, despite such limitations, CSOs have nevertheless sought to become involved in government-funded R&R projects, with mixed results.<sup>144</sup>

## 7.5 Family members and close friends

Although there is no single model for conducting non-custodial R&R, all efforts should take into account relationships in the community and the local understanding of social norms. In this regard, family members and close friends of the individual, assuming they have been determined to be able to have a positive influence over the individual, can serve as “privileged interlocutors between authorities, communities and beneficiaries”,<sup>145</sup> can take the responsibility for getting the beneficiary back into the mainstream, and can “provide a gateway back to society”.<sup>146</sup> As such, they can play an important role in designing R&R plans and delivering R&R interventions. This has been underscored by the United Nations, the GCTF, RAN, and other organizations that have produced frameworks and guidance relevant to non-custodial R&R.<sup>147</sup>

For example, the GCTF has recognized how “[f]amily can function as a ‘pull factor’ in getting VEs [violent extremists] to give up violence, and [how] a family-based approach has been a key feature of VE rehabilitation and reintegration efforts. . . . While disengagement is a process and not a static event, family connections appear to be an important factor in shaping outcomes and creating ‘cognitive openings’ through which former VEs can reassess their commitment.”<sup>148</sup>

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143 Eva Entenmann, “What to Do with Terrorists Released from Prison: A Task Beyond Government Control?”, *Security and Human Rights Monitor*, 23 August 2018, <https://www.shrmonitor.org/countering-violent-extremism/>.

144 See, for example, “Déradicalisation des jihadistes en France: Un «fiasco» selon un rapport du sénat,” *Midi Libre*, 22 February 2017, <https://www.midilibre.fr/2017/02/22/deradicalisation-des-jihadistes-en-france-un-fiasco-selon-un-rapport-du-senat,1469798.php>.

145 UN Centre on Counter-Terrorism (UNCCT) and UN Inter-Regional Crime Institute (UNICRI), *Additional Guidance on Aftercare and Reintegration Programmes for Violent Extremist Offenders*, 2014, <https://toolkit.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/En/Additional-Guidance-on-Aftercare-and-Reintegration-Programmes-for-VEO.pdf>.

146 RAN Returnee Manual, p. 57.

147 See, for example, *UNSC Madrid Addendum; GCTF, Initiative to Address the Life Cycle of Radicalization to Violence;* and *EU RAN The Role of Family and Social Networks in the Rehabilitation of (Violent) Extremist and Terrorist Offenders*, RAN Ex Post Paper, March 2018, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran\\_pp\\_role\\_family\\_social\\_networks\\_rehabilitation\\_extremist\\_terrorist\\_offenders\\_06-07\\_03\\_2018\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran_pp_role_family_social_networks_rehabilitation_extremist_terrorist_offenders_06-07_03_2018_en.pdf).

148 GCTF, *Initiative to Address the Life Cycle of Radicalization to Violence, The Role of Families in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism: Strategic Recommendations and Programming Options*, 2016, Recommendation 5,

More specifically, **family members can facilitate the R&R process in a number of practical ways:**

1. Helping individuals address challenges they have identified to disengagement from VERLT;
2. Helping individuals identify and build their strengths, capabilities, and skills and find community-level opportunities and activities to support their R&R;
3. Challenging individuals' rationales for supporting VERLT;
4. Offering a continued sense of hope and belonging; and
5. Addressing the factors and grievances that can be a barrier to the long-term reconciliation that lasting R&R requires.<sup>149</sup>

For former terrorist prisoners transitioning back into society, family members may have had access to them while in prison and thus may be well-positioned to ensure continuity in the rehabilitation process post-release.<sup>150</sup>

However, before seeking to involve family members in R&R efforts, careful attention should be paid to ensuring that they were not part of the reason for the individual's radicalization to violence in the first place and that they are in fact in a position to support rather than undermine (whether intentionally or not) any R&R process.<sup>151</sup>

## 7.6 Police officers

Although primary responsibility for non-custodial R&R work typically lies with non-law enforcement professionals, police officers, given their unique position in the community, can contribute both to managing the risks associated with the individual and to facilitating his or her resocialization process. The involvement of the police begins with contributing to the assessment of the individual's risks and needs. How the police's involvement develops thereafter will depend on a variety of factors, including the assessed risk that the individual may pose to the community and the level of trust that the local police force or a

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<https://www.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/Lifecycle%20Toolkit-documents/English-The-Role-of-Families-in-PCVE.pdf?ver=2016-09-13-141058-860>.

149 GCCS, *Compendium of Good Practices*, p. 47; Council of Europe *Handbook*, Paragraph 144; and RAN P&P Practitioners' Working Paper, 2016, pp. 20–21.

150 GCCT and ICCT, *It Takes a Village*, p. 3.

151 See, for example, Chris Bosley, *Injecting Humanity: Community-Focused Responses for People Existing Violent Extremist Conflict*, Special Report No. 452, United States Institute of Peace, August 2019, p. 17, [https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2019-08/20190822-sr\\_452-sr.pdf](https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2019-08/20190822-sr_452-sr.pdf); and Adrian Cherney, "The Release and Community Supervision of Radicalised Offenders: Issues and Challenges That Can Influence Reintegration," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (November 2018), <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09546553.2018.1530661>.

particular officer may have with the individual and his or her family and wider community. Finding the right balance between mitigating risk and building trust is important, as too much law enforcement involvement can, depending on the situation, undermine one of the objectives of virtually any R&R programme: creating a cognitive opening in the individual to enable him or her to begin the process that allows for disengagement from violence.

In some cases, police officers work closely with the individual's family throughout his or her imprisonment or after he or she has traveled to a conflict zone; in some cases, officers are able to visit a terrorist offender in prison who will be released into the officer's community. In the case of a released offender or an individual who had some contact with VERLT but was not charged with a crime or otherwise avoided prison, and depending on the particular circumstances — including the level of trust between the police and the relevant community and the capacities of the relevant non-law enforcement entities — the local police might coordinate multiactor R&R efforts or contribute to those coordinated by non-law enforcement actors such as a municipality.

In cases where a terrorist offender is released on probation, the police's formal post-release involvement may be limited to the period of probation, regardless of whether or not this coincides with the offender's process of rehabilitation and resocialization. Where a decision is made not to prosecute an individual who has returned from a conflict zone or where there is no legal basis for police involvement, the role of the police should be similarly circumscribed.<sup>152</sup>

Given the fluid nature of these cases and the sensitivities that can arise when the police are the face of any non-custodial R&R efforts, as well as the importance of mitigating any security risks posed by the individual — risks that can change during the R&R process — it is essential to ensure that there are effective ways to share information and enable cooperation between the police and the other actors involved in the R&R case.

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<sup>152</sup> EU RAN, *What Role Do Police Play in the Resocialisation and Risk Management of Released Former Terrorist Offenders?*, RAN, Ex Post Paper, May 2019, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-pol/docs/ran\\_pol\\_role\\_do\\_police\\_play\\_in\\_resocialisation\\_marseille\\_20190520\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-pol/docs/ran_pol_role_do_police_play_in_resocialisation_marseille_20190520_en.pdf).

## 7.7 Probation workers

Often given responsibility for offenders in initial post-release contexts (including where a court-mandated R&R programme has been imposed) and beyond (e.g., until the sentence ends), probation workers can serve as a bridge between custodial and non-custodial R&R efforts.

Their work is attracting increased attention in the context of P/CVERLT for interrelated reasons. These include the steady increase in the number and diversity of terrorist offenders, many of whom have been convicted under an expanding counterterrorism legal framework that now includes offences (e.g., providing material support or apologies for violent extremist organizations) that can result in shorter sentences than those imposed on individuals guilty of more direct involvement in terrorist violence. A second reason for the increased attention is the often limited amount of time available to initiate a R&R program in prison and to prepare for the post-prison transition, which means that probation workers are shouldering more of the burden of developing and implementing such programmes.<sup>153</sup> All the while, probation workers need to manage the risks related to VERLT while ensuring that the offenders are supported and reintegrated following their release, recognizing that, as underscored by the UNODC, their rehabilitation and reintegration into the community should be among the objectives of national criminal justice systems.<sup>154</sup> Further, as probation workers carry out this work, they are likely to find themselves the subject of media scrutiny, given the public interest in individuals labeled “terrorists”.

In some jurisdictions, probation services are separate from corrections services; in others, they are part of the same agency or do not exist. In some countries, probation services are organized at the local or regional level, which can affect how information is shared among the different relevant agencies and actors and how they cooperate. In others, such as Austria, probation services are provided by a government-funded NGO rather than a government agency.<sup>155</sup>

The R&R contributions of probation services vary and can include (1) developing and supporting resettlement or re-entry plans; (2) monitoring compliance with release restrictions; (3) directing reintegration activities; (4) securing the

153 RAN P&P Practitioners' Working Paper, 2019, p. 28.

154 UNODC, *Introductory Handbook on the Prevention of Recidivism and the Social Reintegration of Offenders*, 2012, p. 13, [https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/crimeprevention/Introductory\\_Handbook\\_on\\_the\\_Prevention\\_of\\_Recidivism\\_and\\_the\\_Social\\_Reintegration\\_of\\_Offenders.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/crimeprevention/Introductory_Handbook_on_the_Prevention_of_Recidivism_and_the_Social_Reintegration_of_Offenders.pdf). In fact, international human rights law provides that “the penitentiary system shall comprise treatment of prisoners the essential aim of which shall be their reformation and social rehabilitation.” ICCPR, Article 10(3).

155 Neustart, “Probation Service: Together We Come Ahead,” <https://www.neustart.at/at/de/>.

resources to help ensure the offender's basic needs, including his or her living arrangements, will be met upon release; and (5) providing offenders with the tools to adjust to their post-release environment and to ultimately reintegrate into the community.<sup>156</sup> Further, probation workers in jurisdictions that have government probation services often serve as the key player in coordinating multiagency efforts and information sharing around R&R, including bringing together contributions from the police, civil society actors, and families.

## 7.8 Local authorities

Municipal and other local authorities can contribute in a range of ways to non-custodial R&R programmes and should be key players in the design and implementation of such initiatives and in P/CVERLT efforts more broadly. Their role should be reflected in the relevant national frameworks and strategies.

In many cases, local authorities will have responsibility for the services that those participating in non-custodial R&R programmes require, whether related to housing, education, vocational training, social services, or recreation and culture. For instance, a local authority might be able to help an individual find employment or a place to live even though jobs and housing might otherwise be hard to find.<sup>157</sup> As such, local authorities may be in the best position to ensure that a package of practical support measures is in place when the individual leaves prison or a conflict zone and returns to the community.

In some instances, local authorities are well-placed to coordinate these multiactor programmes in areas under their jurisdiction, serving as a bridge between the local community and the police and other security actors and between local practitioners and the national government. As the GCTF has noted, they can also help to prepare the local community to accept the return or entry of the those involved in non-custodial R&R programmes.<sup>158</sup> In this regard, “the role they play in nurturing social cohesion to mitigate the risks of recidivism and promoting tolerance within the community helps create an environment for successful reintegration.”<sup>159</sup>

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156 GCCS, *Compendium of Good Practices*, .p. 46; Council of Europe *Handbook*, Paragraph 91; GCTF *Rome Memorandum*, Good Practice 22; RAN P&P Practitioners' Working Paper, 2016, p. 5; and *UNODC VEP Handbook*, Section 8.9.

157 Marta Lopes and Simon Dukic, “Repatriation of Foreign Terrorism Fighters: Cases for the West”, *European Eye on Radicalization*, 19 July 2019, <https://eeradicalization.com/repatriation-of-foreign-terrorist-fighters-cases-for-the-west/>.

158 GCTF *Addendum to the Hague-Marrakech Memorandum*.

159 *Ibid.*

In fact, in many countries across the OSCE area, local authorities, with essential support and resources from the national government and as part of a comprehensive national P/CVERLT framework that carves out an important role for municipalities, are spearheading locally led R&R initiatives and are otherwise significant contributors to local P/CVERLT efforts. Yet, in other countries, local authorities lack the basic resources and expertise, let alone the institutional structures and culture, to enable the sort of multiactor information sharing and collaboration that has proven to be the foundation of many R&R efforts elsewhere.

Some national governments remain reluctant to consider local authorities as partners in addressing violent extremism, especially in handling potentially sensitive cases of individuals that have been radicalized to terrorism or extremist violence. They are hesitant to relinquish control or resources over what they perceive to be national security concerns, and local governments are often excluded from policy and programming discussions about P/CVERLT, including R&R.<sup>160</sup>

With the increased attention being given — by the GCTF and the Strong Cities Network,<sup>161</sup> among others — to the role of cities in P/CVERLT broadly speaking, more local authorities are likely to start contributing to non-custodial R&R initiatives and more national governments are likely to recognize the comparative advantages that local authorities bring to this challenge. Yet, given limited resources and the fact that these initiatives are focused on a small number of individuals seeking to return or relocate to a small number of communities in a given country, careful consideration should be given to the question of which cities should develop R&R programs. It might be advisable to establish a national programme to provide ad hoc support to those cities that are suddenly confronted with an R&R case but lack the expertise and resources to administer an R&R programme. Such a national-level programme, could help mitigate one of the risks of relying too heavily on cities: namely, the risk that a participant in a local R&R programme moves to a different municipality, “effectively transferring the problem, and thus the responsibility for the . . . programme to a different local government”<sup>162</sup> that is unequipped to handle it.

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160 Eric Rosand and Rebecca Skellett, “Connecting the Dots: Strengthening National-Local Collaboration in Addressing Violent Extremism”, *Lawfare*, 21 Oct. 2018, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/connecting-dots-strengthening-national-local-collaboration-addressing-violent-extremism>.

161 Strong Cities Network is a global network of subnational authorities that facilitates the sharing of good practices, challenges, expertise, and experience on P/CVERLT among local practitioners. See [www.strongcitiesnetwork.org](http://www.strongcitiesnetwork.org).

162 Veldhuis, *Reintegrating Violent Extremist Offenders*, p.7





# 8. Enabling effective multiactor information sharing and collaboration

Depending on the specific case and context, non-custodial R&R efforts can involve a variety of actors — government and non-governmental; national and local; law enforcement and non-law enforcement — conducting a wide array of activities, all the while balancing the need to support an individual’s resocialization with the need to ensure community safety. Individuals and their families will have a range of vulnerabilities and needs that no single institution or professional will be able to address. Thus, an approach that allows for multiple actors or agencies to become involved and maintain consistent and human rights-compliant information sharing among all professionals involved is important. Achieving this, however, can pose a challenge, given that those actors and agencies may not have a history of working together and may have “conflicting interests and competing ideas about what needs to be done and how, and it may be a challenge to get all relevant parties engaged and willing to collaborate.”<sup>163</sup>

Various actors may have relevant information on a single individual, and all that information should be reviewed as part of the risk and vulnerabilities

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

assessment and made available to those designing an intervention or support plan. However, different professional and ethical frameworks and goals may make information sharing difficult. Some of these difficulties and other challenges are addressed above in Section 5.3.

As such, and as recommended by the United Nations, the GCTF, RAN, and others, **the adoption of clear guidelines, protocols, agreements, and oversight and independent review processes and other frameworks to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and expertise and to appropriately protect information will enable multiple actors from different professions to jointly assess an individual case effectively and safely.**<sup>164</sup> These frameworks can help protect individual and data privacy by, for example, clarifying under what circumstances, if any, the police, if involved, might use information shared with the team for intelligence-gathering and law enforcement purposes and what information non-law enforcement actors can access and when.<sup>165</sup>

Multiactor collaboration, which can be challenging to operationalize and sustain, particularly given the potential complexity and volatility of some non-custodial R&R situations, will likely need to extend beyond the sharing of information and include practitioners working together on individual cases, as well as families, CSOs, and religious and other community groups.<sup>166</sup> Involving the released offender should also be considered. According to RAN practitioners, “such a holistic approach is a prerequisite to fully reintegrate the special target group of former [violent extremists or other targets of non-custodial R&R interventions] in society. The support and collaboration of both professionals and social surrounding permit the essential access to the [targeted individual], which is not necessarily given if only certain parties assist the individual.”<sup>167</sup> Further, sustained multiactor collaboration can be useful in maintaining the involvement of teachers, healthcare workers, youth leaders, and others in the community who might be able to report on progress in the R&R process and, more importantly, help detect potential recidivism into VERLT.

164 See, for example, UNSC Madrid Addendum, Guiding Principle 5; GCTF, *Initiative to Address Homegrown Terrorism: Rabat-Washington Good Practices on the Prevention, Detection, Intervention and Response to Homegrown Terrorism*, September 2018, p. 10, [https://www.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/Framework%20Documents/C/GCTF-Rabat-Washington-Good-Practices\\_ENG.pdf?ver=2018-09-21-122245-707](https://www.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/Framework%20Documents/C/GCTF-Rabat-Washington-Good-Practices_ENG.pdf?ver=2018-09-21-122245-707); and RAN Returnee Manual, Chapter 4.

165 See Hemmingsen, *Danish Approach to Countering and Preventing Extremism*, p.15.

166 For a discussion of some of the challenges in operationalizing and sustain multi-actor collaboration, see, for example, EU RAN, *Multi-Agency Working and Preventing Violent Extremism: Paper 2*, RAN Health & Social Care Position Paper, 2019, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran-h-and-sc/docs/ran\\_hsc\\_policy\\_mawr\\_report\\_sarma\\_26032019\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran-h-and-sc/docs/ran_hsc_policy_mawr_report_sarma_26032019_en.pdf).

167 EU RAN, *The Role of Family and Social Networks in the Rehabilitation of (Violent) Extremist and Terrorist Offenders*, RAN Ex Post Paper, March 2018, pp. 8–9, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran\\_pp\\_role\\_family\\_social\\_networks\\_rehabilitation\\_extremist\\_terrorist\\_offenders\\_06-07\\_03\\_2018\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran_pp_role_family_social_networks_rehabilitation_extremist_terrorist_offenders_06-07_03_2018_en.pdf).

As with R&R and P/CVERLT efforts more broadly, there is no single way to operationalize multiactor collaboration. Different approaches have been developed across the OSCE area, each reflecting the local legal, political, and cultural context. Examples include the following:

- **The Info House in Aarhus, Denmark:** This initiative brings together representatives from different agencies, including police and social services, as well as the municipality, on a biweekly basis to consider and assess cases related to radicalization and discrimination. The team determines whether the individual may have committed a criminal offence and whether to continue to monitor or to intervene and what type of intervention, if any, to pursue. Possible interventions include social counseling, social service support, mentoring, and psychological counseling. The platform is publicly funded and because all representatives of the different agencies have decision-making authority, decisions are taken and implemented in a timely manner.<sup>168</sup>
- **Case conferences, Rotterdam and other large cities across The Netherlands:** These conferences include representatives from local government, probation services, youth care organizations, the police, and the prosecutor's office, as well as mental health professionals. This group meets on a weekly basis to assess the risks and R&R needs of individuals.<sup>169</sup>
- **Local units for the prevention of crime and radicalization, France:** France has put in place multiactor administrative cells in each prefecture (or locality) in the country to liaise with the central government on radicalization issues. The central government in Paris, which is in charge of national security issues, assigns cases to the different prefectures. The unit includes professionals seconded from national ministries of family, health, justice, and education. Where juveniles are involved — for example, child returnees from conflict zones — this work is coordinated with local Prevention of Radicalisation and Family Support units (CPRAF), which include multidisciplinary teams to assist with “ensuring the necessary long-term social, medical and psychological care for child returnees from terrorist combat zones by mapping the available child psychiatric resources that can be used under the supervision of juvenile court judges.”<sup>170</sup>
- **Social network conferences, Austria:** The Austrian probation service, Neustart, leads efforts to help terrorist offenders under age 21 develop a mandatory plan for their future after their release. A social network conference consists of (1) a network of relevant professionals;

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168 Hemmingsen, *Danish Approach to Countering and Preventing Extremism*, pp. 27–28.

169 EU RAN, *Challenge of Resocialisation*, pp. 10–11.

170 Government of France, *Prevent to Protect: National Plan to Prevent Radicalisation*, February 2018, [https://www.cipdr.gouv.fr/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/PNPR\\_English\\_final\\_sansmediakit.pdf](https://www.cipdr.gouv.fr/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/PNPR_English_final_sansmediakit.pdf).

(2) the offender’s social/family network; and (3) the offender. The offender decides who should be part of the social/family network. Offenders then work together with their social network and relevant professionals to create a reintegration plan, which focuses on daily life, work, and housing. The plan is then sent to a judge, who issues orders according to the plan. The probation officer, through the NGO Neustart, supervises compliance with the orders — for a two-week period — and thus the implementation of the plan.<sup>171</sup>

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- **Local integrated security cells, Belgium:** Local integrated security cells (LISCs) exist at the provincial level across Belgium. They typically include prevention officers and other relevant local social service providers and the local police and prosecutor and are generally coordinated by the mayor’s office. In addition to working with individuals identified as being “at risk” of or on the path to VERLT, LISCs sometimes work on cases of individuals who have already been radicalized. A LISC can discuss cases referred to it by one of the security-focused local task forces (LTFs), which were established in every municipality across the country pursuant to Belgium’s 2005 counter-terrorism strategy. LTFs include local-level representatives from law enforcement, the intelligence services, and the terrorism threat analysis center, as well as the federal and local police; their objective is to enable the sharing of information among law enforcement agencies, identify individuals associated with terrorism or violent extremism (e.g., returning “FTFs”) who require high-priority attention, and determine appropriate interventions. Whereas the LTFs are security-focused, the LISCs look to address the psychosocial and other needs and vulnerabilities of the individual, including by working with family members and a wide range of local civil society groups. To facilitate cooperation, an LTF representative is present on each LISC and all of these platforms link up with a national task force that provides national oversight, consistent with an integrated approach to security involving all levels of government in Belgium.<sup>172</sup>
- **Centre of Excellence for Deradicalization, Bavarian State Criminal Police Office, Germany:** The Centre of Excellence for Deradicalization consists of a team of 10 experts, including ones in theology, politics, psychology, and sociology, as well as police officers. The Centre conducts risk, needs, and threat assessments of potential clients and helps identify service providers to address the identified needs, overseeing the delivery of

171 See “Social Net Conferencing”, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/node/11694\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/node/11694_en), on the European Commission’s Migration and Home Affairs page.

172 Thomas Renard and Rik Coolsoet, eds., *Returnees: Who Are They, Why Are They (Not) Coming Back and How Should We Deal with Them? Assessing Policies of Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters in Belgium, Germany, and The Netherlands*, Egmont Paper 101, Egmont Institute, Brussels, February 2018, pp. 35–37, [http://www.egmontinstitute.be/content/uploads/2018/02/egmont.papers.101\\_online\\_v1-3.pdf?type=pdf](http://www.egmontinstitute.be/content/uploads/2018/02/egmont.papers.101_online_v1-3.pdf?type=pdf).

support by outside groups. The Centre works with individuals who are going through the radicalization process as well as those who want to disengage from VERLT, including returnees from conflict zones.

Following the assessment, the Centre develops a risk management plan for each individual, which is shared with the relevant local police officer assigned to work with the Centre, who then oversees the implementation of the plan. Generally, the office will reach out to the appropriate CSOs and other service providers to engage directly with the individual. The front-line workers report progress back to the Centre, which reviews cases at regularly scheduled meetings, with adjustments to the plan made as needed.<sup>173</sup>

- **Risk Management Action Plan, Canada:** The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) has developed a multiactor approach to manage the risk emanating from subjects of national security investigations, including “high-risk travelers” returning from the conflict zone in Syria and Iraq, including women and children. The RCMP seeks as much information as possible from relevant law enforcement and non-law enforcement agencies to undertake a tailored risk and needs assessment of each individual, inform or support investigative and enforcement strategies, plan for alternative measures in lieu of prosecution, and, where appropriate, pursue R&R efforts involving non-governmental service providers. The structured assessment looks at objective, observable indicators and the reintegration efforts seek to address individual risk factors and vulnerabilities determined to be driving forces in radicalization to VERLT.

With respect to R&R, the RCMP has developed a standardized approach nationally, while allowing for localized and context-specific application. Police personnel at the local, divisional, and national headquarters’ levels, in conjunction with community-based resources, provide value and support to investigations by providing expertise concerning individual pathways of radicalization to violence, violent extremism, and associated vulnerabilities. For example, the RCMP may decide to refer an individual case to a multiagency “situation table” in the municipality into which the individual is to be (re)integrated, thus relying on existing local resources, relationships, and expertise. Alternatively, the RCMP may decide to pursue an approach that involves flying in a team of specialists who have been trained to work on these types of cases to engage with the individual.<sup>174</sup>

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173 EU RAN, *Multi-Agency Working and Preventing Violent Extremism: Paper 2*, pp. 12–13; and Milena Uhlmann, *Evaluation of the Advice Centre on Radicalisation, Final Report*, Research Report 31, German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Research Centre – Migration, Integration and Asylum, 2017, [https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Publikationen/Forschungsberichte/fb31-evaluation-beratungsstelle-radikalisierung.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile](https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Publikationen/Forschungsberichte/fb31-evaluation-beratungsstelle-radikalisierung.pdf?__blob=publicationFile).

174 Input from senior RCMP official at May 2019 OSCE expert roundtable in Vienna.



# 9. Government vs. non-governmental providers

As underscored throughout this guide, there is increasing recognition of the need for both government and non-governmental actors to contribute to the development and implementation of non-custodial R&R programmes. Ensuring that CSOs and other non-governmental actors have the necessary legal and policy space and capacity to engage (see Section 7.4), recognizing the respective comparative advantages of the government and non-governmental stakeholders, and clearly identifying the appropriate division of labor between them in any programme are critical to operationalizing this approach.

Determining which type of actor (i.e., government or non-governmental) is best placed to deliver a particular intervention — a determination that needs to take into account the country, city, and/or community context — may be as relevant to its effectiveness as the content.<sup>175</sup>

With respect to their comparative advantages, government workers may be more comfortable than non-governmental actors working with the cohort of potentially dangerous individuals who might be involved in non-custodial R&R programmes, because government workers may well have more information (including through their involvement in multiagency platforms for information sharing around specific cases) regarding the individuals' security risks and have better access to law enforcement support. They also may be less concerned than community-based CSOs, for example, about possible reputational risks that might arise as a result of their engagement with individuals who have had some involvement with terrorism or VERLT. Moreover, they may be in a better position to align their interventions with government policies (particularly where non-governmental actors were not involved in the development of those policies or where they are not known

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<sup>175</sup> Council of Europe *Handbook*, paragraphs 151–54.

to the public) and to be transparent about their work than non-governmental actors are.<sup>176</sup>

Yet, as representatives of the state, these same workers, particularly as part of or associated with law enforcement or other security actors, could be viewed as the “enemy” by the individual and his or her family and wider community, whose cooperation, support, and engagement will be important for any disengagement or reintegration initiative to succeed.

For their part, CSOs and other NGOs, particularly when they are not government-funded or do not have other close links with the government, are often better placed to build trust more quickly and deeply with the target individual and wider community and have more knowledge of the grievances and other motivations that may be at play. Further, CSOs are often better positioned than any government counterparts to engage with individuals where state policies or actions may be among the main drivers of VERLT. Moreover, CSOs may have experience working with gangs, hate groups, or troubled youth in the community that they can leverage.

In many contexts, governments have focused on the more practical tasks, such as providing support with housing and job training or convening different actors — including local religious leaders, former extremists, family members, and local authorities — to discuss the specific case. For their part, CSOs and other non-governmental community partners have leveraged their credibility and access to engage the individuals on a one-on-one basis on issues of ideology, religion, or extremism — topics where legal or cultural sensitivities could arise were government actors to be spearheading that engagement — or through sports, cultural, or arts programmes.<sup>177</sup> This latter work has often been spearheaded by organizations whose core mission is to help individuals disengage from VERLT or other forms of violence. In a number of countries in the OSCE, EXIT programmes and similar programmes to support those seeking to leave violent extremist groups are narrowly focused on this work.<sup>178</sup>

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176 Ibid. See also GCCT and ICCT, *It Takes a Village*.

177 Elena Souris and Spandan Singh, “Want to Deradicalize Terrorists? Treat Them Like Everyone Else,” *Foreign Policy*, November 23, 2018, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/11/23/want-to-deradicalize-terrorists-treat-them-like-everyone-else-counterterrorism-deradicalization-france-sri-lanka-pontourny-cve/>.

178 See, for example, EXIT Sweden, EXIT Germany, and RADINET (Finland).





# 10. Capacity building

Whether working through a formalized multiactor approach or not, non-custodial R&R efforts — like so many other aspects of P/CVERLT — typically require the involvement of a variety of institutions, agencies, and organizations, as well as an array of professionals and practitioners. Countries in the OSCE area that have developed R&R programmes have typically relied heavily on existing institutional structures and professional capacities, which are not geared specifically to VERLT issues. This can be an effective approach when dedicated resources for non-custodial R&R programmes are limited. Pertinent institutions include the police, prisons, probation service, mental health, social welfare, education, and other relevant government agencies, as well as community-based or other relevant NGOs involved in this or related work.

In some cases, a wide swathe of the staff of one or more of these institutions may have received general awareness training on radicalization to violence and VERLT before becoming engaged in R&R work; in addition, a small group of individuals working on specific cases may have received VERLT-specific knowledge, guidance, and training. This latter type of support might include training on how to assess the risk or needs of those who may have had some contact with terrorism or VERLT, how to engage in multiagency or other multiactor collaboration around specific cases, and how to initiate and engage in difficult conversations that might facilitate disengagement from VERLT.<sup>179</sup>

Many countries across the OSCE area, however, are confronted with institutional capacity challenges and resource limitations, particularly in the prison, probation, and mental health sectors; they also have limited VERLT-specific

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179 See, for example, Council of Europe *Handbook*, paragraph 175. A number of the EU RAN working groups provide guidance and training to the different sectors of front-line workers – and on the concept of multiactor collaboration – whose active and informed involvement in non-custodial R&R efforts is critical to their ability to assess the risk and needs of the relevant individuals (and often their families as well) and design and deliver tailored interventions to facilitate their resocialization into the community. The EU RAN working groups include ones focused on youth, families, and communities; local authorities; prison and probation; EXIT programmes; and health and social care. See European Commission, Migration and Home Affairs, “RAN Working Groups”, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran_en).

expertise of the kind needed to tackle the complex and sensitive issues that released VEOs and returning “FTFs” and their family members can present.<sup>180</sup> Thus, **developing and implementing non-custodial R&R initiatives in some countries will require investing in both specialized training and tools and the broader strengthening of foundational institutional capacities.**

## 10.1 Prison and probation services and workers

Given the connections between custodial and non-custodial R&R work, governments need to ensure not only that prison conditions are humane and a well-trained prison staff is in place, but also that the corrections services have the capacity to deliver a variety of specialized interventions required for a terrorist offender to begin the R&R process while in custody. Yet, prisons in a number of countries in the OSCE area, including in South-Eastern Europe, are burdened by overcrowding and a limited number of specialized staff, making one-on-one engagement almost impossible. Sustained progress on addressing any shortfalls in R&R capacities will be difficult to achieve absent more attention to the broader-based capacity limitations, particularly given that a professional, secure, and just prison environment has been identified as critical both to reduce the risk of an inmate being radicalized to violence and to increase the likelihood of the disengagement process beginning while an offender is still incarcerated.

Similarly, probation services, where they exist, are often underfunded, even though they are now becoming an increasingly relevant stakeholder in the P/CVERLT domain, particularly in relation to the oversight and delivery of non-custodial R&R interventions.

In addition to prioritizing the strengthening of probation services more broadly, governments will need to provide probation workers with enhanced understanding of VERLT, including an awareness of the motivations and grievances that can fuel it and that need to be addressed in order to disengage from it, and of the role that probation services can play in the R&R process. They will also likely need support in helping to manage the exceptional emotional and other difficulties that can arise when working with terrorist offenders upon their release, given the heightened media and public scrutiny that can come with this work.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>180</sup> See, for example, Shtuni, “Western Balkans Foreign Fighters”, pp. 20–25; Azinovic, Regional Report, pp. 11–12; and RCC, *Waiting Game*, pp. 21–28.

<sup>181</sup> RAN P&P Practitioners’ Working Paper, 2019.

Fortunately, an increasing number of guides, tools, and programmes focused on building the capacity of probation workers to contribute to P/CVERLT R&R efforts have been developed.<sup>182</sup>

## 10.2 Psychosocial and health workers and counselors

With psychosocial care often at the core of the R&R and resocialization processes, ensuring that psychosocial capacities and expertise are in place is critical to the effectiveness and sustainability of these efforts.

Within the mental health sector, capacities can vary considerably from country to country. In some countries, for instance, community-based mental health services complement the work done in hospitals and private practice by psychiatrists, but in other countries those services are limited or non-existent.<sup>183</sup> In these latter countries, major investment is needed to enable the people who need community-based mental health support to receive it.<sup>184</sup> In some countries, **mental health professionals may need training on how to deliver trauma-based interventions or provide evidence-based treatment** following a structured risk and needs assessment **and on how to work in a multiactor environment**, such as with family members, religious leaders, or cultural experts to better understand the individual's context.

Mental health and other health and social care workers are typically used to prioritizing the support and well-being of the client; they have less experience working with other stakeholders such as the police that are primarily concerned with risk mitigation and are less attentive to the needs or vulnerabilities of the individual who may pose a risk.<sup>185</sup> Moreover, these workers may be unfamiliar

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182 See, for example, "UNODC and Partners Strengthen Capacity of Prison and Probation Staff to Manage Violent Extremist Offenders in Kyrgyzstan," April 2019, on the UNODC's website, <https://www.unodc.org/centralasia/en/news/unodc-and-partners-strengthen-capacity-of-prison-and-probation-staff-to-manage-violent-extremist-offenders-in-kyrgyzstan.html>; Raluca Ivan and Donche Boshkovski, "Deradicalisation in Prisons Projects in Western Balkans," 27 July 2018, on the Council of Europe website, [https://www.era-comm.eu/radicalisation/kiosk/pdf/seminar\\_4/318DT65\\_8\\_Boshkovski\\_Ivan.pdf](https://www.era-comm.eu/radicalisation/kiosk/pdf/seminar_4/318DT65_8_Boshkovski_Ivan.pdf); Council of Europe *Handbook*; the Integrated Community, Probation and Prison Services Radicalization Prevention Approach (INTEGRA), <http://www.integra-project.org/>; and Denmark's Train-the-Trainer Awareness Training and Resources Persons, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/content/train-trainer-awareness-training-and-resource-persons\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/content/train-trainer-awareness-training-and-resource-persons_en).

183 OSCE, *Understanding Referral Mechanisms*, p. 52.

184 Although expanding community-based mental health support takes time and resources, as well as a commitment from the Ministry of Health (or equivalent ministry), steps can be taken in the interim to develop the necessary mental health capacities to support multi-actor R&R work. These steps include (1) creating a mobile unit that could operate across multiple municipalities or a region or country and providing that unit with P/CVERLT training and mentoring to conduct outpatient, community-based work; and (2) building a network of mental health professionals in a region or country to help identify the relevant mental health vulnerabilities and needs of those who might be beneficiaries of R&R programmes and design and deliver trauma-informed interventions, where appropriate. See OSCE, *Understanding Referral Mechanisms*, p. 52.

185 EU RAN, *Multi-Agency Working and Preventing Violent Extremism: Paper 2*.

with the terminology and concepts around VERLT and R&R and may not have the necessary expertise working in collaboration with other stakeholders such as teachers and communities. **Some training in how to contribute to a multiactor initiative that requires the sharing of information and broader collaboration among professionals from different disciplines with different priorities and cultures may thus be useful, particularly for those health and social care workers who lack experience working in forensic or correctional settings.**<sup>186</sup> Moreover, many health and social care workers (along with other front-line practitioners) may need guidance on how to overcome the obstacles that working with individuals who are associated with the “terrorist” label might create.

Health and social care workers typically provide support when requested to do so by the individual; they generally do not initiate contact with a potential client or his or her family. However, in a number of non-custodial R&R cases, including those involving “FTFs” who return to their communities without having passed through the criminal justice system or involving their family members, health and social care workers may need to make the first contact with the potential client and his or her family to encourage participation in a voluntary R&R programme. Depending on the nature of the case, this contact will sometimes be initiated alone or in tandem with the local police. Further, and as alluded to above, these workers are not typically trained to engage or used to engaging with clients who are “dangerous” in terms of posing a security risk. Thus, some guidance in this area may be required.

The EU RAN’s Health and Social Care Working Group has developed a number of tools to facilitate the involvement of these workers in P/CVERLT, including in R&R work, as have governments in Finland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.<sup>187</sup> Perhaps most ambitiously, the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees is funding the design of a comprehensive training course focused on R&R counseling work. This is in response to three factors: the increased demand across Germany for the involvement of tertiary prevention providers with a

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186 Those with forensic experience often will have specialized knowledge, training, and experience in preventing, addressing, and managing offending behaviour (including supporting R&R) and in working effectively with offenders, including those who may have been involved with terrorism or violent extremism. Therefore, these “forensic” actors can bring distinct benefits to P/CVERLT efforts, including integrating criminal justice priorities and concerns with those priorities and concerns of associated with health and welfare agencies. Such actors can also help other actors (such as clinical psychologists or social workers) to overcome some of the professional role challenges and conflicts identified in this section. Finally, and for these reasons, forensic practitioners have played a central role in some jurisdictions, such as the United Kingdom, in developing P/CVERLT assessment and intervention approaches.

187 See, for example, Tarja Mankkinen, *Proposal for Arranging Cross-sectoral Cooperation on Managing Returnees from Conflict Zones Including a Proposal for Combining NGOs’ Services with the Action of the Authorities*, April 2017, Ministry of Interior, <http://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/79612>; “Actions to Make Society More Resilient to Violent Extremism”, Swedish Government Communication 2014/15:144, 13 August 2015, <https://www.government.se/contentassets/ef243295e51d4635b4870963b18bfa89/actions-to-make-societymore-resilient-to-violent-extremism-2014-15-144.pdf>; Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP), “The Role of the Social Worker in Tackling Violent Extremism”, p. 5. [http://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/role\\_sw\\_violent\\_extreme.pdf](http://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/role_sw_violent_extreme.pdf).

specific focus on family counseling; the increasing complexity of R&R cases; and the lack of any standards or training to guide health and social care workers' engagement in such cases.<sup>188</sup> The course, which will focus on a variety of topics, will include both theoretical and practical components. All those wishing to engage in R&R work in partnership with the government will be expected to complete this training (and fulfill the 220 hours requirement) in order to help provide more consistency across the delivery of counseling-related tertiary prevention interventions.

Beyond the specific tools that have been developed, real-time support for health and social care workers (and other non-law enforcement actors) on handling specific cases may be needed along the lines provided by the VINK (Knowledge — Integration — Copenhagen) Centre in Copenhagen. The VINK Centre provides teachers (who may need training on how to facilitate reintegration efforts in their classrooms while recognizing dangerous behaviours), social workers, and other municipal employees who are in contact with those most vulnerable to VERLT or those who may already have radicalized with training and advice — including by telephone — on how to handle specific cases effectively.<sup>189</sup>

In addition to addressing capacity shortcomings in the broader psychosocial support sector, steps need to be taken to lower the cultural barriers to seeking professional help from mental health professionals (MHPs) that persist in some societies and communities. These barriers are created by several factors. To begin with, in many cultures mental illness remains stigmatized. In addition, some individuals and families may lack understanding of the range of issues, including anxiety, trauma, and depression, that MHPs treat and thus how they can be helpful to them or their family member. They may also be unaware that many factors that may contribute to interest and involvement in violent extremism are associated with psychosocial issues (e.g., identity confusion, need for belonging) that are not necessarily related to diagnosable mental illness per se, but are issues that MHPs and other psychosocial care providers can address. Yet another factor is the fear felt by some parents that their child will be “taken away” by child protection services if they use mental health services.<sup>190</sup>

When considering whether to develop specialized tools, programmes, or expertise for use in non-custodial R&R cases (and perhaps other P/CVERLT interventions) — and to enhance the sustainability of and maximize the use of and public support for such investments — governments should consider how

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188 These were among the findings in the recent evaluation of the Advice Center on Radicalisation in Germany's work. See Uhlmann, *Evaluation of the Advice Centre on Radicalisation*.

189 City of Copenhagen, “Less Radicalisation through an Effective and Coherent Effort: Recommendations of the Expert Group to Prevent Radicalisation”, August 2015, <https://www.kk.dk/sites/default/files/uploaded-files/Abridged%20version.%20Less%20radicalisation%20through%20an%20effective%20and%20coherent%20effort..pdf>.

190 OSCE, *Understanding Referral Mechanisms*.

they can be leveraged in a non-VERLT context (e.g., for other forms of violent crimes or hate crimes).<sup>191</sup>

## 10.3 Civil society

CSOs and other civil society actors have important roles to play in non-custodial R&R efforts but need to be equipped with the pertinent skills, knowledge, and resources if they are to maximize their contributions. For example, religious mentors or counselors involved in disengagement efforts could benefit from specific training before becoming involved in R&R interventions. They may require training in making the transition from a traditional pastoral role to one that includes engaging in open, non-hierarchical, critical debate, as well as some basic training in social work and psychology. They also need to have sufficient knowledge of relevant terrorist organizations or violent extremist ideologies.

Looking at civil society more broadly, Section 7.4 highlighted some of the capacity, resource, and other challenges that can impede civil society actors' involvement in non-custodial R&R work and which need to be addressed in order to maximize their significant comparative advantages in this area. Governments should do more to facilitate this involvement, including by creating the necessary legal, political, and security conditions. As a first step, governments should explicitly recognize in relevant national strategies, frameworks, and action plans the role that CSOs and civil society more broadly play across the spectrum of P/CVERLT issues, including non-custodial R&R.

There are a number of more specific steps that could be taken to deepen civil society's involvement in this work, which were enumerated in a recent report on the role of civil society in the R&R of those associated with and affected by violent extremism. These steps include:

1. Building CSOs' organizational capacity in relation to project management, financial administration, and monitoring and evaluation;
2. Facilitating knowledge sharing among CSOs and between CSOs and other practitioners and professionals on P/CVERLT, including, for example, the development of an appropriate nationwide network;
3. Providing training on communication and outreach strategies as well as on multidisciplinary skills;
4. Supporting efforts to apply existing expertise from related fields such as peacebuilding, conflict resolution, gender and youth empowerment, and

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<sup>191</sup> Jackson et al., *U.S. National Approaches* p. 202.

education to R&R work, thus helping CSOs rebut the charge that some CSOs are simply relabeling or rebranding their non-P/CVERLT work in order to secure P/CVERLT funding; and

5. Pursuing more constructive engagement with CSOs and communities, which might include “providing support to a civil society–government engagement process, particularly in regions with low levels of collaboration.”<sup>192</sup>

The authors of the study note that “positive engagements with host governments can help ensure a safe working environment for civil society members and build stronger links between governments and local communities, CSOs, and international actors. These engagements, in turn, can strengthen the exchange of information and experiences between the various stakeholders, contributing to more effective and targeted interventions.”

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<sup>192</sup> GCCT and ICCT, *It Takes a Village*, p. 34. See also, GSX, “10 Steps”.



# 11. Special categories of individuals: addressing the unique challenges and needs of women and children

A growing number of international and regional organizations, including the United Nations, the OSCE, the GCTE, and the European Union, have emphasized the importance of ensuring that R&R strategies and programmes, including those applied in non-custodial settings, take into account gender and age sensitivities.<sup>193</sup> UN Security Council Resolution 2396, for example, highlights this

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<sup>193</sup> This includes 197 children who returned or relocated to countries in South-Eastern Europe before 2018, with dozens more having done so since then. See, e.g., Azinovic, Regional Report; and Valerie Plesch and Serbeze Haxhijaj, "Kosovo Is Trying to Reintegrate ISIL Returnees. Will It Work?", *Al Jazeera*, 9 June 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/kosovo-reintegrate-isil-returnees-work-190608200858002.html>. Some traveled to the conflict zone by choice; others were brought there by one or both of their parents; and still others were born there to parents from countries in the OSCE area.

point, recognizing that women and children “may have served in many different roles, including as supporters, facilitators, or perpetrators of terrorist acts and require special focus when developing tailored prosecution, rehabilitation, and reintegration strategies.”<sup>194</sup> The Security Council underscored the importance of conducting assessments of their individual risks and needs — taking into account both gender and age considerations — and ensuring women and children associated with “FTFs” who may be victims of terrorism receive the necessary assistance.

This emphasis is motivated by a number of factors, including the high number of women and children who traveled to the conflict zone in Iraq and Syria, the growing recognition of the complex dynamics surrounding their association with terrorism and VERLT, and the unique challenges and needs they can present on return.<sup>195</sup> According to a coordinating doctor for health and mental health under a national programme for women and children in their homes, “From the initial psychotherapy sessions that we’ve done with children and with the women [returning from the conflict in Iraq and Syria], of course you can clearly see signs of PTSD.”<sup>196</sup>

## 11.1 Women

A growing body of research has highlighted the gendered nature of recruitment and radicalization to extremist violence and terrorism and thus the need to ensure appropriately gendered responses, including in the development and implementation of R&R approaches outside of the prison context.<sup>197</sup>

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194 UN Security Council Resolution 2396 (2017), para. 31.

195 See, for example, European Commission, *High-Level Commission Expert Group on Radicalisation (HLCEG-R), Final Report*, 18 May 2018, p. 8, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-security/20180613\\_final-report-radicalisation.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-security/20180613_final-report-radicalisation.pdf).

196 Plesch and Haxhijaj, “Kosovo Is Trying to Reintegrate ISIL Returnees”.

197 See, for example, Joana Cook and Gina Vale, *From Daesh to ‘Diaspora’ II: The Challenges Posed by Women and Minors After the Fall of the Caliphate*, International Centre for the Study on Radicalisation, July 2019, p. 16, <https://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/ICSR-Feature-From-Daesh-to-%E2%80%98Diaspora%E2%80%99-II-The-Challenges-Posed-by-Women-and-Minors-After-the-Fall-of-the-Caliphate.pdf>; and Naureen Choudhury Fink, Sara Zeiger, and Rafia Bulai, *A Man’s World: Exploring the Roles of Women in Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism*, Hedayah and Global Center on Cooperative Security, April 2016, [http://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/AMansWorld\\_FULLL.pdf](http://www.globalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/AMansWorld_FULLL.pdf). For a discussion of gender dynamics of and the role of women in VERLT and P/CVERLT, see, for example, Irene Ndong’u and Mothepa Shadung, *Can a Gendered Approach Improve Responses to Violent Extremism?*, Institute for Security Studies, September 2017, <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/aitwr-5.pdf>; Iflat Idris with Ayat Abdelaziz, *Women and Violent Extremism: Helpdesk Research Report*, GSDRC Help Desk Research Report, 2017, [http://www.gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/HDR\\_1408.pdf](http://www.gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/HDR_1408.pdf); Emily Winterbotham and Elizabeth Pearson, “Different Cities, Shared Stories: A Five-Country Study Challenging Assumptions around Muslim Women and CVE Interventions”, *RUSI Journal*, 30 November 2016, <https://rusi.org/publication/rusi-journal/different-cities-shared-stories-five-country-study-challenging-assumptions>.

As noted above, the integration of a gender dimension into non-custodial R&R (and wider P/CVERLT) efforts is consistent with numerous recent Security Council resolutions and RAN recommendations, and is encouraged as a good practice by the GCTF.<sup>198</sup> It is also reflected in OSCE commitments, with the 2015 OSCE ministerial declaration on VERLT calling on participating States to, *inter alia*, take into account a gender perspective in their efforts to counter terrorism and prevent and counter VERLT, and in the relevant recommendations in the OSCE/ODIHR guidelines for addressing the challenges posed by “FTFs” within a human rights framework.<sup>199</sup>

Yet, despite this enhanced understanding and political support at international and regional levels, a recent study by the United Nations Development Programme and the International Civil Society Action Network found that “current [R&R] policies and programming tend to either ignore women and girls associated with violent extremist groups or oversimplify the issue.”<sup>200</sup> For example, the study found that women and girls are often viewed “in binary terms as victims or perpetrators of violence” despite what is known about the complexity of their involvement and what is needed to enable their disengagement from violence and reintegration into their communities.<sup>201</sup> The reality is that a mix of factors often triggered their decision to associate with terrorism or VERLT. These might include “coercion, co-option, enslavement or kidnapping, or subjugation in their own communities and unfilled aspirations for belonging, purpose, adventure and empowerment.”<sup>202</sup>

Despite the nuances — and the security risks that returning women (just like men) may pose — most receiving countries are regarding women returnees chiefly as victims, “based on (often false) gendered assumptions about their limited agency,” according to a report from the United Nations.<sup>203</sup> Thus, most women are being treated outside the criminal justice system. This UN report also noted that women “tend to receive more limited rehabilitation and reintegration support, thus putting them at potentially greater risk of recidivism and re-radicalization and potentially undermining their successful reintegration into society.”<sup>204</sup>

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198 See, for example, UN Security Council Resolution 2396 (2017); GCTF, *Returning Families Good Practices*; and RAN Returnee Manual.

199 OSCE, “Ministerial Declaration on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism”, Paragraph 13; and OSCE/ODIHR, *FTF Guidelines*.

200 *Invisible Women*, p. 12.

201 For example, in April 2019, all 32 of the women among the 110 returnees to Kosovo were treated as suspects and placed under house arrest. Blerta Begjsholli, “Kosovo Detains More Returnees from Syrian Battlefields,” *Balkan Insight*, 24 April 2019, <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/04/24/kosovo-detains-more-returnees-from-syrian-battlefields/>

202 *Ibid.*

203 UNCTED, *Gender Dimensions of the Response to Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters: Research Perspectives*, CTED Trends Report, February 2019, [https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Feb\\_2019\\_CTED\\_Trends\\_Report.pdf](https://www.un.org/sc/ctc/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Feb_2019_CTED_Trends_Report.pdf).

204 *Ibid.*

Among other things, the above lacuna underscores the importance of focusing more attention on developing non-custodial R&R programmes for women (and girls), where gender sensitivities are reflected throughout, including in the risk and needs assessment and the design and delivery of any interventions.

There are often a number of gender dynamics that institutions and individuals involved in developing and implementing such programmes should take into account. For example, those who were victims of sexual violence face additional stigma from their communities and have distinct psychosocial and health requirements. They often have children, who may have been born of forced marriage and/or rape. Returning women may suffer economic consequences as well, as a result of having to assume the burden of heading a household in the wake of their husband's death on the battlefield. Although some women may return highly radicalized and hold on to ISIL-Da'esh ideology, others return disillusioned and eager to reintegrate into normal life and raise their children. Women may face unique obstacles to R&R such as societal or community norms that restrict their activities; they are also vulnerable to abuses from security officials.<sup>205</sup> Related, the shaming of women who have had some association with terrorism and VERLT is often higher than that of men, which can create barriers to them being accepted by and reintegrated back into their families and communities.

The United Nations, the OSCE, the GCTF, the European Union, and other organizations have identified recommendations and good practices or otherwise provided practical guidance for States to consider as they work to address the often unique reintegration challenges presented by women. Many of these recommendations can be applied to the development of gender-sensitive, non-custodial R&R programmes more broadly. For example:

1. **Risk and needs assessment tools should be gender-sensitive, and practitioners involved in developing and applying these tools should have gender-sensitive expertise** and be trained to identify and reduce unconscious bias in assessments. Assessments should take into account the risk that some women may pose, both in security terms and in light of the possibility of radicalizing others to violence.
2. **R&R programming should be responsive to the ways in which women and girls experience violent extremism and conflict**, which can be significantly different from the experiences of men and boys. Programming for women and girls should include elements tailored for them, which might involve those addressing sexual and gender-based violence,

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<sup>205</sup> See, for example, *Invisible Women*, p. 9; GCTF, *Addendum to the GCTF Good Practices on Women and CVE, with a Focus on Mainstreaming Gender*, September 2019, [www.thegctf.org](http://www.thegctf.org).

- parenting, socioeconomic empowerment, and networking, for example.<sup>206</sup>
3. R&R programmes should be led by gender-sensitized, trauma-informed professionals and should **address not only the practical concerns of women, but also “the ‘push factors’ of misogyny, injustice and deficit in dignity that women experience in their own societies.”** If left unaddressed, “the risk of women being drawn to the messages of violent extremist groups continues.”<sup>207</sup>
  4. **Female professionals and practitioners**, including law enforcement, psychosocial service providers, religious and other counselors, and women leaders of CSOs **should be involved in the design and delivery of interventions to women (and girls)**, as well as P/CVE efforts more broadly.<sup>208</sup>
  5. Governments should provide appropriate gender-sensitive training to relevant professionals, practitioners, and organizations that interact with female returnees or other women (and girls) who might be subjects of non-custodial R&R programmes.

## 11.2 Children

Like women, children have unique needs in relation to R&R. For example, they “may have had their normal social, moral, and emotional development interrupted by the experience of war.”<sup>209</sup> They may have been exposed to or been victims of violence or may have committed violent acts, making the likelihood and severity of trauma particularly acute as compared to other returnees or those who might be subjects of R&R.<sup>210</sup>

The 2018 OSCE/ODIHR report on how to address the challenges presented by returning “FTFs” encourages states to develop and “implement tailored reintegration programmes for returning children, including by assigning mentors and a range of support to enable them to return to their former lives without stigmatization or alienation.”<sup>211</sup> This advice echoes the views of a number of other multilateral bodies, including the United Nations and the GCTF, which have developed practical guidelines or recommendations or elaborated a series of principles for how to deal with this category of cases (often further

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206 See, for example, GCTF, *Returning Families Good Practices*, Good Practice 16.

207 *Invisible Women*, p. 13.

208 Their involvement in interventions for men and boys is also important.

209 European Parliament, *Child Returnees: Managing the Return of European Children from Jihadist Conflict Zones*, 31 January 2018, <https://alde.livecasts.eu/child-returnees-managing-the-return-of-european-children-from-jihadist-conflict-zones>.

210 GCTF, *Returning Families Good Practices*.

211 OSCE/ODIHR, *FTF Guidelines*.

subdivided into age brackets), including when it comes to non-custodial R&R, recognizing the unique risks and protections, as well as needs, involved when dealing with minors.<sup>212</sup>

Those guidelines include the following:

1. Responses should be **informed by an understanding of the rights and best interests of the child**, taking into account the specific context and implemented in a manner consistent with international human rights and humanitarian law, and underscoring that children should be treated primarily as victims and that trying to live a “normal” life should be a top priority.<sup>213</sup> As such, returning and other children should be provided with adequate support to assist their recovery and reintegration, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.<sup>214</sup> As underscored by the OSCE/ODIHR and other guidelines, this should include necessary, tailored care and medical, psychosocial, and educational support.
2. For children who have been linked with terrorist or violent extremist groups or have otherwise been exposed to terrorism or VERLT, **R&R and preventing further stigmatization should be prioritized.**<sup>215</sup>
3. To help develop a coherent and effective response to child returnees (and other non-custodial R&R cases involving juveniles), states should **use risk and needs assessment tools that have been shown to be relevant to this population or which have been specifically developed for children and juveniles.** Where appropriate, they should **consider developing a children-specific tool** that could also be applied to a broader target group to include children who are radicalized or vulnerable to radicalization to violence. Because of the need to take into account a child’s stages of development — and his or her gender — simply adapting a tool or other framework originally developed for adults may not be adequate.<sup>216</sup>

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212 See, e.g., United Nations, *Key Principles for the Protection, Repatriation, Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Women and Children with Links to United Nations Listed Terrorist Groups*, April 2019 (hereinafter United Nations, *Key Principles*); UNSC Madrid Addendum; UNODC, *Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorists and Violent Extremist Groups*, 2018 [https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Child-Victims/Handbook\\_on\\_Children\\_Recruited\\_and\\_Exploited\\_by\\_Terrorist\\_and\\_Violent\\_Extremist\\_Groups\\_the\\_Role\\_of\\_the\\_Justice\\_System.E.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Child-Victims/Handbook_on_Children_Recruited_and_Exploited_by_Terrorist_and_Violent_Extremist_Groups_the_Role_of_the_Justice_System.E.pdf); GCTF, *Returning Families Good Practices*; RAN Manual on Responses to FTF Returnees, 2017, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/ran\\_br\\_a4\\_m10\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/ran_br_a4_m10_en.pdf). In addition, although focused more broadly on FTFs, the OSCE/ODIHR developed a series of guidelines that include a focus on addressing the unique challenges that child returnees pose. See OSCE/ODIHR, *FTF Guidelines*.

213 Council of Europe *Handbook*, Paragraph 109.

214 Article 39 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child requires that “States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child.” Article 24 of the ICCPR requires that every child shall have, without any discrimination, the right to such measures of protection as are required by his or her status as a minor.

215 United Nations, *Key Principles*, p. 6.

216 RAN Returnee Manual, p. 5. However, at least one of the existing tools, the VERA-2R, has been assessed to have applicability to juveniles and youth.

4. When conducting an assessment, practitioners should take into account that children may have witnessed or otherwise been subject to violence, sometimes extreme forms of violence; and/or may be prone to violence themselves. Thus, assessments — and decisions (such as whether to recommend some form of R&R, custody, and/or supervision) — **should balance the need to take into account the best interests of the child with the need to ensure public safety.**
5. Mental health professionals, with training in trauma and experience working with children, should be involved in carrying out any such assessments and in determining appropriate interventions. Their involvement is **important to reduce the risk of further trauma being inflicted during the assessment process.**
6. **R&R programmes for children should be comprehensive** and include social, educational (including pre- and/or primary schools, where appropriate), mentoring and mental health components, including for parents, grandparents, and other relevant family and community members. More specifically, for example:
  - a. Programmes should support positive life skills of the child while mitigating the risk of revictimization that can arise as a result of community-level stigmas, misperceptions, and prejudices; communicating to the public the actual, case-specific risks surrounding returning (or other) children participating in non-custodial R&R programmes is helpful;
  - b. Trauma-healing should be a priority and thus trauma-sensitization training for those who may come in direct contact with the children on a regular basis may be appropriate;
  - c. Those children who may have grown up around violent extremism or in a conflict zone may require a different approach to disengage from a violent ideology than adults; and
  - d. Pre- and primary schools play an important role in R&R programmes involving children: access to education can be critical to the R&R process for children as, *inter alia*, it “instills a sense of safety, normalizes the child’s day-to-day life, ensures exposure to cultural diversity and increases interaction with individuals outside of the home.”<sup>217</sup> As such, attention should be given to sensitizing and providing training for teachers who may be asked to integrate returnee children in their classrooms.
7. **Coordination and collaboration among a range of actors and structures**, including in the child protection, youth care, and education sectors — relying on existing structures and procedures, where possible — is important for facilitating integrated assessments and interventions.

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<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, p.77

8. Organizations, practitioners, and professionals involved in R&R cases involving children should **receive sufficient training for working on such cases**, recognizing the unique concerns and needs of juveniles.
9. Children-focused R&R efforts should **pay particular attention to the potential negative influence of social media and the Internet** on disengagement from violence and reintegration. For example, when grappling with the challenges that reintegration can present, young people may be particularly vulnerable to re-engaging online with certain groups, causes, and ideologies.<sup>218</sup>
10. **Be sensitive to the terminology and broader framing** of an R&R engagement with children, recognizing that they can reinforce or reduce stigmatization and facilitate or impede disengagement.<sup>219</sup>

Some of the countries in the OSCE area have developed systematic approaches towards managing the return of children from the conflict zone that includes a R&R component. In France, for example, this approach involves, *inter alia*, (1) a systematic referral to a juvenile judge for protective measures; (2) an assessment led by the youth judicial protection services; (3) a mental health and broader medical evaluation; (4) entry (or re-entry) into school as soon as feasible; (5) the involvement of the local crime and radicalization and family support units — established under the 2018 National Plan to Prevent Radicalization — to ensure sustained follow-up with the children and their families; and (6) specific training for the relevant professionals.<sup>220</sup>

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218 GCCS, *Compendium of Good Practices*, p. 52

219 *Ibid.* p. 51

220 Government of France, *Prevent to Protect*. See also, EU RAN, Centre of Excellence, *Common P/CVE Challenges in the Western Balkans and European Union*, RAN Ex Post Paper, RAN Policy & Practice Event, Sofia, 4 April 2018, p. 12, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/ran-papers/docs/ran\\_policy\\_practice\\_common\\_pcve\\_challenges\\_sofia\\_04042018\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/ran_policy_practice_common_pcve_challenges_sofia_04042018_en.pdf).





# 12. Conclusion: key principles

The R&R of those assessed to have had meaningful involvement in or exposure to terrorism and VERLT is widely recognized as a necessary element of a comprehensive approach to addressing these challenges over the long term. R&R is essential not only to preventing acts of violence in the near term but also to building overall community-level resilience to VERLT. As such, the concept of R&R features prominently in the UN Secretary-General's PVE Plan of Action and many of the P/CVERLT national action plans and strategies that continue to be elaborated.<sup>221</sup>

As noted as the outset of this guide, R&R is receiving heightened attention from multilateral bodies, governments (including donors), multilateral bodies, and CSOs and other non-governmental actors in the current environment. Yet, to date, most of the policy and programmatic focus has been placed on R&R in the prison context — and this is reflected in the multiple guides, recommendations, and manuals focused on this aspect of the challenge. This guidebook, drawing in part from lessons learned and good practices focused on the prison setting and relevant experiences and expertise across the OSCE area, is intended to complement those efforts by addressing the diverse *non-custodial* environments. It highlights some of the steps that states and other stakeholders could take, and challenges they may face, should they decide to develop non-custodial R&R programmes as part of a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to P/CVERLT.

As noted throughout this guide, there is no one-size-fits-all approach for these programmes. Much like P/CVERLT programmes more broadly, R&R efforts have come in a variety of different shapes and sizes, informed, *inter alia*, by

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221 UNGA, Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. See, for example, Canada's *National Strategy on Countering Radicalization to Violence*, 2018, <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/ntnl-strtg-cntrng-rdclztn-vlnc/index-en.aspx>; the *National Strategy for Counterterrorism of the United States of America*, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/NSCT.pdf>; Lebanon's *National Strategy for Preventing Violent Extremism*, 2018, [http://www.pvelebanon.org/Resources/PVE\\_English.pdf](http://www.pvelebanon.org/Resources/PVE_English.pdf); and Switzerland's *National Action Plan to Prevent and Counter Radicalisation and Violent Extremism*, <https://www.news.admin.ch/newsd/message/attachments/50703.pdf>.

the specific targets and relevant local societal, cultural, and historical contexts, community relationships, and available capacities. However, reflecting on the relevant experiences across the OSCE area, the guide elucidates some basic, often interrelated principles that should inform the development and implementation of any such programmes. Chief among these principles are the following.

1. **Make the case for R&R.** Governments need to effectively communicate the goals and benefits of non-custodial R&R to, on the one hand, a public that may see it as too “soft” for dealing with terrorism — with a segment of the population preferring a “lock them up and throw away the key” form of response — and, on the other hand, the targeted individuals and communities that may view R&R measures as potentially stigmatizing.

With respect to the skeptical public, it should be emphasized that investment in such measures is an important element of a comprehensive strategy to prevent and counter terrorism and VERLT. Rather than helping “terrorists” or unfairly targeting certain individuals or communities, it represents a “smart way to work on reducing the risk of recidivism, and on working with former terrorist offenders to prevent future violence committed by others”<sup>222</sup> and radicalization to violence of others in the relevant communities.

Particularly given the limited time many terrorist offenders are likely to spend in prison, the risk of (further) radicalization in prison, the relatively young age of most released terrorist offenders, and the number of individuals returning from conflict zones who may not be prosecuted, politicians and policymakers should emphasize to skeptical publics that failing to invest in interventions to facilitate disengagement from violence and peaceful re-entry into society would be shortsighted at best.

Further, it is worth underscoring that interventions conducted in the community are typically more effective than those conducted in prison or other custodial settings.<sup>223</sup> There is little reason to suggest why this would not be the case in non-custodial P/CVERLT R&R work. The empirical evidence to support such an assertion is limited, but, as this guide has explained, the thinness of the evidence has more to do with the methodological difficulties of obtaining it than with the value and impact of R&R measures.

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<sup>222</sup> Morton and Silber, *When Terrorists Come Home*, p. 14.

<sup>223</sup> See, for example, James Bonta and D.A. Andrews, *The Psychology of Criminal Conduct*, 6th Ed., (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017); Mark Lipsey, “The Primary Factors that Characterise Effective Interventions with Juvenile Offenders: A Meta-Analytic Overview,” *Victims & Offenders*, no. 4 (2009): pp. 124–47, [http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/sites/default/files/community/Lipsey\\_Effective%20interventions%20-%202009.pdf](http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/sites/default/files/community/Lipsey_Effective%20interventions%20-%202009.pdf); Friedrich Losel and Martin Schmucker, “The Effectiveness of Treatment for Sexual Offenders: A Comprehensive Meta-Analysis,” *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, no. 1 (2005): pp. 117–146, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11292-004-6466-7>.

2. **Address all forms of VERLT.** Programmes should not be limited to a single form of VERLT and should instead be available (typically on a voluntary basis) to those looking to disengage from any form of such violence, whether linked to ISIL-Da'esh or other “jihadi” terrorist groups or right-wing or ethno-nationalist motivations. Not only is this breadth likely to be warranted from a security perspective, particularly given the increasing concerns over non-“jihadi” extremist violence in a number of countries in the OSCE area, but also it is less likely to stigmatize those involved in the programmes — whether the intended beneficiaries or practitioners and professionals — that flow from it and thus improve the general public’s perception of these programmes. As such, programmes developed under a broad-based framework are more likely to be accepted and receive support from those whose cooperation is critical to their success.
  
3. **Emphasize disengagement.** Programmes should focus primarily on disengagement from violence, informed by an understanding of how and why someone became involved in VERLT in the first place. They should recognize that the reasons are diverse and generally extend beyond the embrace of a particular ideology. Programmes should be flexible and tailored to the specific background and motives of the individual. The individual’s ideological or theological perspectives — or mindset more broadly — should not be ignored. Indeed, beneficiaries of R&R interventions may require more engagement on psychological, ideological, and theological issues than the beneficiaries of prevention-focused programmes. However, interventions should not seek to convert an individual from one belief or ideology to another or otherwise seek to or coerce someone into changing his or her beliefs or ideology
  
4. **Enable a multiactor and multisector approach.** Individuals and families that stand to benefit from non-custodial R&R programmes will have a range of vulnerabilities and needs that a single professional or institution is unlikely to be able to address alone. Thus, there will likely be a need for an approach that allows contributions from a range of professionals, practitioners, and other actors from a number of disciplines within and outside of government, drawing upon a wide range of expertise and leveraging those who are most likely to have the credibility and trusted relationships within the community into which the individual is to be integrated or reintegrated. The issues that may have led the individual down the path to VERLT are almost certainly complex and thus can be adequately addressed only by a multifaceted approach.

Intervention providers — which should, where appropriate, also be involved in assessing the risk and needs of the particular individual and

deciding on the appropriate treatment — might include one or more of the following, depending on the particular case and context and available capacities: psychologists, psychiatrists, or other mental health professionals; “formers”; social workers; housing officers; youth services workers; aftercare experts; family members; probation workers; and police officers. These actors will have different tasks, mandates, and objectives that can pose a challenge to information sharing and other forms of cooperation; their different roles and responsibilities will need to be clarified. As such, states should take steps to facilitate the transparent multiactor information sharing and broader cooperation, while respecting privacy, data protection, and confidentiality requirements. In doing so, however, they should take into account that clients will typically benefit from having just one practitioner, professional, or other expert as their main point of contact, with that individual coordinating the involvement of other service providers. Among other things, trust that can result from this relationship between a single coordinator and the beneficiary can increase the latter’s willingness to accept other services recommended by the coordinator.

5. **Ensure proportionality and emphasize continuity.** Although there are a number of possible interventions, the support offered or prescribed should be proportionate to the risks, needs, and vulnerabilities of the individual. Prescribing too many interventions at once can backfire, as the risks of “over intervention” include stigmatization, potentially closing the cognitive space needed for rehabilitation, and needlessly creating a sense of alarm in the relevant community, whose cooperation and support can be critical for successful re-entry. Those overseeing non-custodial R&R programmes should regularly assess whether the interventions are proportional to the level of risk and need presented or whether the programme is doing more harm than good.<sup>224</sup>

Ensuring continuity between prison-based R&R and post-release R&R programmes is also important to effective disengagement and resocialization. The beneficiaries of R&R programmes have typically had a series of broken relationships throughout their life and providing them with a sense of stability and security when they seek to re-enter society will contribute to the success of any R&R approach involving terrorist offenders. Creating such stability might include taking steps such as initiating the necessary R&R programmes as early as feasible during the prison sentence; developing a post-release plan commencing at least six months prior to the

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<sup>224</sup> Christopher Dean, *Addressing Violent Extremism in Prisons and Probation: Principles for Effective Programs and Interventions*, Global Center on Cooperative Security, September 2016, <https://www.globalcenter.org/publications/addressing-violent-extremism-in-prisons-and-probation>.

end of the prison sentence; having practitioners and professionals working inside of prison continue, where possible, to counsel the ex-offender upon release in order to help foster a lasting, trustful relationship; and ensuring that the process of information exchange between relevant stakeholders (both those working in and outside the prison context) is well established and continuous and that support services are in place with an essential role played by probation services or the national equivalent. A critical element for all of this is ensuring a humane and otherwise human rights-compliant prison environment.

- 6. Navigate and mitigate stigma and avoid (the perception of) giving special treatment.** Those involved in developing and implementing non-custodial R&R programmes should be mindful of the stigmas that, if not identified and mitigated, can impede the effectiveness of the efforts. Such stigmas may be triggered by applying the labels “terrorist”, “violent extremist”, or “FTF” to a programme, which could create barriers to accessing social support, education, or other services that are vital to reintegration, or by emphasizing mental health or other issues that could trigger cultural sensitivities in the particular community.

Even labelling individuals using these terms may reinforce these identities as being primary to how the individual self-defines moving forward. It is important to emphasize and nurture other identities in an individual’s life — identities such as parent, worker, student, or spouse.

Depending on the interventions and other support offered in a non-custodial R&R setting — and the extent to which these same services are available to the wider population — R&R programmes can generate feelings of resentment among the community towards the targets of such programmes based on the perception (or perhaps reality) that those who may have had some association with terrorism or violent extremism are getting better treatment than those who have not. Giving (or even being perceived to be giving) former violent extremist offenders or returnees from conflict zones preferential treatment can create grievances among community members, who may feel they are being unfairly disadvantaged. This risk is heightened where communities feel that the government has not been sufficiently responsive to their material, educational, or psychosocial needs.

- 7. Prepare and engage communities.** The extent to which the community into which the individual is looking to reintegrate is receptive of and supports the process is often a key factor in the success of any non-custodial R&R programme. (As noted in Section 1, there may be some instances in

which an individual does not return to his or her community of origin but is relocated to another community.) In the end, non-custodial R&R is likely to work best when local government and businesses, faith-based organizations, NGOs, psychosocial care providers, schools, and community groups are engaged early and involved in both developing and implementing any programmes involving individuals in their communities.<sup>225</sup> However, those with a “terrorist”, “violent extremist”, “FTF”, or “returnee” label can inspire fear and raise suspicion in the communities they are seeking to re-enter (or enter). As a consequence, getting schools, workplaces, social circles, faith-based or other community centres, or other local stakeholders to trust those who may have had some association with terrorism or violent extremism, no matter how tenuous and regardless of their motives or what they may have done, can be a challenge.<sup>226</sup> It can impede access to social support, schools, and jobs, often key parts of a comprehensive approach to reintegration. In some cases, those in the community, particularly family members, may require psychosocial or other support in order to play a constructive role in the reintegration and disengagement process.

Awareness should be raised, stigmas and potential backlash mitigated, and prejudices confronted as part of an effort to prepare communities to receive these individuals. To these ends, governments, particularly at the local level, should share with their relevant communities the parameters of the R&R programme, highlight the different actors involved, and underscore that public safety remains the priority.

8. **Ensure approaches are sensitive to and address the unique needs of women and children.** Risk and needs assessment tools should be gender-sensitive and professionals and practitioners involved in developing and applying these tools should have gender-sensitive expertise. Programming should be responsive to the ways in which women and girls experience violent extremism and conflict, which can be significantly different than the experiences of men and boys. Programmes should be led by gender-sensitized, trauma-informed professionals who are not only equipped to address the practical concerns of women, but also informed about the gender-distinct factors and circumstances that may contribute to interest and involvement in violent extremism. Female practitioners and women-led CSOs should be involved in the design and delivery of interventions to women (and girls). Governments should provide appropriate gender-

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<sup>225</sup> GCTF, *Returning Families Good Practices*, Good Practice 19.

<sup>226</sup> This is also why it can be useful for a government agency to be identified as being responsible for the individual in question during their period of supervision and reintegration into the community. Community members may be more willing to co-operate and assist if they can liaise with a trusted government partner who they know is ultimately responsible for this individual (including for carrying the risk) and who can provide advice and support if necessary.

sensitive training to relevant professionals, practitioners, and organizations that interact with female returnees or other women (and girls) who might be subjects of non-custodial R&R programmes.

Approaches involving children, including those who may have committed terrorism-related offences, should be informed by an understanding of the rights and best interests of the child, who should be viewed first and foremost as victims. The provision of adequate and tailored care and medical, psychosocial, and educational support that can facilitate reintegration and avoid further trauma and stigmatization, while ensuring public safety, should be the priority. Programmes should be tailored to take into account that children who may have grown up around violent extremism or in a conflict zone may require a different approach to disengage from a violent ideology than adults. Child protection services, pre- and primary schools, and grandparents and other extended family members — stakeholders not typically involved in adult-oriented R&R efforts — are among the key actors that will likely need to be involved in children-focused R&R programmes. Those working with children in these programmes should have received trauma-sensitization and other specialized training, recognizing the unique concerns and needs of minors.

9. **Rely on existing capacities but strengthen them where necessary:** Effective and sustainable non-custodial R&R programmes require the involvement of a variety of institutions and organizations, as well as professionals, practitioners, and other experts. This diverse group should include some individuals with VERLT-specific expertise and administrators and managers who can provide a supportive organizational environment for gender- and age-sensitive P/CVERLT R&R efforts to take place. Wherever possible, governments should look to leverage existing institutional and other capacities, including those not geared specifically to P/CVERLT issues, avoiding the creation of parallel structures. However, developing and implementing non-custodial R&R initiatives in some countries may require investing in specialized training and tools as well as the broader strengthening of foundational institutional capacities. The former includes training on how to assess risk or needs of those who may have had some contact with terrorism or VERLT, how to engage in multiagency or other multiactor collaboration around specific cases, and/or how to initiate and engage in difficult conversations that might facilitate disengagement from VERLT. The latter includes capacities of police, prisons, probation services, mental health, social welfare, education, and other relevant government agencies and of the community-based or other relevant NGOs involved in this or related work. These capacities are particularly important given the difficulties in delivering specialized, targeted interventions and other

services associated with a comprehensive approach to non-custodial R&R absent certain baseline capabilities. Beyond ensuring that necessary governmental capacities are in place at the national and subnational levels, particular attention should be given to ensuring that CSOs (and civil society more broadly) — given their many comparative advantages when it comes to working in communities on sensitive issues — have the necessary legal and policy space, capacity, and resources to contribute.

**10. Incorporate a theory of change.** R&R programmes should be driven by a theory of change that explains how the proposed approach relates to the intervention's aims and outcomes. The programme's aims (e.g., attitudinal, motivational, and/or skills-related) help determine the design of the programme and whether it is effective in achieving its intended outcomes, as well as facilitating the measurement of ongoing progress.<sup>227</sup> Clearly articulating what non-custodial R&R programmes are aiming to achieve is vital to effective evaluation, which in turn is critical to mobilizing sustained funding and public support for this work. Further, it is important to enable progress to be assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure that the intervention continues to address what are likely to be the changing needs of the individual. It is also important to acknowledge the potentially significant societal, cultural, and other barriers confronting those hoping to disengage from VERLT when assessing the impact of any interventions.

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<sup>227</sup> See, for example, CREST, *Deradicalisation Programmes*, setting out the types of interventions in operation, the methods they use, and how to evaluate their effects.

# Annex 1:

## Manuals, guidelines, and other tools relevant to non-custodial R&R

This annex includes both the material developed by international, regional, and non-governmental organizations specifically for the prison-based R&R setting as well as the more limited number of tools designed for R&R programs and approaches outside of the prison environment. Both sets of material are relevant to non-custodial R&R.

### Council of Europe

1. Compendium of Conventions, Recommendations and Resolutions Relating to Prisons and Community Sanctions and Measures. March 2019. <https://rm.coe.int/compendium-e-2019/16809372d2>.
2. Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the European Rules on Community Sanctions and Measures, CM/Rec. 2017. [https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectID=0900001680700a5a](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=0900001680700a5a).
3. *Council of Europe Handbook for Prison and Probation Services Regarding Radicalization and Violent Extremism*. 2016. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322100931>.
4. Guidelines for Prison and Probation Services Regarding Radicalization and Violent Extremism. 2016. <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806f3d51>.
5. Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)1 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the Council of Europe Probation Rules. January 2010. [https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805cfc7](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805cfc7).
6. Commentary on Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)1 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the Council of Europe Probation Rules. January 2010. [https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805cff79](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805cff79).
7. Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)11 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the European Rules for Juvenile Offenders Subject to Sanctions or Measures. 2008. [https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805d2716](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805d2716).
8. Recommendation Rec(2003)22 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Conditional Release (Parole). 2003. [https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805df03f](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805df03f).

## EU Radicalization Awareness Network

9. *Approaches to Countering Radicalisation and Dealing with Violent Extremist and Terrorist Offenders in Prisons and Probation*. RAN Prison and Probation Practitioners' Working Paper. 2019. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran\\_wrk\\_pp\\_pract\\_3rd-2018\\_20190606\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran_wrk_pp_pract_3rd-2018_20190606_en.pdf).
10. *Multi-Agency Working and Preventing Violent Extremism: Paper 2*. RAN Health & Social Care Working Paper. 2019. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-h-and-sc/docs/ran\\_hsc\\_policy\\_mawr\\_report\\_sarma\\_26032019\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-h-and-sc/docs/ran_hsc_policy_mawr_report_sarma_26032019_en.pdf).
11. *What Role Do Police Play in the Resocialisation and Risk Management of Released Former Terrorist Offenders?* RAN Ex Post Paper. May 2019. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-pol/docs/ran\\_pol\\_role\\_do\\_police\\_play\\_in\\_resocialisation\\_marseille\\_20190520\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-pol/docs/ran_pol_role_do_police_play_in_resocialisation_marseille_20190520_en.pdf).
12. *The Role of Family and Social Networks in the Rehabilitation of (Violent) Extremist and Terrorist Offenders*. RAN Ex Post Paper. March 2018. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran\\_pp\\_role\\_family\\_social\\_networks\\_rehabilitation\\_extremist\\_terrorist\\_offenders\\_06-07\\_03\\_2018\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran_pp_role_family_social_networks_rehabilitation_extremist_terrorist_offenders_06-07_03_2018_en.pdf).
13. *Preventing Radicalisation to Terrorism and Violent Extremism Prison and Probation Interventions*. 2018. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/ran-best-practices/docs/prison-and-probation-interventions\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-best-practices/docs/prison-and-probation-interventions_en.pdf).
14. *The Challenge of Resocialisation: Dealing with Radicalised individuals during and after Imprisonment*. RAN Ex Post Paper". November 2018. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran\\_pp\\_dealing\\_with\\_radicalised\\_individuals\\_06\\_112018\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran_pp_dealing_with_radicalised_individuals_06_112018_en.pdf).
15. *Responses to Returnees: Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Their Families*. – RAN Manual. July 2017. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/ran\\_br\\_a4\\_m10\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/ran_br_a4_m10_en.pdf).
16. *The Role of Religion in Exit Programmes and Religious Counselling in Prison and Probation Settings*. RAN Ex Post Paper. October 2017. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran\\_pp\\_role\\_of\\_religion\\_in\\_exit\\_programmes\\_10-11\\_10\\_2017\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-p-and-p/docs/ran_pp_role_of_religion_in_exit_programmes_10-11_10_2017_en.pdf).
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## Annex 2: Examples of different approaches to non-custodial R&R in the OSCE region

### BELGIUM

#### Brussels Prevention Service (municipal-level)

The counter-radicalization unit of the **Bruxelles Avance Brussel Vooruit (BRAVVO)**<sup>228</sup> consists of five full-time staff – a legal/political science specialist; a clinical psychologist; a social worker; a comparative religion expert; and a sociologist/education expert – and it is connected to large network of service providers across the city. The unit works in the primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention spaces, with its objectives being to manage the psychosocial and security risks of individuals involved in extremist violence and to reduce the influence of violent extremism in certain neighbourhoods by raising awareness of the dangers of violent extremism and strengthening the protective factors of vulnerable youth and their parents. Its activities include providing communities with information on radicalization to violence, training professionals on how to identify signs of and address vulnerabilities to radicalization, assessing individual vulnerabilities and offering “wrap around” services through its network of intervention providers to address them. The unit has transparent rules for when and how interventions occur, with transparent information-sharing protocols and flexibility to allow resources to be allocated according to the identified needs and appoints a team leader for each case, with clear lines of communication among team members.

BRAVVO’s tertiary prevention, or R&R, work is conducted pursuant to Belgium’s 2005 national counter-terrorism strategy, with most cases in this area referred to it from the relevant security-focused local task forces, which were established in every municipality across the country pursuant to that strategy.<sup>229</sup>

228 For more information about BRAVVO, see its website, <https://www.brussels.be/prevention-service-bravo>.

229 European Forum for Urban Security (EFUS), “Practice Sheet”, [https://efus.eu/files/2016/10/PS\\_Brussels\\_RadicalisationUnit\\_EN.pdf](https://efus.eu/files/2016/10/PS_Brussels_RadicalisationUnit_EN.pdf).

## DENMARK

### Aarhus (municipal-level)

The Aarhus programme, like P/CVERLT programmes in other Danish municipalities, deals with all types of violent extremism and radicalization and is based on systematized multiagency collaboration that has evolved over a decade between various social services providers, the educational system, the health care system, the police, and the intelligence and security services.<sup>230</sup> The local police are the lead implementing agency, although the programme involves collaboration between the city and the police. Since 2014, the programme has been made available to returned “FTFs” on a voluntary basis, provided they had not committed any crimes and had been screened and assessed as not posing a security risk to the community. This model works effectively through maintaining an open line of communication between returning FTFs and local government and is considered a key factor to rebuilding trust. Aarhus supports participants in finding jobs and housing, provides psychological counseling (to help deal with PTSD) and medical care for free, and offers family support.

Specially trained mentors (including former jihadists) play a role as reference persons for returnees and support them not only in dealing with a regular life but can also provide religious counseling. The aim is not to persuade returnees to give up their faith but to encourage more nuanced deliberation.

### Back on Track (national-level)

Initially funded by the European Union from 2011 through 2014, Back on Track is now among the programs offered by the Danish Prison and Probation Services to those charged with or convicted of terrorism-related offenses, those whose offenses were associated with hate of another group, and those prisoners deemed vulnerable to radicalization to violent extremism.<sup>231</sup>

The goal of the mentorship programme is to help prisoners become better at tackling everyday situations, problems, and conflicts in order to prevent them from committing future acts of violent extremism. The role of the mentor is to support and strengthen the inmate’s motivation to opt for a lifestyle free of crime and to build new relations in non-criminal and non-violent extremist

<sup>230</sup> For details of the Aarhus programme, see EU RAN, *Aarhus Model: Prevention of Radicalisation and Discrimination in Aarhus*, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/node/7423\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/node/7423_en). For P/CVERLT efforts in the Nordic countries more generally, see Ramboll (for the Danish Ministry of Immigration and Integration), *Efforts to Prevent Extremism in the Nordic Countries*, December 2017, <https://uim.dk/publikationer/efforts-to-prevent-extremism-in-the-nordic-countries>.

<sup>231</sup> For more information about Back on Track, see [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/node/7411\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/node/7411_en).

environments. Focus is placed on involving the prisoner's family and social network outside of prison, giving them an active role during the offender's time in prison and reintegration.

During reintegration, mentors focus on helping to navigate the practical challenges their mentees may face upon release. This help might include providing support in finding a place to live, an education, or a job and in building new social networks. Mentors receive training in different dialogue techniques and coaching and conflict management skills as well as in family engagement. They are also educated about radicalization and VERLT so that they can better understand their mentee and be in a position to tailor appropriate interventions.<sup>232</sup>

## FINLAND

### RADINET (NGO-led public-private partnership)

Launched as part of the 2016 national action plan on prevention violent extremism,<sup>233</sup> RADINET is an exit service implemented by Vuolle Setlementti Vuolle, a non-profit association, in cooperation with Finland's Ministry of Interior and other organizations and institutions that work with individuals who have been involved in either political or religiously justified violent extremist groups but have decided to leave the group.<sup>234</sup> Some are still involved but are thinking about leaving. The focus is on disengagement from violence and reintegration.

The steering group includes representatives of the Ministry of Interior, religious communities, NGOs, service provider institutions, and local authorities. The group assesses the risks and needs of the individuals looking to disengage from VERLT and then helps organize the necessary services or other support, including mentoring to support disengagement from ideologically motivated violence. Participation in the programme, which is funded by the Ministry of Interior, is voluntary. It has been noted that that having an NGO as the face of this initiative has been important to gaining the trust of the participants, who would likely be less willing to participate in a government-led disengagement and reintegration initiative.<sup>235</sup> The initiative is financed by Finland's Slot Machine

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232 GCCS, *Compendium of Good Practices*, p. 45; and Danish Department of Prisons and Probation and Danish Ministry of Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs, "Back on Track: A Pilot Project on the Prevention of Radicalization among Inmates," June 2014, [https://www.kennisplein.be/Documents/Back%20On%20Track\\_Denemarken.pdf](https://www.kennisplein.be/Documents/Back%20On%20Track_Denemarken.pdf).

233 Finland Ministry of Interior, *National Action Plan for Prevention of Terrorism and Violent Extremism*, 2016, [http://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/75040/Kansallinen\\_vakivalt\\_radikalisoituminen\\_eng\\_NETTI.pdf](http://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/75040/Kansallinen_vakivalt_radikalisoituminen_eng_NETTI.pdf).

234 For more about RADINET, see <https://vuolleoulu.fi/hyvinvointi-ja-yhteistyo/asiantuntijuutta-ja-osallisuutta/kehittamistyo-ja-hankeet/radinet-hanke/>.

235 Finland Ministry of the Interior, Proposal for Arranging Cross-sectoral Cooperation on Managing Returnees from Conflict

Association, which provided financing for the first three years, but according to the government, the demand for the service is outpacing the resources available.<sup>236</sup>

## FRANCE

### Entr'Autres (NGO)

Entr'Autres, an NGO that handles some of France's deradicalization cases, works with radicalized individuals seeking to reject jihadist ideology and disengage from violence. It focuses on strengthening the bonds within the family and helps clients secure employment and resocialize as part of its effort to facilitate reintegration into the community. Entr'Autres' work is based on first understanding the reasons behind the individual's radicalization to violence (e.g., psychological factors, a family crisis, identity issues, religious or ideological beliefs), and then delivering tailored interventions informed by those motivations.<sup>237</sup>

### Research and Intervention on Violent Extremism (NGO)

Research and Intervention on Violent Extremism (RIVE), which includes a 10-person staff, is a branch of the Association for Applied Criminal Policy and Social Reintegration (APCARS),<sup>238</sup> a French NGO that specializes in the fields of social law, social rehabilitation, victim support, and restorative justice and is active in Paris and Marseille. With funding from the French Ministry of Justice, RIVE uses a mentorship approach aimed at deradicalization and social reintegration; its targets are individuals older than 18 who have been charged with committing terrorist acts or identified by probation services as having radicalized in the pre- or post-sentencing stage. The Exit programme, which is designed to address all forms of VERLT, lasts for one year and consists of a tailored mentoring approach implemented by a multidisciplinary team that includes educators, psychologists, a religious counselor, a psychiatrist, and a criminal lawyer.

The programme is implemented under judicial decision (i.e., it is not voluntary) in collaboration with the probation service outside of the prison setting. The

Zones: Including a Proposal for Combining NGOs' Services with the Action of the Authorities, 2017, p. 25. [http://julkaisut.valtioneuvoisto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/79612/Palajat%20\\_enkku.pdf](http://julkaisut.valtioneuvoisto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/79612/Palajat%20_enkku.pdf).

<sup>236</sup> Ibid, p. 42.

<sup>237</sup> See [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/node/11455\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/node/11455_en).

<sup>238</sup> For more information about APCARS, see <http://www.apcars.fr/en/>.

interventions are determined following a three-month information-gathering process that includes outreach to the individual's family and social network, with a risk and needs assessment conducted at the end of the process. RIVE, together with the probation services, evaluates each case on a monthly basis.<sup>239</sup>

## GERMANY

### Hayat (NGO as part of a public-private partnership)

Hayat (Turkish and Arabic for “life”) is the first German counseling programme for persons involved in radical Salafist groups or on the path of a violent jihadist radicalization, including those travelling to Syria and other combat zones.<sup>240</sup> Hayat is available to parents, siblings, friends, teachers, employers, and anyone else who has a relationship with a person potentially on the path of a (violent) radicalization. Moreover, Hayat works directly with radicalized persons in order to demonstrate the prerequisites and possibilities of ceasing radical behavior and abandoning radical ideologies and groups. Since January 2012, Hayat has been a partner of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, which established a national counseling hotline on radicalization.

Requests for assistance can be directly addressed to Hayat by phone or email. Once the request is received, Hayat undertakes a first assessment. If counseling intervention is needed, Hayat evaluates whether the participation of third parties is required. Hayat links the callers with institutions or services that might be able to help them, depending on their situation (e.g., schools, social services, and sometimes probation services and police). Counseling interventions, if needed, vary from case to case. Support to the family is also a key part of this work.<sup>241</sup> It recognizes that “extremists are tough to persuade when their beliefs are rooted in theology, so direct intervention by a stranger, even when a highly trained Hayat counselor, is not likely to succeed. Instead, families are usually the best emotional connection to the individual. Positive relationships are the asset.”<sup>242</sup> Hayat guarantees the rights and security of callers as well as the confidentiality of the exchanges. But it does contact security services if their involvement seems necessary, although always after having first informed families. Hayat encourages families to contact security agencies themselves.

239 EU RAN, *Preventing Radicalization to Terrorism and Violent Extremism, Exit Strategies, Approaches and Practices Collection*, 2018, pp. 48–49, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/ran-best-practices/docs/exit\\_strategies\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-best-practices/docs/exit_strategies_en.pdf).

240 For more details, see <https://hayat-deutschland.de/english/>.

241 EFUS, “Practice Sheet”.

242 Cities of Migration, “Hayat Means Life”, 12 February 2015, [https://citiesofmigration.ca/good\\_idea/hayat-means-life/](https://citiesofmigration.ca/good_idea/hayat-means-life/).

### Violence Prevention Network (NGO as part of a public-private partnership)

Violence Prevention Network (VPN) is a German NGO founded in 2004. It is part of the national deradicalization counseling network established by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees.<sup>243</sup> VPN's advice centres, based in a number of federal states across Germany, are designed for all persons who require advice or support in dealing with religiously motivated extremism. Seventy of its 125 full-time staff members work as first-line practitioners in the field. Supported with federal, state, and European Commission funds, VPN tackles both right-wing and Islamist radicalization in prevention (including providing training and workshops for professionals and volunteers in schools, refugee centres, and NGOs), intervention, and deradicalization/exit programmes both within and outside of youth and adult prison settings.

VPN has continually worked on 250 individual cases since 2016, most of them involving those with Islamist extremist backgrounds. Additional programmes are designed to counsel relatives of offenders and ex-offenders and those who traveled to combat zones (and have come back) or are interested in violent extremist groups.

VPN's vision is that ideologically vulnerable people and violent offenders motivated by extremism can change their behaviour through a guided deradicalization process and become part of the democratic community. VPN works to ensure that people have the tools and resources available to reflect on and overcome their previous behavioural patterns. The goal is to enable them to live a life in which they do not harm themselves or others.

VPN has worked with many people who have been convicted for terrorist offenses, doing so in close cooperation with the relevant authorities. For this purpose, VPN developed security guidelines in collaboration with security authorities for every advice centre to ensure that youth workers and the young people involved will remain protected throughout the mentoring process. The security guidelines establish basic rules and red lines, as well as conditions, legal foundations, and data protection principles under which reporting to the security authorities will have to take place.<sup>244</sup>

243 For more details, see the Violence Prevention Network's website, <http://www.violence-prevention-network.de/en/>. For a 2017 evaluation of the network and the Advice Centre on Radicalization, which provides support to the VPN, see German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Research Centre – Migration, Integration and Asylum, *Final Report*, Research Report 31, 2017, [https://www.academia.edu/38447362/Evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_Advice\\_Centre\\_on\\_Radicalisation\\_-\\_final\\_report](https://www.academia.edu/38447362/Evaluation_of_the_Advice_Centre_on_Radicalisation_-_final_report).

244 EU RAN, *Foreign Fighter Returnees & the Reintegration Challenge*, RAN Issue Paper, November 2016, p. 7, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/ran-papers/docs/issue\\_paper\\_foreign\\_fighter\\_returnees\\_reintegration\\_challenge\\_112016\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/ran-papers/docs/issue_paper_foreign_fighter_returnees_reintegration_challenge_112016_en.pdf).

## THE NETHERLANDS

### Family Support Centre (national-level)

Established at the end of 2015 as part of the government-subsidized national action plan for countering jihadi-inspired terrorism,<sup>245</sup> the Family Support Centre provides specialized information, advice, and support to those worried about a family member who has radicalized.<sup>246</sup> It complements the Dutch Exit Centre, Forsa (see below). The Family Support Centre brings together health workers, psychiatrists, mentors, researchers, theologians, and other experts for meetings twice a week to discuss cases. This model maintains an open channel of communication between the Centre, family members involved, and the local municipality, following strict privacy rules, with information shared with the municipality or police when there is a safety risk or after the family has granted permission. The programme first conducts a risk and needs assessment process, which is followed by the drafting of an intervention plan in coordination with family members and the local authority. A designated person from the Centre coordinates all the aspects of the implementation of the intervention. Participation is voluntary, with cases typically being referred via the municipality.<sup>247</sup>

### Forsa (national-level)

Also set up as part of the government-subsidized 2015 action plan, Forsa provides support to adults and young people who harbour extremist convictions or who are or have been involved in extremist networks. This target audience includes those who are attracted to extremist networks, people who are in contact with active members of an extremist network, and people who have left an extremist network and are having difficulty rebuilding their lives. Participation is voluntary. Forsa works together with local partners in the region where the individuals live, such as municipal authorities, healthcare providers, security partners, and judicial partners, to develop and support tailored interventions.

The services and other support provided include “encouragement of critical reflection; trauma counselling; empowerment in relation to the network/ex-

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245 The Netherlands Comprehensive Action Programme to Combat Jihadism, “Overview of Measures,” August 2014, <https://www.firstlinepractitioners.com/sk/practice/the-netherlands-comprehensive-action-programme-to-combat-jihadism>.

246 See the Dutch-language website for the Family Support Centre, <https://www.landelijksteunpuntextremisme.nl/?lang=en>.

247 See, for example, the FTF Programs Catalogue on the Hedayah website, <http://www.hedayahcenter.org/ftfprograms/program/family-support-unit-radicalization/>; and EU RAN, *Working with Families and Safeguarding Children from Radicalization: Step-by-Step Guidance Paper for Practitioners and Policy-makers*, RAN Ex Post Paper, February 2017, p. 18, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation\\_awareness\\_network/about-ran/ran-h-and-sc/docs/ran\\_yf-c\\_h-sc\\_working\\_with\\_families\\_safeguarding\\_children\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/about-ran/ran-h-and-sc/docs/ran_yf-c_h-sc_working_with_families_safeguarding_children_en.pdf).

network; coming to terms with experiences in war zones; encouragement of social connection via work/studies/work placements; building/rebuilding of social network; repairing family relationships; boosting resilience; encouraging and promoting openness regarding philosophical and ideological issues.” Forsa’s programs might involve one-on-one coaching, building or rebuilding of social networks, career or academic counseling, anger management, and/or psychological help.<sup>248</sup>

## SWEDEN

### EXIT Sweden – Fryshuset (NGO)

Supported primarily by government grants and part of a youth centre, EXIT Sweden helps individuals disengage from white supremacy groups and supports them in social reintegration.<sup>249</sup> The programme has so far not been expanded to include other forms of VERLT, largely due to funding limitations. It is implemented on a voluntary basis, reflecting the programme’s belief that a sustainable and successful disengagement process requires the individual to seek change. The programme, through individualized, tailored approaches, helps participants re-establish contact with family and friends, boost their social life skills, deal with conflict in a peaceful way, and most importantly reintegrate into the social fabric, including through finding a new job. Although tailored to each individual, the work often focuses on helping the client build a new social identity and thus turn away from his or her previous extremist one. The programme offers personal meetings, provides a contact person (who, if needed, is available 24/7), and facilitates contacts with government agencies, including those that can assist with housing, social services, and legal services, as well as the police. Exit Sweden also offers counseling to parents, siblings, partners, and others close to its clients.

Beyond its individual case work, Exit Sweden seeks to educate young people on how violent movements are organized and able to radicalize individuals and has produced two handbooks on preventing violent extremism and disengagement from violent extremist groups. The programme also collaborates with a local theatre that performs plays on engagement and disengagement from white supremacy groups and other relevant topics.<sup>250</sup>

248 An independent evaluation of both Forsa and the Family Support Centre was conducted on behalf of the National Coordinator for Security and Counter-Terrorism and published in November 2018; it is available at <https://www.landelijksteunpuntextremisme.nl/mediadepot/1702325ce56c/EvaluationofForsaandtheFamilySupportCentre.pdf>.

249 For details, see the EXIT Sweden – Fryshuset website, <http://exit.fryshuset.se/english/>.

250 EXIT Sweden – Fryshuset, [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/content/exit-sweden\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/content/exit-sweden_en).

EXIT Sweden follows strict privacy rules, “reserving the right to neither share nor register any information about those it works with and their past activities with the authorities,” a practice aimed at “securing the disengagement of some extremists who would otherwise remain within the movement to avoid legal retribution”.<sup>251</sup>

## UNITED KINGDOM

### Desistance and Disengagement Programme (national-level)

As set out in the UK counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST, which was updated in 2018,<sup>252</sup> the Desistance and Disengagement Programme (DDP) focuses on individuals who are subject to court-approved conditions, including all terrorism and terrorism-related offenders on probation licence, as well as those on Terrorism Prevention Investigation Measures (TPIMs)<sup>253</sup> and those who have returned from conflict zones in Syria or Iraq and are subject to Temporary Exclusion Orders (TEOs)<sup>254</sup>.

With the broad objective of providing a more holistic approach to disengagement, the multiactor programme is delivered in conjunction with a variety of agencies and other partners, including the Ministry of Justice, police, and the Prison and Probation Service, as well as NGOs. Through a range of intensive, tailored interventions and practical support, the programme seeks to tackle the drivers of radicalization to extremist violence, build resilience, and aid rehabilitation. Support might include mentoring, psychological support, and theological and ideological advice. These interventions are designed to provide the best possible means for these individuals to disengage from terrorism and reintegrate safely back into society.

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251 Nima Khorrami, “Swedish Counter-Radicalization Strategies: An Overview”, *European Eye on Radicalization*, 3 August 2019, <https://eeradicalization.com/swedish-counter-radicalization-strategies-an-overview/>.

252 UK Home Office, “Counter-Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) 2018”, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorism-strategy-contest-2018>.

253 TPIMs allow the UK Home Secretary to impose restrictions on individuals via means of a “TPIM” notice, which can include restrictions on movement, financial activity and communication. See the Terror Prevention and Investigation Measures Act collection at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/terrorism-prevention-and-investigation-measures-act>.

254 TEOs, which apply to people suspected of involvement in terrorist activity abroad, allow the UK Home Secretary to ban British citizens from returning home from another country.

The DDP operates alongside existing statutory risk assessment and management processes to ensure it bolsters existing provisions. Terrorism cases are reviewed regularly with key stakeholders to determine how best to continue managing the risk an individual present, as well as supporting their rehabilitation.<sup>255</sup>

Unlike other parts of the United Kingdom’s national CVE strategy (PREVENT), the DDP is mandatory in certain cases. Where mandated for individuals subject to TEOs, TPIMs, or probation requirements, non-compliance could lead to the possibility of being charged for breach of conditions or being recalled to prison. Although little information is available in the public domain regarding DDP, according to one report, 116 people were subject to the programme between October 2016 and September 2018.<sup>256</sup>

## UNITED STATES

### Boston (state-level)

With financial support from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (\$500,000 over two years), the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security is partnering with the Massachusetts Department of Corrections to implement a project aimed at preventing escalation to extremist violence and the radicalization of vulnerable individuals, establishing trust, and building resilience. This project is targeting 139 men recognized as high-risk individuals for violent extremism upon their release from a maximum-security prison. The project focuses on addressing the root causes of violent extremism and recognizes that strengthening certain protective factors and skills such as problem solving and dealing with conflict in a non-violent manner can promote a strong and resilient community. Moreover, the project emphasizes the importance of education, positive engagement with the community, connecting with family and friends, and finding suitable employment<sup>257</sup>

### Minneapolis (public-private partnership)

Implemented by the U.S. Probation Office for the District of Minnesota in cooperation with an NGO, Heartland Democracy, what is often described as the

<sup>255</sup> See the “Disengagement and Desistance Programme” factsheet at <http://www.hampshirepreventboard.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Desistance-and-Disengagement-Programme-Factsheet.pdf>.

<sup>256</sup> James Grierson, “Extremists Living in UK under Secretive Counter-Terror Programme,” *Guardian*, 5 April 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/apr/05/extremists-living-in-uk-under-secretive-counter-terror-programme>.

<sup>257</sup> U.S. Department for Homeland Security, Office for Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention, “Quarterly Update on Programmatic Performance FY16 Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Grant Program Quarter 5: 1 July to 30 September 2018”, [https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/19\\_0703\\_cve\\_q4-cve-grant-program-summary.pdf](https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/19_0703_cve_q4-cve-grant-program-summary.pdf).

United States' first deradicalization programme was ordered by a U.S. federal judge and designed with input from German deradicalization expert, Daniel Koehler. The programme has worked with some 25 violent extremists charged with terrorism-related crimes — including 12 white supremacists — since it was developed in 2016. Koehler helps identify the factors that led to the radicalization of the individuals involved in the programme and their risk of reoffending and specify strategies to steer them away from radical ideologies. The participants in the programme are on judge-ordered supervised release in lieu of a prison sentence. The programme provides psychological testing and counseling, in addition to religious mentoring. A particular emphasis is also placed on community reintegration strategies in order to achieve a balance between public safety and rehabilitation. The programme seeks to strengthen ties with family members to ensure that participants have supportive environments to live in when they return to their communities; works with participants to set up further education, vocational training, or employment plans to restore self-reliance; helps them develop new social networks to distance themselves from previously destructive influences; and provides community mentors who are knowledgeable about religion to advise participants during supervised release.<sup>258</sup>

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258 Brandon Stahl, "Launched after Minnesota Court Cases, First U.S. Deradicalization Program Shows Promise", *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, 19 February 2019, <http://www.startribune.com/country-s-first-deradicalization-program-shows-promise/506069262/>; and Ivy Kaplan, "An Inside Look at the First US Domestic Deradicalization Program", *Defense Post*, 12 February 2019, <https://thedefensepost.com/2019/02/12/us-minnesota-deradicalization-program-inside-look/>.

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