

LASER PULSE

PREVENTING/COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM MONITORING, EVALUATION, & LEARNING (MEL): **DISENGAGEMENT, DERADICALIZATION, REHABILITATION, AND REINTEGRATION**

Jessica Baumgardner-Zuzik | Shaziya DeYoung | Allyson Bachta | Shreya Gautam | Kelsey Edmond

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AOR Name: Brent Wells

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About LASER PULSE

LASER (Long-term Assistance and Services for Research) PULSE (Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine) is a 10-year, \$70M program funded by USAID's Innovation, Technology, and Research Hub, that delivers research-driven solutions to field-sourced development challenges in USAID partner countries.

A consortium led by Purdue University, with core partners Catholic Relief Services, Indiana University, Makerere University, and the University of Notre Dame, implements the LASER PULSE program through a growing network of 3,700+ researchers and development practitioners in 86 countries.

LASER PULSE collaborates with USAID missions, bureaus, and independent offices, and other local stakeholders to identify research needs for critical development challenges, and funds and strengthens the capacity of researcher-practitioner teams to co-design solutions that translate into policy and practice.

About the Armed Conflict and Violence Prevention Learning Agenda

The Conflict and Violence Prevention Learning Agenda Implementation Team (CVP LAIT) was tasked with co-creating and implementing a bureau-wide learning agenda that:

- Establishes the evidence base for effective approaches to armed conflict and violence prevention;
- Identifies opportunities for CVP investments that would produce new knowledge to fill gaps in the existing literature;
- Provides USAID staff with events, tools, resources, and/or guidance to incorporate learning agenda findings into their work; and
- Conducts original research into armed conflict and violence prevention.

Through an intensive, multi-stakeholder consultation process with USAID Washington and mission staff, preventing/countering violent extremism (P/CVE) was identified as an effort that, if backed by sound evidence and guidance, could benefit program design, outcomes, policy, and knowledge generation.

Disclaimer

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ACRONYMS

AfP	Alliance for Peacebuilding
CI	Containment/Interdiction
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
CVP LAIT	Conflict and Violence Prevention Learning Agenda Implementation Team
DDRR	Disengagement, Deradicalization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration
LASER PULSE	Long-term Assistance and Services for Research Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
P/CVE	Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism
PI	Principal Investigator
PV	Prevention
ToC/s	Theory/ies of Change
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VE	Violent Extremism
VEO	Violent Extremist Organization
VEP	Violent Extremist Prisoner

RESEARCH SUMMARY

This research aims to better understand the current state of measurement with regards to disengagement, deradicalization, rehabilitation, and reintegration (DDRR) programming across the broader preventing/countering violent extremism (P/CVE) landscape. The following report explores the general characteristics of DDDR studies including explicit indicators, common measurement trends, and indicator examples, to determine what, exactly, DDDR programs are seeking to change. The studies analyzed for this research were curated from a P/CVE systematic mixed method review that contained 25 DDDR-related studies, of which 10 (40%) contained explicit indicators. The characteristics of these studies are synthesized within the body of this report.

In total, 130 indicators were extracted for analysis. Collectively, these indicators illustrate the diversity of approaches to DDDR in addressing immediate challenges posed by radicalized individuals, as well as tackling the underlying factors contributing to their extremist inclinations. Findings from the DDDR studies reveal a broad spectrum of measures addressing varied themes, predominantly focused on measuring changes in attitudes and behaviors. The findings across indicators and measures in DDDR illuminate the multifaceted nature of these interventions and the intricate balance of addressing both immediate concerns and underlying extremist motivations.

Within DDDR, indicators highlight the intricate journey of reintegrating former VE offenders. From reshaping societal views on extremism to tracking ex-offenders' transformation, the focus is multifaceted. The ties between returnees and their communities emphasize both rehabilitation and societal cohesion. Collectively, these DDDR measures not only trace the steps toward rehabilitation and reintegration but also emphasize the broader goal of fostering cohesive, informed, and resilient societies.

This research lays a promising foundation on the measurement of DDDR programming, showcasing existing indicators and measures as examples of the current state of measurement, while highlighting the necessity for ongoing development and validation of theories of change (ToCs), indicators, and program approaches. While these examples serve as inspiration for creating contextualized and participatory monitoring and evaluation frameworks and can potentially contribute to establishing standard indicators for the P/CVE field, it is crucial to align them with the specific goals, outcomes, and local contexts to ensure accurate and effective evaluation. Further, the current indicators and measures demonstrate that there still exists a gap between observed changes in attitudes, behaviors, and social networks and actual impacts in VE outcomes. To advance the field of P/CVE measurement, researchers and implementers need to establish clear correlations between intermediate changes and tangible VE results to better identify which interventions lead to meaningful reductions in VE. This approach ensures better allocation of resources and development of a stronger evidence base, enabling more targeted and effective interventions in future strategies.

INTRODUCTION

VE stands as one of the most significant security threats facing the international community, with the frequency of violent acts and atrocities perpetrated by extremists escalating across the world. Despite the looming threats and known impacts of VE, designing indicators and measuring change in P/CVE interventions is inherently complex due to their multifaceted nature. Consequently, the actual impact of many interventions remains ambiguously documented, leaving the effectiveness of different approaches largely unassessed, especially in relation to VE goals. The overall absence of uniform indicators and measures to gauge intervention outcomes and participant change magnify other methodological and logistical challenges to P/CVE evaluation, hindering the field's ability to aggregate evidence and articulate what works.

To address these deficiencies and build on the emerging base of P/CVE measurement, this research aims to better understand the current state of measurement with regard to DDDR programming. These interventions play a pivotal role in P/CVE, not only addressing the immediate challenges posed by radicalized individuals, but also tackling the underlying factors contributing to their extremist inclinations. The following report explores the general characteristics of DDDR studies that include explicit indicators, and measures and common measurement trends across DDDR indicators, including related examples, to determine what, exactly, DDDR programs are seeking to change.

MEL REPORT METHODOLOGY

To address deficiencies in assessment of P/CVE measurements and build on the emerging base of P/CVE measurement, this research complements an extensive systematic mixed method review of relevant P/CVE literature to extract, analyze, and curate P/CVE indicators and measures across three primary programming responses: (1) *prevention (PV)*; (2) *containment/interdiction (CI)*; and (3) *disengagement, deradicalization, rehabilitation, and reintegration (DDRR)*.

Many of the included studies fell across multiple programming responses and ToCs, and even though all attempts were made by multiple researchers to separate them, the strong overlap of studies across programming responses and ToCs reflects the field's current programming and funding practice. While in theory there exist strong distinctions, this is not reflected in current practice. This suggests a critical need for more rigorous, specific, and nuanced methodologies in measuring and differentiating the impacts of various P/CVE interventions. Addressing this will enhance the effectiveness and specificity of P/CVE strategies, leading to more accurate assessments and improved outcomes.

An analysis of the research and existing literature led to a focus on exploring trends in measuring changes in attitudes, behaviors, relationship and social networks, and capacity building in evaluation of P/CVE programs. This report presents the findings from the review of DDDR interventions. A detailed description of this research's methodology is available in the accompanying *P/CVE Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning: Methodology* report.

INCLUDED STUDIES

The finalized P/CVE systematic mixed method review contained 25 studies related to DDDR, of which 10 (40%) contained explicit indicators. In total, 130 indicators were extracted for further analysis, with an average of 13 indicators per DDDR studies.

The studies employed a wide variety of program activities to achieve DDDR goals. Vocational training stood out as the primary focus. This encompassed skills development in market access, livelihoods, mentorship, and entrepreneurship aimed at amplifying beneficiaries' employability and fostering income-generation. Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) also featured prominently, addressing the needs of VE offenders, returnees, and their families. Awareness raising and/or narrative creation activities was also prevalent across studies, particularly for fostering positive perceptions of returnees through various mediums, like social media and radio. Additionally, network building activities, pivotal for reinforcing one's social support infrastructure, especially among family and peers, were spotlighted in DDDR research.

Understanding the context and methodological approach of studies with explicit DDDR indicators is crucial for understanding the current measurement landscape. A study's context impacts the indicators' applicability and universality, while its

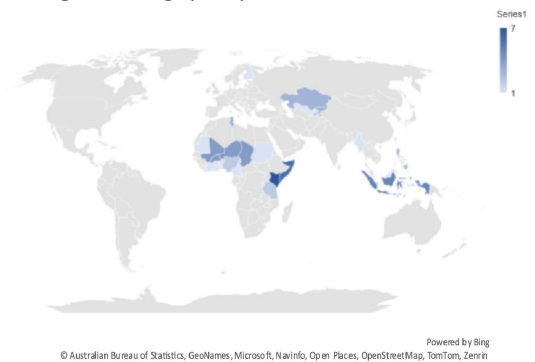
methodology speaks to the indicators' reliability and validity. By examining these aspects, one gains insights into the strength of the evidence behind the indicators and their adaptability in the ever-evolving P/CVE landscape. However, it is important to acknowledge that while these are best practices in theory, in practice, one often sees less consistency and encounters numerous methodological limitations. These challenges can significantly affect the interpretation and applicability of the findings. Ultimately, a deep-dive into these study characteristics provides a clearer picture of current P/CVE measurements and paves the way for future advancements, helping to refine shared definitions of success. This section provides information related to the geographic context, types of studies, research methodology, and publication and evaluation timelines of the 10 DDDR studies that contained indicators.

Geographic Reach

DDRR research was conducted in nine countries. Indonesia, Niger, and Kyrgyzstan emerged as the primary research locations, accounting for 17% of the studies respectively. The number of countries may not match the number of resources, as some studies focus on the same or multiple countries. On a broader regional scale, West Africa led in research frequency, followed by Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Central Asia.

The types of documents are predominantly (81%) organizational self-published programmatic evaluations with only 19% published as journal submissions (research reports, academic papers, and case studies).

Figure 1: Geographic spread of DDDR research



Document Types

The types of documents are predominantly (80%) organizational self-published programmatic evaluations with only 20% published as journal submissions (research reports, academic papers, and case studies).

Timeline Publication and Evaluation

The majority of DDDR studies were published in the last two years, with 60% (N=6) published between 2021 and 2022. 2021 witnessed the pinnacle of research publications at 40% (N=4), succeeded by 2022 at 20% (N=2), underlining the burgeoning interest in DDDR research.¹

Studies were also coded to determine the time elapsed between program implementation and evaluation. Notably, 40% (N=4) of included studies did not include substantial information on the timeline of the program implemented and/or the evaluation conducted. Conversely, all evaluations for which data was available (60%, N=6) were endline evaluations.²

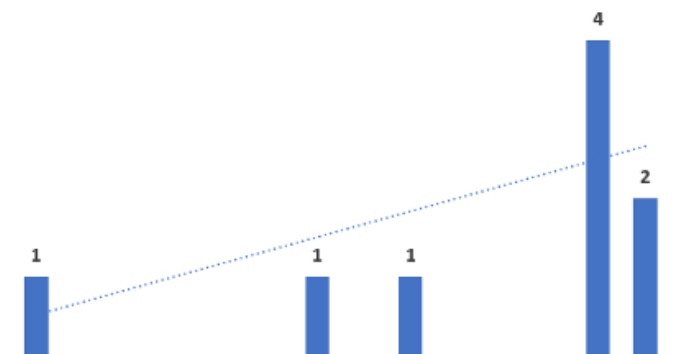


Figure 2: Timeline of publication of DDDR studies

¹ One resource included in the sample did not provide any timeline publication data; as such, it is not depicted in Figure 2.

² Endline evaluation reflects evaluations conducted within the last three months of program implementation up to 1-year post program implementation.

Methodology: Research Design, Evaluation, Analysis, and Limitations

The research design of DDDR studies is most commonly reported as mixed methods and multi-methods³, reflecting 80% of included studies. The second most common research designs were qualitative and non-randomized studies (10% each respectively). There were no DDDR studies that exhibited indicators and applied quantitative descriptive nor randomized control trial study designs.

DDRR studies are most commonly reported as mixed (40%) or multi-methods (40%) research designs. Nearly all studies (90%) used more than one method of data collection. The most common type of data collection includes key informant interviews and enumerated and self-administered surveys (90% each), followed by focus groups (70%), document/desk review (50%), and observations, social media statistics, and publicly available secondary data (10% each).

73% of the corpus examined the effect the intervention had on participants and whether these effects matched the objectives. Few studies (18%) also executed process evaluations, which focus on the actors that determine or influence the implementation of the program or project activities and provide insight into the changes that happen during them. The type of evaluation was undeterminable for 9% of DDDR studies.

Research Design	N	%
Mixed Methods Studies	4	40%
Multi-Methods Studies	4	40%
Qualitative Studies	1	10%
Randomized Control Trial Studies	1	10%
Quantitative Descriptive Studies	0	0%
Non-Randomized Studies	0	0%

Table 1: Research design of DDDR studies

Analysis Methods	N	%
Descriptive Statistics	6	60%
Thematic Analyses	2	20%
Comparative Analysis	2	20%
Inferential Statistics	2	20%
Correlation and Association	1	10%
Content and Discourse Analyses	1	10%
Case Study and Ethnography	1	10%
Theory of Change/Hypothesis Testing Analysis	1	10%
Contribution Analysis	1	10%

Table 2: Analysis methods of DDDR indicators

Study Limitation	Rank
Methodological Challenges and Limitations	1
Stakeholder Engagement and Cooperation Challenges	2
Logistical and Environmental Challenges	3
Security and Safety Concerns	4
Resource Constraints	5
Cultural and Societal Factors	6
Operational and Technical Challenges	7
Specific Regional and National Contexts	8
Project Adaptation or Change in Focus	9
Data Interpretation and Generalizability Challenges	10

Table 3: Ranked list of study limitations of DDDR resources

All DDDR studies reported analysis methods, and over half (60%) used more than one method of data analysis. Of the types of analysis methods used, 53% were quantitative in design, 35% were qualitative, and 12% were mixed methods. The most prevalent method of analyses were descriptive statistics (60% of studies); thematic analyses, comparative analyses, and inferential statistics (20% each); and correlation and association, content and discourse, case study and ethnography, theory of change/hypothesis testing, and contribution (10% each).

DDRR studies included in the analysis encountered a variety of limitations, with 100% reporting at least one explicit study limitation. The most common reported limitations include methodological challenges, stakeholder engagement and cooperations, and logistical and environmental challenges.

³ Multi-Methods Studies are studies that employed a combination of methods that did not meet the minimum criteria of social science research to be considered a Mixed Methods Study.

Of particular interest to MEL, methodological constraints included limitations related to lack of randomization and control groups, limited sample sizes, lack of baseline data, the subjective nature of the data, and problems with heterogeneity of sample. Challenges in stakeholder engagement also presented distinct limitations, including issues collecting unbiased data, particularly from government officials, and accessing key sample populations. Limitations in data interpretation and memory included issues with recall bias and social-desirability bias.



DDRR Recommendation:

Explore creative avenues to increase sample sizes in studies.

The DDDR findings are commonly based on a very small sample size and highlight the need for more extensive research. Larger studies or meta-analyses can enhance the validity and generalizability of findings.

DDRR INDICATORS AND MEASURES

DDRR interventions play a pivotal role in P/CVE. Unlike in PV and CI programming, DDDR programs are directed at former VE offenders and current participators/sympathizers of VE. DDDR programming not only addresses the immediate challenges posed by radicalized individuals, but also tackles the underlying factors contributing to their extremist inclinations. However, there are many types of approaches to DDDR, reflecting different ToCs, target groups, analysis levels, and outcomes. To better understand current trends in measurement, the following section presents findings, and related examples, of current DDDR indicators and measures to determine what DDDR programs are seeking to change and at what level.

Less than half of the included studies (40%) explicitly present disaggregated information on at least one of their indicators. In total 298 of the coded indicators (24%), explicitly present disaggregation, resulting in a total of 12 discrete disaggregation

themes. The most common type of indicator disaggregate is gender, followed by geographic location, direct/indirect beneficiaries, and community members.

Disaggregates

Over half of the studies explicitly present disaggregation information on at least one of the indicators used. In total 70 of the coded indicators (54%) explicitly present disaggregation, resulting in a total of 10 disaggregation themes. The most common type of indicator disaggregate is geographic location, followed by community members, direct/indirect beneficiaries, and gender.

Indicator Disaggregation	N	%
No Disaggregation Specified	60	46%
Geographic Location	31	24%
Community Members	28	22%
Direct/Indirect Beneficiaries	20	15%
Gender	14	11%
Age	8	6%
Professional Role	2	2%
Intervention Type	2	2%
Document Type	1	1%
Type of Direct Beneficiaries	1	1%
Type of Prison Sentence	1	1%

Table 4: Types of disaggregates of DDDR Indicators



DDRR Recommendation: *Collect disaggregated data.*

Given that only 54% of studies provided disaggregation of at least one indicator, there is still a great need to make this standard practice. More granular data, such as age, gender, or socio-economic background, can provide insights into which interventions work best for specific sub-groups.

Types of Change

P/CVE programs aim to affect change across multiple dimensions, from shaping attitudes, to altering behaviors, to increasing social networks, to building capacity generally. To develop a structure for analysis, this research analyzed and coded⁴ the 130 indicators scraped from the DDDR studies across four distinct dimensions: attitudes, behaviors, relationships and social networks, and capacity building.

Usually, studies have indicators that span different types of change; only two DDDR studies had indicators that were coded within just one type of change. Most commonly, DDDR studies have indicators assessing two types of change, with the most prevalent combination being attitudes and behaviors. The most common type of change being measured in DDDR programs is attitude change. Only one study in the DDDR corpus does not include attitude-oriented indicators.

Types of Change	N	%
Attitudes	80	62%
Behaviors	38	29%
Attitudes/Behaviors	3	2%
Relationships & Social Networks	7	5%
Capacity Building	2	2%

Table 5: Types of Change of DDDR Indicators

Indicator Levels

P/CVE programs encompass a multi-tiered approach to counter radicalization and VE. These tiers—spanning from individual factors, through community dynamics, to national and systemic issues—represent the levels of change a program aims to achieve and subsequently measure in their indicators. Together, these levels create a holistic P/CVE strategy, merging personal transformation, community resilience, and structural adjustments to tackle the complexities of VE. Within DDDR, over half (55%) of indicators measure change at the individual (micro) level, 36% measure change at the community (meso-level), and only 9% measure change at the national (macro) level.

The following analysis of indicator themes, types of change, and their examples provides a sub-analysis of indicator levels across each.

Indicator Levels, Themes, and Examples

Themes were extracted through a thematic analysis⁵ of indicators across each of the four types of change and results are presented below based on the type of change.

⁴ Please reference the *Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning (MEL): Methodology* report for more explanation on the type of change analysis approach employed in this research.

⁵ Please reference the *Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning (MEL): Methodology* report for more explanation on the thematic analysis approach employed in this research.

Attitudes

In the 83⁶ DDDR indicators that address changes in attitudes, 17 themes were developed, and the table below presents more information on the most prevalent themes and their indicator levels.

Table 6: Change in attitudes themes and indicator levels for DDDR indicators

Themes: Changes in Attitudes	N	%	Individual (Micro)		Community (Meso)		National (Macro)	
			N	%	N	%	N	%
Perceptions of VE	23	28%	15	65%	8	35%	0	0%
Acceptance of Ex-Offenders	16	19%	5	31%	11	69%	0	0%
Ex-Prisoners' Attitudes on Integration	12	14%	11	92%	1	8%	0	0%
Knowledge of VE	5	6%	0	0%	5	100%	0	0%
Impact of Program	5	6%	4	80%	1	20%	0	0%
Openness to Alternate Narratives	4	5%	1	25%	3	75%	0	0%

Within DDDR indicators assessing attitude change, several distinct themes emerge. **Perceptions of VE** and **knowledge of VE** together form the bedrock of understanding and awareness—highlighting changes in societal standpoints and potential misconceptions about extremism. The dynamics of reintegration are captured through the themes of **acceptance of ex-offenders** and **ex-prisoners' attitudes on integration**, offering insights into both community reception and the personal aspirations of former VE actors. Furthermore, the impact of training speaks to the success of rehabilitative measures, while openness to alternate narratives gauges the cognitive flexibility of individuals, revealing their receptiveness to diverse ideologies.

Attitude-related indicators were predominantly focused on changes at the individual and community level; however, they were reported across all three indicator levels. Studies assessed attitude changes occurring within the personal/psychological realm 55% of the time, within or between communities, including subgroups of a community 41% of the time, and at the national or macro-level 4% of the time.

Table 7: Indicator examples of attitudes change for PV indicators

Themes: Changes in Attitudes	Indicator Examples	Measure Examples	Measure Option Examples
Perceptions of VE	Personal perception towards violence extremism and peace narratives	Q1. Under what condition(s) do you think it is justified to engage in violence? You can choose more than one.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When myself or my family is insulted or threatened When my belief or religion is insulted or threatened When my ethnic background is insulted or threatened When my ideology or political choice is insulted or threatened

6 This includes indicators that assess both attitudes and behaviors.

Themes: Changes in Attitudes	Indicator Examples	Measure Examples	Measure Option Examples
Perceptions of VE (cont.)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When my voice is unheard • When my livelihood is threatened • Others
Acceptance of Ex-Offenders or Ex-Combatants Reintegrating Back Into Society	Personal perception towards Ex-Offenders reintegration	<p>Q1. If you are about to meet or interact with a terrorist convict who just came out of prison, what would be your expectation about this person?</p> <p>Q2. What will you do if a former terrorist convict chooses to rent a house in your neighborhood?</p>	<p>Refer to Q1: Open ended</p> <p>Refer to Q2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot say • I will try my best to prevent him/her be part of my neighborhood • I will welcome him/her as a new part of my neighborhood • I will let others decide on this issue • I will reluctantly accept him/her • I don't care, I never think of this as a problem • Other
Ex-Prisoners' Attitudes on Integration, Deradicalization Process, and Outlook on Life	Level of satisfaction with the treatment by family members and caregivers	<p>Q1. Do you feel that family members are doing much to make you feel part of them? Why or why not?</p> <p>Q2. The rehabilitation program has helped me. My situation has improved since the rehabilitation program began.</p>	<p>Refer to Q1: Open ended</p> <p>Refer to Q2: 7-point scale (1= strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)</p>
Knowledge of VE	Change in community perception towards children associated with armed forces and armed groups	<p>Q1. Who are children associated with armed forces and armed groups?</p> <p>Q2. What is the children's situation compared to before?</p>	Open ended
Impact of Program	Reported impact of the project training	<p>Q1. Do you use the knowledge gained as a result of the training provided by Search for Common Ground in your work?</p> <p>Q2. Has the knowledge gained as a result of the training provided improved the quality of your work?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a moderate extent • To a great extent

Themes: Changes in Attitudes	Indicator Examples	Measure Examples	Measure Option Examples
Impact of Program (cont.)		Q3. To what extent did you find the training provided useful for you?	
Openness to Alternate Narratives	Perceptions of project's radio show	Q1. How many people create discussions around the program, and how/what do they discuss?	Open ended

Behaviors

Within the 41⁷ DDDR indicators that address changes in behaviors, nine themes were developed. The table below presents more information on the most prevalent themes and their indicator levels.

Table 8: Change in behaviors themes and indicator levels for DDDR indicators

Themes: Changes in Behaviors	N	%	Individual (Micro)		Community (Meso)		National (Macro)	
			N	%	N	%	N	%
Ex-Offender Training/Participation	12	29%	9	75%	2	17%	1	8%
Engagement with Activities	14	24%	8	57%	6	43%	0	0%
Interaction with VE Content	4	10%	1	25%	3	75%	0	0%
Adoption of Laws/Policies	4	10%	2	50%	0	0%	2	50%
Recidivism/Sentencing	2	5%	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%

Several salient themes emerged from studies' DDDR measurements assessing behavior change. At the forefront, **ex-offender training/participation** signals the efforts to rehabilitate and retrain former VE offenders, laying a foundation for successful reintegration. **Engagement with activities** underscores an ex-offender's active involvement in constructive tasks, serving as a barometer of their dedication to a transformed life. Concurrently, the **interaction with VE content** is a testament to their current stance towards extremism, revealing potential lingering influences. The **adoption of laws/policies** reflects a broader societal commitment, translating into structural efforts to counter VE. Lastly, **recidivism/sentencing** emerges as a direct metric of relapse, pinpointing the rate at which ex-offenders might revert to extremist activities.

Behavior-related indicators were predominantly focused on changes at the individual and community levels; however, they were reported across all three indicator levels. Behavioral changes occurred within the personal/psychological realm 54% of the time, changes occurring within or between communities, including subgroups of a community 29% of the time, and changes occurring at the national or macro-level 17% of the time. Changes at the macro-level were particularly rooted in governmental sentencing and recidivism statistics.

⁷ This includes indicators that assess both behaviors and attitudes.

Table 9: Indicator examples of behavior change for DDDR indicators

Themes: Changes in Behaviors	Indicator Examples	Measure Examples	Measure Option Examples
Ex-Offender Training/ Participation	Effectiveness of local reintegration forums	<p>Q1. How many local reintegration forums you attended?</p> <p>Q2. Did your agency/institution provide suggestions or offer support on reintegration activities in your area?</p> <p>Q3. Toward how many families of returnees, deportees, or former convicted terrorists your agency/institution solicited suggestions or offered support?</p> <p>Q4. How many documents summarizing learning outcomes from local reintegration forums were forwarded to other government agencies?</p>	<p>Refer to Q1, Q3, and Q4: Open ended</p> <p>Refer to Q2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Not sure
Engagement with Activities	Total # of initiatives around tolerance and diversity, which training participants took the lead in organizing	<p>Q1. To your knowledge, how many initiatives around tolerance and diversity that training participants organized in your area?</p> <p>Q2. Who led the initiatives?</p>	<p>Refer to Q1: Open ended</p> <p>Refer to Q2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • Non-government/CSOs • Women • Youth • Community leaders • Myself
Interaction with VE Content	Violent extremism and peace narratives in social media: action and response	<p>Q1. Have you ever intentionally visited or viewed websites or social media accounts with violent extremist contents?</p> <p>Q2. If yes, please mention the name of websites or social media accounts below (write as many as you remember)</p>	<p>Refer to Q1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p>Refer to Q2: Open ended</p>
Adoption of Laws/Policies	# of laws and policies on prevention of radicalization to violence & management of violent extremist offenders endorsed	Count of number of regulatory documents developed with the project expert support, endorsed	Count

Themes: Changes in Behaviors	Indicator Examples	Measure Examples	Measure Option Examples
Recidivism/Sentencing	Recidivism rate among violent extremist offenders	Numerator: Percentage of violent extremist offenders who repeatedly committed crime Denominator: Percentage decrease in the number of repeatedly committed crimes by violent extremist offender	Percentage

The realm of DDDR measurements assessing behavior change pivots around several salient themes. At the forefront, ex-offender training/participation signals the efforts to rehabilitate and retrain former VE offenders, laying a foundation for successful reintegration. The engagement with activities underscores an ex-offender’s active involvement in constructive tasks, serving as a barometer of their dedication to a transformed life. Concurrently, the interaction with VE content is a testament to their current stance towards extremism, revealing potential lingering influences. The adoption of laws/policies reflects a broader societal commitment, translating into structural efforts to counter VE. Lastly, recidivism/sentencing emerges as a direct metric of relapse, pinpointing the rate at which ex-offenders might revert to extremist activities.

Behavior-related indicators were predominantly focused on changes at the individual and community level; however, they were reported across all three indicator levels. Behavioral changes occur within the personal/psychological realm 54% of the time, changes occurring within or between communities (including subgroups of a community) 29% of the time, and changes occurring at the national or macro-level 17% of the time. Changes at the macro-level particularly were rooted in governmental sentencing and recidivism statistics.

Relationships and Social Networks

Within the seven DDDR indicators that measure social networks, four themes were developed, and the table below presents more information on the most prevalent themes and their indicator levels.

Table 10: Change in relationships & social networks themes and indicator levels for DDDR indicators

Themes: Changes in Social Networks & Relationships	N	%	Individual (Micro)		Community (Meso)		National (Macro)	
			N	%	N	%	N	%
Personal Relationships with VEO	3	43%	1	33%	1	33%	1	33%
Collaboration between Stakeholders	2	29%	1	50%	0	0%	1	50%
Measures of Social Cohesion	1	14%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Engagement with Activities	1	14%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%

Within DDDR, assessing changes in relationships and social networks surfaces distinct themes. **Personal relationships with violent extremist organizations (VEOs)** provide insight into how deeply an individual remains embedded within extremist circles and whether they are severing or maintaining these ties. **Collaboration between stakeholders** speaks to a broader cooperative framework, underlining the importance of multi-faceted efforts to reintegrate ex-offenders.

Measures of social cohesion delves into the strength and unity of community bonds, a pivotal indicator of whether DDDR initiatives foster a sense of belonging among returnees. Meanwhile, repeated **engagement with activities** serves as both a behavior and relationship metric, reflecting the extent to which former VEOs are integrating into community and group initiatives.

Relational-related indicators were predominantly focused on changes at the individual level; however, they were reported across all three indicator levels. Social network or relational changes occur within the personal/psychological realm 57% of the time, within or between communities, including subgroups of a community 14% of the time, at the national or macro-level 29% of the time.

Table 11: Indicator examples of relationships & social networks change for DDDR indicators

Themes: Changes in Relationships & Social Networks	Indicator Examples	Measure Examples	Measure Option Examples
Personal Relationships with VEO	# of violent extremist offenders and members of their families involved in social reintegration programs	Count	Count
Collaboration between Stakeholders	% of key state and non-state actors that feel that collaboration on sharing of best practices of prevention of violent extremism between Central Asian countries increased	<p>Q1. In the last 2 years, to what extent do you think the collaboration on sharing best practices for preventing violent extremism (PVE) between CA countries increased?</p> <p>Q2. To what extent was/were the conference(s) organized helpful for sharing experiences?</p> <p>Q3. To what extent did conference(s) facilitate the exchange of best practices and experience for the prevention of violent extremism between Central Asian Countries?</p> <p>Q4. To what extent did the conference(s) increase collaboration between Central Asian Countries?</p> <p>Q5. To what extent did the conference(s) help you to establish/strengthen the connection with other Central Asian partners?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a moderate extent • To a great extent

Themes: Changes in Relationships & Social Networks			
Indicator Examples	Measure Examples	Measure Option Examples	
Collaboration between Stakeholders (cont.)		Q6. Has the knowledge gained at the conference had an impact on your work?	
Measures of Social Cohesion	% of migrant workers and their families benefiting from the social cohesion and capacity-building initiatives organised by key state and non-state actors in two Central Asian countries	Q1. if they participated in any capacity-building or social cohesion initiatives organised by local state and non-state actors Q2. if their relationships with other members of the local community have improved in the past two years to further explore the theme of social cohesion	Refer to Q1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No Refer to Q2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migration awareness raising • Migrant rights related initiative • Childcare and education • Employment related • Medical support • Psychosocial support for migrants and their families • Housing • Legal and document related • Other
Engagement with Activities	# of vulnerable persons who benefited from community initiatives to prevent extremism and recidivism	# of communities' beneficiaries	Count

Capacity Building

Within the two DDDR indicators that measure capacity, two themes were developed, and the table below presents more information on the most prevalent themes and their indicator levels.

Table 12: Change in capacity building themes and indicator levels for DDDR indicators

Themes: Changes in Capacity Building	N	%	Individual (Micro)		Community (Meso)		National (Macro)	
			N	%	N	%	N	%
Capacity to Support Oneself	1	50%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Exposure of Knowledge of VE	1	50%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%

Given the limited number of indicators related to capacity building within DDDR programs, both indicators were provided as individual themes.

Given the limited number of indicators related to capacity building within DDDR programs, both indicators were provided as individual themes. Capacity building-related indicators were predominantly focused on changes at the individual and community level. Capacity changes occur within the personal/psychological realm 50% of the time, and within or between communities, including subgroups of a community 50% of the time.

Table 13: Indicator examples of capacity building change for DDDR indicators

Themes: Changes in Capacity Building	Indicator Examples	Measure Examples	Measure Option Examples
Capacity to Support Oneself	% of pentiti and released ex-prisoners having a lawful and remunerated activity, enabling them to support themselves and their families	Count	Count
Exposure of Knowledge of VE	% of leaders in project areas who can attribute an increase in people's knowledge of potential solutions to extremism and how to engage the relevant authorities to Search for Common Ground's project intervention	Do you think XXX project interventions increased people's knowledge of potential solutions to extremism and how to engage relevant authorities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Not sure

Indicator Themes and Examples Recommendations



Strengthen DDDR behavior metrics.

While assessing attitudes is critical, it is equally important to ensure behavioral change. Additional measures tracking tangible behavior change, especially moving beyond individually-reported behaviors, can help verify that changes in attitudes translate to action.



Expand measures for evaluating capacity building/training impacts.

Given the emphasis on capacity building and training in DDDR programming, ensure that these indicators and measures are not only about content delivery but also about transformative thinking, critical evaluation, ideological resilience, and the application of these skills and knowledge acquisition on behaviors and indicators related to P/CVE.



Develop and test indicators on community impacts.

Future measurements should incorporate indicators that gauge community receptivity and systemic change, ensuring that individual transformations are synchronized with and translated to community resilience.



Prioritize longitudinal studies.

To ascertain the long-term impact and effectiveness of DDDR programs, more longitudinal studies are recommended. This will also help in tracking potential recidivism over extended periods.

Level of Indicators and Interventions

DDRR programs and their subsequent measures encompass a multi-level approach to provide pathways for individuals to abandon extremist views and actions and return to society. However, there can frequently be a disconnect between the intervention level and what a program is actually measuring based on their indicators. For instance, a reintegration program designed to address community fears and stigmatization of returnees may only assess individual attitudes or knowledge acquisition—i.e., change at the individual level. This incongruity between the change a program is designed to impact and what it is actually assessing may lead to misleading interpretations by underestimating or overestimating a program's impact.

To assess alignment between level of indicators and their interventions as a proxy of indicator validity, studies were coded on whether their intended intervention level matched their indicator levels. Studies could either mis-match, match, or exceed the change the program originally intended to achieve. Matches denote that the level of measurement—of at least

one indicator⁸—matches or exceeds the level of intervention. Mismatch-Less Than implies that the indicators presented measured change at a level less than the intervention—e.g., indicators were focused on change at the individual-level, but the reported goal/outcomes of the intervention were focused on change at the community level. Finally, Mismatch-Exceed implies that the indicators presented measured change a level greater than the intervention’s reported goal/outcomes, implying attempts to measure or explore the impact of the intervention on higher-order outcomes.

The intersection of the intervention and indicator levels was examined across all DDDR indicators. The majority (90%) of DDDR studies had indicators that matched or exceeded their level of intervention. Only one study had indicators

Indicator VS Intervention Level	N	%
Match	5	50%
Mismatch-Exceed	4	40%
Mismatch-Less Than	1	10%

Table 14: Level of indicator compared to intervention for DDDR

that measured change at the micro-level, but the intervention aimed to affect change at the meso-level. These findings suggest that the majority of the sample (90%) has effectively aligned their stated objectives with their evaluation practices. However, the 10% incongruity suggests that a smaller portion of the interventions might be overlooking broader community impacts by solely focusing on individual-level measurements, which could limit the comprehensive understanding of the intervention’s effects and potential areas for improvement.

Recognizing that 90% of DDDR studies have successfully ensured that their indicators are in line with or even exceed their intervention levels is a testament to the meticulous planning and evaluation strategies adopted by many researchers in this domain. Such precision underscores the credibility and robustness of these DDDR efforts. Nonetheless, the 10% that did not align indicates a potential gap in capturing broader community impacts by focusing solely on individual metrics. Such an oversight could curtail a complete understanding of an intervention’s multifaceted impacts. Yet, it is essential to approach these interpretations with caution, given that the findings are based on a relatively small sample of just 10 studies. Thus, while these insights are enlightening, they underscore the need for more extensive research to validate and build upon these observations.



DDRR Recommendation:

Ensure alignment between indicators and intervention levels.

Given the substantial alignment of indicators and intervention levels in 90% of DDDR studies, it is crucial to maintain this rigorous approach across all studies. Aim for meticulous alignment across studies to accurately capture and represent the impact of interventions. Address the misalignment seen in 10% of studies by training practitioners and refining evaluation strategies, ensuring that the depth and breadth of interventions at all levels, from micro to macro, are properly assessed and understood. This reduces the risk of misinterpretation, enhances decision-making, and ensures the maximum impact of P/CVE efforts.

⁸ It is important to note that program outcomes and impact should not be measured exclusively by one indicator only, so these analyses are a way to identify potential incongruities or misinterpretations that could under/overestimate a program’s impact and lead to questionable indicator validity.

CONCLUSION

DDRR interventions, as intricate facets of P/CVE, cater uniquely to the segment of the population formerly involved with or sympathetic toward VE. These programs aim to not only mitigate the immediate threats posed by these individuals, but also delve deeper to address the foundational reasons behind their extremist leanings.

This research effort explores the general characteristics of DDDR studies that include explicit indicators, measures, and common measurement trends across DDDR indicators, including related examples, to better understand what DDDR programs are currently seeking to change. It is limited to the extent that evaluations publish and explicitly share this information, a practice that is still not common across the field. As such, it is possible that valuable resources may have been missed, leading to conclusions being drawn on partial data.

Understanding the specific themes across the different types of change provides insights into the nuanced approach of DDDR interventions. Within attitudes, DDDR programs frequently explore *perceptions and knowledge of VE*, offering a lens into societal shifts and the challenging task of dispelling extremist myths. Indicators such as *ex-offender acceptance* and *attitudes towards reintegration* provide nuanced insights into how communities perceive former VE actors and how these individuals view their prospects of rejoining society. *Impact of training* illuminates the success of rehabilitation efforts, and *openness to alternative narratives* becomes a litmus test for the adaptability and resilience of ex-VE participants in embracing diverse ideologies. Within behaviors, indicator themes spotlight the transformative journey of ex-offenders. Indicators like *participation in training* and *engagement with constructive activities* underline their commitment to turning over a new leaf. Conversely, *interactions with extremist content* stand as critical gauges of lingering extremist affinities. On a broader scale, *adoption of laws/policies* embodies societal dedication to countering VE, while *recidivism rates* lay bare the persistent challenges related to the potential reversion to extremist tendencies. In the realm of relationships and networks, DDDR evaluations hone in on the complex dynamics between ex-offenders and their surrounding communities. Themes such as *personal affiliations with VEOs* and *collaborative efforts between stakeholders* serve as indicators, presenting a tableau of the intricate task of reintegrating former radicals. Meanwhile, metrics like *social cohesion* and *engagement in community initiatives* portray both the triumphs and tribulations of fostering a sense of belonging and integration among returnees. Finally, in capacity building, DDDR strategies navigate themes of empowerment and knowledge dissemination. Indicators like *empowerment to support oneself* spotlight the personal empowerment journey, whereas *exposure to knowledge of VE* sheds light on efforts to dispel extremist misinformation. While the number of indicators within this realm is relatively limited, their inclusion underscores the necessity of robust capacity-building and continuous learning in the overarching mission to counter VE.

A promising observation within the measurement of DDDR programming is that the majority of DDDR studies ensure their objectives are mirrored in their measures. This alignment is a testament to the maturing field of PV programing. However, the existing incongruence underscores potential blind spots in capturing community-wide effects by concentrating predominantly on individual indicators. While these insights prove invaluable, they are drawn from a limited study pool, prompting a call for more expansive research to corroborate and enrich these findings.

The findings presented herein lay a promising foundation on the state of measurement of DDDR programming; however, much work still needs to be done as the field continues to mature and develop tested and validated ToCs and programming approaches. This research effort serves as a beginning effort to look across the field of DDDR indicators and measures and understand how programs are defining, measuring, and testing different outcomes in PVE. The indicators, measures, and major themes presented in this research are meant to serve as examples of the current state of measurement and should not be taken as a recommendation for their use across all DDDR programs. Program indicators and measures should be developed to align with specific program goals and outcomes that are informed by the unique local and lived-reality of the context in which a program will occur. However, these examples can serve as inspiration when designing new program monitoring and evaluation frameworks and creating indicators to better refine and contextualize indicators, measures, and

tools for each specific program. They can further act as a starting point to define and test a set of core standard indicators for the P/CVE field that could serve as a foundational framework to ensure consistent evaluation criteria across different programs and contexts and help advance the field towards aggregating results and studying collective impact of P/CVE programming.

P/CVE FIELD-BASED MEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Unique recommendations resulting from the DRR findings presented within this report are incorporated within the report sections. The following overarching recommendations were informed by individual study recommendations, challenges, and best practices, as well as broader insights from research to enhance the state of P/CVE monitoring, evaluation, and learning. Some recommendations have been made by the researchers based on their subject-matter expertise.

1. **Develop and test new indicators:** As the field of P/CVE measurement matures, it is crucial to develop and test new indicators across a variety of contexts. Existing indicators should not simply be copied and repeated in a cookie-cutter fashion.
2. **Explore indicators and measures from other sectors:** To strengthen the robustness of VE programming metrics, it is essential to look beyond the P/CVE sector. Incorporating tested indicators and methodologies from fields like public health, education, and psychology can offer innovative perspectives and tools. These cross-sectoral approaches might reveal unexplored avenues to evaluate program effectiveness and impact, ensuring a more holistic assessment and increasing the potential for interdisciplinary collaboration.
3. **Develop appropriate time-bound indicators:** Recognizing that many changes that interventions seek to achieve, such as improved trust, social cohesion, etc. take considerable time to effect and are often influenced by external factors outside the control of a program, it is vital that indicators be aligned with realistic expectations for change. It is crucial to ensure that indicators both capture achievable and realistic changes within an intervention timeframe and lay a foundation for capturing the nuances of long-term change contributing to broader phenomena like developing resilience and social cohesion.
4. **Connect changes in attitudes, behaviors, social networks, and capacity building to VE outcomes:** It is essential to bridge the gap between observed changes in attitudes, behaviors, and social networks, and actual impacts in VE outcomes. By establishing clear correlations between these intermediate changes and tangible VE results, programs can better identify which interventions lead to meaningful reductions in VE. This approach ensures a more precise allocation of resources and enables more targeted and effective interventions in future strategies. However, to effectively test the association between intermediate changes and long-term P/CVE outcomes, P/CVE programs must develop explicit ToCs and approaches that stabilize their interventions, ensuring more consistent intermediate changes and sustained long-term impacts.
5. **Contextualize indicators:** Given the diversity in regions where P/CVE programs are implemented, it is critical to tailor indicators and measures to be culturally-sensitive. Recognizing the local dynamics ensures a more accurate measurement of how ideologies take root and how they can be effectively countered. A comprehensive approach that incorporates diverse indicators addressing various ethnic, religious, socio-economic, and political dimensions is essential for a thorough assessment of the multifaceted factors influencing VE. This expansion ensures that P/CVE measurements are not only contextually relevant but also resonate with the specific push and pull factors, cultural, and social dynamics of each region.

- 6. Develop and test core standard indicators:** Following the contextualization of indicators, the next step is to develop a degree of standardization in measurement across the P/CVE field. Whilst recognizing the dynamic and unique nature of different contexts in which P/CVE programs operate, there is still an imperative need to introduce a degree of standardization in measurement. The P/CVE field should collaborate to identify, develop, and rigorously test a set of core standard indicators. These metrics would serve as a foundational framework to ensure consistent evaluation criteria across different programs and geographies, promoting comparability and cross-referencing. This process of standardization, balanced with the need for contextualization, sets a quality benchmark for all P/CVE initiatives, ensuring both broad applicability and local relevance in P/CVE measurements.
- 7. Develop and integrate quantitative and qualitative measures:** To gain a comprehensive understanding of VE programming impacts, it is crucial to blend the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. While quantitative metrics deliver concrete data points and trends, qualitative research delves into the nuanced lived experiences and perceptions of community members. By seamlessly integrating findings from both approaches, evaluations can capture the full spectrum of program outcomes – from tangible results to subtle shifts in beliefs and attitudes. This holistic view is instrumental in refining and enhancing the effectiveness of VE interventions.
- 8. Engage diverse stakeholders in indicator design:** Engage a wider range of stakeholders in measurement design, including religious leaders, educators, community elders, and even former extremists. Their insights can refine indicators, making them more relevant and actionable.
- 9. Promote community feedback mechanisms:** Create platforms where program beneficiaries/participants and community members can give feedback on P/CVE programs. Their on-the-ground insights can identify gaps, potential pitfalls, or areas of improvement.
- 10. Regularly update/refine indicators and reporting mechanisms:** Ideologies evolve, and so should the indicators. Regularly review and update measurement tools to remain current and address emerging trends in extremist thought. Develop real-time monitoring systems and feedback loops that allow program implementers to make timely adjustments based on emerging trends and findings.
- 11. Fund capacity building for local research:** Invest in training local researchers and institutions to develop, test, and collect P/CVE measurements. This not only builds local expertise but also ensures that measurements are grounded in local realities.
- 12. Promote cross-program comparisons:** Encourage initiatives that allow for cross-comparison of P/CVE programs across different regions or countries. Such efforts can lead to best practice sharing and global collaboration.

By implementing these recommendations, the field of P/CVE programming can ensure more accurate, relevant, and actionable insights, driving more effective interventions tailored to the unique needs of each context.

DISENGAGEMENT, DERADICALIZATION, REHABILITATION, AND REINTEGRATION INCLUDED STUDIES WITH INDICATORS

Citation	Research Design	Location
Bangura, Ibrahim. <i>Supporting the Socio-Economic Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups Including the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) in Northeast Nigeria</i> . Search for Common Ground, 2021. https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Final-Evaluation-Report-June2021.pdf .	Multi-methods	Nigeria
Cherney, Adrian, and Emma Belton. "The Evaluation of Case-Managed Programs Targeting Individuals at Risk of Radicalisation." <i>Terrorism and Political Violence</i> 35, no. 4 (2021): 846–65. https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2021.1984236 .	Qualitative	Australia
<i>Final Evaluation—Kallo Lenio, Klla Founna: Ensemble Avançons Vers l'Avenir</i> . Search for Common Ground, 2020. https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/SFCG_EEU012_RAPPORT_EVALUATION_FINALE_09112020_vf_11Nov20.pdf#new_tab .	Mixed Methods	Niger
Hiariej, Eric, Ayu Diasti Rachmawati, Agustinus Moruk Taek, Mutiara Kurniasari, and Rizky Alif Alvian. <i>Reducing the Recruitment and Recidivism of Violent Extremists in Indonesia</i> . Search for Common Ground, 2017. https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/INA029_DOS_BC_external_Evaluation_Report_FINAL_2017.pdf .	Multi-methods	Indonesia
Igdoe, Abdoulaye. <i>Jandeniyo! Let's Talk About It: An Initiative to Support the Disengagement and Reintegration of Boko Haram/ISIS-WA Combatants and Affiliates in Niger</i> . Search for Common Ground, 2021. https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Final-Evaluation_Jandeniyo-Lets-Talk-about-it_April-2021.pdf .	Mixed Methods	Niger
Jailobaev, Temirlan, Kanykey Jailobaeva, Gulsaadat Baialieva, Gulnara Asilbekova, and Zeinep Eshmuratova. <i>Final Evaluation for the "Prevention of Violent Extremism in Central Asian Countries Through Strengthening Social Cohesion Among Labour Migrants, Returnees, and Their Families Project</i> . https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5db70e83fc0a966cf4cc42ea/t/6585ad7357de5a52c0230491/1703259508463/1464.pdf .	Mixed Methods	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan
Lumbantoruan, Christina. <i>Building Resilience through Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration to Prevent Violent Extremism in Indonesia</i> . Search for Common Ground, 2022. https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Final-Evaluation-Report_STD070.pdf .	Multi-methods	Indonesia
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Thapa, Rashmi. <i>Children's Voices: Children Associated With Armed Forces And Armed Groups</i> . Search for Common Ground, 2009. https://cnxus.org/resource/childrens-voices-children-associated-with-armed-forces-and-armed-groups-final-evaluation-report/ .	Multi-methods	Nepal
Webber, David, Marina Chernikova, Arie W. Kruglanski, Michele J. Gelfand, Malkanthi Hettiarachchi, Rohan Gunaratna, Marc-Andre Lafreniere, and Jocelyn J. Belanger. "Deradicalizing Detained Terrorists." <i>Political Psychology</i> 39, no. 3 (2017): 539–56. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/pops.12428 .	Quantitative non-randomized	Sri Lanka

