

# Guide to Evaluating Programs

FOR PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



"UNESCO Chair in Prevention of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism", Université de Sherbrooke, Concordia University, Université du Québec à Montréal

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# About this guide

This guide was developed as part of the PREV-IMPACT Canada research project, whose goal is to develop and implement Canadian models for evaluating programs and practices for prevention of violent extremism (PVE) and thereby ultimately to build the capacity of key PVE stakeholders in Canada.

As part of the PREV-IMPACT project, the UNESCO-PREV Chair has conducted a number of studies, including a study on how 57 PVE professionals from around the world view PVE program evaluation, an exploratory study on improving PVE program evaluation, and a systematic methodological review of past evaluations of PVE programs (Clément et al., 2021; Madriaza et al., 2021, 2022).

# The Chair's systematic review found many shortcomings in past PVE program evaluations.

### HERE ARE SOME OF THE SHORT-COMINGS FOUND

- Most of these evaluations had focused on describing the programs' activities rather than on how effective they were in preventing violent extremism or what issues were encountered in the implementation process.
- The PVE programs lacked the knowledge needed to design and carry out suitable evaluations.
- The absence of theories of change and evaluation plans at program outset made it harder for PVE programs to conduct evaluations later on.
- The quality of the indicators and methods used in these PVE evaluations was sometimes inadequate.
- > There were weaknesses in data collection, in particular regarding representation of the groups targeted by PVE interventions.
- Establishing causal links between program activities and outcomes was challenging.

- > There was little transparency regarding the data sources and their reliability.
- In many cases, the evaluations were summative (conducted at the end of a program cycle, to make judgments about it) rather than formative (conducted at the start and in the course of a program cycle, for purposes of learning and continuous improvement).
- Practitioners tended to perceive evaluations as institutional constraints imposed by program funders, though also recognizing their usefulness for improving practices.
- > Evaluations that involved less or little collaboration among stakeholders were not as successful.

In response to these observed shortcomings, the UNESCO-PREV Chair has developed the present evaluation guide, which will help to improve the quality and effectiveness of PVE programs in Canada.

This guide is intended mainly for managers, practitioners and other individuals involved in delivering PVE programs in Canada. In this guide, "practitioners" means the workers in all the professions involved in day-to-day activities of PVE programs, such as social workers, psychologists, and cultural mediators.

Users of this guide will find support for better integrating evaluation within other program responsibilities, for individual and collective benefit. This guide can help practitioners improve the quality of their practices, managers build their capacities for management and continuous improvement,

and funders demonstrate the effectiveness of their investments.

Because both PVE and program evaluation are such broad subjects, the authors of this guide have intentionally limited its scope so that it can be used as a tool for educating and training PVE professionals who work in Canada. Its content will be used in whole or in part to develop evaluation competencies within the various organizations involved in PVE in this country. Each part of this guide can be used separately to meet specific needs.

Throughout this guide, we have provided references to other sources where readers can acquire a deeper understanding of the subjects that it deals with. Although we have endeavored to find such reference materials both in English and in French, for some subjects we could not find references in both languages.

Table 1: What this guide is and is not



### WHAT IT IS:

- A practical guide that presents the essential basic elements of PVE program evaluation, including the associated ethical issues, clearly and concisely
- A guide that supports PVE practitioners in planning and carrying out PVE program evaluations and in using the data that they provide
- A foundation for training sessions and workshops on evaluating PVE programs
- A space for discussing and co-creating practices for evaluating PVE programs
- A basis for examining the ethical issues that may be encountered in evaluating PVE programs



### **WHAT IT IS NOT:**

- > A guide for designing scientific research
- An exhaustive methodological guide for collecting and analyzing data
- > A specialized training package on evaluation
- > A library of universal evaluation tools
- > An indicator bank
- > A guide that evaluates in the stead of PVE practitioners
- > A guide to best practices in PVE

Among the various types of PVE programs currently delivered in Canada, this guide does not cover evaluations of online PVE campaigns, because such evaluations call for a different methodology than evaluations of conventional PVE programs, and guides dealing specifically with evaluation of online PVE campaigns already exist. If you are planning to evaluate a program that combines conventional PVE interventions with online PVE campaigns, you should use this guide together with other guides that deal specifically with evaluating such campaigns.



### **FIND OUT MORE**

- For more information about online PVE campaigns, see the following two guides developed by the *Institute for Strategic Dialogue*:
  - The Counter-Narrative Handbook, which deals with designing and evaluating online PVE campaigns; and
  - > <u>The Counter-Narrative Monitoring & Evaluation Handbook</u>, which deals with monitoring and evaluating online PVE campaigns.

This guide will be updated continually to keep abreast of advances in knowledge regarding PVE, the work of the UNESCO-PREV Chair and the evaluation of PVE programs.

# Introduction

NO MATTER THEIR FIELD, PRACTITIONERS FACE SOME KEY OUESTIONS EVERY DAY.

- > How can we tell whether we have met our objectives?
- > If we have met them, for whom have we done so and under what circumstances?
- > Are we taking the right actions?
- > Are we meeting the needs of our various stakeholders?

The answers to these questions are just as important as the actions themselves. They allow practitioners to report their results, learn from the wisdom that stakeholders deploy every day, make necessary adjustments and the best use of their often-limited resources. Finding out what works, what doesn't, and why is essential for sound program development.

Although practitioners make observations to analyze and adjust their actions every day, these observations run the risks of being biased, of lacking an adequate overview, and of overlooking the experience of other people who are directly concerned by their actions. In contrast, program evaluations that apply rigorous methods and explicit criteria provide evidence that can enable stakeholders to answer the above questions.

The need to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of interventions is especially pressing in recently-developed fields that cannot rely on years of scientific research to ensure that interventions are of high quality and follow best practices. One such field is the prevention of violent extremism (PVE), which is a new conceptual and practical approach that differs greatly from but complements the traditional security response for fighting extremism-related violence.

In Canada, many organizations have become involved in PVE in recent years. As of 2020, the Canadian Practitioners Network for the Prevention of Radicalization and Extremist Violence (CPN-PREV) had identified 26 different programs for preventing radicalization and violent extremism in Canada (Hassan et al., 2020). The various mapping and inventorying initiatives by CPN-PREV and the UNESCO-PREV Chair have shown that the organizations have devoted much of their efforts to develop PVE intervention practices and programs, which has left them with little time for evaluating.

This document is a practical guide for organizations doing PVE work in Canada. It is designed to support them in evaluating the relevance, implementation and effectiveness of their programs so as to learn from them and continue to develop the field of PVE. Through the theoretical discussions, practical advice and tools presented in this guide, readers can learn the essential elements of PVE program evaluation.

# Structure of this guide

Section 1 of this guide provides an overview of evaluation in general and PVE program evaluation in particular. Sections 2, 3, and 4 discuss each of the three main phases usually involved in a PVE program evaluation: planning, conducting, and presenting and using the findings.

To go to any one of them, simply click its title.

Figure 1: Guide structure

### **01** OVERVIEW OF PVE PROGRAM EVALUATION **02** PLANNING A PVE PROGRAM EVALUATION 2.1 What aspects of a program to evaluate 1.1 What is evaluation? and why? 2.2 How to choose among evaluation 1.2 What are the differences among program approaches? evaluation, accountability reporting, and research? 2.3 For and with whom to conduct the evaluation? 1.3 What does evaluation in PEV contexts 2.4 When to conduct the evaluation? involve? 2.5 How to prepare for the evaluation? 1.4 What about ethics in PVE evaluation? 2.6 What to evaluate? 2.7 How to define the program's theory of change? 2.8 How to plan the execution of the evaluation? **03** CONDUCTING A PVE PROGRAM EVALUATION 2.9 How to write an evaluation plan? 3.1 How to choose among data collection methods? **04** REPORTING AND USING EVALUATION FINDINGS 3.2 How to collect data? 3.3 How to analyze data? 4.1 How to report evaluation findings? 3.4 How to draw conclusions and 4.2 How to encourage use of evaluation develop recommendations? findings?

# O1 Overview of PVE program evaluation

This section is designed to raise PVE practitioners' awareness of program evaluation and of what distinguishes it from other program management and research practices. This section also discusses some implications of evaluation as applied to PVE programs and addresses ethical issues specific to this context.

### CLICK ON THE SECTION TITLES TO ACCESS THE CONTENT

- 1.1 What is evaluation?
- 1.2 What are the differences between program evaluation, accountability reporting and research?
- 1.3 What does evaluation in PEV contexts involve?
- 1.4 What about ethics in PVE program evaluation?

### 1.1 WHAT IS EVALUATION?



- Define evaluation.
- > Introduce the concept of evaluative thinking to support continuous program improvement.



- > What is evaluative thinking?
- > What benefits do evaluations provide to program managers, practitioners, participants, partners and funders?

The Canadian Evaluation Society defines evaluation as "the systematic assessment of the design, implementation or results of an initiative for the purposes of learning or decision-making".

The term 'program' is used throughout as a generic designation for all types of projects, initiatives, policies and strategies.

The United Nations Evaluation Group describes the usefulness of evaluation as follows: "An evaluation should provide credible, useful evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of organizations and stakeholders."

### **Evaluative thinking**

Evaluative thinking can be a professional practice reserved for experts, but it is also a way of taking a systematic, critical look at a program. Everyone involved in a program can engage in evaluative thinking by going beyond snap judgments and to critically examine its relevance, the suitability of the activities that it carries out, and the results that it achieves. Evaluative thinking can be defined as follows:

Evaluative thinking is "motivated by an attitude of inquisitiveness and a belief in the value of evidence, that involves identifying assumptions, posing thoughtful questions, pursuing deeper understanding through reflection and perspective taking, and informing decisions in preparation for action" (Buckley et al., 2015).

For an evaluation of a program to be useful, the first essential step is to develop the practice of evaluative thinking among the people involved in the program and an evaluative culture within the organization that delivers it. Otherwise, the evaluation may become nothing more than a routine compliance exercise to meet objectives external to the program itself, or an institutional constraint imposed by the program's funders.

### **Benefits of evaluation**

As <u>Table 2</u> shows, an evaluation process that is well integrated into the program's ongoing activities and that properly involves all of its stakeholders will yield ongoing benefits throughout the process, not only when the evaluation findings are presented.

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;What is Evaluation?", Canadian Evaluation Society, accessed February 14, 2021, https://evaluationcanada.ca/what-is-evaluation.

<sup>2 &</sup>quot;Norms and Standards for Evaluation", United Nations Evaluation Group, accessed February 15, 2021, <a href="http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914">http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914</a>.

Table 2: Benefits of evaluation process and findings



## BENEFITS OF **PARTICIPATING** IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS (Patton, 2008)

Regardless of the program's results, participation in the evaluation process provides learning opportunities, such as chances to:

- > improve your understanding of the program;
- > build your intervention capacity;
- > strengthen the program's structure;
- > encourage analysis of practices and development of knowledge;
- > improve stakeholder engagement;
- > develop an evaluative culture within the organization.

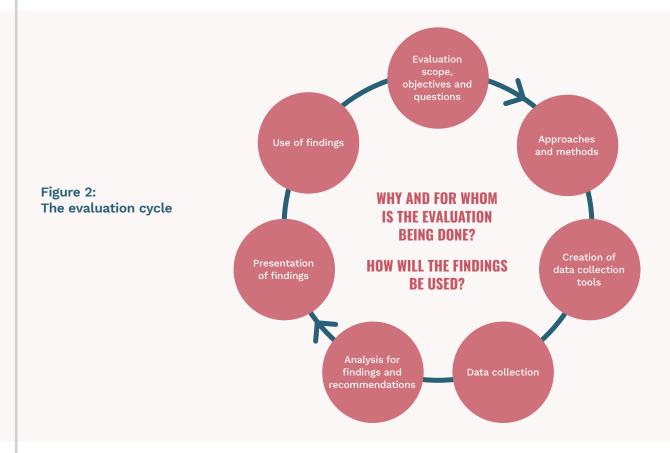


### BENEFITS OF EVALUATION FINDINGS

The ways that findings may be used will depend on the questions asked, but may include:

- > assisting in decision-making;
- promoting reporting/accountability;
- improving the program/organization;
- > improving knowledge;
- > improving social conditions;
- > building capacity/autonomy/engagement of stakeholders.

Programs are often evaluated cyclically: findings from one evaluation cycle are used to make changes that improve both the program and the design of the next evaluation cycle. As <u>Figure 2</u> shows, the answers to the question of why and for whom the evaluation is being done and how the findings will be used are essential and will influence the decisions concerning all aspects of the evaluation process.



Depending on how the evaluation process and findings are used, the evaluation of a program can have many different benefits for its various stakeholders, as shown in <u>Figure 3</u>.

Figure 3: Potential benefits for people involved in the program



### **PRACTITIONERS**

Evaluation provides an opportunity to analyze and improve the quality of their own practices, to better situate their roles and practices in the program as a whole and to get an outside view on the effects of their interventions.



### **FUNDERS**

Evaluation can demonstrate the effectiveness of their investment.



### **PARTICIPANTS**

Evaluation gives them the chance to express their needs and suggest ideas for improving the program.



### MANAGERS

Evaluation helps them ensure consistency among program objectives, activities and outcomes and thereby better manage the program as a whole.



### **PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**

Evaluation lets them better understand the scope of the program and the usefulness of their support.



### **FIND OUT MORE**

- > For over 40 years, the <u>Canadian Evaluation Society</u> has been dedicated to advancing excellence in evaluation across Canada and internationally.<sup>3</sup> Its website offers many relevant resources for learning more about evaluation. The <u>Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation</u> is free to everyone and offers useful resources for learning more about this field.
- > Two sections of the CES website are especially helpful for going beyond preconceptions about evaluation and learning more about it:
  - **Competencies for Canadian Evaluators:** competencies in reflective, technical, situational, management, and interpersonal practice.
  - > <u>Program Evaluation Standards</u>: utility, feasibility, propriety, accuracy and accountability.
- > The <u>BetterEvaluation</u> website is another useful source of theoretical and applied content regarding evaluation (most of it in English).

# 1.2 WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PROGRAM EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY REPORTING AND RESEARCH?



> Differentiate program evaluation, program reporting and research



- > What questions are asked in program evaluation, program reporting, and research?
- > What are the purposes of program evaluation, accountability reporting and research?

Program evaluation is an activity that is part of program management and is often confused with reporting to funders for accountability purposes. <u>Table 3</u> shows the similarities and differences between the two, though the distinctions may not always be clear-cut. One of the main reasons for this confusion is that both of these activities involve examining a program by using indicators and collecting data. Each of these activities has its own logic, and though they may be complementary, each serves its own specific purposes.

<sup>3 &</sup>quot;Mission and Vision" Canadian Evaluation Society, accessed March 15, 2021, https://evaluationcanada.ca/mission-and-vision

Table 3: Accountability reporting versus program evaluation

# ACCOUNTABILITY REPORTING

### Definition

Accurately report on the human and financial resources and the materials used and the activities carried out to achieve the program outcomes.

### **Purpose**

The main purpose of accountability reporting is to determine whether a program is being carried out in conformity with the specified parameters.

## PROGRAM EVALUATION

### **Definition**

A systematic, rigorous process of collecting and solid evidence on an intervention in order to improve it or judge its value and thus inform decision-making.

### **Purpose**

Program evaluation also examines the relevance of the program's objectives and the suitability, effectiveness and efficiency of the methods used, in addition to generating knowledge and building the capacities of stakeholders, practitioners, partners and participants.

It is also helpful to distinguish between evaluation and research. The PREV-IMPACT project's systematic methodological review of PVE program evaluations found that over 90% of the evaluations reviewed had been conducted by researchers. What evaluation and research have in common is that both of them involve formulating questions and then conducting systematic investigations to produce qualitative and quantitative data that can answer them. What distinguishes the two is that the questions and findings from a program evaluation are useful primarily for improving the program concerned.

Table 4 shows the overall similarities and differences between program evaluation and research.

Table 4: Differences between research and program evaluation4



VS



The objective is to acquire new knowledge about social and physical reality.

The questions are formulated by researchers in a given discipline.

The researchers are often involved in developing the program that they then study.

The objective is to determine the relevance, effectiveness or efficiency of a program.

The questions are formulated by the program's main stakeholders and the main expected users of the evaluation's findings.

The evaluators do not participate in developing the program, in order to preserve their independence and neutrality.

A **systematic procedure** is followed to obtain answers.

Quantitative and qualitative research methods are used.

The quality of the research is **judged through review by the researchers' peers** in their discipline.

The ultimate test of the value of the research is its **contribution to knowledge.** 

The main audience for the research is the **scientific community**.

The quality and importance of an evaluation are judged by the people who will use its findings to make decisions and take action.

The ultimate test of the value of an evaluation is **its usefulness for improving** the program and for making decisions.

The main audiences for an evaluation are the program organization, the program stakeholders and the program funders.

<sup>4</sup> Research can take several other forms not covered by this table, such as action, trans-disciplinary and collaborative research, and evaluation can be used for purposes other than those mentioned here.

### 1.3 WHAT DOES EVALUATION IN PVE CONTEXTS INVOLVE?



- > Review some essential aspects of PVE that affect evaluation.
- > Describe the major types of PVE programs in Canada.



- > What are the distinctive features of PVE programs?
- > Which kinds of outcomes of a PVE program might reasonably be attributed to the program's activities and hence be the subject of an evaluation?
- > What kinds of outcomes would lie outside the program's sphere of influence?

Because this guide deals with evaluation of PVE programs in the Canadian context, it is essential to define prevention of radicalization and violent extremism and to highlight some of the implications for evaluation of PVE programs. Our purpose here is not to summarize all of the knowledge in this field nor to unify all the research on this subject, especially since at present there is

no consensus on it. Instead, we present certain key concepts, drawing on past work by the UNESCO-PREV Chair, where the implications for program evaluation are illustrated.

For the purposes of this guide, the two definitions given in Figure 4 should be kept in mind.

Figure 4: Definitions of radicalization leading to violent extremism and prevention of violent radicalization and violent extremism (Madriaza et al., 2022)

RADICALIZATION
LEADING TO VIOLENT
EXTREMISM

Radicalization is a dynamic process that arises out of the gradual polarization of political, economic, social or religious ideas that seek to reject or undermine the status quo. Radicalization can have positive or negative results for individuals and society. It can create opportunities for social change, but it can also aggravate a climate of confrontation between actors or groups. When the methods advocated for achieving a radical solution involve legitimizing the use of violence or considering recourse to violent actions, then we can speak of radicalization leading to violence.

All efforts to strengthen the factors protecting at-risk individuals or groups and to reduce or eliminate the risk conditions that may make them more vulnerable to violent radicalization or to recidivism among individuals who have previously engaged in violence or belonged to extremist groups.

PREVENTION
OF VIOLENT RADICALIZATION
AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Efforts to prevent radicalization and violent extremism can be targeted at the four different levels of intervention shown in <u>Table 5</u>.

Table 5: Prevention intervention levels (Madriaza et al., 2022)

### PRIMARY PREVENTION

All action seeking to reduce or eliminate risk factors or encourage protective factors and that **target the general public** not identified as being at risk. Primary prevention is a type of universal prevention (public awareness campaigns are a good example).

### TARGETED PRIMARY PREVENTION

All action seeking to reduce or eliminate risk factors or encourage protective factors and that **target a specific community** that is not identified as being at risk (for example, universal prevention programs that target all youth).

### SECONDARY PREVENTION

All action seeking to reduce or eliminate risk factors or encourage protective factors and that **target individuals or groups regarded as at risk** or in the initial stages of this process.

### TERTIARY PREVENTION

All action seeking to reduce the factors that **encourage recidivism among individuals or groups that are in the final stages of this process**, or that **belong to extremist groups**, or **that have committed acts of violent radicalism or terrorism**. Tertiary prevention also attempts to reintegrate such individuals and groups into society.

One feature of all prevention efforts is that they attempt to prevent undesirable situations from arising in the future, whereas counter-terrorism efforts directly attempt to prevent or deter violent extremist acts, such as terrorist attacks. Thus, although PVE and counter-terrorism have complementary objectives, they use different approaches. PVE targets factors such as marginalization, isolation and discrimination that are at the source of or indirectly related to the phenomenon itself, but that explain how individuals or societies may become radicalized.

One goal of PVE is to strengthen protective factors such as community integration, social cohesion, and freedom of expression while reducing risk factors such as discrimination (Wolfowicz et al., 2019). In addressing individuals at the greatest risk, PVE can also promote their well-being, personal development, and open-mindedness so that they do not become radicalized to violence.

In Canada, PVE programs do not attempt "deradicalization", which involves trying to change the targeted individuals' ideas. Instead, these programs aim to develop participants' capacities to accept diverse opinions, listen to one another, take personal responsibility and integrate into society (Hassan et al., 2020). Success in achieving each of these objectives could well be examined in an evaluation. An evaluation might also focus on success in reducing violent radicalization and violent extremism, provided that this outcome fell within the program's sphere of influence and that credible data were available within the relevant time frame or the evaluators had access to an equivalent control group.

### **Attribution versus contribution**

Regardless of its intervention level, any evaluation of a program must focus on what it targets directly in order to capture the outcomes that it can realistically hope to achieve through its activities. It is very hard, however, to demonstrate that a particular outcome is attributable solely to a particular intervention (in other words, that it was caused by that intervention), without the influence of any other, external factors (Dawson et al., 2014). Proving attribution requires conditions that are hard to find in a "real-world" intervention, especially in the context of PVE, where the phenomenon to be observed is rare, and hard to reproduce and involves major ethical issues.

For this reason, in PVE program evaluation, it is preferable to use the concept of contribution, which attempts to explain how an intervention, together with other, external factors, helped to achieve an outcome. This approach is more realistic and more consistent with the conditions in which the activities are carried out and with the resources available to conduct the evaluation.

Evaluating the contribution of an intervention also involves clearly defining the program's sphere of control and sphere of influence: the areas where the intervention acts directly and the ways that it can reasonably be expected to contribute to the desired outcomes, even if other factors also contribute to their attainment. The outcomes that fall within the program's sphere of interest but cannot reasonably be attributed to it are outside the scope of the evaluation.



### **FIND OUT MORE**

- > The UNESCO-PREV Chair website offers many resources, in both English and French, to help understand the prevention of violent radicalization and violent extremism. Examples include:
  - > <u>UNESCO-PREV Chair interactive map</u> of centers of expertise in prevention of violent extremism (PVE)
  - all of the scientific papers published by the Chair
  - **a**ll of the guides and manuals published by the Chair
- A link to the CPN-PREV network's <u>interactive map</u> of organizations offering intervention services in situations involving radicalization leading to violence in Canada.
- > Other organizations' work on the connection between evaluation and PVE has produced some content that better defines the various parameters for this type of intervention. Here are three English-language resources that will help to inform your thinking on this subject:
  - > International Alert
  - > IMPACT Europe
  - > RAND Program Evaluation Toolkit for Countering Violent Extremism, Chapter 2.

### **EXAMPLE A**



# PROGRAM TO DEVELOP CRITICAL THINKING THROUGH COMPLEXITY OF VALUES IN YOUNG PEOPLE<sup>5</sup>

### **CONCRETE EXAMPLE**

Secondary prevention program for youth who feel attracted to radical arguments. Presents workshops that apply the cognitive concept of integrative complexity to help these young people develop their ability to understand other people's viewpoints in a more nuanced way and thus encourage them to negotiate and settle conflicts peacefully.

### TARGETED PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Build participants' personal skills:

- > learn to confront differing opinions while respecting the people who hold them;
- > develop capacity to manage conflicts peacefully.

### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR EVALUATION**

Evaluating the program's implementation (number of workshops held, number of at-risk youth reached) will not reveal whether the participants actually developed their ability to understand other people's viewpoints. This requires an effectiveness evaluation that captures the effects that the program has on the participants in the short, medium and long terms.

The evaluation of this program should focus mainly on its sphere of control and sphere of influence and not on elements that lie beyond its sphere of influence, even if they do fall within its sphere of interest.

### SPHERE OF INTEREST

### Other factors related to radicalization

- > Participation of youth in civil society
- > Self-confidence

### SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

### **Targeted protective factors**

- > Increased sensitivity to and understanding of diverse viewpoints
- ➤ Acquisition of negotiation and conflict resolution skills
- > Reduced likelihood of embracing radicalizing discourse

### SPHERE OF CONTROL

### Services provided to at-risk youth

- > Number of at-risk youth reached
- > Number of workshops delivered

<sup>5</sup> Based on Liht and Savage, 2013 and Savage et al., 2014

### 1.4 WHAT ABOUT ETHICS IN PVE PROGRAM EVALUATION?



- > Raise awareness of the importance of making a practice of ethical thinking in order to deal with the issues that may arise throughout an evaluation.
- > Consider some of the ethical issues that arise most often in PVE evaluations.
- > Present the fundamental values to consider when conducting evaluations.



- > What ethical issues are likely to arise in an evaluation of a PVE program?
- > How should these ethical issues be addressed?

When you are evaluating a PVE program, there are certain ethical issues that you will often have to consider. <u>Table 6</u> lists some (though not all) of these issues and some ways of addressing them (Madriaza et al., 2021, 2022).

Table 6: Examples of ethical issues in evaluation of PVE programs



### PROTECTION OF PARTICIPANTS' PRIVACY

### **Ethical issues**

In evaluations of PVE programs, protecting the privacy of the participants is more important than reporting all the information gathered in these programs, because information contained in the evaluation report might harm or stigmatize these people or even place them in danger.

For all participants who provide evaluation data, the following must be ensured:

- > Free and informed consent to participate requires that a) the participants be informed of the context in which the evaluation is taking place and of its objectives, and b) they give their express agreement to participate in it voluntarily.
- > The confidentiality statement indicates what types of information will be accessible to whom (for example: raw data will be accessible to the evaluators only; summaries of results stripped of identifying information will be accessible to

- the steering committee; the complete report will be available to the program funders and other program stakeholders).
- > In all forms of evaluation reports and presentations, information will be anonymized so that specific participants cannot be identified and evaluation data cannot be linked to specific persons.

A consent form is one possible way to provide proper information to the participants in an evaluation but might pose challenges to people who have difficulty in reading. Also, if a consent form makes the process of data collection seem too formal, it might discourage people from participating in the evaluation or, even worse, lead them to withdraw from the program. Depending on the situation, consent may be implicit (for online forms, for example) or oral.



### **ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

### **Ethical issues**

The need to protect participants' privacy can pose another constraint for evaluations, by limiting or blocking evaluators' access to potentially useful personal information (medical records, intervention notes, criminal records, Internet data, etc.) that might be useful, depending on what is being evaluated, unless the participants' free, informed consent can be obtained. In some cases, the program organizations themselves deny evaluators' access to such information. In other cases, the organizations may pressurize the evaluators to give them access to information disclosed during data collection (for example, in interviews) that would allow individuals to be identified.

This issue requires that, in evaluation planning, even greater attention be paid to what data will be needed to answer the evaluation questions and what steps will be required to access them.

It also requires that at evaluation outset, the stakeholders be given clear communication as to the nature of the information that will be disclosed and how it will be disclosed (for example, only anonymized, abridged information will be shared in the evaluation report or in any other presentations about the evaluation), in keeping with the obligation to protect the participants' privacy.



### **USE OF APPROPRIATE, NON-STIGMATIZING TERMINOLOGY**

### **Ethical issues**

Some terms associated with violent radicalization and violent extremism can tend to stigmatize participants. The use of such terms may reduce participation in the evaluation and, in the worst case, impede ongoing intervention with these people.

Some of these terms should be replaced with terms that are less threatening but still enable free, informed consent to participation. Evaluation teams should strike a balance between the transparency of the process and the use of non-stigmatizing language.

For example, if evaluation questionnaires or interviews refer to the targeted persons as "radicalized individuals" or "extremists" or to the

program as being designed to "reduce radicalism and violent extremism", such terminology may tend to stigmatize these persons further, especially since in the eyes of the public, "radicalism" and "violent extremism" may easily be associated with a certain type of radicalism. Such terms should be used as little as possible.

The data collection and communication tools used in an evaluation should employ terms that are not threatening to the persons concerned. For example, these tools could use terms that emphasize the strengthening of protective factors (open-mindedness, better integration into the community, etc.) rather than terms linked to risk factors.



### PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL RISKS FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS

### **Ethical issues**

Participating in PVE evaluations involves some physical, emotional and social risks for all of the stakeholders. Here are some examples.

- > The participants in a PVE program may disclose sensitive information that might place them in danger from certain extremist groups. For example, simply letting it be known that they are participating may expose them to reprisal from extremist groups that had wanted to recruit them.
- > The program evaluators may also be endangered for example, by having access to this information or being associated with programs designed to prevent recruitment.
- > Participants who are asked to share their experiences may end up reliving traumatic events such as experiencing discrimination or being pressured by extremist groups or losing family members. Evaluators may hear sensitive stories that they were not really prepared for and that may affect them psychologically.

These risks should therefore be identified in advance, with the help of experts in this field, and then minimized in the course of data collection, even if this means not gathering some information. It is also highly advisable to identify solutions in case such problems arise, such as offering counselling to participants and evaluators and making plans to help people who feel endangered because of the information that they have shared.



### INFLUENCE OF PREVENTION TEAMS' AND EVALUATORS' IDEOLOGICAL BIASES

### **Ethical issues**

The people responsible for evaluations should consider and declare any real, potential, or perceived potential conflicts of interest in their evaluation work.<sup>6</sup>

Because the teams responsible for the program and the evaluation cannot completely free themselves from their own biases, the exercise of identifying these biases and determining what influence they may have on the evaluation process is a good place to start to reduce this possible influence.

<sup>6</sup> CES Guidance for Ethical Evaluation Practice (Renfrew, ON: Canadian Evaluation Society, 2021), https://evaluationcanada.ca/ethics.



### USE OF EXPERIMENTAL DESIGNS IN PVE PROGRAM EVALUATION

### **Ethical issues**

Some evaluations use an experimental design, in which there are two groups of participants: an experimental group, whose members do receive the intervention, and a control group, whose members do not. The control group serves as a basis for comparison to determine the intervention's effectiveness, often by means of tests performed on both groups before and after. Participants are randomly assigned to experimental and control groups before the pre-tests are performed.

If control groups are used in this way, there is a high risk that some radicalized people will not be offered real support but placed on a waiting list to receive support later on. For example, not providing an intervention to members of a control group may increase the threat of violent extremism. Such unequal treatment of the control group and the experimental group is hard to justify ethically with so sensitive an issue as PVE. Assigning people to either the control or experimental group is possible only under certain specific circumstances—for example, when professionals are being selected to participate in a PVE training program and this program is offered

for long enough that the people assigned to the control group can still participate in and benefit from it later on.

Another concern with experimental evaluation designs is that they are intended to demonstrate whether or not an intervention is working but not how and why it is working—what contributed to the outcomes, what did not work, what needs to be improved, and so on. Instead, the intervention is treated like a "black box". Implementing experimental evaluation designs requires considerable human and financial resources, time, and know-how, and the means needed to explain the outcomes may be lacking.

Table 14 in the toolkit on the International Alert website discusses the advantages and disadvantages of counterfactual evaluation methods (available in English only).8

The website of Territoires innovants en économie sociale et solidaire (TIESS) provides a summary sheet on randomized control trials in <u>English</u> and in <u>French</u> (Salathé-Beaulieu and Gruet, 2020).

# Ethical dilemmas arise when differing values and principles come into conflict and make decisions difficult.

Every evaluation will encounter ethical dilemmas that the evaluators will have to resolve in cooperation with the stakeholders. This will be easier in some cases than others: there is no ready-made answer or ideal solution to such dilemmas. For ethical issues to be addressed properly, they must be considered carefully when the evaluation is being planned and must receive ongoing attention throughout the evaluation process.

<sup>7 &</sup>quot;Theory-Based Approaches to Evaluation: Concepts and Practices", Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, accessed March 31, 2021, <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/audit-evaluation/evaluation-government-canada/theory-based-approaches-evaluation-concepts-practices.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/audit-evaluation/evaluation-government-canada/theory-based-approaches-evaluation-concepts-practices.html</a>.

<sup>8 &</sup>quot;Module 6: Data Collection Methods", International Alert, accessed April 14, 2021, <a href="http://www.pvetoolkit.org/laying-the-foundations?ModuleId=1127">http://www.pvetoolkit.org/laying-the-foundations?ModuleId=1127</a>.

### **EXAMPLE B**



# ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING PRESSURE TO CHANGE EVALUATION FINDINGS

In this example of the ethical issues that must be considered in evaluation practice, we examine one of the ethical dilemmas most commonly encountered not only in evaluation of PVE programs<sup>9</sup> but also in all other kinds of evaluations both in Canada and in other countries (Buchanan et al., 2011; Madriaza et al., 2021; Morris, 2011, 2015; Morris and Cohn, 1993; Perrin, 2019).

PVE programs are subject to many pressures to show results, first because, ultimately, human lives are at stake, and second, because this topic receives a great deal of media attention and the way that it is handled can affect public opinion. The evaluators of a particular PVE program might therefore experience pressure (for example, from its funders or from the senior managers of the organization that delivers it) to report only positive results and thus keep public opinion in its favour.

The evaluators would then face the ethical dilemma of weighing competing values and deciding how best to respond to this pressure. One option would be to uphold values of honesty, transparency and independent thinking by resisting pressure to alter the evaluation and instead reporting all of their findings, whether positive or negative. But depending on the situation and the context, if the negative findings receive too much attention in the media, the funders might decide to stop funding the program. In some cases, ending or reducing the funding for a PVE program that is largely effective might have harmful consequences for those it is supposed to help, in particular people whose well-being is threatened by a high risk of violent extremism.

Consequently, out of concern for the competing value of protecting people's well-being, the evaluators might consider alternatives such as deleting the negative findings from the evaluation report as the funders or managers have asked or leaving those negative findings in the report but adding information that places them in context. However, in accordance with the values of responsibility and protection of people's well-being, if these alternatives are chosen, then it might also be wise to meet with the stakeholders to ensure that they are informed of the evaluation findings and have put plans in place to improve the program by addressing its shortcomings.

### The following questions<sup>10</sup> may serve as a guide for ethical reflection and decision-making.

- 1 What values and principles are at stake in this ethical dilemma (for example, rights and well-being of persons, honesty and transparency, independence of thought, professionalism, responsibility and sound resource management)?
- 2 What are the possible decisions that might be made in this particular context to resolve this ethical dilemma?
- What are the potential consequences of each of these alternative decisions? For example, for program participants, evaluation clients, program partners, communities, political entities, the evaluation field and the acquisition of knowledge?
- Who would be affected by each of these decisions, how and with what risks and benefits?
- Among all the possible decisions, which would be the most ethical ones to make in this situation and this context?

To answer these questions, it might also help to ask for advice from other stakeholders in the evaluation or from colleagues who are experts in PVE or in evaluation.



### **FIND OUT MORE**

- > The Canadian Evaluation Society publication CES Guidance for Ethical Evaluation Practice is designed to help evaluators engage in ethical reflection so that they can make the decisions that are the most justifiable from an ethical standpoint, in light of the situation and the context. This publication includes an example of an ethical dilemma specifically involving pressure to misrepresent evaluation findings (in a context other than PVE).
- > Here are some other resources that specifically address ethical issues involved in evaluating PVE programs:
  - > Evaluating interventions that prevent or counter violent extremism: a practical guide, Chapter 3, RAND Corporation.
  - > IMPACT Europe, Ethical considerations.
  - > Improving evaluations of programs for prevention of radicalization and violent extremism: An exploratory international study.

<sup>10</sup> CES Guidance for Ethical Evaluation Practice (Renfrew, ON: Canadian Evaluation Society, 2021).

# O2 Planning PVE program evaluations

A PVE program evaluation must be carefully planned so that the evaluation's objectives, the questions that it must answer, the methods chosen to conduct it, and the analysis are all consistent with one another. Sound planning is one of the keys to successful evaluation. The exercise of planning an evaluation also benefits program stakeholders, because it allows them to revisit program fundamentals and make decisions about both the evaluation itself and the program's future delivery.

### **CLICK ON THE SECTION TITLES TO ACCESS THE CONTENT**

- 2.1 What aspects of a program to evaluate and why?
- 2.2 How to choose among evaluation approaches?
- 2.3 For and with whom to conduct the evaluation?
- 2.4 When to conduct the evaluation?
- 2.5 How to prepare for the evaluation?
- 2.6 What to evaluate?
- 2.7 How to define the program's theory of change?
- 2.8 How to plan the execution of the evaluation?
- 2.9 How to write an evaluation plan?

### 2.1 WHAT ASPECTS OF A PROGRAM TO EVALUATE AND WHY?



- > Introduce evaluation of program relevance, implementation and effectiveness.
- > Stress the importance of evaluating effectiveness to demonstrate results.



- > What aspects of the program will be evaluated?
- > Do you want to evaluate the program's relevance, implementation or effectiveness?
- > What will the evaluation ultimately be used for?
- > What does it mean to incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion into an evaluation?

The key first step in planning an evaluation is defining which aspects of the program will be evaluated and why.

### What aspects to evaluate?

Because the programs that may be evaluated can potentially cover all kinds of PVE projects, initiatives, policies and strategies, it is important to clearly define those aspects of the program that are going to be evaluated. For example, the evaluation might cover the entire program; one or more of its projects or components (for example, the training or the intervention components, or a specific dimensions such as the organization's collaboration with its key partners), or the organization itself (for example, if it is a small organization working exclusively on PVE). The evaluation could also focus on a collaborative initiative involving several different actors.

### Why evaluate?

To ensure that the evaluation and its findings will be useful, the reasons for evaluating must be clear. This can also facilitate integration of evaluation into overall program management. Although every evaluation is unique in that its objectives are adapted to the specific characteristics of the program so that its findings will be as relevant as possible, certain types of evaluations are more common often than others.

Since we cannot discuss all of these types here, we have focused on three of them: evaluation of a program's relevance, its implementation (or processes) and its effectiveness. Other types include evaluation of efficiency, sustainability, and social impact.

<u>Table 7</u> explains the purpose of each of the three types of evaluations presented in this guide. In reality, a given evaluation often combines several different types of evaluation, to meet stakeholders' specific needs.

Table 7: Three types of evaluations

A relevance evaluation attempts to determine whether the nature of the problem to be solved, the program's objectives and the planned intervention methods meet stakeholders' needs. A relevance evaluation can be done both before a program starts and as it continues, in order to assess its ongoing relevance over time. **RELEVANCE IMPLEMENTATION** delivery. **EFFECTIVENESS** 

An implementation evaluation focuses mainly on what happens as the program is delivered—the types and quantities of goods and services provided, the participants who receive these services, the practical problems encountered, the way that these problems are solved, and the lessons learned. An implementation evaluation thus seeks to determine whether the program is proceeding as planned and whether it has encountered any conditions that warrant changes in its

An effectiveness evaluation deals with the program's outcomes—its positive and negative effects, expected or unexpected, in the short, medium and long terms. A comparison of the program's actual outcomes with its expected outcomes is often an integral part of evaluating its effectiveness.

The following example shows how these three types of evaluations can complement one another and how, throughout the evaluation process, the evaluation questions can continuously yield information that is essential for its smooth program delivery and relevant for all of the parties involved.

### **EXAMPLE C**



# THREE TYPES OF EVALUATION APPLIED TO A TRAINING PROGRAM

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

♦ A PVE training program to teach social workers, street workers, community police and other social service providers in Quebec about the issues involved in radicalization and how to take the first steps toward preventing it.

### RELEVANCE EVALUATION

Here are some of the questions that an evaluation of this program's relevance might address.

- ➤ To what extent did the training objectives reflect participants' learning needs?
  - > Did the training respond equitably to the needs of the participants from various professions (social workers, street workers, community police, etc.)?
  - > Did the training address the participants' various needs for the types of prevention programs and services they provide (primary, secondary, and tertiary)?
  - > Did the training overlook any needs that the participants considered important?

### **IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION**

An evaluation of this training program's implementation would look both at how the training was delivered and at the conditions that facilitated or impeded its delivery:

- Did the key partners participate fully in developing and implementing the training?
- > Was the training delivered as planned, in terms of logistics and content?
- > Were the learning needs of the various targeted groups of learners considered when the program was designed? (For example, were arrangements made for participants who were geographically scattered, or had disabilities, or had family responsibilities outside of business hours?)
- > How many training sessions were held? If this number was lower than expected, what factors contributed to this?
- > How many people from the target population were reached (that is, how many were informed of the program or invited to participate in it)? Were the various sub-groups within the target population reached to the extent that had been planned?
- What lessons were learned from the delivery of this training program, in terms both of project management and of partnerships involved in delivering it?

### **EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION**

Evaluating how effective the training program was for the people who took it means finding out what they learned in the short term, how they intend to apply it in their day-to-day work, and how they actually do apply it in practice once the training is over.

- > How many people participated in the training, and how did that compare with the expected participation rate? To what extent did the training encourage participation by the various targeted groups of practitioners (social workers, street workers, community police, etc.)? To what extent did the participants reflect the population of targeted practitioners in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, seniority on the job, etc.?
- Did the training increase the participants' knowledge of the issues involved in radicalization?
- > How satisfied were the participants with the training, and how did the degree of satisfaction vary among the various practitioner types? What factors made it easier or harder for the participants to absorb the content?
- > Once the participants had completed this training, were they able to apply the practices taught? If they were, had this training made them more skilled in dealing with radicalization?
- > Did any of the groups of participants (as defined by occupation, gender, ethnicity, seniority on the job, or other traits) benefit from the training more than others? If so, how and why?

### **DISCUSSION**

As this example has shown, evaluating a PVE training program involves much more than simply monitoring and reporting how many training sessions were delivered. For example, a program report stating that "250 practitioners from 10 of Quebec's administrative regions participated in the PVE-awareness training program" tells readers nothing about the impacts of this training.

For instance, if we wanted to know whether the training provided was the kind that the practitioners really needed, we would have to conduct a relevance evaluation. Maybe we were delivering the right solution, but to the wrong problem.

If we wanted to know more about how effective the program was in achieving the desired outcomes, we would have to investigate what aspects of the training the participants applied once they returned to work, whether that differed from one group of practitioners to another, and how effective these actions were in actually preventing radicalization. For an evaluation to be systematic and rigorous, it must capture information about all of these effects from a significant number of participants. Interviewing one participant or one trainer will not suffice to evaluate the training's effectiveness.

Effectiveness must be evaluated not in terms of production volume ("train as many people as possible") but rather in terms of the changes in practices that the training is designed to bring about, so that the people who receive the training will be better equipped to detect the signs of radicalization and know how to make an appropriate basic response.



### **FIND OUT MORE**

- > Depending on the program's needs, other types of evaluation may be more appropriate.
- > In addition to all of the types of evaluations discussed above, the International Alert website presents information on evaluating efficiency and cost efficiency.
- The IMPACT Europe website discusses <u>cost-benefit analysis</u> and <u>cost-effectiveness</u> <u>analysis</u>.

# INCORPORATING DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION INTO EVALUATIONS

One evaluation objective that cuts across all the others is to assess how the various groups of people experience the program being evaluated. As some of the evaluation questions in Example C show, the evaluation should respect and respond to the needs and contexts of the various groups within the program's target populations by adopting an approach that incorporates equity, diversity and inclusion.







DIVERSITY	EQUITY	INCLUSION
Recognition of differences among persons with regard to factors of identity such as gender, age, race, ethnicity, Indigenous identity, sexual identity, abilities, and immigrant and new arrival status.	Fair treatment of all persons so that everyone has access to and benefits from the same opportunities.	Creation of a welcoming environment in which all persons are valued and respected.

Radicalism and violent extremism affect men and women differently.

There may be differences in the processes by which men and women become radicalized and in the types of radicalization prevention programs that are most affective for these two groups. Also, given the great diversity among women as well as men, considerations regarding diversity must go beyond gender and include its intersection with other identity factors (race, ethnicity, age, religion, physical ability, geographic region, etc.).

It is therefore important to consider intersectionality among multiple identity factors.

In order to properly evaluate how members of various groups experience a given PVE program, diversity, equity and inclusion must be considered throughout the evaluation process—for example, in defining evaluation questions, collecting and analyzing data, and interpreting and reporting findings.



### **FIND OUT MORE**

- > The Government of Canada offers helpful materials and free online training in how to conduct a <u>Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+)</u>. The "Plus" (+) signifies that GBA+ goes beyond biological differences (sex) and social and cultural differences (gender) to include multiple factors of identity. This training is applicable to evaluation as well as to the other phases of a program's cycle. It is available in English and in French.
- The Government of Canada also offers a guide that provides more detailed information about how to integrate GBA+ into evaluation. This guide is also available in English and in French.
- International Alert also offers some <u>thoughts on gender-based analysis</u> from an intersectionality perspective adapted to the context of PVE programs (in English only).

## 2.2 HOW TO CHOOSE AMONG EVALUATION APPROACHES?



> Present some approaches that are appropriate for evaluating PVE programs.



- > What approaches should you choose to encourage participation in the evaluation and use of its findings?
- How can an evaluation determine how the program contributed to the observed outcomes?

In program evaluation, a wide variety of approaches can be used, sometimes separately and sometimes in combination. To choose an evaluation approach, you may consider the type of interventions involved in the program, the populations that it targets, the issue that it addresses or the values of the evaluation team. <u>Table 8</u> describes some approaches that may be especially appropriate for evaluating PVE programs.

Table 8: Approaches for evaluating PVE programs

PARTICIPATORY

The participatory evaluation approach directly and actively engages the program's various internal and external stakeholders in planning and conducting the evaluation. Through their involvement acquire evaluation skills and knowledge; ensure that the evaluation reflects their lived realities and meets everyone's needs; and increase the likelihood that its findings will be useful, usable and used. The participatory approach can be implemented to differing extents. Often, it involves including representatives of the program's various stakeholders on the evaluation committee.

UTILIZATION-FOCUSED The utilization-focused evaluation approach is based on the principle that the value of an evaluation must be judged according to how useful it is for its planned users. Utilization-focused evaluations attempt to minimize the risks that their findings will not be used. In every step of the evaluation process, thought must be given to how that step will affect the process as a whole and the planned use of its findings. The expected users should participate in all important evaluation decisions. This approach emphasizes the importance of supporting the use of the findings once they are available, in particular through facilitation and accompaniment.

THEORY-BASED 11

The theory-based evaluation approach attempts to determine the extent to which a given program produced the observed outcomes. This approach uses an explicit theory of change to describe the connections between a program's activities and its expected outcomes in the short, medium and long terms, as well as to describe the mechanisms of change and their conditions of operation. A theory-based evaluation attempts to use data to test the theory of change and thereby determine how the program contributed to the observed outcomes.

<sup>11 &</sup>quot;Theory-Based Approaches to Evaluation: Concepts and Practices", Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, accessed March 31, 2021, https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/audit-evaluation/evaluation-government-canada/theory-based-approaches-evaluation-concepts-practices.html.



## **FIND OUT MORE**

- > The BetterEvaluation website <u>describes 25 different evaluation approaches</u>, though this list is not exhaustive.
- > The IMPACT Europe website also provides a <u>list of evaluation approaches and methods</u>.

## 2.3 FOR AND WITH WHOM TO CONDUCT THE EVALUATION?



- > Define the concept of program stakeholders.
- > Reflect on their involvement in the evaluation of the program.



- > To which stakeholders is this evaluation going to be useful?
- > How will they participate in planning and conducting the evaluation?
- > How are they going to use the information that the evaluation produces?

# In the utilization-focused approach, the evaluation must be used by the program's stakeholders.

In the utilization-focussed approach, the concerns of these stakeholders must be addressed, they must expect to receive the evaluation's findings, and they must be ready to act on them. The term "stakeholders" refers to all of the groups, organizations and individuals that influence the achievement of a program's objectives (see <u>Table 9</u>).

#### Table 9: Types of stakeholders

**People or groups within the program**The people involved in managing or delivering the program

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

Program managers, practitioners, administrative support staff, communications staff, etc.

Organizations external to the program Organizations that are involved only indirectly in delivering the program but have enough influence to modify some aspects of it.

Funders, researchers, partner organizations, professionals from government departments, political groups, non-government organizations, etc

#### **Program participants**

The people directly affected by the program, who will receive its services or participate in its activities

## EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

In a program that provides practitioner training in radicalization issues, the participants are the practitioners invited to take the training.

In a program that helps families to build ties with people at high risk of radicalization, the participants are the family members.

#### **Target populations**

The people who will benefit from the program outcomes, directly or indirectly

Sometimes, the program participants and the target populations are the same people. In a program that provides practitioner training in detecting signs of radicalization, the target population consists of the people with whom these practitioners work from day to day.

In a program that helps families to build ties with people at high risk of radicalization, the direct target population consists of the family members and the indirect target population consists of the people at high risk.

It is impossible to provide an exhaustive list of all of the stakeholders in PVE programs, because they vary with the context, the type of program, its objectives, whether it has funding from a government department, and so on. Because you want your evaluation to be useful, usable and used by its stakeholders, it is important to answer the following questions about them:

- > To which stakeholders is this evaluation going to be useful?
- > How will they participate in planning and conducting the evaluation?
- > How are they going to use the information that the evaluation produces?

The answers to these questions will be different for every evaluation. One best practice for encouraging stakeholders' involvement in the evaluation is to establish an evaluation advisory committee and clearly define its members' roles and responsibilities. The committee's exact composition should be determined in consultation with the program managers to ensure that internal and external stakeholders are represented. To foster stakeholder participation,

the functions of this committee (see Figure 5) might include helping to determine the evaluation objectives, taking all parties' interests into account; providing feedback on the program's theory of change, the program evaluation plan and the data collection tools; providing advice to solve problems encountered in the course of the evaluation; validating the evaluation findings and providing feedback on the draft of the evaluation report.

Figure 5: Possible functions of the evaluation advisory committee



Help to determine the evaluation objectives, taking all parties' interests into account



Provide advice to solve problems encountered in the course of the evaluation



Provide feedback on the program's theory of change, the evaluation plan and the data collection tools



Validate the evaluation findings and provide feedback on the draft evaluation report

For best results, the evaluation should be managed by an individual or a team that is formally responsible for ensuring coordination and consistency from the start of the evaluation process to the end. Otherwise, some steps may be skipped, thus making the evaluation less rigorous, credible and useful.

The evaluation team should include people who have experience in evaluation and hence can facilitate the process methodologically and logistically. Having evaluation team members with expertise in PVE is also an asset.

Given the kinds of interventions that PVE programs involve, having evaluation team members who are diverse in gender, ethnic origin, religious beliefs, or other characteristics is also an asset.

This diversity will make it easier to build trust with program participants.

It will also make the evaluators more aware of and sensitive to certain realities, so that they can adapt the evaluation process and avoid certain pitfalls that could undermine the intervention.<sup>12</sup> Thought may be given to hiring an outside evaluation expert to support the evaluation process.

<sup>12</sup> Madriaza et al., 2022.

### Is it absolutely necessary to engage an external evaluator?

In every situation, using an external evaluator has both advantages and disadvantages (see <u>Table 10</u>). Also, someone inside the organization may well have the expertise and availability necessary to conduct an evaluation while finding satisfactory ways to address any ethical questions that this may raise about its neutrality and independence. Keep in mind that whatever the composition of the evaluation team, there will always be some ideological, methodological or other kinds of biases, ethical issues, possible pressures regarding expected outcomes and so on.

Table 10: Advantages and disadvantages of using an internal or an external evaluator (Meunier and Michaud, 2018)

## **Advantages**

- > Costs already covered in the budget, or lower than for an external evaluator.
- > Expertise in the subject area.
- > Better knowledge of the organization's culture, the program's context, and the issues and dynamics.
- > Closer to the subject of the evaluation and so more readily able to adapt it to the program's context.
- May make contact with target populations easier.
- ➤ Recommendations potentially better suited to the context.

## INTERNAL EVALUATOR

## **Disadvantages**

- > Potentially too close to the program to get any real perspective on it, or personally involved in it, which may create biases.
- > Neutrality and seriousness of findings may be questioned. Perception of bias in interpretation of findings. Credibility may be questioned by outside parties.
- > Possible resistance or mistrust during data collection and biases that may affect the validity of the information supplied.
- May not have enough time to coordinate the evaluation.
- > May lack experience in an evaluation process, which increases the time needed to conduct the evaluation and may impair its quality.

## **Advantages**

- > Provides expertise when needed without requiring a sustained financial commitment over time.
- > Can readily guide the evaluation process from start to finish.
- > More detached from the subject of the evaluation and the issues that it addresses.
- > Independent from certain stakeholders, with more perspective.
- > Greater credibility of findings.
- > Costs, expectations and deliverables clarified from the outset.
- > Contributes new views and ideas.
- > Neutral third party, may make relations among partners easier to manage.
- > Enables findings (even negative ones) to be presented more easily and discussed more freely.

## **Disadvantages** > Greater cost.

- > Need to invest time to let the evaluator grasp the context and the issues.
- > Less control over the evaluation process.
- > Hard to know which evaluators can best meet requirements and how to recruit them.
- > Lack of experience in the field of the program being evaluated.
- > If the funder hires the evaluator, then their credibility may be questioned by people within the organization (mistrust, suspicion of hidden agendas, fear of being judged,



## **FIND OUT MORE**

Buetti et al. (2019) have developed a tool (available in French only) to help Canadian community agencies assess their evaluation capacity by conducting structured in-house discussions about the characteristics that generally influence capacity. This tool may be useful to other kinds of organizations as well.

EXTERNAL

**FVALUATOR** 

## 2.4 WHEN TO CONDUCT THE EVALUATION?



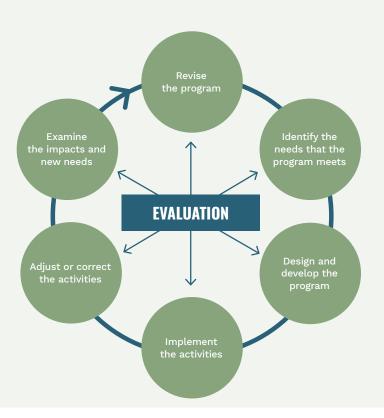
- > Show how evaluation can be incorporated into the program cycle.
- > Consider the implications of evaluation timing.



- > When is the best time to begin an evaluation of the program?
- > Can a program be evaluated even if no plans for this were made when it was first designed?

The earlier the evaluation process is incorporated into a program, the more evaluation will be regarded as an integral part of the program's day-to-day activities, which will make ongoing adjustments easier (see Figure 6). For many reasons, it may not always be possible to implement the evaluation at the very start of a program, so sometimes the evaluation may have to begin after the program is already under way. In such cases, it will no longer be possible to use some evaluation methods, such as preintervention and post-intervention comparisons, but it will still be possible to demonstrate a certain degree of effectiveness.

Figure 6 : Incorporating evaluation into the program cycle<sup>13</sup>



<sup>13</sup> Beverly, s. d.

Depending on how mature the program is, it may be subjected to either a formative or a summative evaluation (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Formative and summative evaluation





FORMATIVE	SUMMATIVE
In a formative evaluation, the main goals are to determine, either at the beginning or in the middle of a program, whether it is on the right track to meet its objectives, and to draw lessons for its continuous improvement.	A summative evaluation is carried out at the end of a program cycle to determine <b>to what extent the program has met its objectives</b> , to judge the value of the program and to inform subsequent decision-making.

The later in the program cycle that an evaluation takes place, the more it will focus on summative elements and the fewer formative elements it will contain.

## 2.5 HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE EVALUATION?



> Outline evaluation logistics.



> What human, time, technical and financial resources will the evaluation require?

Successful evaluation conduct requires preparing its logistics.

Certain questions will decide whether or not the evaluation can be carried out. Figure 8 provides an overview of the main resources that must be deployed and the main conditions that must be met.

Figure 8: Logistic factors to consider for an evaluation





HUMAN	TIME
<ul> <li>Availability of necessary human resources</li> <li>Capacity to collect and analyze data in-house</li> <li>Someone who is an expert in program evaluation</li> <li>Staff buy-in to the evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Time available to conduct the evaluation</li> <li>Timing of the evaluation's integration into the program</li> <li>Final schedule for obtaining the results</li> </ul>





TECHNICAL	FINANCIAL
<ul> <li>Data accessibility</li> <li>Database management</li> <li>Collection, analysis and graphics tools</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Budget available for the evaluation</li> <li>If possible, reserve about 10% of the program budget for evaluation</li> <li>Balance between budgets for program delivery and program evaluation</li> </ul>

## 2.6 WHAT TO EVALUATE?



- > Guide the choice of evaluation questions.
- > Raise awareness of the diversity issues that must be considered.



> What are the main questions that the evaluation will answer?

A mistake to avoid in the evaluation process is choosing data collection tools too soon, before the information needs are known. Defining the evaluation questions is a crucial phase because it will guide everything that follows. Ultimately, the evaluation should answer each of the identified questions.

The evaluation questions should be aligned with the planned or types of evaluation (for example relevance, implementation, or effectiveness evaluations—see <u>Table 7</u>) and should reflect the stakeholders' information needs. One simple way to define the evaluation questions is to have a discussion with the stakeholders in which they are asked:

"What questions do you want this evaluation to answer?"

If there are too many evaluation questions, they will have to be prioritized according to the resources available for the evaluation. The evaluation questions should be a combination of the concerns of all stakeholders, and not only those mandating the evaluation. These questions should also be limited to the program's spheres of influence (see Section 1.3).

It is also important to define evaluation questions for all essential program components. The notion of "essential components" is addressed in more detail in <u>Section 2.7</u>.

It is not possible to provide a list of evaluation questions that will be valid for all PVE programs. Nonetheless, <u>Table 11</u> provides examples of questions that might be asked for evaluations of a program's relevance, implementation and effectiveness. Note that the evaluation questions also offer the opportunity to explore how the various sub-groups within a target population differ in their needs, their access to programs, and the ways that programs impact them.

## Table 11: Examples of questions for evaluating relevance, implementation and effectiveness

### **RELEVANCE EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

- > How do the objectives, activities and expected outcomes meet the needs of the target populations?
- > Are the activities consistent with the organization's mission, the objectives set for the program, and the desired outcomes?
- > Do the activities meet the needs of the partner organizations, funders and political actors involved in preparing and carrying out these activities?
- Is there any duplication or overlap with other programs that pursue the same objective?

- ➤ Has the program been designed to meet the needs of diverse groups of individuals?
  - > Do the program's expected outcomes include changes that benefit various sub-groups within the target populations?
  - > What activities are carried out to meet the needs of the various groups within the program's target population?
  - > What types of changes are expected for the various sub-groups within the target population?

## **IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

- ➤ Were the activities implemented as planned? If there were any discrepancies, what are the explanations for them?
- > What influenced the implementation of the activities? What factors facilitated or hindered implementation?
- What aspects of these activities do we want to keep, discontinue, or improve?
- > To what extent was access to the program by various sub-groups within its target population considered in designing the program? Were tools or supports developed to improve access to the programs?
- ➤ How many people from the target population were reached (that is, how many were informed of the program or invited to participate in it)? Were the various sub-groups within the target population reached to the extent that had been planned?

## EFFECTIVENESS AND MEASUREMENT OF OUTCOMES ACCORDING TO THE MAJOR TYPES OF PVE ACTIVITIES (Hassan et al., 2020)

- > How many people participated?
  - > Did they reflect the diversity of the target group of practitioners (in terms of occupation, seniority, gender, age, ethnicity, etc.)?
  - ➤ If not, what obstacles prevented members of specific sub-groups within the target population from participating in this training?
- > What immediate lessons did the training participants learn, and what do they plan to transfer into their practices?
- > Several weeks after the training, in what specific ways had its content been applied in practice?

## PRIMARY PREVENTION

**TRAINING** 

- > How many people the prevention program reach and what proportion of the target population did they represent? Were there any differences in access to the program among the various sub-groups within the target population? What were the obstacles to access to the program?
- > To what extent did the targeted individuals change their perceptions following the awareness-raising activities? Were there any differences in awareness raising among the various sub-groups within the target population and if so, what kinds of differences, and why?

# INTERVENTION IN THE CONTEXT OF RADICALIZATION

- ➤ In this case, it is very hard to formulate generic questions, because the program objectives can vary so widely. Outcome questions are intended to assess what the program changed for the people it targeted. Here are some examples:
  - > To what extent did the program increase opportunities to reintegrate individuals who had begun the process of radicalization?
  - > To what extent did the program reduce the risk factors for people who had begun the process of radicalization?
  - ➤ What proportions of the targeted individuals distanced themselves from the radical groups?
  - > Did the program's outcomes vary among the various populations, and if so, how?

## **COLLABORATION**

- > To what extent were the trust and collaboration among the practitioners strengthened?
- > In what ways did the collaborations improve sharing of information, referencing, joint interventions, PVE work?

#### RESEARCH

- > In what ways was the research conducted useful?
- > What changes in knowledge, attitudes or practices did it facilitate?

No matter what type of program you are evaluating, it is also worthwhile to ask whether the program had any unexpected outcomes, whether favourable or unfavourable. If you do observe any unexpected outcomes, then you should try to understand what it was in the program that contributed to these outcomes and in which sub-groups it was observed.



## **FIND OUT MORE**

> The International Alert web site also proposes a number of guiding evaluation questions for PVE programming.

## 2.7 HOW TO DEFINE THE PROGRAM'S THEORY OF CHANGE?



- > Guide the definition of the evaluation questions.
- > Explain how to create a theory of change.



- What are the logical relationships between the program's activities and its outcomes?
- What immediate, intermediate and ultimate outcomes will the program have?

A theory of change is a very helpful tool for guiding the evaluation process, especially for defining the evaluation questions and interpreting the evaluation findings.

A theory of change explains how and why a program is supposed to achieve the expected outcomes.

A theory of change often includes a logic model—a diagram representing the connections between the activities and the expected outcomes—and a narrative description explaining how these activities should produce these outcomes. A theory of change may also include other elements, such as an identification of the causal mechanisms as well as of the external factors and the risks that may influence the outcomes. Table 12 provides a non-exhaustive list of the objectives of the theory of change.

#### Table 12: Theory of change objectives for program management and for evaluation

## **OBJECTIVES FOR PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

- > Generate agreement among the stakeholders about what the program is trying to do and how it will do it.
- > Verify whether the theory of change is sound and realistic. Are its assumptions plausible?
- > Provide information on the program to its stakeholders in a user-friendly visual form.

## **OBJECTIVES FOR EVALUATION**

- > Choose evaluation questions and indicators that generate truly useful information for evaluating the program and making decisions about it.
- > Interpret the evaluation data and their implications for the future direction of the program.

A logic model is a one-page diagram that visually explains how you expect the resources invested in the program to produce the desired outcomes, by clarifying the connections between activities, outputs and expected outcomes.

The logic model is based on documents describing the program and its activities and on discussions with stakeholders. Ideally, the final version of the logic model should reflect consensus among the representatives of all groups and stakeholders. Figure 9 shows the components of a logic model, and Table 13 describes them.

**INPUTS OUTPUTS ACTIVITIES OUTCOMES** 

Figure 9: Simple illustration of a logic model

Table 13: Components of a logic model<sup>14</sup>

	Description	Application to Example D, training for practitioners
INPUTS	Human, physical, financial and information resources that the program will have available to carry out its activities.	Budget provided to hire two trainers.
ACTIVITIES	Planned program activities to be carried out using the inputs.	Preparation of the training content Development of the training sessions (location, schedule, process for recruiting learners, etc.).
OUTPUTS	Goods, services and actions that will result from the program activities over the planned implementation period.	Teaching materials produced, including historical background, definitions of terms, differences from counter-terrorism, the prevention levels and a few intervention models.  Training sessions delivered to three target groups of learners (psychologists, social workers, and educators).
OUTCOMES	Expected changes that the program should produce in the target population or environment through the activities and outputs. These changes may be defined by their time frame (short, medium or long term) or their proximity to the activities (immediate, intermediate, ultimate). These changes must be logically and reasonably attributable to the program outputs. Ultimately or in the long term, the expected change is not necessarily controlled by the program alone but must still fall within its sphere of influence. The program contributes to this ultimate change, even if it is not attributable solely to the program.	Learning by participants, confidence level regarding PVE, desire to become involved in existing programs, transfer of knowledge into their daily practices, improved effectiveness of the PVE interventions carried out by training participants, etc.

A logic model does more than simply list its components. It also uses arrows to represent its assumptions about how one component influences one or more higher-level components. The model tries to highlight the relationships among components, as shown in the example in Figure 10. Logic models can take many different forms, depending on the creativity of the evaluation team and the stakeholders involved. However, regardless of the form, the logical relationships from the inputs to the ultimate outcomes must remain easy to understand.

<sup>14 &</sup>quot;Theory-Based Approaches to Evaluation: Concepts and Practices", Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. Accessed March 31, 2021, https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/audit-evaluation/evaluation-government-canada/theory-based-approaches-evaluation-concepts-practices.html.

## **EXAMPLE D**



## SIMPLIFIED VERSION OF A LOGIC MODEL

Developing a theory of change and a logic model greatly helps to clarify and consolidate the shared vision among stakeholders. The theory of change should be continually adjusted as the program progresses, so that the theory evolves with the program itself.

#### **CONCRETE EXAMPLE**

### • Workshops aiming to develop capacity to understand other people's viewpoints

A secondary prevention program for youth who feel attracted to radical discourse. Presents workshops that apply the cognitive concept of integrative complexity to help these young people develop their ability to understand other people's viewpoints in a more nuanced way and thus encourage them to negotiate and settle conflicts peacefully.

#### THEORY OF CHANGE

On the basis of the limited information available in the program description, a preliminary logical connection between the program activities and the program outcomes can be inferred: the workshops should help young people to understand other people's viewpoints and thus encourage them to negotiate and look for peaceful ways to settle conflicts.

In a theory of change, the logical sequence is diagrammed as follows:

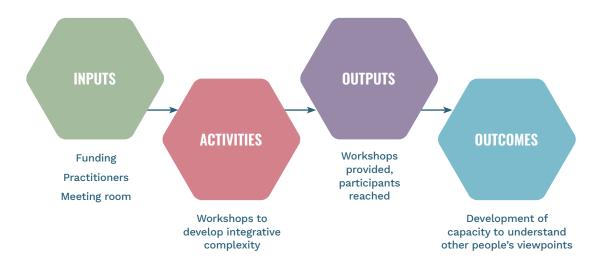
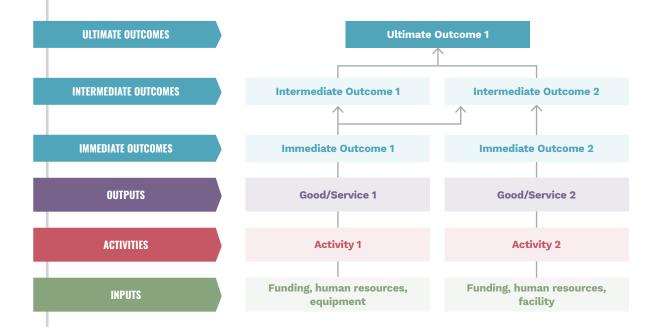


Figure 10 presents a sample logic model template illustrating more fully the relationships between the inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes.

Figure 10: Logic model template





## **FIND OUT MORE**

- > A number of tools available online provide methods for defining theories of change for purposes of PVE program evaluation. Here are three of these tools:
  - ➤ International Alert <u>Module 2: Theory of Change Development</u>
  - > RAND Program Evaluation Toolkit for Countering Violent Extremism, Chapter 2
  - ➤ IMPACT Europe <u>Logic models/Theory of change.</u>

## **EXAMPLE E**



# LOGIC MODEL FOR A PROGRAM AIMING TO DEVELOP THE CAPACITY TO UNDERSTAND OTHER PEOPLE'S VIEWPOINTS

#### **CONCRETE EXAMPLE**

#### • Workshops aiming to develop the capacity to understand other people's viewpoints

A secondary prevention program for youth who feel attracted to radical discourse. Presents workshops that apply the cognitive concept of integrative complexity to help these young people develop their ability to understand other people's viewpoints in a more nuanced way and thus encourage them to negotiate and settle conflicts peacefully

#### **DISCUSSION**

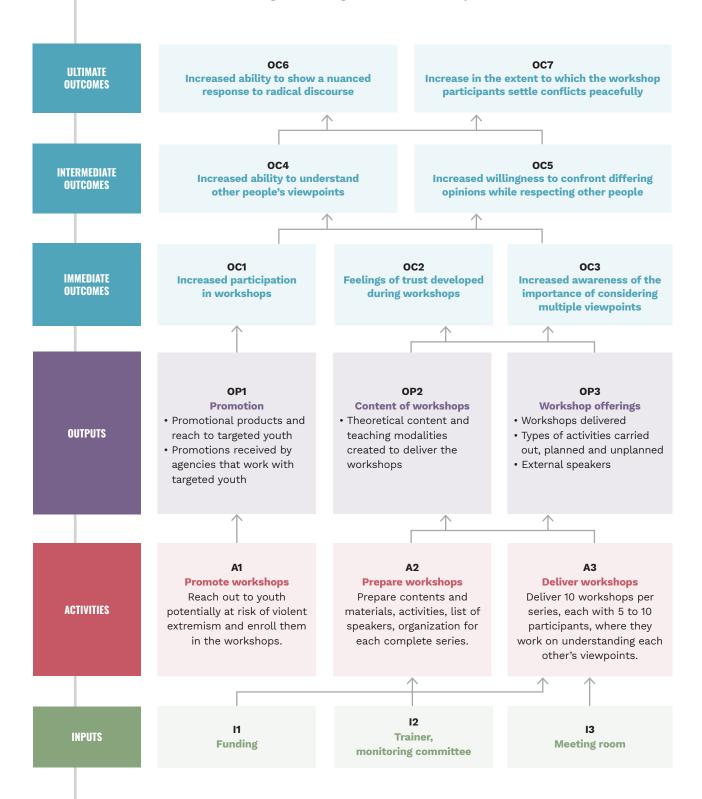
The logic model diagrammed on page 55 makes it easier to define evaluation questions related to each of the outputs and expected outcomes.

For example, output OP1, Promotion, may generate the implementation evaluation question "What promotional activities were carried out?", while expected outcome OC2 "Feelings of trust developed during the workshops", can generate the effectiveness evaluation question "What is the degree of trust with regard to the workshops?"

In a participatory, utilization-based approach, these questions should ideally be developed with the help of the evaluation advisory committee, whose members should be asked: "What question about this output or outcome do you want this evaluation to answer?"

In this way, the evaluation questions will be grounded in the program's sphere of influence and will yield useful answers that are grounded in the program's realities.

Figure 11: Logic model for Example E



PLANNING PVE PROGRAM EVALUATIONS | 55

## **EXAMPLE F**



### **CONCRETE EXAMPLE**

## PVE situation table (hub)

The purpose of a situation table or hub is to foster security by conducting multi-organizational interventions to mitigate risks of crime, violence and victimization. In this approach, a multidisciplinary team attempts to attenuate high-risk situations in specific geographic areas, such as a particular neighbourhood in a large city. Such teams are composed of representatives from local police, correctional, health and social services and any other relevant services from municipal and other levels of government.

Situation tables meet regularly to identify high-risk situations and develop and implement interventions

targeting individuals and their families within 72 hours.

PVE is one category of issues that a situation table may address. The scope of the evaluation will then be limited to the activities, outputs and expected outcomes of the table's PVE interventions.

A situation table's teams may address many different kinds of risk (support to victims of crime, antisocial behaviour, risk of criminality, etc.). Over the past few years, violent extremism has been added to the list of risks, supported by training on this topic for each of the teams' partners.

#### DISCUSSION

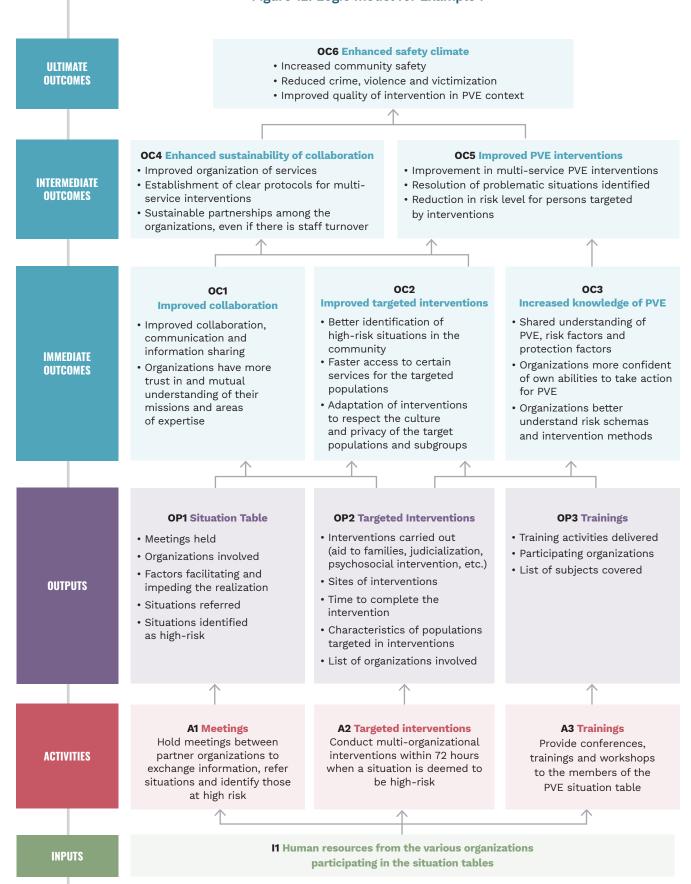
The logic model for a PVE situation table shown on page 57 makes it easier to define evaluation questions related to each of the outputs and expected outcomes.

For example, output OP1, Situation Table, may generate the implementation evaluation question "Was the situation table implemented as planned?", while expected outcome OC1, Improved Collaboration, may lead to the effectiveness evaluation question "To what extent was collaboration among the situation table partners improved?"

In a participatory, utilization-based approach, these questions should ideally be developed with the help of the evaluation advisory committee, whose members should be asked: "What questions concerning these outputs or outcomes do you want this evaluation to answer?"

The evaluation questions will then be grounded in the program's sphere of influence and yield useful answers grounded in the program's realities.

Figure 12: Logic model for Example F



## 2.8 HOW TO PLAN THE EXECUTION OF THE EVALUATION?



- > Plan the exercise by using an evaluation matrix.
- > Specify what an indicator is.



- > What information is essential for answering the evaluation questions?
- How should data collection be organized throughout the program?
- > Who is responsible for collecting the data?
- > What are the key times at which data should be collected?

Once you have defined the evaluation questions, you can begin designing the rest of the evaluation exercise.

To specify exactly what will be examined, the indicators and data collection methods to be used to answer the evaluation questions must now be defined.

All of this information is entered in a summary table called an evaluation matrix. <u>Table 14</u> is a generic template for an evaluation matrix. It can be used to plan what indicators and data sources will be used to answer each evaluation question about the program's relevance, implementation and/or effectiveness.

## Table 14 : Generic template for an evaluation matrix

RELEVANCE           Question about relevance         Indicator 1 (a)	Evaluation question	Indicator	Initial data	Target	Schedule	Method/Data sources	Collection responsibility
Question about relevance   Indicator 1   Indicator 2   Indicator 3   Indicator 1   Indicator 1   Indicator 1   Indicator 2   Indicator 2   Indicator 2   Indicator 3   Indicator 3   Indicator 2   Indicator 3   Indicator 4   Indicator 4   Indicator 4   Indicator 4   Indicator 4   Indicator 5   Indicator 6   Indicator 7   Indicator 8   Indicator 9   Indicator 1   Indicator 9   Indicator 9   Indicator 9   Indicator 9   Indicator 9   Indicator 9   Indicator 1   Indicator 9   Indicator 9   Indicator 9   Indicator 1   Ind	RELEVANCE						
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	Outcome 2 in logic model	Indicator 2					

The evaluation matrix template introduces the concept of an indicator, which is defined as follows:

An indicator is used to measure a phenomenon qualitatively or quantitatively on the basis of concrete observations. It can use information as a reference point to demonstrate a change or a trend.

#### An indicator must:

- > specify what will be measured about the relevance, implementation or effectiveness of the program;
- > allow an evaluative judgment, that provides a way of knowing whether the measurement obtained is or is not satisfactory;
- > be directly related to the program's activities;
- > satisfy the criteria for SMART indicators shown in Table 15.

Table 15: Criteria for smart indicators (Little and Carnegie, no date)

S	SPECIFIC	The indicator must be narrow and accurately describe what must be evaluated.
M	MEASURABLE	Regardless of who uses the indicator, it would be measured in the same way.
A	ATTAINABLE	Collecting the data must be straightforward and feasible using accessible and available data sources and collection methods.
R	REALISTIC	The indicator must be closely linked to the program outcome.
T	TIME-BOUND	The indicator must be limited to a specified time frame.

# Precise evaluation questions and indicators will make it easier to select methods and create data collection tools.

In accordance with your evaluation questions, it is important to identify indicators regarding gender and other identity factors (that is, indicators that describe the relevance, implementation and effectiveness of the program for the various subgroups within the target populations and that enable comparisons between these groups) in order to ensure that the evaluation will measure the needs, participation and barriers to participation as well as the impacts on these groups.

If any initial data and targets are available for the indicators that you have defined, it is helpful to specify them in the evaluation matrix, as well as the date on which the targets should be met.

This is generally more relevant for quantitative indicators (that is, numerical measurements such as numbers, ratios, percentages and rates of change) than for qualitative indicators, which are reported in the form of words and often reflect people's judgments and perceptions on the production of an output or an outcome.

Also to be entered into the evaluation matrix are the data collection methods and sources for each indicator, as well as who will be responsible for collecting data. Information on selecting data collection methods is presented in Section 3 of this guide, "Conducting PVE program evaluations".

## **EXAMPLE G**



# EVALUATION MATRIX FOR A PROGRAM AIMING TO DEVELOP CAPACITY TO UNDERSTAND OTHER PEOPLE'S VIEWPOINTS

#### **CONCRETE EXAMPLE**

## • Workshop aiming to develop capacity to understand other people's viewpoints

On the basis of the sample logic model defined in <u>Section 2.7</u>, evaluation questions, indicators, a schedule, and data collection methods and sources can be defined, and responsibility for data collection assigned. These are in the example evaluation matrix on the following pages.

model #	Evaluation question	Indicator	Initial data	Target	Schedule	Data collection method and data source	Responsible for collection
RELEVA	NCE						
	In what way do the workshops meet a need in the community?	Importance placed on the need to improve conflict-management skills in youth who are potentially at risk of violent extremism	N/A	N/A	N/A	Focus groups with community agencies that work with youth	
	Is there any duplication or overlap with other programs pursuing this same objective?	Identity and description of the other programs pursuing the same objective	N/A	N/A	N/A		Evaluation team
	Are the workshops designed to meet the needs of the various groups of young people who are at greatest risk of violent extremism?	Identification of diverse groups of young people who are at greatest risk of violent extremism	N/A	N/A	N/A		
		Alignment between the realities of the various groups of young people who are at greatest risk of violent extremism and the components of the workshops designed to meet their needs	N/A	N/A	N/A	Document review: content of workshops	Assigned practitioners

model #	Evaluation question	Indicator	Initial data	Target	Schedule	Data collection method and data source	Responsible for collection
IMPLEM	MENTATION						
Outputs							
	What promotional activities were	Number and type of promotional activities targeting at-risk youth	N/A	N/A	N/A	Document review:	Assigned
	carried out?	Number and type of promotional activities targeting community agencies that work with at-risk youth	N/A	N/A	N/A	follow up on communication plan	Assigned practitioners
	What community agencies working with youth were targeted by the promotional activities?	List of community agencies targeted	N/A	N/A	N/A	Document review: follow up on communication plan	Assigned practitioners
OP1		% of agencies targeted out of all agencies working with youth in the community	30%	60%	Before the start of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop series		
		List of the various groups of youth targeted by the promotion	N/A	N/A	N/A	Document review:	Assigned practitioners
	To what extent were the various targeted groups of youth considered in designing the	% of agencies working with the various groups of youth targeted by the promotion	50%	75%	Before the start of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop series	follow up on communi- cation plan	
	promotional activities?	Probability that the promotional activities reach and interest each of the various groups of youth targeted	N/A	N/A	N/A	Review of promotional activities by PVE experts	Evaluation team

model #	Evaluation question	Indicator	Initial data	Target	Schedule	Data collection method and data source	Responsible for collection
	What is the quality of the content	Clarity of the content of the workshops	Moderately clear	Very clear	Before the start of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop series	Review of the content by PVE experts	
	created?	Number of theoretical references used	1 reference	5 references	Before the start of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop series		Evaluation team
OP2	Given the workshops' objectives, how relevant is their content?	Ratio of relevant content for the workshops	75%	100%	Before the start of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop series		
	Is the content easy to understand for the participants, including the various sub-groups?	Ease with which each of the various sub-groups understands the content	N/A	N/A	End of the 2nd workshop series	Telephone interviews with the participants after the workshop series ends	Evaluation team
	Did the workshops take place as planned?	Number, frequency and duration of workshops in each series	10 workshops 1/week 2h/workshop	10 workshops 1/week 2h/workshop	S/O	Journaling	Assigned practitioners
	What activities were carried out?	List of planned and unplanned activities carried out	N/A	N/A	N/A		
ОР3	What speakers participated?	Number of speakers	1	3	End of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop series		
	what speakers participated:	Topics covered by the speakers	1	3	End of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop series		
	What factors facilitated and what factors posed obstacles to the delivery of the workshops?	Facilitating factors and hindrances identified by the practitioners who delivered the workshops	N/A	N/A	N/A	Telephone interviews with the practitioners after the workshop series ends	Assigned practitioners

model#	Evaluation question	Indicator	Initial data	Target	Schedule	Data collection method and data source	Responsible for collection
EFFECT	IVENESS						
Immediat	e Outcomes						
	By how much did	Number of participants per session	5	8	End of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop series	Document review: registration lists	Assigned practitioners
	participation increase?	% of participants who attended all the workshops	75%	95%	End of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop series	Document review: attendance lists	Assigned practitioners
OC1	Did the participants reflect the diversity of the targeted groups of youth?	Characteristics of the youth who participated	Moderately reflected	Strongly reflected	End of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop series	Document review: registration lists	Assigned practitioners
	What factors facilitated and posed obstacles to participation in the workshops?	Factors that facilitated and hindered to participation, as reported by the participants	N/A	N/A	End of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop series	Telephone interviews	Evaluation team
		Factors that facilitated and hindered participation by the various sub-groups of participants	N/A	N/A	End of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop series	with participants and assigned practitioners	

model #	Evaluation question	Indicator	Initial data	Target	Schedule	Data collection method and data source	Responsible for collection
	How much trust do the participants have in the workshops?	Degree of trust expressed by participants	Moderate degree of trust	High degree of trust	End of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop series		Evaluation team
	In what ways does trust in the workshops vary from one subgroup of participants to another?	Similarities and differences in trust expressed by the various sub-groups of participants	N/A	N/A	N/A	Survey of participants at end of workshop series	
OC2	What aspects of the workshops helped to create a climate of trust?	Classification of workshop activities according to their contribution to the climate of trust	N/A	N/A	N/A		
	What improvements should be made in the workshop delivery?	Suggested improvements	N/A	N/A	N/A	Telephone interviews with participants and assigned practitioners at the end of the workshop series	Evaluation team
ОСЗ	To what extent were the participants made more aware of the importance of taking multiple veiwpoints into consideration?	How important the participants think it is to take multiple viewpoints into consideration	Not very important	Very important	End of each workshop series and 6 months later	Surveys of participants before and after the workshops and 6 months later	Evaluation team
	To what extent did the change in awareness vary from one subgroup of participants to another?	Similarities and differences in change in awareness among the various subgroups of participants	N/A	N/A	N/A	Telephone interviews with the assigned practitioners at the end of the workshop series	Evaluation team

model #	Evaluation question	Indicator	Initial data	Target	Schedule	Data collection method and data source	Responsible for collection			
Intermedi	ntermediate Outcomes									
	To what extent did the participants develop the ability to understand other people's viewpoints?	Change in capacity to understand other people's viewpoints	N/A	Increase	End of each series	Standardized test for integrative complexity, administered before and after workshops	Evaluation team			
004	Do the participants perceive themselves as having the capacity to seek out different viewpoints?	Participants' perception of having adequate capacity	N/A	Well equipped	End of each series	Survey of participants at the end of	Evaluation team			
OC4	How do perceptions of being equipped vary from one sub-group of participants to another?	Similarities and differences in perception of self as having adequate capacity among the various sub-groups of participants	N/A	N/A	N/A	the workshops				
	More specifically, what capacities did the participants report having developed?	Participants' perceptions of the capacities that they developed	N/A	N/A	N/A	Telephone interviews with participants and assigned practitioners at the end of the workshop series	Evaluation team			

model #	Evaluation question	Indicator	Initial data	Target	Schedule	Data collection method and data source	Responsible for collection
OC5	To what degree are the participants willing to confront opinions that differ from theirs while showing respect toward the people who express them?	Degree of willingness to confront differing opinions	Low	High	End of each series and 6 months later	Surveys of participants before and after the workshops and 6 months later	Evaluation team
			N/A	N/A	N/A	Telephone interviews with the assigned practitioners at the end of the workshop series	Evaluation team
	In what concrete ways do the participants show respect for differing opinions?	Ways identified by the participants	N/A	Several ways identified	End of each series	Telephone interviews with the participants at the end of the workshop series	Evaluation team
	How much confidence do the participants have in their own capacity to confront differing opinions?	Degree of confidence in capacity to confront differing opinions	Low or moderate	High	End of each series	Telephone interviews with the participants and the assigned practitioners at the end of the workshop series	Evaluation team

model #	Evaluation question	Indicator	Initial data	Target	Schedule	Data collection method and data source	Responsible for collection	
Ultimate Outcomes								
OC6	To what degree do participants display discernment when faced with radical discourse?	Practitioners' perceptions of participants' discernment when faced with radical discourse	Moderate degree	High degree	End of each series	Telephone interviews with the assigned practitioners at the end of the workshop series	Evaluation team	
007	To what extent do the participants settle conflicts peacefully?	Participants' own perceptions of how often they settle conflicts more peacefully, after having participated in the workshops	N/A	Often or always	End of each series and 6 months later	Surveys of participants at the end of the workshops and 6 months later	Evaluation team	
		Practitioners' perceptions that the participants have acquired capacity to settle conflicts more peacefully	N/A	N/A	N/A	Telephone interviews with the assigned practitioners at the end of the workshop series	Evaluation team	
	How satisfied are the participants with how the conflicts they experience are resolved?	Participants' degree of satisfaction with the way that the conflicts that they experienced are resolved	Low or moderate	High	End of each series and 6 months later	Surveys of participants before and at the end of the workshops and 6 months later	Evaluation team	

## **EXAMPLE H**



#### **CONCRETE EXAMPLE**

### PVE situation table or hub example, continued

(See Figure 12: Logic model for a PVE situation table (Example F).

Every output and every outcome can be the subject of one or more evaluation questions. For the purposes of this example, we will consider only Output OP1, "Situation Table" and Outcome OC1, "Improved collaboration". (In the first phase of an evaluation, the evaluation advisory committee might decide to focus on this one output and this one outcome, as a way of managing the evaluation resources.)

When a situation table or hub is to be evaluated, it is important for the evaluation to include questions about diversity among the partners participating in it. The evaluation matrix on the following pages shows examples of possible evaluation questions.

This evaluation matrix deals only with the organizations that are members of the situation table or hub. For the sake of simplicity, they are referred to here as "members".

In what way is the situation table designed to meet the PVE-related needs of its member organizations?  For example, the needs of the various professions that work on PVE, the types of radicalization, and the groups of persons targeted by the member organizations.  Perceptions regarding the concerns that the table does and does not address  N/A  N/A  N/A  N/A  N/A  N/A  N/A  Interviews with members  Similarities between the types of needs that the table does address  Similarities between the types of needs that the table does address  Similarities between the types of needs that the table does address	Evaluation team									
In what way is the situation table designed to meet the PVE-related needs of its member organizations?  For example, the needs of the various professions that work on PVE, the types of radicalization, and the groups of persons targeted by the member organizations.  Similarities between the types of needs that the table does address  N/A  N/A  N/A  N/A  N/A  N/A  N/A  N										
In what way is the situation table designed to meet the PVE-related needs of its member organizations?  For example, the needs of the various professions that work on PVE, the types of radicalization, and the groups of persons targeted by the member organizations.  Similarities between the types of needs that the table does address  the concerns that the table does and does not address  N/A  N/A  N/A  N/A  N/A  Interviews with members  Similarities between the table does address  Similarities between the types of needs that the table does address	Evaluation team									
various professions that work on PVE, the types of radicalization, and the groups of persons targeted by the member organizations.  Similarities between the types of needs that the table does address  N/A  N/A  N/A  Interviews with members  Similarities between the types of needs that the type										
types of needs that the N/A N/A N/A Interviews with	Evaluation team									
	Evaluation team									
IMPLEMENTATION										
Outputs										
Was the situation table implemented as planned?  Number, frequency and duration of meetings  As required  2 hours every 2 weeks  2020  Document review: meeting minutes	Coordinator									

nodel #	Evaluation question	Indicator	Initial data	Target	Schedule	Data collection method and data source	Responsible for collection
	What factors facilitated and hindered the establishment of the situation table?	Perceived facilitating factors and hindrances reported by members	N/A	N/A	N/A	Interviews with members	Evaluation team
	What organizations were invited to become members of the situation table?	Number and list of organizations invited	N/A	N/A	N/A	Document review: list of invitations sent	Coordinator
	Do the members' mandates reflect the diversity of the PVE situations referred to the situation table?	Degree of correspondance between members' mandates and types of situations referred to the table	50% match	80% match	2020	Document review: situation referral template	Coordinator
	What PVE situations were referred to the situation table for analysis?	List of situations referred	N/A	N/A	N/A	Document review: situation referral template	Coordinator
		Similarities between the situations referred to the table	N/A	N/A	N/A	Document review: situation referral template	Coordinator
		Similarities between the situations not referred to the table	N/A	N/A	N/A	Document review: situation referral template	Coordinator
	Which members referred situations to the table?	List of members who made referrals	100% come from the police department	80% come from the police department	2021	Document review: situation referral template	Coordinator
	Out of all the PVE situations referred to the situation table for analysis, how many were identified as high-risk?	Numbers and percentage of situations identified as high-risk	N/A	N/A	N/A	Document review: situation referral template	Coordinator
		Similarities between situations identified as high-risk	N/A	N/A	N/A	Document review: situation referral template	Coordinator
		Similarities between Situations identified as high-risk by the situation table	N/A	N/A	N/A	Document review: situation referral template	Coordinator

model#	Evaluation question	Indicator	Initial data	Target	Schedule	Data collection method and data source	Responsible for collection
EFFEC1	TIVENESS						
Immediate outcomes							
	How much did collaboration among the members improve?	Members' perceptions regarding collaboration, communication and information-sharing	A little to moderately	A lot to quite	2021	Interviews with members	Evaluation team
	How many members actually participated in the situation-table meetings?	Number and percentage of invited organizations that attended at least ¾ of the meetings	40%	80%	2021	Document review: minutes of meetings Interviews with members	Coordinator  Evaluation team
0C1	What factors facilitated and hindered members' participation?	Perceptions of factors facilitating and hindering participation, including those of members who participate less frequently	N/A	N/A	N/A	Interviews with members	Evaluation team
	How much more familiar are the members with the PVE-related services available in the community?	Knowledge of the missions and areas of expertise of the organizations in the community	Knowledge of half of the missions	Knowledge of most of the missions	2020	Interviews with members	Evaluation team
	To what extent do the members have more trust in one another?	Members' perceptions of their trust in one another	Moderate degree of trust in the other members	High degree of trust in the other members	2021	Interviews with members	Evaluation team
OC2	Question concerning OC2 in the logic model. Etc.	Indicator 1					

## 2.9 HOW TO WRITE AN EVALUATION PLAN?

An evaluation plan is a document that brings together the key elements of the evaluation process. It is prepared at the beginning of the evaluation, to guide this process. It will be used as a reference document to facilitate decisions concerning the evaluation, to carry out the work as agreed to and, potentially, to communicate about the evaluation procedure. Table 16 shows the contents of an evaluation plan.

Table 16: Contents of an evaluation plan

1	Brief description of the program
2	Theory of change
3	Aspects of the program to evaluate and objectives
4	Evaluation approaches
5	Planned uses of the evaluation
6	Evaluation questions
7	Evaluation matrices
8	<u>Methods</u>
9	<u>Analysis</u>
10	Reporting

# O3 Conducting PVE program evaluations

Once the evaluation plan has been finalized, it must be carried out. This involves choosing the data collection methods, coordinating the data collection activities, and analyzing the data collected. This section presents an introduction to all of these aspects so that proper attention can be given to certain essential details.

Because this guide is not a methodological handbook or a guide for designing scientific research, it does not address the creation of data collection and analysis tools in depth. It does, however, provide references to outside resources for readers who want to delve into these aspects further.

#### CLICK ON THE SECTION TITLES TO ACCESS THE CONTENT

- 3.1 How to choose among data collection methods?
- 3.2 How to collect data?
- 3.3 How to analyze data?
- 3.4 How to draw conclusions and develop recommendations?

#### 3.1 HOW TO CHOOSE AMONG DATA COLLECTION METHODS?



- > Propose some key elements for choosing data collection methods.
- > Present some methods commonly used in program evaluation.



- > How can you choose the most appropriate data collection methods?
- > What are the advantages and disadvantages of the most commonly used data collection methods?

Many different methods can be used to collect data for program evaluations. The <u>Table 17</u> shows some key questions to help identify the most appropriate methods more easily, according to the kind of information you are looking for.

Table 17: Key questions for choosing data collection methods

What type of information does each indicator in the evaluation matrix require?

- > Data from administrative records
- > Official statistics
- > Opinions
- > Accounts of experiences

# Who has this information?

- > Organization manager
- > Statistical data centres
- > Program participants
- > Neutral observers
- > Experts in the field

How can this information be collected?

- Document and literature reviews
- > Surveys
- > Individual interviews
- > Focus groups
- > Journaling
- > Standardized tests

What data collection tools does the program already have?

- > Intervention notes, evolving notes, intervention assessments, activity reports, etc.
- > Registration lists

- > Internal statistics logs
- > Monitoring meetings
- > Satisfaction questionnaires

What are likely challenges and risks during data collection?

- > Availability of data
- > Ethical considerations (confidentiality, anonymity, risks for participants, non-stigmatizing terminology, etc.)
- > Costs of or delays in data collection
- > Expertise required

Will enough valid, high-quality data be collected to perform a rigorous analysis?

- > Response rates
- > Credibility of sources

Do you have more than one source of data so that you can confirm (triangulate) your findings?

> A finding is based on pieces of evidence from multiple data sources (such as individual interviews with practitioners, logbooks, and surveys of program participants).

Regardless of the data collection methods chosen, they must be thoughtfully selected and justifiable. For the sake of transparency and to show that the evaluation methodology is sound, the data collection methods must be explicitly identified in the evaluation plan and in all evaluation reports. Every method has limitations that may affect the findings. The evaluation team should be aware of these limitations and indicate them.

Whatever methods are chosen, the evaluation team must be well aware of its capabilities for understanding, creation, compilation and analysis.

In addition, ethical issues must be considered at every stage of the evaluation, from designing the tools to analyzing the data and presenting the findings. The methods most commonly used to collect data for program evaluations are presented in Tables 18 through 23.

#### Table 18

#### **DOCUMENT AND LITERATURE REVIEWS**

A document and literature review consists in gathering and analyzing all documents that may contain information relevant to the evaluation questions. These documents are regarded as secondary data because the people conducting the program evaluation did not themselves collect the information in these documents.

The documents reviewed may include:

- Documents related to the program (minutes of meetings, statements and reports, publications in the media, reference frameworks, documents presenting the program, internal memoranda, etc.)
- > Scientific research publications
- > Grey literature (documents not controlled by commercial publishers)
- > Information in the media and on social networks

Although document and literature reviews can provide relevant information, they should be combined with other methods that provide access to the experience of the various stakeholders. This was one of the shortcomings that Madriaza et al. (2022) identified in their systematic review of PVE program evaluations: some of these evaluations were based solely on reviews of secondary data related to the program.

In evaluation presentations and reports, it is important to provide complete references for all of the documents and literature reviewed.

#### **ADVANTAGES**

- > Identify information that is already available and avoid duplication of effort.
- > Provide extensive information about the history, context and strategic intentions of the program.
- > Inexpensive.
- > May be facilitated by online search tools.

- ➤ May take a lot of time if there are a large number of documents.
- ➤ May be difficult to find information that is really relevant for answering the evaluation questions.
- > Risk that the information reviewed may not be up to date.
- Do not provide information on the stakeholders' experiences and impressions.

#### **SURVEYS**

A survey is a questionnaire administered to a population or a sample of a population in order to determine, for example, their opinions, experiences, or behaviour or what they have learned or their situation with regard to the program being evaluated. Survey questionnaires can be administered in person or online or by telephone, text message, postal mail or other methods.

Carrying out a survey can be a fairly simple exercise that does not require a large investment of time or money. But developing the survey questionnaire to begin with requires several steps and, ideally, a pilot survey before the full-scale survey is carried out.

#### **ADVANTAGES**

- > Enable data to be collected in a uniform way from a large group of people.
- > Can be easily created or adapted to the special characteristics of the program.
- > Can be carried out without a large financial investment.
- > Facilitate compilation of data, especially for closed questions (multiple choice, rating scales, etc.).
- > Can ask questions that let respondents be classified quickly according to demographic characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity, Indigenous identity, occupation and geographic region.
- > Can be used to compile descriptive statistics (such as numbers and percentages) and perform analyses comparing various sub-groups within the population surveyed.
- > Can enable sensitive information to be gathered anonymously and confidentially, which can be useful for evaluating PVE programs.
- > Enable evaluators to ask various types of questions (open, multiple-choice, with rating scales, etc.).

- > Require careful wording to ensure that respondents have all information necessary to be able to answer the questions and and are being asked for only one piece of information in each question.
- Do not provide access to details of respondents' experiences.
- Wording of questions may influence respondents' answers.
- > Ineffective for respondents who do not speak the language or have reading difficulties.
- > Require a high participation rate for findings to be generalized to the target population.
- > May require a lot of time to compile and analyze the responses, in particular to open-ended questions.

#### **INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS**

An individual interview is a meeting in which one person, leading the meeting, asks another person a set of questions on a given subject. Sometimes more than one person may attend a group interview. Interviews may be conducted in person, or by telephone, or by videoconference.

When an interview is being conducted for evaluation purposes, the interviewer follows an interview guide designed to answer specific evaluation questions. The interview guide may contain a mixture of open-ended and closed questions. The three most common types of individual interviews are as follows:

- > Structured: the interview guide is structured with questions and follow-up questions, and the interviewer cannot change the order of the questions or reword them.
- > Semi-structured: the interview guide contains questions, but the interviewer can change their wording and their order to guide the interview.
- > Unstructured: there is no interview guide. The interviewer formulates specific questions as the interview proceeds.

Some of the techniques used in individual PVE intervention sessions with people potentially at risk of violent extremism or their families may be useful here, such as asking open, closed and follow-up questions, reflecting answers back to the respondent, and so on.

#### **ADVANTAGES**

- > Allow interviewers to gather more specific information, concrete examples, detailed views and personal experiences from respondents in their own words (by reflecting, asking follow-up questions, etc.).
- > Conducive to in-depth analyses.
- > Allow interviewers to draw connections among multiple elements, providing meaning that would be hard to convey by any method other than narration.
- > Allow interviewers to adjust the discussion if respondents do not fully understand some questions.

- > Takes time to conduct each interview and analyze the qualitative responses.
- > Can be challenging to schedule an interview for a time that suits both the interviewer and the respondent.
- > Some people may be reluctant to be interviewed because they see the process as similar to other procedures, such as police interrogations or administrative verifications.
- > May lead to bias in the responses, if the respondent wants to make a good impression.

#### **FOCUS GROUPS**

A focus group is a meeting run by a person known as the facilitator, in which a group generally consisting of 5 to 12 people discusses a set of questions on a specific subject. These people are carefully selected to represent a variety of viewpoints and create a thoughtful group dynamic. Focus groups may be held in person, or by videoconference, or in online chat forums.

When a focus group is being conducted for evaluation purposes, the facilitator follows a discussion guide designed to obtain answers to specific evaluation questions. This guide may contain a mixture of openended and closed questions, as well as exercises designed to obtain evaluative information from the participants.

The facilitator plays an important role, helping the discussion along and ensuring that all participants are able express their views as freely as possible in the allotted time, in a safe, respectful environment.

#### **ADVANTAGES**

- ➤ Help to generate ideas and obtain multiple views as one response inspires another, can create common understandings.
- > Allow participants to exchange views and discuss disagreements.
- > Can save time by obtaining information from several people at once.
- ➤ Allow participants to provide specific information and concrete examples and develop greater depth of expression in their own words.
- ➤ Let facilitators adjust the discussion if participants do not clearly understand some questions.

- > Can be hard to schedule the focus group for a time that suits all the participants invited.
- May lead to bias in the participants' responses for example, caused by:
  - > participants' unease in expressing their views or recounting their personal histories;
  - desires to make a good impression on the rest of the group;
  - > tendency of some to go along with the group's opinions, instead of saying what they think personally;
  - > a participant imposing their point of view.
- > Facilitator must be skilled in leading groups, eliciting minority opinions, making sure everyone gets a chance to speak, and so on.

#### **JOURNALING**

Journaling is an ongoing process in which someone makes entries regularly to record information and perceptions on a given subject as a project progresses. Journals can be a physical document, or a computer file or a web page, or an audio or video recording.

To guide this data collection, a form specifying the information to be recorded is provided to the respondents concerned. The frequency of collection is determined according to the evaluation requirements and the respondents' capacities.

#### **ADVANTAGES**

- > Provide access to day-to-day information that the respondents might forget, such as actions taken in the course of an intervention or subjects discussed on the spur of the moment. Such complete details could not be obtained by any other means.
- > Do not take much time to fill out. Methods can be devised to facilitate responses, such as an online form accessible by smart phone.
- ➤ Allow practices to be documented regularly while introducing an element of reflective practice into them.
- > Can provide concrete examples to support the responses.
- > Allow an activity to be adjusted directly if a difficulty is identified.

- > Can be hard for someone to make entries regularly if they are not used to or are resistant to this practice.
- > Can be challenging for respondents who have difficulty in writing.
- > Takes time to analyze the entries in all of the journals.
- > Can jeopardize data collection if the respondents have not kept up with making entries in their journals.

#### **STANDARDIZED TESTS**

Standardized tests are generally available on the market and have been independently validated for their ability to measure specific concepts or phenomena such as attitudes, risks of radicalization and self-esteem. In these tests, a standardized form is used to ask the respondents a set of questions, and special procedures are usually required to analyze their answers.

#### **ADVANTAGES**

- > Have a high degree of scientific validity.
- > Provide precise measurements of the concepts being studied, thus enhancing the validity of the evaluation findings.
- > Can save time, by eliminating the need to develop tests from scratch.

- > Not generally adapted to the specific context of the program to be evaluated.
- > Special expertise usually required to administer the tests and interpret the results.
- > Validity requires compliance with certain standards and protocols (administration, compilation, analysis, etc.).
- > May contain biases that disadvantage people who have varied cultural backgrounds, or language barriers, or different psychological dispositions. Given the importance of diversity, non-discrimination and ethical evaluation practices, it is important to carefully examine how use of standardized tests might bias the results for various groups of respondents.
- > Professional accreditation sometimes required for authorization to use a standardized test.



#### **FIND OUT MORE**

- > Two other PVE program evaluation guides provide methods for collecting data suitable for this purpose, including guidance on creating certain tools:
  - > International Alert Module 6: Data Collection Methods
  - > IMPACT Europe section on methods
- > The BetterEvaluation website offers highly detailed guidance on choosing appropriate evaluation methods and processes, as well as a long list of data collection methods.
- > Here are links to guidance on creating tools for specific data collection methods:
  - > Survey questionnaires: <a href="mailto:BetterEvaluation">BetterEvaluation</a>, <a href="IMPACT Europe">IMPACT Europe</a>
  - > Individual interviews: <u>BetterEvaluation</u>, <u>IMPACT Europe</u>
  - > Focus groups: <a href="Memory Better Evaluation">Better Evaluation</a>, <a href="IMPACT Europe">IMPACT Europe</a>
  - > Logbooks and diaries: BetterEvaluation
- There is no exhaustive list of all of the standardized tests and tools that may be helpful for PVE program evaluation, but here are some links that may be helpful:
  - a systematic review of the quality of tools for assessing risk factors for violent extremism, including 16 standardized tests (in Table 3)
  - a list of tools used to evaluate programs to prevent violent radicalization in the French probation system (available in French only, in an appendix to a report published by the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime)
  - > a standardized test for measuring activism and radicalism.

# **EXAMPLE 1**



# **CHOOSING DATA COLLECTION METHODS** TO EVALUATE A PROGRAM AIMING TO DEVELOP THE **CAPACITY TO UNDERSTAND OTHER PEOPLE'S VIEWPOINTS**

OP1 PROMOTION				
Evaluation question	Indicator			
What promotional activities were carried out?	<ul> <li>Number and type of promotional activities targeting at-risk youth.</li> <li>Number and type of promotional activities targeting community agencies that work with at-risk youth.</li> </ul>			
Data collection method and data source	Explanation of choice of method			
Document review: monitoring of the communication plan	The existence of a communication plan implies that communications have been rigorously planned and will be monitored. Creating a document for this purpose would help in executing the communication plan, in adjusting communications along the way and in its final evaluation.  Also, a promotional campaign often requires the production of materials such as posters, social media posts, and presentations. Analyses of these documents will also be useful for answering this evaluation question.			

Based on Liht and Savage, 2013 and Savage et al, 2014. This example is the continuation of Example A.

# OC3 INCREASED AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING MULTIPLE VIEWPOINTS INTO ACCOUNT

#### **Evaluation question**

# To what extent were the participants made more aware of the importance of take multiple viewpoints into account?

#### **Indicator**

How important the participants think it is to take multiple viewpoints into account

#### Data collection method and data source

#### Surveys of participants before and at the end of the workshops and 6 months later

#### Telephone interviews with the assigned practitioners at the end of the workshop series

#### **Explanation of choice of method**

In this case, surveys were chosen as the data collection method, because the information to be gathered involves a personal opinion. The respondents must feel that it is safe to answer the questions freely and honestly. In an interview, they might feel afraid of being judged, while a survey will protect their anonymity and confidentiality. The evaluators can thus ask sensitive questions more easily while still satisfying ethical considerations.

Individual telephone interviews with practitioners will allow them to share their observations about participating youth while respecting their anonymity and confidentiality. Also, added details and examples could be developed in depth by means of practice narratives.

#### **RELEVANCE**

#### **Evaluation question**

In what way do the workshops meet a need in the community?

#### **Indicator**

Importance placed on the need to improve conflict-management skills in youth who are potentially at risk of violent extremism.

Is there any duplication or overlap with other programs pursuing this same objective?

Identity and description of other programs pursuing this same objective.

#### Data collection method and data source

Focus groups with community agencies that work with youth.

#### **Explanation of choice of method**

A focus group would let the agencies construct a rapid inventory of the needs they see in the community, supported by concrete examples. The agencies could also discuss what services are currently offered and which are lacking. The overall picture of the situation developed during the focus group could help foster a shared understanding among the agencies, along with buy-in to the project and a stronger partnership for the subsequent steps.

#### **OP3 WORKSHOP OFFERINGS**

#### **Evaluation question**

Did the workshops take place as planned?

#### **Indicator**

Number, frequency and duration of workshops in each series

What activities were carried out in them?

List of planned and unplanned activities carried out

#### Data collection method and data source

Journaling by the assigned practitioners.

#### **Explanation of choice of method**

It is important here to collect information throughout the delivery of the workshops. Interviews after all of the workshops were over would not provide all of the required details, because the practitioners would not be able to remember or report all of the activities that were carried out throughout the program. Having the practitioners keep journals is therefore a good method to ensure regular information recording and access to reflexive questions.

#### OC4 INCREASED CAPACITY TO UNDERSTAND OTHER PEOPLE'S VIEWPOINTS

#### **Evaluation question**

To what extent did the participants develop the capacity to understand other people's viewpoints?

#### **Indicator**

Change in capacity to understand other people's viewpoints.

#### Data collection method and data source

Standardized test for integrative complexity, administered before and after workshops.

#### **Explanation of choice of method**

To assess a specific theoretical concept (in this case, integrative complexity), it may be advisable to use a standardized test developed specifically for this purpose. Such a test will provide valid, accurate measurement of improvement in integrative complexity among workshop participants while saving the time that it would otherwise take to create a new measurement tool for this purpose.

#### 3.2 HOW TO COLLECT DATA?



- > Identify a few points to consider when creating data collection tools.
- > Raise awareness of the logistics of data collection.



- > What aspects of data collection require particular attention?
- > What are the traps to avoid when collecting data?

Every method has its own tools for data collection, and they must be created in keeping with the objectives of the evaluation and the evaluation questions and indicators identified in the evaluation matrix. A single tool may be used to gather information on a number of questions.

Table 24 shows some of the principles to consider when creating or adapting a new tool.

#### Table 24: Principles for creating and adapting evaluation tools

Differentiate the evaluation questions from the more specific questions used in the data collection tools.

The evaluation questions are broad questions that guide the entire evaluation process and help with the final analysis. Use of these questions in the data collection tools in this format is not recommended.

The questions asked in the data collection tools are more specific and must help respondents recount their experience or guide the analysis of documents. These questions must be formulated from all of the elements in the evaluation matrix (indicators, targets, data sources, etc.).

Define what you are trying to document.

On the basis of the evaluation questions, and referring to the indicators and methods identified in the evaluation matrix, define what you are trying to document with each evaluation tool.

Formulate the questions to be used in the collection tools.

Formulate questions or categories of information for each of the data collection tools that cover all of the indicators identified in the evaluation matrix.

Classify the questions and information.

Ensure that the questions that you are asking and the information that you are seeking are consistent across all of the evaluation tools. Use numbers or keywords to classify each question/piece of information in relation to the indicators in the evaluation matrix, so that the data collected can be readily compiled for analysis.

Validate the tools.

Test each tool with a small sample of the target population, then adjust the tool as needed.

# To avoid collecting irrelevant information, the questions addressed through data collection must include only those in the evaluation matrix.

For ethical reasons, it is inappropriate for evaluators to ask respondents to spend time providing information that is not going to be used or personal information that is not relevant to answering the evaluation questions. Evaluators should, however, remain open to important information that does not necessarily fit into the questions but may be helpful for the analysis. Some specific questions may be included to capture unexpected findings.

To ensure that data collection tools such as questionnaires are relevant and can be accessed and understood by all respondents, it is essential to validate these tools with people who represent various sub-groups within the target population.

As <u>Table 25</u> shows, in order to incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion into evaluation, all of the information needed to organize the data according to respondent characteristics such as occupation, gender, age and other relevant identity factors, must be explicitly included.

Every data collection tool has to be managed in its own way and coordinated effectively with the evaluation schedule.

#### Table 25: Logistical considerations for data collection

#### CONSIDERATIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL DATA COLLECTION METHODS

- > Tell the prospective respondents that their participation is voluntary, and how the information that they provide will be used.
- > Clearly describe how their anonymity and confidentiality will be protected.
- > Allow time in the schedule to manage the data collection process.
- Anticipate the problems that may arise during data collection (for instance, technical problems, low response rates, and respondents who fail to show up for interviews), and make alternative plans.
- > Put protective measures in place to address concerns that might make respondents vulnerable to disclosure of sensitive information.
- > Choose a suitable system for classifying the volume of documents with which you will be dealing. Softwares such as Excel, NVivo, Access or EndNote can be especially helpful for large volumes of information.

#### CONSIDERATIONS SPECIFIC TO CERTAIN DATA COLLECTION METHODS

# Document and literature review

- > Keep track of the references for the documents.
- > Explicitly state the deadline for responding.
- > Plan for targeted callbacks and reminders to deal with low response rates.
- > Clearly indicate how respondents should send in their responses.

#### Surveys

- > Minimize any obstacles that might discourage respondents (for example, difficulties in submitting responses, questionnaires with too many sections, initial perception that it is going to take too long).
- > Send out the questionnaires at a time that is appropriate for the respondents.

# Individual interviews and focus groups

- > Schedule the interviews or focus groups for times that make participation easier (for example, avoid scheduling at family dinnertime).
- > Determine whether it is desirable to provide financial compensation for participating or to defray participants' costs for doing so.
- > Send the participants a reminder.

# > Take certain cultural norms into account, such as accommodating customary mealtimes or dietary restrictions if you will be serving the participants any food.

- Plan how the participants will provide their consent (for example, orally or by signing a form).
- > Provide a means of recording the participants' remarks—for example, by taking notes on a form designed for this purpose, or by making audio or video recordings (with the participants' express consent).

#### Journaling

- > Follow up regularly to make sure that individuals who are supposed to be making entries in journals are doing so.
- ➤ Adapt the method of making journal entries if necessary (paper document, online questionnaire, etc.).

# Standardized tests

- > Make sure that all of the conditions for administering standardized tests are met, in accordance with the instructions that accompany them.
- ➤ Make sure that the people who will be administering the tests and compiling and analyzing the data have the necessary training to do so.

# Diversity and representativity among the people from whom data are going to be collected are important considerations, especially for surveys, interviews and focus groups.

When identifying potential respondents, here are the kinds of people to consider:

- Members of the program's target populations, including the various sub-groups within each of them.
- All of the program's internal and external stakeholders.
- Experts on PVE (so that they can advise on the validity of the program's theory of change and answer specific evaluation questions, such as how likely the program is to achieve its desired outcomes and how large an impact it can be expected to have).
- In some cases, informed observers, such as journalists and commentators, can shed some interesting light.

In evaluation methods that involve participants (such as people who fill out survey questionnaires, or undergo individual interviews, or participate in focus groups), it is also important for the sample sizes to be large enough and to be representative of the sub-groups within the target populations.

If any given group is excluded from data collection, then the resulting implications for the evaluation and for relations with this group must be carefully considered. To avoid any misinterpretations by the group in question, the reasons for the exclusion might be identified as limitations in the evaluation report.



#### **FIND OUT MORE**

> The BetterEvaluation website provides <u>helpful advice on managing the collection and organization of data</u>.

### 3.3 HOW TO ANALYZE DATA?



- > Explain the importance of rigourous data analysis.
- > Identify some key elements to consider in analyzing the data.



- > What types of data analyses will be performed?
- > How will rigour in the analysis be ensured?
- > How will stakeholders be involved in the analysis?

# The purpose of data analysis is to obtain relevant, credible, evidence-based results that meets the needs of the evaluation.

The analysis will reveal the meaning of all of the information gathered. This essential step must be carried out in an organized, rigorous manner so that the findings and conclusions will be evidence-based. Also, analysts should be ready to be surprised, rather than trying to confirm what they already know.

This step of the evaluation should be carefully planned so that the necessary time and knowhow are available to perform the qualitative and quantitative analyses. The data collected for an evaluation may be qualitative or quantitative, and suitable analyses must therefore be used for each type. Usually, the evaluation data are gathered by a variety of methods (so that one type of data can complement another), making it necessary to perform both qualitative and quantitative analyses (see <u>Table 26</u>).

Table 26: Qualitative and quantitative evaluation data

QUALITATIVE DATA<sup>15</sup>

#### The results are expressed in words.

Thematic analysis reveals the trends that emerge from the classification of the qualitative information.

QUANTITATIVE DATA<sup>16</sup>

#### The results are expressed in numbers.

Number Proportion or percentage Frequency Mean/Median Correlations

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS But be careful not to apply methods for analyzing quantitative data to qualitative data (for example, don't use a percentage to describe the emergence of a theme from the open-ended responses provided by your interview participants).

Regarding qualitative data, a single comment can be highly relevant for evaluating the program, even if only one person makes it. That person may have been the only one who had this thought or the courage to express it.

If the data collection tools are aligned with the evaluation matrix, then the answers to the evaluation questions will provide information on how the program is contributing to the desired changes, but not necessarily on the extent to which the observed changes can be attributed to the program (for more on this subject, see Attribution versus contribution). The reason is that in most cases, the program's outcomes are also influenced by factors beyond its control. The methods that are generally recognized as meeting the highest standards for demonstrating causality generally are not feasible or ethically desirable in PVE program evaluations (see "Use of experimental designs in PVE program evaluation").

To take diversity into account, over and above analysis of the overall program results, analyses of differences among population sub-groups should be conducted, including analyses examining intersectionalities among sub-groups (for example, differences between men with low and high literacy). All qualitative and quantitative analyses should take each sub-group's unique context into account, along with the relationships among program stakeholder groups and their power dynamics.

<u>Table 27</u> discusses two practices—triangulation and participatory analysis—that can help to minimize bias and enhance quality in data analyses.

<sup>15 «</sup>How to analyse qualitative data for evaluation», NCVO Knowhow, accessed April 28, 2021, <a href="https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/how-to/how-to-analyse-qualitative-data-for-evaluation">https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/how-to/how-to-analyse-qualitative-data-for-evaluation</a>.

<sup>16 «</sup> How to analyse quantitative data for evaluation », NCVO Knowhow, accessed April 28, 2021, <a href="https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/how-to/how-to-analyse-quantitative-data-for-evaluation">https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/how-to/how-to-analyse-quantitative-data-for-evaluation</a>.

#### Table 27: Two practices for strengthening data analyses

# VALIDATION BY TRIANGULATION

- Triangulation attempts to enhance the validity of findings by combining several perspectives during the analysis.
- > One way to achieve triangulation is to have several analysts examine the data and develop their findings together.
- > Another way is to gather data from multiple sources—for example, by administering the same survey questionnaire to the practitioners who deliver the program and to the members of the target populations who participate in it.

# PARTICIPATORY ANALYSIS

- ➤ Participatory analysis consists in involving all of the stakeholders (ideally including representatives of various sub-groups within the target population) in the analysis stage and, more specifically, in interpreting the results.
- > For this purpose, all of the persons involved must have access to the preliminary results (with all personal identifying information removed) and help to interpret their meaning.
- > By participating in the analysis, the stakeholders may accept the data more readily, become aware of certain realities of the program and give more weight to the analysis and to the recommendations and decisions that arise from it.
- > Participatory analysis requires a great deal of time, preparation and attention to ethics.



#### **FIND OUT MORE**

- > Here are some links to methods of analyzing data:
  - > IMPACT Europe Evaluation Guide: <u>analyzing quantitative and qualitative data and combining</u> findings from more than one analytical method
  - > BetterEvaluation website: quantitative and qualitative data analysis
  - > International Alert Module 6, Section 6.3: Tips for dealing with bias
- > Useful content on the BetterEvaluation website:
  - > Triangulation
  - Participatory evaluation and data parties

# 3.4 HOW TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS AND DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS?



- > Distinguish between conclusions and recommendations.
- > Highlight aspects to consider when formulating conclusions and recommendations.



- > What are the differences between conclusions and recommendations?
- > What makes conclusions and recommendations credible and useful?

# Analysis derives findings from information obtained through data collection, in response to the evaluation questions.

A final task is to interpret the findings by drawing conclusions and formulating recommendations, each of which should be linked to the evaluation objectives and questions defined at the outset. It should be easy to understand which findings each of the conclusions or recommendations is based on, and the evaluator must be able to trace the links between the findings and every conclusion and recommendation (see <u>Table 28</u>).

#### Table 28: Conclusions and recommendations

## CONCLUSIONS

Drawing conclusions means answering the evaluation questions, by making value judgments about your findings while making sure to rely on the facts. To remain consistent with the evaluation's objectives, it is essential to go back to the initial evaluation questions. It is also important to stay realistic about the conclusions that can be drawn from the data gathered.

Drawing conclusions requires identifying patterns (for example, similarities or redundancies) and connections in the evaluation findings as well as any divergences, anomalies or special cases among them.

In addition to providing answers to the evaluation questions, the conclusions also present discussions that can explain why these findings were observed. Comparing the program evaluation findings with the program's theory of change and its logic model makes it easier to draw conclusions about what the program has achieved and how it did so. For example, it enables:

Strengthening inferences inferences about contributions by identifying the findings that either are consistent with the theory of change or contradict it. > Explaining whether a failure to achieve the program's desired outcomes was due to shortcomings in its implementation or in its underlying theory of change—by connecting the information about the program's processes with the information about its results.

Conclusions may also lessons learned in the course of the program that might be useful for program continuation or for other situations.

Incorporating equity and diversity into the evaluation means that the evaluation conclusions must be presented in a balanced way, so that the various perspectives of the program's stakeholders are represented fairly. The evaluation conclusions should also address the needs of various target population sub-groups related to their access and barriers to program participation, and identify any discrepancies in the outcomes for these sub-groups.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations provide advice and suggest courses of action for the future delivery of the program, in accordance with the required changes identified through the conclusions. Recommendations must be specific, and help the stakeholders to prioritize their future actions.

For a fully participatory process, the stakeholders should be asked to help to develop these recommendations, thus facilitating their appropriation and possibly their subsequent implementation.

Also, the resulting recommendations should identify ways of reducing any inequalities observed among the various sub-groups within the target population.

## **EXAMPLE J**



# **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS** FOR A PROGRAM AIMING TO DEVELOP CAPACITY TO UNDERSTAND OTHER PEOPLE'S VIEWPOINTS

#### **OP1 PROMOTION**

#### **Evaluation question**

What promotional

activities were carried out?

Is there any duplication or overlap with other programs pursuing the same objective?

#### **Indicator**

Identity and description of other programs pursuing the same objective.

Number and type of promotional activities targeting community agencies that work with at-risk youth

Number and type of promotional activities targeting at-risk youth

#### **Findings (fictitious)**

The organizations could not answer this question, because they did not understand the program well enough and would have needed more time between viewing the promotion and the start of the session to ask questions about possible overlaps.

Two promotional activities targeting community agencies were carried out: an e-mail was sent to all of these organizations, and a presentation was made at a roundtable. At the roundtable, the presentation took up all the available time, with none left for questions or reactions.

Three promotional activities targeting at-risk youth were carried out: a poster campaign in schools, a campaign on social networks, and appearances during the "welcome-back" events for the first day of class at large secondary schools in the neighbourhood.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Promotional activities were varied, both for youth and for the agencies. Also, the activities targeting youth told them clearly and directly how to volunteer to participate in the workshops.

The promotional activities targeting agencies provided good information, but did not give them enough time to ask questions or give their reactions.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Keep the current promotional strategies while encouraging direct contacts with practitioners who work closely with young people in the community agencies, so that they can ask questions to get a better understanding of the program.

Based on Liht and Savage, 2013 and Savage et al, 2014. This example is the continuation of Example A.

#### **OP3 WORKSHOP OFFERINGS**

Evaluation question	Indicator	Findings (fictitious)	
Did the workshops take place as planned?	Number, frequency and duration of workshops in each series	Ten 2-hour workshops were held, once per week, as per the planned schedule.	
Which activities were carried out in them?	List of planned and unplanned activities carried out	Only 50% of the planned activities were carried out, because the discussion periods took more time than expected.	
	<ul> <li>Number of speakers</li> </ul>	Two of the three scheduled speakers were able to participate; the other one had to cancel at the last minute.	
Which speakers participated?	<ul> <li>Topics covered by the speakers</li> </ul>	The two speakers spoke on their planned topics briefly, and then discussed these topics with the participants.	

#### CONCLUSIONS

Although the workshops did proceed on the planned schedule, their content was often modified to accommodate the participants' needs for discussion.

This had an impact both on the potential to carry out the planned activities and on the discussions with the speakers. These exchanges did not have the effect expected from addressing personal topics.



#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Make the planned schedule for the workshop series more flexible, so that it can be adjusted throughout. From the outset, include more time for discussions with the participants.

For example, the practitioners could prioritize the activities that were the most important for the participants' progress and use them according to the group's progress.

#### OC3 INCREASED AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING MULTIPLE VIEWPOINTS INTO ACCOUNT

#### **Evaluation question**

To what extent were the participants made more aware of the importance of taking multiple viewpoints into account?

#### **Indicator**

How important the participants think it is to take multiple viewpoints into account.

#### **Findings (fictitious)**

At the end of the workshop series, 75% of the participants said that they thought it was very important to consider multiple viewpoints, while 25% thought it was moderately important. The practitioners reported that some of the participating youth showed a growing awareness of the importance of considering multiple viewpoints, while others showed a lack of interest and chose not to participate in the role-playing and some other activities designed to help them take multiple viewpoints into account.

To what extent did the change in awareness vary from one sub-group of participants to another?

Similarities and differences in change in awareness among the various subgroups of participants.

The statistical analyses showed that those young people who are not in daily contact with members of other ethnocultural communities are less likely to place value on understanding other perspectives.

#### **OP2 WORKSHOP CONTENT**

#### **Evaluation question**

Is the content easy to understand for the participants, including the various sub-groups?

#### Indicator

Ease with which each of the various sub-groups understands the content.

#### **Findings (fictitious)**

According to the experts, the examples used in the workshops referred mainly to an international context, which made it harder for the participants to understand the content.

The discussions with the participants confirmed this observation. The examples referred to a non-Canadian cultural context that the participants did not understand very well.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

The program succeeded in making most of the young participants more aware of the importance of taking multiple viewpoints into account, but failed to do so for a sizable minority of the participants (25%).

The emphasis on international content in the workshop materials made the content less accessible to the participants.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Where possible, revise the content of the workshops, replacing the examples based on the international context with local examples, so as to reflect the greater cultural diversity of the workshop participants.

# O4 Reporting and using evaluation findings

A program evaluation becomes truly useful when its findings are presented effectively and the program's stakeholders apply them. For that to happen, it is important to consider the purpose and planned use of the findings when the evaluation is first being planned. It must be determined very early on who will be using the evaluation findings, how they will remain engaged, and what is the best way to communicate these findings to them.

The evaluation team is responsible for presenting its findings effectively and must do its best to present conclusions and recommendations that are clear, usable and suited to the needs of each group of stakeholders. Applying the findings and making adjustments to the program are, of course, the responsibilities of the stakeholders involved in managing the program.

#### CLICK ON THE SECTION TITLES TO ACCESS THE CONTENT

- 4.1 How to report evaluation findings?
- 4.2 How to facilitate use of findings?

## 4.1 HOW TO REPORT EVALUATION FINDINGS?



- > Illustrate various formats for documents reporting evaluation findings.
- > Plan the reporting of the findings.



- > With whom should the findings be shared?
- > What are the best ways to share the findings according to the target audience?
- > What are the things to watch out for in writing the documents?

# Well-presented findings facilitate their use for future program development.

Discussions on how the findings will be reported must be held with the stakeholders who mandated the evaluation and to answer two questions: Who will benefit from these findings? and How are they going to be used?

The earlier in the process that this discussion is held, the more possible it will be to coordinate the reporting of the findings with key moments in the course of the program, such as important meetings, symposiums, or the end of the fiscal year. This coordination will involve two parallel reflections:

- > How will the sharing of findings be organized?
- > What documents should be produced to report the findings?

#### Sharing the findings

The planning for sharing the evaluation findings greatly influences the creation of the reporting documents. It requires taking the perspective of those who will receive these findings (normally, the program's stakeholders) to determine what information is relevant to them, in what format, at what time and for what use. As shown in Table 29. each target audience will have its own interests and objectives, and it is important to consider all of them when planning how the findings will be shared.

#### Table 29: Examples of target audiences with whom findings may be shared (Emery, 2021)

Who are the target audiences?

#### Internal audiences:

- > Managers
- > Practitioners and other professionals involved in the program
- > Communications staff

#### **External audiences:**

- > Current and potential funders
- > Partner organizations
- > Program participants and target populations
- > Scientific community
- > Newspapers and other media

What steps will they have to take once the evaluation findings are reported?

- > Practitioners: make adjustments to the program
- > Managers: train program staff to improve program quality
- > Funders: renew funding

Are these audiences comfortable with technical information?

- > Technical audiences will feel comfortable examining raw data that require some technical skills to understand (such as data tables).
- > Non-technical audiences will need a visual translation that lets them analyze the information more easily.

In what forms audiences prefer to have findings reported?

- > A narrative account
- > A traditional graphic
- > A symbolic representation

What level of detail is most appropriate for each of these audiences?

- > Practitioners may need the detailed analysis and findings to draw practical connections with their work.
- > Managers may not always have the time to read all of the findings. A summary presenting the essential elements of the conclusions and recommendations may be enough for them.

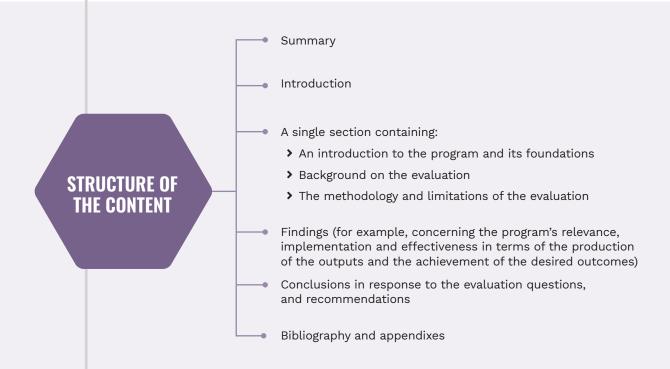
The primary purpose of sharing program evaluation findings is to improve the program and help its stakeholders to make decisions. Other purposes include sharing lessons learned, publicizing achievements and identifying major problems in the area evaluated.

The sharing process can involve some challenges, such as how to disseminate negative findings. The opposite may also be true: some stakeholders may want to turn the reporting of findings into a marketing campaign to promote the program. Although evaluation and promotion may complement each other, the evaluation process must remain neutral and not attempt to focus only on what can be publicized or promoted. Otherwise, the entire process may become biased from the outset.

#### **Documents for reporting findings**

An evaluation report is a complete document that presents the background, methodology and limitations of the evaluation, along with its findings, conclusions and recommendations. This report provides a written record of the findings that may endure over time and be consulted as needed, even after the end of the evaluation exercise. A complete evaluation report usually contains the sections shown in <u>Table 30</u>.

Table 30: General content of a complete evaluation report



Lengthy evaluation reports are harder to read for stakeholders who have limited time available to absorb the findings.

# The report and supporting documents should take the most appropriate format for each target group.

Figure 13 shows examples of some of the written, oral and visual forms in which evaluation findings can be reported.

Figure 13: Example of formats in which evaluation findings can be reported



## 1:3:25 - A USER-FRIENDLY REPORT FORMAT<sup>17</sup>

> One page to present the main messages from the evaluation > Three pages to present the key findings, conclusions and recommendations in more detail.

> Twenty-five pages to present the findings and methodology in language that is clear and accessible to people who are not specialists in the program.

**APPENDIXES** 

> Appendixes can be added to supplement the information in the report.

As shown in Table 31 whether the documents are intended to stand on their own or to support an oral presentation, several points must be considered when they are being written.

<sup>17 &</sup>quot;One-Three-Twenty-Five (1:3:25) Principle", BetterEvaluation, accessed April 24, 2021, https://www.betterevaluation.org/evaluationoptions/ report\_friendly\_writing.

#### Table 31: Considerations for writing documents to report evaluation findings

#### **PARTICIPATORY PREPARATION**

- > To ensure that the documents are clear and of high quality, they should be validated and subjected to internal review by targeted stakeholders, such as members of the evaluation advisory committee.
- > The people who participated in the participatory analysis can help write the conclusions and recommendations.

### VALIDITY **OF CONTENT**

- > The findings and recommendations must show which data (evidence) from the evaluation they are based upon.
- > The limitations of the evaluation must be clearly identified, so that readers can understand certain choices.

### **ETHICS AND** DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

- > All of the information presented in the documents must take potential ethical issues, and in particular anonymity, into consideration.
- > If any findings concern one group of individuals in particular (for example, one specific sub-group of the program participants), then readers must be given enough information to understand that it is this sub-group, but without compromising its members' anonymity.

#### READABILITY

- > The documents must let readers identify and absorb the key information from the program evaluation quickly and easily.
- > The vocabulary used must be suited and accessible to the target audience. Use of technical terms must be limited, and the terms must be defined in the document.
- > The text must be accompanied by charts, tables, figures and any other visual elements that help readers to understand the information without overwhelming the text.
- > Out of consideration for readers who are colour-blind, avoid using red and green together in your charts and figures. Instead, use colours that these readers can distinguish, such as blue and orange or blue and red.



## **FIND OUT MORE**

The BetterEvaluation website offers many ideas for reporting formats (written, presentations, creative, and graphic design) as well as the key elements to consider at this stage.

## 4.2 HOW TO FACILITATE USE OF FINDINGS?



> Illustrate various ways to encourage the application of findings and the appropriation of knowledge.



> What should you do to ensure that your findings do not wind up sitting on a shelf?

A good strategy for sharing findings greatly increases the chances that they will be applied in practice, though it does not guarantee complete success. Whether these findings get used depends not only on the evaluation report and supporting documents, but also on the extent to which the program's stakeholders see the evaluation as credible and relevant to them. This buy-in from stakeholders must be secured throughout the evaluation process. It is strengthened by using a participatory evaluation approach.

For example, the more the stakeholders have participated in designing the evaluation, interpreting its findings and writing the evaluation report, the more likely they will be to trust its findings and rely on them to take steps to improve the program.

To promote evaluation use, encourage those stakeholders who will make decisions about the program's future to consider the findings and act on them.

Achieving use goes beyond the evaluation process and is part of the project management cycle, of the organization's learning culture and of external factors such as decisions by donors or by government (for example, the reallocation of the program's budget). Utilisation can be enhanced by planning the activities for sharing results, encouraging uptake and taking action based on the recommendations.

#### **Activities for sharing and appropriating findings**

Although the evaluation team has a limited power over how its findings are used, it can influence the results-sharing strategies so as to encourage appropriation of lessons learned, practice improvement, and program adjustments. Collaborative outreach methods that foster structured interactions and ongoing exchange will exert more influence than a static presentation.

For collaborative outreach methods to succeed, they will have to be based on discussion and decision-making with the evaluation commissioners. This will ensure that the methods chosen are consistent with the program's governance, internal issues, and imponderables. For example, there will be little point in participatory discussions

about the actions to be taken on the evaluation recommendations if these decisions are actually going to be made only at some senior level of the organization.

At this stage, the evaluation team can withdraw from the sharing exercise, be there to present its findings and then respond to requests for clarifications or still be more actively involved in the sharing and appropriation activities. It all depends on what has been agreed to with the program sponsors.

Table 32 presents a non-exhaustive list of possible activities for sharing and appropriation of knowledge.

#### Table 32: Methods and activities for sharing and appropriating knowledge<sup>18</sup>

# LITTLE TO NO INTERACTION

- > Articles, reports
- > Newsletters
- > Videos
- > Press releases
- > "Lunch and learns"
- > Summary sheets, activity summaries
- > Educational materials (kits, guides)
- > Poster presentations
- > Presentations at events
- Representation and awareness activities (lobbying, advocacy, etc.) to influence decision-makers
- > Websites

# MORE STRUCTURED INTERACTIONS

- > Networking
- > Peer-to-peer coaching
- > Multi-sector collaborations
- > Symposiums
- > Training
- > Social media

- > Advisory committees
- > Brainstorming
- > Interactive websites
- > Surveys, focus groups
- > Roundtables
- > Webinars

ONGOING INTERACTIVE EXCHANGES

- > Multiplying agents
- > Learning in action
- > Communities of practice
- Professional co-development groups
- > Involving various types of relevant actors throughout the project
- Establishing partnerships to develop alliances and networks
- > Collaborative websites (wikis, Google Docs, etc.)

<sup>18 &</sup>quot;Vers une stratégie de partage et d'appropriation des connaissances", Agirtôt.org, accessed April 24, 2021, <a href="https://agirtot.org/media/488428/fiche\_strategie\_partage\_ae\_2017\_v2.pdf">https://agirtot.org/media/488428/fiche\_strategie\_partage\_ae\_2017\_v2.pdf</a>.

#### Planning actions in response to evaluation recommendations

The template shown in Table 33 is another good tool for encouraging the application of the evaluation findings. This template can be used to plan actions to be taken in response to evaluation recommendations. It is filled out primarily by the program management team, but can benefit from the participation of other stakeholders.

It can be reviewed regularly in order to determine what progress has been achieved in implementing the evaluation recommendations.

The evaluation team's involvement in preparing this action plan and reviewing it periodically should be discussed with the program sponsors.



## **FIND OUT MORE**

> The BetterEvaluation website offers <u>best practices for encouraging the use of evaluation findings.</u>

Table 33: Template for planning actions to respond to evaluation recommendations

Recommendation	Response	Planned action(s)	Planned completion date	Responsibility	Status
Recommendation as presented in the evaluation report	Agreement or disagreement with the recommendation (and why)	Identify the action or actions that will be taken in response to the recommendation	Specify the date for completing each action	Identify the person responsible for completing each action	Status of planned action: not begun, in progress, completed, or no longer applicable
Recommendation 1					
Recommendation 2					
Recommendation 3					
Recommendation 4					
Recommendation 5					
Recommendation 6					

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# Glossary

## TERMS RELATED TO PROGRAM EVALUATION

Term	Definition
Accountability reporting	Accountability reporting aims to provide an accurate account of the human, financial and physical resources used and the activities carried out to achieve a program's results. It examines the program chiefly to ensure that it is proceeding according to and in conformity with specified parameters.
Activity	This term designates all of the activities that the program plans to carry out, using the inputs.
Anonymity	In all forms of evaluation reports and presentations, anonymity means that specific participants cannot be identified and evaluation data cannot be linked to specific individuals.
Confidentiality	Confidentiality indicates what kind of information is accessible to whom (for example, raw program-evaluation data might be accessible to the evaluators only, while a compilation of evaluation results stripped of identifying information might be accessible to the steering committee and a complete report to the program's funders and its other stakeholders).
Diversity	Diversity involves recognizing differences among persons with regard to factors of identity such as gender, age, race, ethnicity, Indigenous identity, sexual identity, abilities, and immigrant and new-arrival status.
Effectiveness evaluation	An effectiveness evaluation deals with a program's outcomes—its positive and negative effects, expected or unexpected, in the short, medium and long terms. A comparison of the program's actual outcomes with its expected outcomes is often an integral part of evaluating its effectiveness.
Equity	Equity means treating all people fairly so that everyone has access to and benefits from the same opportunities.

Tarres	Definition
Term	Definition
Evaluation	Evaluation is "the systematic assessment of the design, implementation or results of an initiative for the purposes of learning or decision-making." "An evaluation should provide credible, useful evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of organizations and stakeholders."
Evaluation matrix	An evaluation matrix is a document that is used as a reference in planning a program evaluation. This matrix takes the form of a table summarizing the main evaluation questions, the indicators and targets, the data collection methods, the people responsible for each of the methods, and the schedule.
Evaluative thinking	Evaluative thinking is "a cognitive process in the context of evaluation, motivated by an attitude of inquisitiveness and a belief in the value of evidence, that involves identifying assumptions, posing thoughtful questions, pursuing deeper understanding through reflection and perspective taking, and informing decisions in preparation for action." <sup>21</sup>
Formative evaluation	The main purposes of a formative evaluation are to determine, when a program is starting up or once it is under way, whether it is on the right track to achieve its objectives, and to draw lessons that can be used for its continuous improvement.
Free and informed consent	Free and informed consent to participate in an evaluation requires that a) the participants be aware of the context in which the evaluation is being conducted and of its objectives, and b) that they give their explicit consent to participate in it voluntarily.
Grey literature	The grey literature consists of all documents not controlled by commercial publishers. It includes such things as reports, working documents, newsletters, government documents, speeches, white papers and evaluation reports published by government agencies, not-for-profit organizations and businesses.
Implementation evaluation	An implementation evaluation focuses mainly on what happens as the program is delivered—the types and quantities of goods and services provided, the participants reached by these services, the practical problems encountered, the ways that these problems are solved, and the lessons that are learned. An implementation evaluation thus seeks to determine whether the program is proceeding as planned and whether it has encountered any conditions that warrant changes in the way it is being delivered.
Incorporation of diversity, equity and inclusion in evaluation	This approach refers to the need to evaluate how various groups of people experience the program being evaluated. Considerations regarding diversity, equity and inclusion must go beyond gender and include the intersection with other identity factors such as race, ethnicity, age, religion, physical ability, and geographic region.

<sup>19 &</sup>quot;What is Evaluation?", Canadian Evaluation Society, accessed February 14, 2021, <a href="https://evaluationcanada.ca/what-is-evaluation.">https://evaluationcanada.ca/what-is-evaluation.</a>

<sup>20 &</sup>quot;Norms and Standards for Evaluation", United Nations Evaluation Group, accessed February 15, 2021, <a href="http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914">http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914</a>

<sup>21</sup> Jane Buckley et al. (2015), "Defining and teaching evaluative thinking: Insights from research on critical thinking", American Journal of Evaluation, 36(3), 375-388, <a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/1098214015581706">https://doi.org/10.1177/1098214015581706</a>

Term	Definition
Inclusion	Inclusion seeks to create a welcoming environment in which all persons are valued and respected.
Indicator	An indicator is used to assess a phenomenon qualitatively or quantitatively on the basis of concrete observations. It can use information as a reference point to demonstrate a change or evolution.
Logic model	A logic model is a one-page diagram that visually explains how we expect the resources invested in a program to produce the desired outcomes, by clarifying the connections between the activities, the outputs and the expected outcomes.
Organizations external to the program	The organizations external to the program consist of all of the organizations that are directly involved in the implementation of the program (funders, researchers, partner organizations, professional staff of government departments, political groups, non-government organizations, etc.) and that exert enough influence to change some of them.
Outcome	Outcomes are the changes that a program's activities and outputs can be expected to achieve for its target population or target environment. These changes may be defined by their time frame (short, medium or long term) or their proximity to the activities (immediate, intermediate, ultimate). These expected changes should be logically attributable to the program's outputs. Ultimately or in the long term, these changes are not necessarily controlled by the program alone, but they must still fall within its sphere of influence. The program contributes to them, even if they may not ultimately be attributable to the program alone.
Output	Outputs are the goods, services and actions that result from the program's activities in the time provided for its implementation.
Participatory analysis	Participatory analysis consists in involving all of the stakeholders (ideally including representatives of various sub-groups within the target population) in the analysis stage and, more specifically, in interpreting the results. For this purpose, all of the persons involved must have access to the preliminary results (with all personal identifying information removed) and help to interpret their meaning.
Participatory evaluation	The participatory evaluation approach directly and actively engages the various internal and external program stakeholders in planning and conducting the evaluation. This involvement lets them acquire evaluation skills and knowledge and ensure that the evaluation reflects their lived realities and meets everyone's needs and that its findings will be useful, usable and used. The participatory approach can be implemented to various degrees and often involves including representatives of the program's various stakeholders on its evaluation committee.
People and groups internal to the program	The people and groups internal to the program consist of the people or groups of people who, within an organization, are involved in managing or carrying out the program. They include program managers, practitioners, administrative support staff, communications staff, etc.

Term	Definition
Practitioner	The term "practitioner" means any of the workers who carry out the day-to-day work of PVE programs, such as social workers, psychologists and cultural mediators.
Program participants	The participants are the people who participate directly in a program. Sometimes the direct participants and the target populations are the same people.
Relevance evaluation	A relevance evaluation attempts to determine whether the nature of the problem to be solved, the program's objectives and the planned intervention methods meet the stakeholders' needs. A relevance evaluation can be done both before the program starts and as it continues, in order to see whether it has remained relevant over time.
Scope of an evaluation	Because the PVE programs that may be evaluated can intersect with all kinds of PVE initiatives, projects, policies and strategies, it is important to define the boundaries of what any given PVE program evaluation will deal with. It might deal with the entire program, or with one or more projects or components of the program (for example, the training component or the intervention component), or with a specific aspect of the program (such as the collaboration between the program organization and its key partners) or with the program organization itself (for example, if it is a small organization that works exclusively on PVE). The evaluation might also focus on a collaborative initiative involving a large number of partners.
Stakeholders	The term "stakeholders" refers to any of the groups, organizations and individuals that influence the achievement of a program's objectives.
Summative evaluation	A summative evaluation is conducted at the end of a program cycle, to determine to what extent the program's objectives were achieved, to assess the program's value, and to inform subsequent decision-making.
Target populations of the program	The target populations consist of the people who are affected by the program directly and will receive its services or activities.
Theory of change	A theory of change explains how a program plans to achieve its desired outcomes. A theory of change comprises a logic model (a diagram representing the connections between the program's activities and its desired outcomes) and a narrative explaining how these activities should produce these outcomes. A theory of change may also include other elements, such as an identification of the causal mechanisms as well as of the external factors and the risks that may influence the outcomes.
Theory-based evaluation	The theory-based evaluation approach attempts to determine the extent to which a given intervention produced the observed outcomes. This approach uses an explicit theory of change to describe the connections between a program's activities and its expected outcomes in the short, medium and long terms, as well as to describe the mechanisms of change, the assumptions and the risks that might support the theory or prevent it from playing out in practice. A theory-based evaluation attempts to use empirical evidence to test the theory of change and thereby determine how the intervention contributed to the observed outcomes.

Term	Definition
Utilization-focused evaluation	The utilization-focused evaluation approach is based on the principle that the value of an evaluation must be judged according to how useful it is for its planned users. This kind of evaluation tries to minimize the chances that its findings will go unused. In every step of the evaluation process, thought must be given to how that step will affect the process as a whole and the planned use of its findings. The expected users should participate in all important evaluation decisions. This approach emphasizes the importance of supporting the use of the findings when they are available, in particular through facilitating and leading.
Validation by triangulation	Triangulation attempts to strengthen the validity of findings by combining several perspectives during the analysis. One way to achieve triangulation is to have several analysts examine the data and develop their findings together. Another way is to gather data from multiple sources—for example, by administering the same survey questionnaire to the practitioners who deliver the program and to the members of the target populations who participate in it.

# TERMS RELATED TO PREVENTION OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM<sup>22</sup>

Term	Definition
Prevention of radicalization and violent extremism	Prevention of radicalization and violent extremism means all efforts to reduce or eliminate the risk conditions that may make individuals or groups more vulnerable to violent radicalization or drive them to recidivism, in the case of individuals who have previously resorted to violence or who belong to an extremist group.
Primary prevention	Primary prevention means all efforts that seek to reduce or eliminate risk factors or encourage protective factors and that target the general public not identified as being at risk. Primary prevention is a type of universal prevention; awareness campaigns are an example of primary prevention programs.
Radicalization leading to violent extremism	Radicalization is a dynamic process that arises out of the gradual polarization of political, economic, social or religious ideas and that seeks to reject or undermine the status quo. Radicalization can have positive or negative results for individuals and society. It can create opportunities for social change, but it can also aggravate a climate of confrontation between actors or groups. When the methods advocated for achieving a radical solution involve legitimizing the use of violence or considering recourse to violent actions, this is a case of radicalization leading to violence.

Term	Definition
Secondary prevention	Secondary prevention means all efforts that seek to reduce or eliminate risk factors or encourage protective factors and that target individuals or groups regarded as at risk or in the initial stages of this process.
Targeted primary prevention	Targeted primary prevention means all efforts that seek to reduce or eliminate risk factors or encourage protective factors and that target a specific community that is not identified as being at risk. Example: universal prevention programs hat target all young people.
Tertiary prevention	Tertiary prevention means all efforts that seek to reduce the factors that encourage recidivism among individuals or groups that are in the final stages of this process, or that belong to extremist groups, or that have committed acts of violent radicalism or terrorism. Tertiary prevention also attempts to reintegrate such individuals or groups into society.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CES	Canadian Evaluation Society
CPN-PREV	Canadian Practitioners Network for the Prevention of Radicalization and Extremist Violence
GBA+	Gender-based Analysis Plus
PVE	Prevention of violent extremism

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