Managing the Reintegration of Violent Extremists and their Families

A Guide to Proactive Reintegration

The Commonwealth

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Published by the Commonwealth Secretariat.

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Acknowledgments

The Commonwealth Secretariat extends its thanks to all persons and institutions involved in providing information and advice that contributed to the development of this guide and acknowledges the contributions of the following:

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Addressing Violent Extremism and Radicalisation to Terrorism (AVERT) Research Network, Deakin University, Australia
Al-Ihsaan Institute, Trinidad and Tobago
Allamin Foundation for Peace, Nigeria
Commonwealth Youth Peace Ambassadors Network (CYPAN)
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia
Guyana Police Force, Guyana
Institute for Security Studies, South Africa
Institute of Strategic and International Studies
International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism
International Civil Society Action Network for Women, Peace and Security
International Institute for Strategic Studies
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia
Ministry of National Security, Jamaica
Ministry of National Security, Trinidad and Tobago
Observer Research Foundation, India
Organization for the Prevention of Violence, Canada
PAIMAN Trust, Pakistan
Parallel Networks Inc, United States
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore
Tearfund
The Global Strategy Network
Tony Blair Institute for Global Change
Tower Hamlets Council, United Kingdom
University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
Victoria Police, Australia

Foreword

Mark Albon

Head of Countering Violent Extremism Unit

This publication focuses on efforts to rehabilitate individuals that have participated in violent extremist groups to reintegrate them into their community. It looks at proactive strategies that could be used in Commonwealth countries to aide in the rehabilitation and integration of former violent extremists and their families.

Developing successful reintegration programs is crucial not only to preventing recidivism among returnees but also to mitigating further radicalization among the local population and building overall community-level resilience to violent extremism.

Terrorism and violent extremism are more adaptive and geographically diffuse than ever before, affecting all regions of the Commonwealth. At the same time, across the Commonwealth and around the world, there are people seeking to return and reintegrate into their home communities after a period of time with a terrorist group or violent extremist movement, having participated either virtually, within their home country or across national borders. These 'returnees' from violent extremism include men, women and children. It includes people who fought for violent extremist groups, people who enabled and supported violent extremist activity, as well as individuals who were coercively or forcibly brought into the group or were married or born into conflict. They may also include self-directed violent extremists who never joined a group but became involved with violent extremist ideas, people who have moved in and out of groups and – sometimes - people whose ambitions to join violent extremist movements were thwarted, whether by law enforcement, family or other circumstances.

Disengagement from violent extremist groups is most often successful when the individual becomes connected and engaged somewhere else. When a person leaves violent extremism behind, it may take months or years to find sustainable way of living in the non-radical world. This guide provides guidance for policymakers and practitioners working in Commonwealth countries on how to support the proactive reintegration of violent extremists and their families as a way of reducing the risk of future violence. Importantly, it is for both government and civil society organisations; for both security practitioners and community practitioners. Strategies for managing returnees cannot be driven exclusively through a lens of national security. Moreover, the process of reintegration is not linear. It requires long-term focus and a commitment to providing opportunities for returnees to put their lives back together so that the community can be safer in the long term.

In developing this guide, the Commonwealth Secretariat has been guided by two fundamental considerations: supporting Commonwealth member countries to ensure the security of their citizens; and advocating the fulfilment of Commonwealth values, including human rights and the rule of law.

In support of the Commonwealth's commitment to peace and security, the Commonwealth Secretariat commends this report to practitioners engaging with returnees from violent extremis across the member countries of the Commonwealth.

1. Overview

This guide is intended to assist frontline workers, families, friends and community groups to identify appropriate intervention and reintegration support plans to help rehabilitate individuals returning from involvement with violent extremism.

This guide is focussed on supporting returnees to reintegrate. This focus on reintegration is very important, but the term itself can be misleading. Those who joined a violent extremist organisation may never have felt integrated into their community to begin with. For that reason, when reading the term 'reintegration' in this guide, it can be useful to think about reabsorbing former violent extremists into the community, including those who always perceived themselves as outsiders.

This guide does not offer a one-size-fits-all template, because every individual's circumstances and challengers are different and distinctive. Instead, it proposes methodologies that will enable practitioners to understand the returnee's circumstances and to work with the returnee to facilitate integration.

The guide has been developed and draws on insights that were provided by community practitioners, researchers, academics and former extremists. An extensive literature review has been undertaken to include best practices on reducing the potential risks posed by individuals returning to their community from extremist and terrorist activities. Although there may be inter-agency and government support for returnees, this is not the concern here as governments do not exert authority over the frontline management of returnees or related community-based programmes. Rather, the guide focuses on practical support for returnees at a local and grassroots level.

Specific factors such as age, gender, cultural background and religious or political beliefs need to be considered for each individual and will impact on the approach, risks and planning options available throughout the process. Every returnee should be assessed on a case-by-case basis and their support plan customised to suit their needs based on their personal circumstances.

Sustainability and ownership are emphasised as they allow for growth and reabsorption back into the community and decrease residual and domestic threats to both the community and the authorities. A systemic approach is recommended throughout the different phases of transitioning back into the community. Utilising already established services is a key process during rehabilitation as individuals need to feel safe, supported and valued at a local level. It is important not to reinvent the wheel regarding services that have already been established. Utilising expertise and experience is vital when nurturing and creating protective factors that will enhance positive reform in an individual's behaviour and mindset.

2. Objectives

The primary objective of this guide is to provide guidance and tools for practitioners so that they can more effectively support the reintegration of violent extremists. Disengagement from violent extremist groups is most often related to engagement somewhere else. What makes reintegration successful is the support of this other engagement. In most cases, significant distress is experienced after leaving an extremist group, and there is a period of months to years of adjustment before finding a sustainable way of living in the non-radical world.

- The guide sets out strategies for how this can be achieved, through: Assisting those who are vulnerable when they return from conflict zones, increase their capabilities and develop their self-respect and positive relationships with their family, peers and the community
- Maximising employment opportunities and training to develop skills that will be transferrable within the individual's personal life and career
- Providing individuals and their families with life skills and tools for a proactive and brighter future
- Building resilience and appropriate reactions to discrimination within the community
- Utilise programmes such as the performing/ creative arts, martial arts and storytelling as an outlet for coping mechanisms and relationship development
- Training frontline staff in areas such as trauma, mental health and psychosocial support
- Creating mentoring partnerships between and rapport with those who have a similar story, and
- Providing a framework for risk assessment of individuals, including their circumstances and the consequences of their actions.

3. Methodology

This guide was developed through a process that involved three methodological components:

- Desktop literature review
- Academic and practitioner stakeholder interviews
- Review and feedback of the draft guide by members of the Commonwealth Cadre of CVE Experts network.

Desktop literature review

The literature review provides the theoretical and conceptual basis for the principles and practices recommended in the guide. It attempted to systematically collect and collate a variety of literature from across the spectrum of countering violent extremism that may provide insights into effective practices for reintegration of returnees. Literature related to the management of foreign terrorist fighters, rehabilitation and reintegration of terrorist offenders and diversion and prevention literature was included.

Academic and practitioner stakeholder interviews

The academic and practitioner stakeholder interviews provided the practical and pragmatic basis for the principles and practices recommended in the guide.

Review of the draft guide

Government officials, practitioners and academic members of the Commonwealth Secretariat's network, the Commonwealth Cadre of CVE Experts, were ivited to review and provide feedback on the draft guide. Their feedback has helped to inform this guide. The Commonwealth Cadre of CVE Experts involves a balance between academic and practitioner perspectives and includes representatives from all regions of the Commonwealth.

4. Stakeholders and Their Roles

Many different stakeholders have a role to play in facilitating rehabilitation and reintegration. The roles, qualifications and relationships between the stakeholders will be different in different contexts. While flexibility is important, it is also important to remember that a stakeholder should not engage in rehabilitation and reintegration if they are not qualified and do not feel that they have the appropriate knowledge.

Key stakeholder	Roles and responsibilities
Corrections and parole authorities	Share information about relevant prisoners with the persons involved in undertaking needs and risk assessments Prepare and engage with stakeholders as early as possible in discharge and reintegration planning
Ministry responsible for counter-terrorism policy	Make sure that the rules and procedures are in place to make it possible for agencies and partners to share information Consider providing funding for community organisations leading the reintegration process
Police and law enforcement officers	Convene a meeting with all the other agencies to undertake an assessment (in locations where the police are appointed as the leaders of the assessment process) Share information about possible returnees with organisations and stakeholders involved in reintegration planning and support
Foreign Ministry	Share information about returnees and their travel plans to identify them at the earliest possible stage and allow for thorough reintegration planning and support
Child protection or welfare officers	Share information about risks or welfare concerns relating to child returnees Identify any child protection risks with returnees reintegrating to support housing and placement options
Non-government or civil society practitioners	Participate in information sharing with other stakeholders to deliver support and case plan interventions to returnees Engage with community leaders, community members, family members and local authorities to build relationships and prepare planning for potential returnees
Local community leaders	Engage with local practitioners to discuss concerns and identify support networks for returnees and local community members
Community members	Engage with local practitioners, local authorities, government organisations and local community members to raise concerns and participate in reintegration planning (where appropriate) for returnees in the community
Religious leaders	Represent issues of the community in collaboration with local community leaders and local authorities with respect to community concerns and opportunities for supporting the reintegration of returnees
Family members	Share information about risks or concerns for reintegrating the returnee Communicate needs to support the returnee with local reintegration lead or local authorities/non-government or civil society practitioners
Local authorities	Enable cooperation of local community leaders/groups/members and other government and non-government organisations Support and/or provide options and opportunities for case management interventions

Key stakeholder	Roles and responsibilities
Other government organisations (e.g., dealing with transport/road safety, health or housing)	Engage in individual case management or with specific communities based on their needs Share relevant information with local authorities and the local identified reintegration lead regarding the individual and available services/programmes/support Engage in the development of memorandums of understanding
Local identified reintegration lead	Coordinate and deliver training, education, workshops, forums and seminars to engage local community organisations, community leaders, religious leaders, community members, civil society organisations and local businesses in building understanding, acceptance and preparedness to reintegrate returnees Identify case management options such as employment, education, housing, mentors and support networks Coordinate information sharing permissions Coordinate and convene case conferences/case planning and intervention delivery
Education providers, schools, training providers	Engage with local practitioners and the local reintegration lead to develop individual plans for the reintegration of children returnees to school Participate as a stakeholder offering case management options for adult returnees who may require vocational training or education
Social workers, youth workers, community workers, aid workers, support workers	Provide welfare, information, support and assistance to individuals, families and communities Participate in case management planning and the delivery of interventions as identified or requested by the local identified reintegration lead Engage with other practitioners and government/non-government organisations involved in the reintegration plan for the individual Share information as required Provide therapeutic or counselling services as identified in the reintegration plan
Returnee/individual/returned foreign terrorist fighter	For the purpose of this guide, we have used the term 'returnees' to describe those individuals returning from violent extremism. They may be returning from a conflict zone within their country or internationally, returning from a period of incarceration as a result of being charged or convicted of a terrorism-related offence or returning to engage in their community after involvement with a violent extremist group. They may have left their community physically or they may have remained within their community but still engaged in violent extremist activity. Participate in case management planning and interventions Consent to the release of information and information sharing with key stakeholders supporting the reintegration case plan Collaborate with the local identified reintegration lead on case plan and reintegration plan needs and interventions

5. Preparation

All efforts to reintegrate those who have been engaged in violent extremism should begin as soon as possible. For those returning from conflict zones, this should be at the time the individual is identified as returning, ideally before they commence their return. For those incarcerated, planning for reintegration should commence at the beginning of their period of incarceration and whilst they are still detained. For those who are reintegrating into communities, it should be from the moment the individual identifies that they are leaving the extremist organisation or disengaging from their ideology. In order for this preparation to take place, the process of assessment should commence with the collection of all available information and the identification of any other possible sources of information.

Any individual returning from a conflict zone or from being engaged with a violent extremist organisation may be subject at any time to the justice process. Ideally they will be dealt with by law enforcement and the justice system prior to reintegration into the community, but it is possible they may engage with and integrate into the community first and then be subject to prosecution. Maintaining strong communication with law enforcement and justice officials will ensure that you are made aware at the earliest possible stage if the individual is going to be pursued for prosecution.

5.1 What is proactive reintegration?

The most successful reintegration is proactive. That means it is planned. In order to be proactive in reintegration, practitioners need to be aware that someone is planning to, thinking about or considering reintegrating. Working with someone who is already back in the community, while really important, is reactive and not proactive. Proactive reintegration requires practitioners to be connected with local communities, law enforcement, prison authorities and local government agencies so they can be made aware of people seeking to or ready to return.

Proactive reintegration requires proactive communication. Local practitioners can ask local community leaders (formal and informal), law enforcement or prison authority contacts if they are aware of anyone who is going to be returning, no matter how far in the future this might be. The more time there is until reintegration, the more time there is to assess, plan and develop the supporting networks to ensure it is successful. Early engagement enables conversations that may challenge any fear or stigma in an environment that is not pressured by an imminent returnee.

Local communities often have a better understanding of the risks and challenges that may be faced by individuals returning. Laying the groundwork in communities is part of a proactive process of engagement that will support plans and interventions for individuals when they return. This may be in the form of individual meetings with local practitioners; holding information sessions, seminars or workshops that local community members can attend to discuss issues of violent extremism, perceptions of returnees or local opportunities; or developing local support networks of peers, practitioners or family groups who are interested in or have been impacted by violent extremism. Investing in these engagement and support activities early, even before any anticipated individual return, will ensure the networks, individuals, groups and organisations exist and can be called upon. When working to develop individual support plans for returnees, you will have proactively developed a ready-made list of possible support networks.

Identifying those individuals and organisations early on will also provide opportunities to work through any support or training requirements they may need as well as to identify possible practical options for supporting returnees. Where the returning individual is a child or young person, these networks should include education and child welfare practitioners, agencies or organisations.

5.2 Managing risk and barriers

Preparing for reintegration also involves identifying those risk and barriers that could prevent or hinder the individual from reintegrating. In order to do so, you must not only understand the needs of the returnee but also the needs and gaps in the family and community they are reintegrating into. While thorough assessments will help with this at the time of reintegration, proactive work can be done to identify possible risks and barriers early on and help to address them.

One significant risk to effective reintegration is the negative perception of returnees within a community. If a community stigmatises, ostracises or actively rejects a returnee, this is not only a barrier to successful reintegration but can also create a significant risk that the returnee will re-engage with violent extremist groups in order to find acceptance and a sense of belonging. There may be very real reasons a community is rejecting or avoiding engaging with returnees. These need to be understood, accepted and addressed before successful reintegration can occur. They may vary from local pressures from extremist groups, risks associated with accepting returnees or concerns about how returnees may impact on the community's ability to live peacefully.

It is important to also consider the impact of unintended consequences or perceptions within a community when returnees are supported to reintegrate. The increase in surveillance by law enforcement in the community as a result of increased surveillance on the individual and the additional resources and opportunities afforded returnees and their families may contribute to resentment from others within the community. Moreover, the lack of information shared with members of the community to protect the privacy of the returnee may cause the community to fear risks that do not necessarily exist. Specific risk factors or community perceptions related to gender or age also need to be considered.

Another risk to reintegration is when the returnee's family, friends or social networks remain supportive of violent extremist groups and would seek to influence the returnee to reengage in terrorist activity. This can be especially difficult if the returnee is a woman, child or young person who is heavily reliant on the family and their support for basic needs. Placing a returnee back in an environment that remains supportive of violent extremist ideology, where they may have been radicalised to violent extremism initially or where they may be punished for disengaging or leaving the group, is a risk that needs to be identified as early as possible in the reintegration planning so suitable safe alternatives can be sought. This may include relocating the individual to another area, finding alternative housing and support for women or women with children, or finding alternative care arrangements (formal through child welfare organisations or informal through extended families or communities) for children and young people. These circumstances will require a greater level of planning, more complex assessment and more integrated multiagency responses.

As with all integration plans, it is important to identify early on who will lead and manage the individual's plan and provide, where possible, a single point of contact for the returnee, their families and the various practitioners, individuals, agencies and organisations involved in the support plan.

CASE STUDY

Neem Foundation, Yellow Ribbon Initiative (Nigeria)

Neem Foundation implements one of the largest rehabilitation and reintegration programmes by a national civil society organisation – the Yellow-Ribbon Initiative – in north-east Nigeria. The project takes a holistic approach to rehabilitation and reintegration, which covers psychological care, religious engagement, creative engagement and, peace through sports, as well as reintegration activities such as economic empowerment and reconciliation.

As it was important to find a way of avoiding exacerbating resentment in the community by being seen to provide additional support to the returning woman, while ignoring the needs of local women, they negotiated with communities and agreed to provide assistance to two locals for every returnee that the community accepts and supports.

5.3 The impact of trauma

When working with any community or individual, it is important to recognise the impact of trauma and how to work using a trauma-informed approach in all interactions. One of the goals of terrorist organisations is to create fear, so the psychological trauma experienced by individuals involved in terrorism can be as significant as the trauma experienced by those exposed to extreme violence or directly impacted by terrorist acts. Communities can also experience trauma as a result of their exposure to violent extremist groups or the experience of individuals within their community being aligned with such groups.

The impact of trauma will vary among individuals depending on the nature of the event, their exposure to it, the responses of individuals and communities after the event and how sustained or long term the exposure has been. Some individuals will have been physically injured and may require treatment, ongoing health care and long-term rehabilitation, some will need to adjust to the death of a family member or friend and others may experience ongoing fear. Children and young people may react differently to traumatic events depending on their age, their prior experience and their attachment to or support from significant caregivers and family. It is important to be supportive and understanding of different presentations of trauma responses.

Approaching individuals from a trauma-informed perspective involves:

- **Creating a safe environment:** People who have experienced trauma need safety first. Safety is established through building trust, being predictable, being transparent, showing respect and being empathic.
- **Building relationships and connectedness:** People who have experienced trauma often experience feelings of isolation and disconnection. Relationships and connectedness are built through 'we are all in this together' approaches, participation in conversations, identifying common goals or mutual interests, being empowered, collaborating, having choice and being able to make decisions.
- **Respecting diversity:** People who have experienced trauma need to feel as though they are respected and valued for who they are. Respecting diversity is achieved through showing interest in the individual and their story and exploring their lived experience while not making assumptions based on religion, culture, race, ethnicity or gender.

Traumatised children may have developed behavioural patterns that served them well while dealing with the impacts of trauma but can subsequently be seen as negative, naughty or problematic. They may have trouble regulating their emotions and this may also present as troubling, aggressive or violent behaviours. Experiences of trauma can also impact on a child's or adolescent's normal development. This means children may not meet developmental milestones, physically, emotionally, socially or psychologically. They may fall behind same age peers or may regress, returning to younger behaviours such as sucking their thumb or wetting their bed.

Periods of change or transitioning may be particularly difficult for children who have been traumatised, and efforts should be made to introduce only small, incremental changes over an extended period of time rather than making one big change. For example, when working to reengage a child who has returned in education, it is best to take a phased approach to schooling (see example).

When working with children and young people who have experienced trauma, it is important to ensure you are also helping the parents or caregivers to support trauma-responsive practices within their relationship. This may include education and awareness as well as ongoing coaching and support to enable them to assist the child or young person to regulate their emotions or control their behaviours.

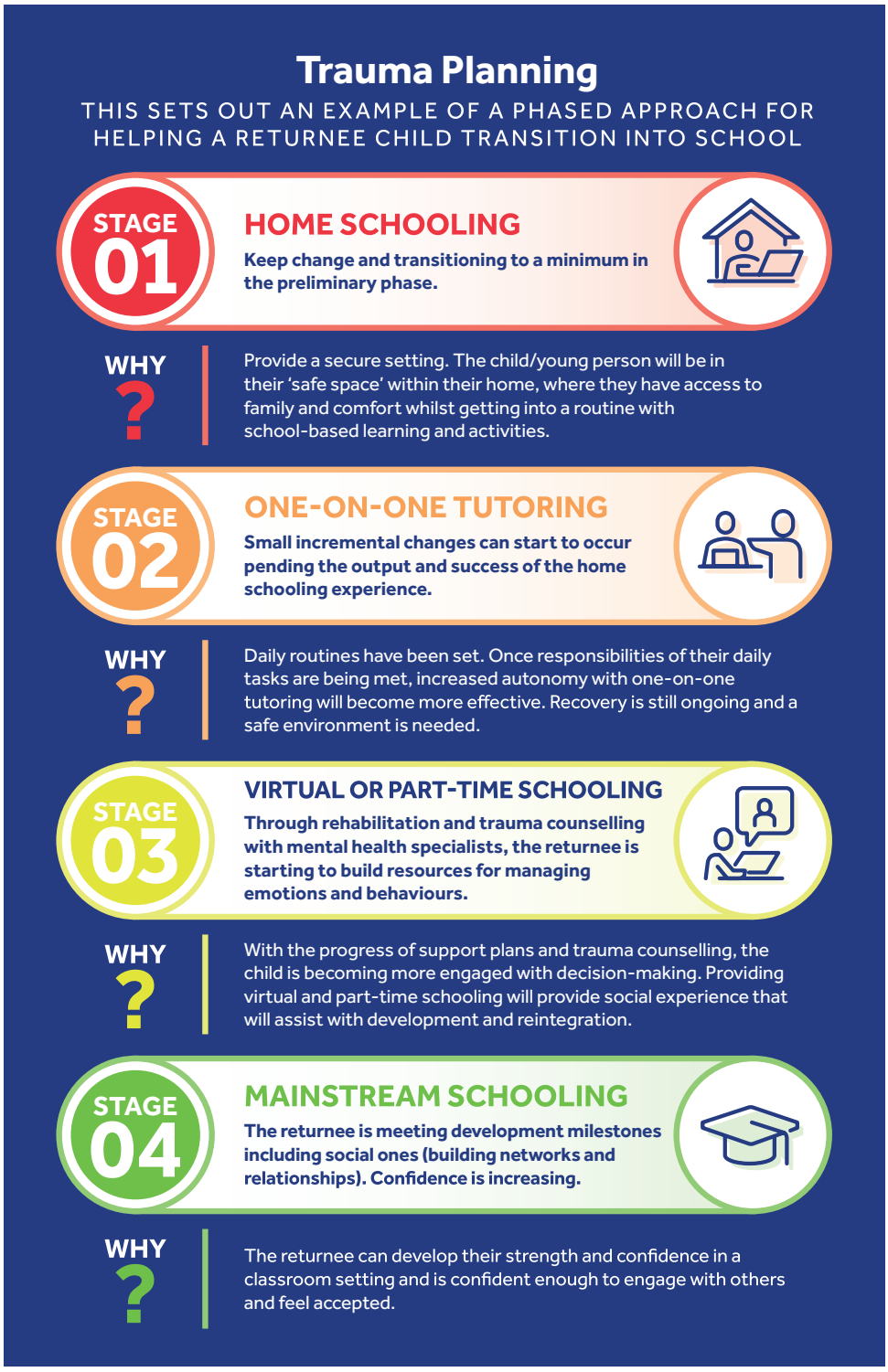
5.4 Working with limited resources

There is a need for investment in resources for reintegration work as well as in the practitioners working with returnees and their families and communities. However, while some programmes may be well resourced and include financial support and incentives, others may need to consider ways in which they can make the resources they have stretch further. This may include financial resources, skilled practitioners, materials or time. Practitioners may have to find creative options for interventions and support in contexts where there is limited access to resources.

There are a variety of interventions and services that can and do exist in a context of limited resourcing. Alternative options for resources can

also be identified and sourced from individuals, groups, communities or agencies. This involves considering what the desired outcomes of the intervention are, what is limiting the resource and engaging with the local communities to identify options for addressing the resourcing gap.

Multiagency responses and approaches ensure all available resources in a community or family network are harnessed to increase efficacy. Such approaches contribute to increased information sharing, resulting in more accurate assessments and therefore intervention planning, and combine a variety of expertise along with access to resources and funding opportunities. Multiagency approaches also increase opportunities for all parties involved by enabling the returnee to have access to other support providers including assistance from community members and community-led groups that are outside the mainstream.



6. Assessment

In order to effectively intervene with any returnee, in any circumstance, assessment is a fundamental requirement. Assessments provide the basis for what you do and why in any individual case or intervention plan. They can be complex and extensive or they can be more general and simplified. Assessments can focus only on the individual or focus on the broader context and social factors; can be one-dimensional and rely on file information only or be dynamic and involve interviews and observations. The more significant the risk or possible consequences of intervention, the more in-depth and extensive the assessment should be.

Assessments are also a good opportunity to build rapport, engagement and trust with returnees. This can be done through demonstrating genuine interest in them and their experiences by asking open questions that encourage them to tell their story. While the use of checklists or screening tools are helpful for practitioners to ensure they gather all relevant information, they can impact on the development of a relationship with the returnee when they are relied on during assessment conversations.

The context in which assessments are conducted and their purpose should always be considered, and that they are always limited by the information available at the time. Ideally, they occur over a period of time during which you are able to observe the returnee and their behaviour.

Assessments of returnees should include an individual risk and needs assessment, a psychosocial assessment including the returnee and their family/support network/community and a specific violent extremist risk assessment (utilising an experienced practitioner and specific violent extremist risk assessment tool wherever possible).

CASE STUDY

The Friendship Bench (Zimbabwe)

Dixon Chibanda created the Friendship Bench programme in Zimbabwe. This is a cognitive therapy approach to depression in communities with limited mental health resources. The programme trains community grandmothers in evidence-based talk-therapy and attentive listening as an accessible alternative to mental illness care.

Since 2006, Chibanda and his team have trained over 400 grandmothers in evidence-based talk therapy, which they deliver for free in more than 70 communities in the country.

The programme is a blueprint for any community, city or country interested in bringing affordable, accessible and highly effective mental health services to its residents and demonstrates how existing local resources can be utilised and supported to fill gaps in service delivery.

6.1 Risk and needs assessments

When completing assessments for returnees, it is important that factors of risk, need and resilience are considered. There may be extensive information available to inform your assessment or you may have very limited background information before you commence. What is important is that you gather what information is available, from as

many sources as you can, and consider all that information when making an assessment.

It is important to confirm the returnee's identity, in so far as possible, at the first opportunity in the assessment process. This may require liaison with national and foreign government organisations, local community members and family.

Sources of information for assessments can include security and intelligence organisations, police and law enforcement, corrections and parole authorities, government organisations, civil society organisations, community groups, community leaders (formal and informal), religious institutions, families, friends and the individual. Close co-operation and information-sharing practices are vital to ensure assessments are accurate, capture all the risks and opportunities and reflect the areas for intervention.

Individual risk, needs and resilience assessments focus on developing an understanding of the returnee and the risks for that person in relation to engagement with violent extremist organisations, their specific needs and the individual factors of resilience.

Risk assessments should consider a broad concept of risk, including whether the individual is at risk of harming themself or has health and wellbeing risks. There may be a risk to the health and development for children if they are removed from their parents without appropriate preparation and care, or the broader family or community may be at risk of violence or reprisal from the extremist group the returnee has left. Risk should be considered on both an individual intrinsic level and a systemic extrinsic level.

Whatever model or approach is used for the risk assessment, it is crucial that it is flexible enough to adapt to the personal and contextual circumstances of the individual returning and their community/social network.

It is always preferable to have a number of professionals, from a range of disciplines or organisations, involved in the assessment process, including psychologists, religious clerics, law enforcement or social workers where they are available. This ensures different knowledge and skills are used to balance any assessment and all information is considered from different perspectives, thus increasing understanding of the individual and their risks and needs. Where you are unaware of the returnee's religion, ideology or individual needs such as mental health, you should seek advice and guidance from someone who has this knowledge.

Where assessments involve children and young people, it is important to include professionals who understand issues specific to these age groups, such as developmental stages and the impact of attachment and trauma. Where assessments involve women, appropriate professionals who understand community gender roles and expectations should be involved.

Dynamic assessments should be delivered at the start and throughout the intervention process to inform the baseline, assess progress and inform changes to the content and delivery of programmes.

It is important to note that risk assessments can also have harmful effects if used incorrectly or ineffectively. Returnees may be stigmatised as a result of assessments, contributing to alienation of individuals from their communities and threatening reintegration efforts. Practitioners need to ensure risk assessments are balanced and highlight opportunities and resilience factors as well as risks and needs and how these needs can be met. Assessments should always be undertaken for a specific purpose, such as planning service delivery.

6.2 Psychosocial assessments

Assessments should also focus on developing a broader understanding of the individual, their ability to function within their community as well as the opportunities and challenges within their surrounding systems. This involves developing an understanding not just of the individual but also of how they interact within their family/community and an understanding of their context, including the strengths, challenges and beliefs within their surrounding support systems and community.

Psychosocial assessments are best conducted over a period of time by observing the relationships, connections and interactions between the returnee and their family and social network. They involve engaging with and interviewing family, friends, associates and local community members to build a picture of not only the risks and vulnerabilities of the returnees but also the needs and strengths that the family and social networks have to support the returnee to reintegrate.

Information to be considered relating to the returnee includes: family composition and background, educational history, employment or vocational skills, religious/spiritual involvement, cultural identity and engagement, physical and health background, psychological functioning,

social, community and recreational engagement, financial or basic life necessities circumstances, broader environmental or social factors and individual strengths capacities and resources.

6.3 Assessment tools

The use of tools to help guide and structure an assessment process is encouraged. Structured assessment tools encourage practitioners to gather all the relevant information, consider all the relevant factors and assist in decision-making when determining an individual's level of risk, or likelihood of harm, for specific outcomes within specific contexts.

There are a variety of tools that can be used to assist in the assessment of an individual for a variety of purposes. Formal and structured tools such as the Violent Extremism Risk Assessment Version 2 Revised (VERA-2R),[1] the Terrorist Radicalisation Assessment Protocol (TRAP-18)[2] or the RADAR[3] specifically assess violent extremist risk. These tools assess the specific factors contributing to the risk that an individual will engage in violent extremist or terrorist acts and identify the factors and circumstances relating to an individual's engagement, offending, disengagement and desistance.

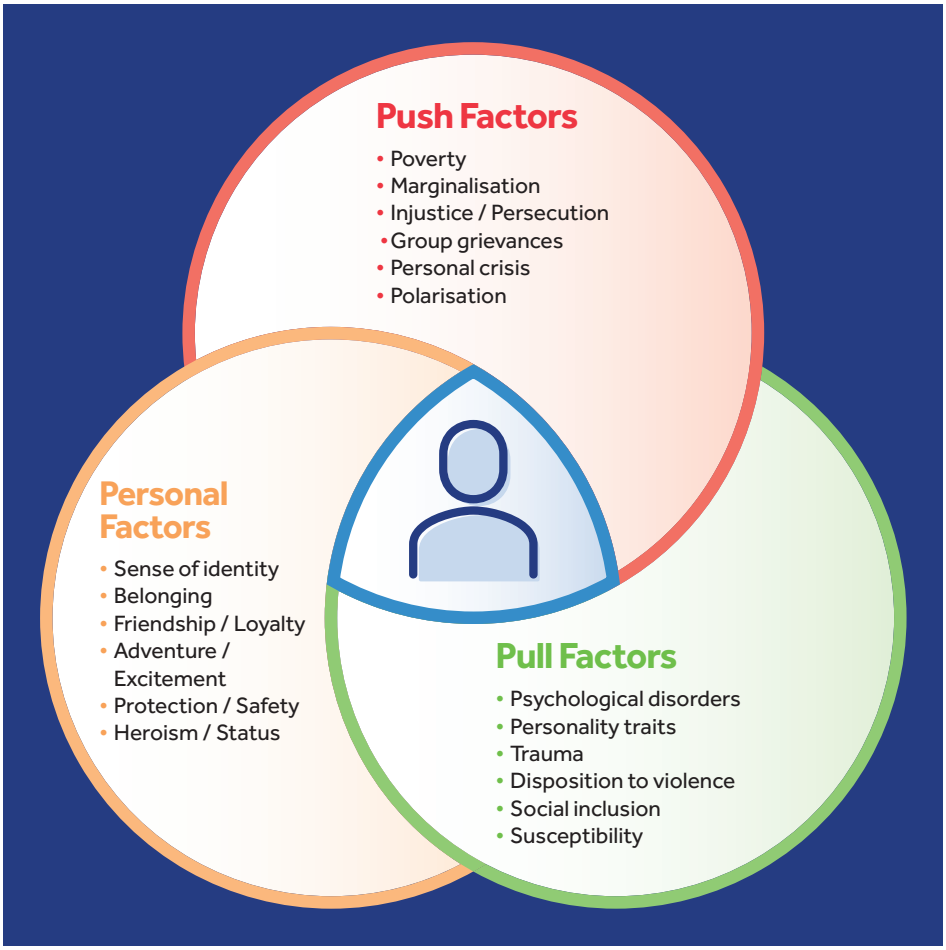
These tools can be used as organisational tools for information, as decision-making tools to guide resourcing, placement or monitoring interventions, as reintegration tools to inform reintegration plans or as reviewing tools to track change, the effectiveness of interventions or changes in planned interventions.

Assessments may include looking at 'push factors' or macro level drivers such as poverty or experiences of injustice, 'pull factors' or meso level drivers such as lack of individual identity or need for belonging and 'personal factors' or micro level drivers such as experiences of trauma or mental health concerns.

1 See: https://www.vera-2r.nl/

2 Meloy JR, K Roshdi, J Glaz-Ocik and J Hoffmann (2015) 'Investigating the Individual Terrorist in Europe', *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management* 2(3-4): 140–152.

3 Referenced in: Department of Homeland Security (2017) 'Countering Violent Extremism: The Use of Assessment Tools for Measuring Violence Risk Literature Review'. www dhs.gov.



7. Developing Support Networks

In order to build resistance and social engagement with a returnee from violent extremism and their family, protective factors and support are vital. If their family, friends and the wider community are not supportive of their reintegration and rehabilitation, divisions and threats will widen. This will expose vulnerabilities in the individual and hinder any success with transitioning away from extremism.

Returning to a fragmented society that does not clearly understand the reasoning behind why an individual turned their back on their community can cause panic and fear. The consequences in terms of facilitating support and safety can be dire.

To develop and increase strong community relationships and social cohesion, consistent effort needs to be made across all platforms. These include personal, social, political and economic influences.

It is important as a frontline worker to exercise empathy and compassion by asking questions and listening to the returnee's story. By being listened to, not judged, that individual will be able to see the benefit in forming a connection when they might not have had any before leaving to join an extremist group. Your role is to help rebuild new and old relationships that will increase opportunities for the individual by humanizing the situation and not labelling or judging them.

7.1 Psychosocial safety

Psychological safety is a human need. Feeling accepted, valued and respected enables any individual, regardless of their situation, to engage in dialogue and also share their frustrations in a healthy way.

When an individual feels safe, they are able to open up to service providers and their loved ones. The same concept is relevant in the workplace, personal life and social interactions. If you feel safe, you are empowered and you are free from judgement. This allows for improved communication and collaboration (including contributing to the community) and a greater likelihood of excelling and achieving your goals. The changes that arise when a returnee feels accepted, valued and respected will benefit the returnee and also the people around them.

When interacting and forming a relationship with the returnee, listen. Create the safe space for that individual to be heard. Do not take for granted your own privilege and lack of understanding of that individual's situation. If you have not lived their experience, do not commenton or misinterpret what they say. Become a mentor, develop a relationship and be reliable, not judgemental. This is especially important when establishing rapport with children and young people. If they identify you, as their worker, to be insincere, you will become dangerous; once you are established as 'untruthful', you will not be able to gain the trust of the individual, and their reintegration and rehabilitation process will be hindered.

One of the most important approaches when reintegrating a returnee and their family is to be restorative and collaborative from the beginning. Allowing the families to lead the conversation will allow them the opportunity to tell you what support they need. Do not tell an individual what to do; rather, guide the person so they feel safe enough to open up to you. This will establish self-awareness for both parties and information sharing will become more transparent. You will then have opened up the doors to create a partnership. A support network has been established, and you can commence the process of extending it to those of influence – for example, community leaders (formal and informal), teachers, religious mentors, mental health providers and social workers – and reforming prior relationships and friendships.

Social inclusion is imperative when it comes to feeling secure and safe in your environment. Often, the returnee and their family can be polarising and inflexible. Successful reintegration requires mutual respect from the community and within their personal circles/networks (if they have any left). This will create a safe environment that will assist with their motivation to reintegrate and partake in setting goals, gaining skills, getting a job and not only providing for their family but giving back to the community. There is a sense of accomplishment when you are not hindered by judgement and ridicule. No matter your

personal views, as a frontline worker your approach will determine the individual's 'buy-in' to becoming a reintegrated citizen - a whole person.

Protection is important when establishing psychological safety. There are risks when reintegrating into society. If the community is hostile or feels the need for retribution, the returned family will put up barriers and your engagement approach will not be effective.

If this occurs, other support and service providers will need to be engaged in order to fuel psychological safety among not only the individual and family members but also the community. This includes receiving support from mental health providers to assist with coping strategies and religious guides to discuss ideologies and recognition of personal values, beliefs and their own vulnerabilities.

By establishing the foundation of psychological safety, you can take a 'bottom up' approach to building the individual's needs (from psychological, security, belonging and acceptance). Building the needs of the returnee, creating a safe space to share and having a support network will build and influence the necessary resources and open access to reintegration for that individual and the family involved.

7.2 Motivational and engagement needs

As a frontline worker, you need to manage your own expectations and the expectations of the returnee from violent extremism. Showing and demonstrating empathy builds and establishes rapport. Acknowledge their grievances but zoom in on the consequences. Your role as a frontline worker is to assist in creating a safe space by meeting their needs. Your dialogue is important, and how you phrase your sentences can either help or hinder a successful reintegration.

Even though there is a lack of empirical data and evidence on what works and what method is least successful, there are best practice principles based on research and evaluation that facilitate successful reintegration on a needs-based approach.

Every individual, including their family, will have different circumstances and responsiveness to this approach. There is no one size fits all. Each case needs to be looked at entirely on its own. Pursuing different values, beliefs and cultural and community engagement is necessary when creating a support plan. One person's theological, psychosocial and ideological trains of thought will be inherently different to another's. This highlights the importance of a bespoke and customised support plans that resonate with the individual's own needs. It will increase motivation and engagement and help address other relevant skills and services. Without addressing the needs of the individual, your rehabilitation and reintegration plan may be counterproductive with the risk of doing more harm than good.

When assessing the needs and responsiveness of the returnee and the family, you will find that common ones are usually interconnected and dependent on one another. However, although the needs may be similar or the same, the process will be different due to personal circumstances and experiences. The main question to focus on when working with the returnee and their family is: 'Are we improving the individual's life?' This question is framed in this way because improving the individual's life reduces the likelihood that they will go back to violent extremism, thus making the whole community safer. Also, a returnee is often a product of their environment. Look at the current context of their environment and their circumstances. Not only are you creating opportunities where there often would be none, you are improving the members of the community and their own experiences.

Terrorists, extremist behaviour and ideologies are not formed overnight. It can take years to cultivate and even more to action. Likewise, your support plans and needs assessment also have also a long-term agenda. Similar to individuals suffering with addiction (drugs, alcohol, gambling etc.), it is a long road to recovery and there can often be relapses along the way. There is no 'quick fix'; however, with informed care you can not only improve community cohesion, you can minimise relapses and monitor behavioural changes. Using a different subset of skills such as cognitive and critical thought will engage thinking patterns. This is why mentorship and coaching are beneficial. However, if these are not administrated correctly by an appropriate parties, you may could re-radicalise the individual.

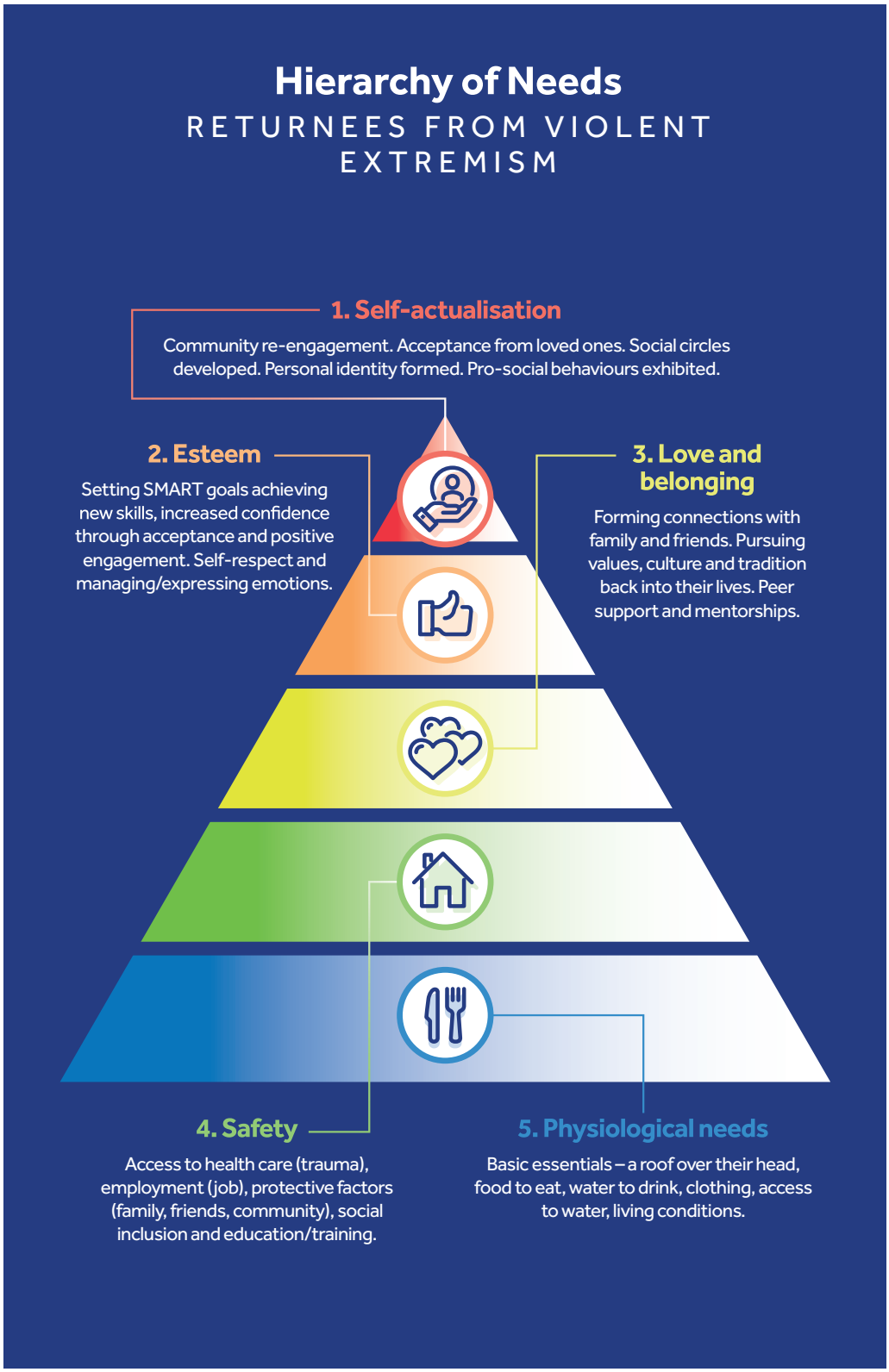
It can be useful to have a structured framework for assessing the capability of civil society organisations to safely and effectively deliver specific activities that prevent and counter violent extremism. One example is the 'Non Profit Organisation Capability Assessment Toolkit' and 'Capacity Building Framework', created by the Commonwealth Secretariat, Government of Trinidad and Tobago and community organisations in that country to assist government and community organisations in assessing the capability of non-government organisations to deliver specific activities to prevent/counter violent extremism[4].

Once you review what areas of the community you need to engage with, you can begin to work backwards and look at the reasons why the returnee left in the first place. Be open and transparent. Utilise their passion and beliefs and place those behaviours and skills they acquired into a new movement, hobby or job. It is vital to intervene

4 Commonwealth Secretariat (2020) 'Capability Assessment Toolkit: A Development Framework for Non-Profit Organisations in Trinidad and Tobago', https://thecommonwealth.org/our-work/countering-violent-extremism

early and give ownership to the individual. This will empower their own change plan by having other parties invested in their journey.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs, a well-known theory on motivation, basically states that people are motivated by needs that range from primal to self-fulfilment. Although it is only a theory, the five categories can easily be transferred to the needs of a returnee, including those of their family. Although all your needs do not need to be met to reach the next tier, it does make reintegration more streamlined and personal, reducing the likelihood that families/ individuals will feel forgotten.



7.3 Building trust

Similar to creating psychological safety and meeting the needs of an individual, building trust must start immediately whilst setting the foundation of your relationship with the returnee. Efforts at building trust are often met with barriers before you have a breakthrough.

This is especially important if a returnee has not been charged with any crimes, as the opportunity to get that person to enter and join a programme (of any kind) is almost impossible. They may not speak about their experiences or share any information as this could potentially be used as evidence. There will be resistance when asking questions due to fear of prosecution and government involvement. This is not a reflection on the frontline workers and the non-government organisations working with the families but will have an effect on rehabilitation options and the level of engagement in reintegration activities. It is a factor that law enforcement, prosecutors and other officials may wish to take into account when making decisions about the handling of a case, alongside all other relevant factors.

Due to the widespread stigma against returnees, particularly those perceived to be terrorist fighters, lack of trust between the community and the individual will be the hardest barrier to overcome. In some European countries, a person that has returned from a conflict zone is obligated to provide potential employers with a letter from law enforcement (police) that sets out who they are and what they did. In these circumstances, trust will be almost impossible to gain, let alone build. Not being able to obtain employment will cause a domino effect on matters such as security, housing, protection and a sense of belonging.

The impulse that many people feel to punish or keep away from a person who has been involved with violent extremism is understandable but counterproductive. It is useful to ask the question 'Will this make our community safer?'.

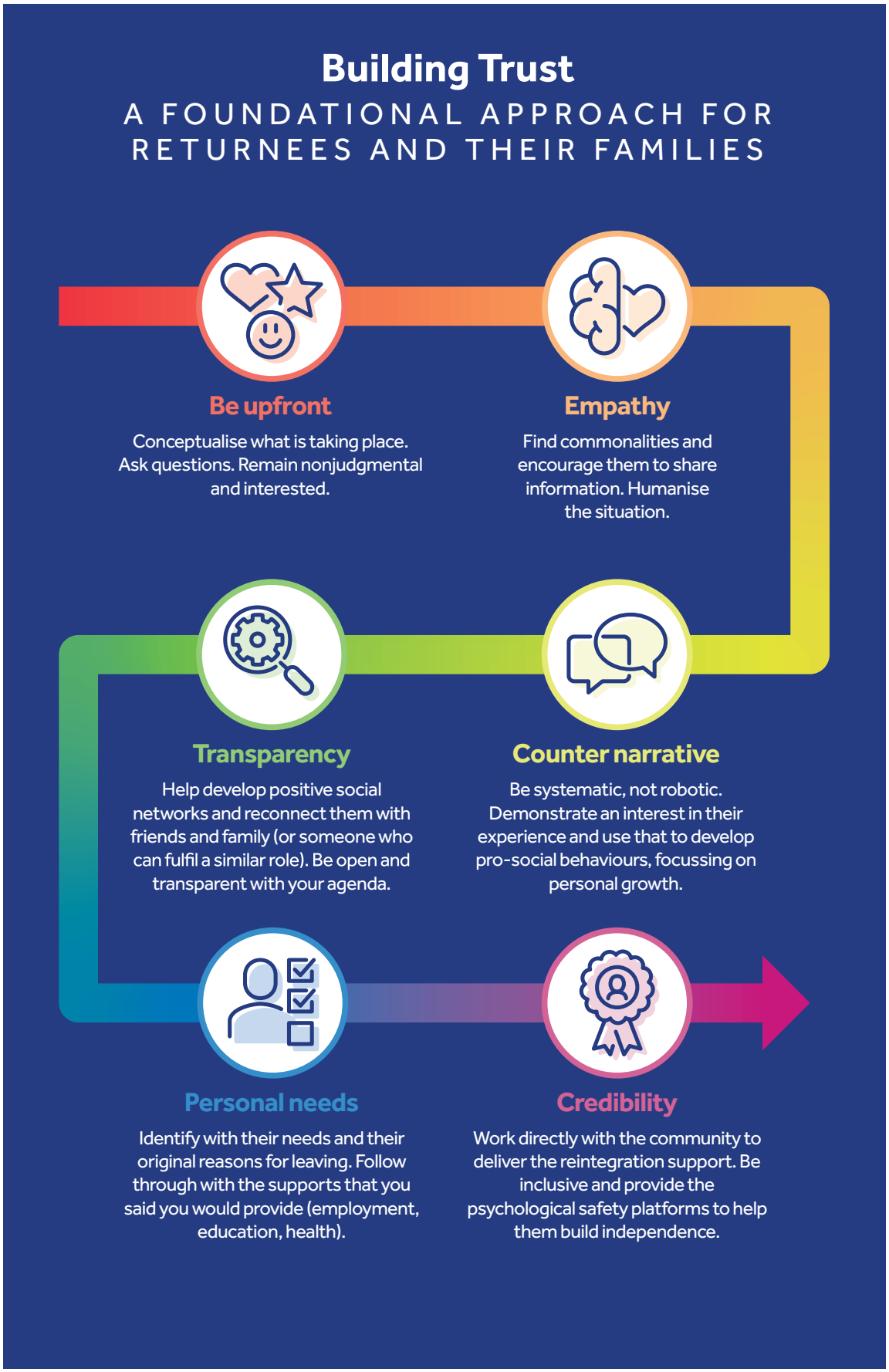
Without trust between the returnee and frontline workers, police and the community, recidivism will increase and the risk of the returnee going back to their terrorist/ militant group is greater. If a returnee is not highly functional, the failures and insecurities that they had prior to leaving will be the same issues on their return. If members of the community distrust the returnee, the development of a grass-roots support plan will be hindered. Developing trust and respect will foster positivity, growth and a healthy mindset.

When forming a relationship and establishing why you are there and the motives behind the programme, you are opening up a dialogue. Ensure that you acknowledge the individual and show respect. Boost their feeling of self-worth and individuality to increase resilience as this characteristic will need strengthening if the community they are returning to becomes dismissive. Do not make assumptions because every individual is unique in their own way.

With trust, you can challenge their thoughts by talking rather than by showing control or authority. This is their journey, not yours. It is incredibly personal and unique. It is your role to assist with the preparation stage of reintegrating or being reabsorbed back into the community with a set of tools to connect with others that is equally as powerful as the reasons they left in the first place.

7.4 Partnerships (community and government)

Partnerships between civil society and government need to be collaborative from the beginning. Those with schools, health departments, employment agencies and community-based organisations build relationships and trust. Frontline workers can utilise these partnerships by having a multiagency approach that increases communication and understanding. While government support is important when it comes to dealing with any criminal activity, most support should be at the community level to reduce politicalised and bureaucratic processes. There is more chance of a programme and reintegration process run by local parties being successful. Somebody that is perceived to be neural, such as a community or government organisation that is not directly involved in the case, can play an important role due to the areas of expertise displayed by frontline workers and the trust they have built with community leaders (formal and informal) and their members.


Building Trust
A FOUNDATIONAL APPROACH FOR RETURNEES AND THEIR FAMILIES
Be upfront
Conceptualise what is taking place. Ask questions. Remain nonjudgmental and interested.
Empathy
Find commonalities and encourage them to share information. Humanise the situation.
Transparency
Help develop positive social networks and reconnect them with friends and family (or someone who can fulfil a similar role). Be open and transparent with your agenda.
Counter narrative
Be systematic, not robotic. Demonstrate an interest in their experience and use that to develop pro-social behaviours, focussing on personal growth.
Personal needs
Identify with their needs and their original reasons for leaving. Follow through with the supports that you said you would provide (employment, education, health).
Credibility
Work directly with the community to deliver the reintegration support. Be inclusive and provide the psychological safety platforms to help them build independence.

CASE STUDY

Muslim Public Affairs Council, Diminishing Opportunities for Violent Extremism (USA)

American Somalis of the Twin Cities area engaged in a partnership between local community advocates and academic researchers to identify a community-based approach to preventing violent extremism. Out of this partnership came a blueprint for action: Diminishing Opportunities for Violent Extremism. More information about the initiative is available in the Muslim Public Affairs Council (2016) 'Safe Spaces Initiative: Tools for Developing Healthy Communities' (available at www.dhs.gov).

Sharing appropriate information (with consideration for the safety of the individual and their family) is an operational method used to develop protocols between each party. This is used in a practical sense to develop customised plans that are appropriate, relevant, timely and actionable.

When two or more organisations are working collaboratively, the well-being of the family is put first and long-term commitment does not overlap with other competing priorities. Shared dialogue is used to bring forth leadership, resources and risk aversion to achieve common goals. This direct engagement approach is necessary to improve service delivery and ensure the most suitable support is available. In countries where resources are limited, it is vital to piggyback on other organisations, co-exist and cooperate to achieve mutual benefits for all involved.

To achieve positive partnerships, information exchange and planning is vital. Be transparent and authentic in your approach. That will be a key driver in your success in a partnership. The community and local organisations are more likely to play a role in the reintegration programme if they are aware of the individual's circumstances. Day-to-day working with returnees and other parties involved will open up discussion at a strategic level to ensure that the most suitable services are being secured and that needs are being met by the appropriate provider. In simple terms, leave it to the experts in their fields and share the information as an integrated service model.


Partnerships
RETURNEES FROM VIOLENT EXTREMISM
Local communities
• A better understanding of the returnee's circumstances and why they became radicalised. Understand the local community. Work with grass-roots actor leading the programme. These grass-roots actors should be people who can connect with and relate to the returnee.
• Knowledge of the current views held in the communities and the key players that may be involved to assist in rehabilitation and reintegration.
Preventative strategies
• Developing relationships with local groups who have already established activities, mentorships and specialised intervention methods for those who are returning.
• Community-based approaches to deter and minimise relapse and anti-social behaviour.
Multiagency cooperation
• Leveraging public, private, local and volunteer organisations to partner and increase social inclusion by working together and forming common continuity.
• Develop social networks and connections between all parties (integrated working)
• All parties are contributing to building community resilience and social inclusion.
• Establishing allied groups/relationships to strengthen the bonds between all parties and strengthen accountability.
• Skills and knowledge being readily available and shared across networks.
Tailored assessments
• Identify needs and circumstances of returnees from violent extremism at a rudimentary stage and build from there (customised with their own goals and support plans).
• Establish key professionals to be involved (psychologists, teachers, youth workers, social workers, religious guides, mentors, medical specialists, etc. – all working together with shared expertise.
• Case-by-Case approach and customised risk assessment.

8. Support and Reintegration Planning

Planning for reintegration should occur as early as possible, ideally before the individuals (and/ or family) return. Where possible, promote the active participation of families, friends and wider community networks in the planning process. If the governing body (government) is aware of their return, it is their responsibility to start reaching out to community services and local authorities. This consultation period is essential to working effectively with a multiagency approach.

You will need to engage integrated services, including a range of specialised and local service providers, to begin their delivery model prior to the individual's arrival. Information that should be gathered and shared includes:

a. Who is returning? A violent extremist combatant (likely male)? A non-combatant (male or female)? A wife? Children?

b. What are the ages of all individuals?

c. Did they leave their home to travel to a conflict zone to join a militant group (is that group still active)?

d. Did they return voluntarily or did they get caught?

e. Is there a pending court case (include the gravity and seriousness of any crime)?

f. Has there been prosecution (include any legal action taking place)?

g. If returning from another country/region, how long have they been away?

h. Were the children born outside of the country?

i. What level of violence/ trauma has been experienced/ witnessed?

j. Has there been any schooling for the children?

k. Has there been a formal risk assessment including any referrals or interventions prior to returning?

l. Are they returning to live with family members or do they need housing options?

m. Has their extended family been informed? Impact on any victims in the community?

n. Are they well-known to the community and is there media coverage of their return that will make peaceful settlement difficult?

o. Are there safety precautions in place for both the returnee(s) and community members?

p. What is the expected date of arrival and is there a calendar schedule for meeting with the returnee and their family?

q. Are there appropriate resources for both local and cultural contexts?

r. Consideration of any limitations and need to know information.

8.1 Managing a support plan

A support plan is a fluid document to assist with the reintegration of the returnee. This service will also be available to their spouse and any children/ young people returning home with them. The plan lists the returnee's goals and the services being offered. The plan must be agreed to by the returnee and is created with the case manager assigned to the individual and their family.

If the support plan is not built together with and customised based on the specific needs of the returnee, barriers will hinder any progress and buy-in will not occur. Rather, you will create resistance.

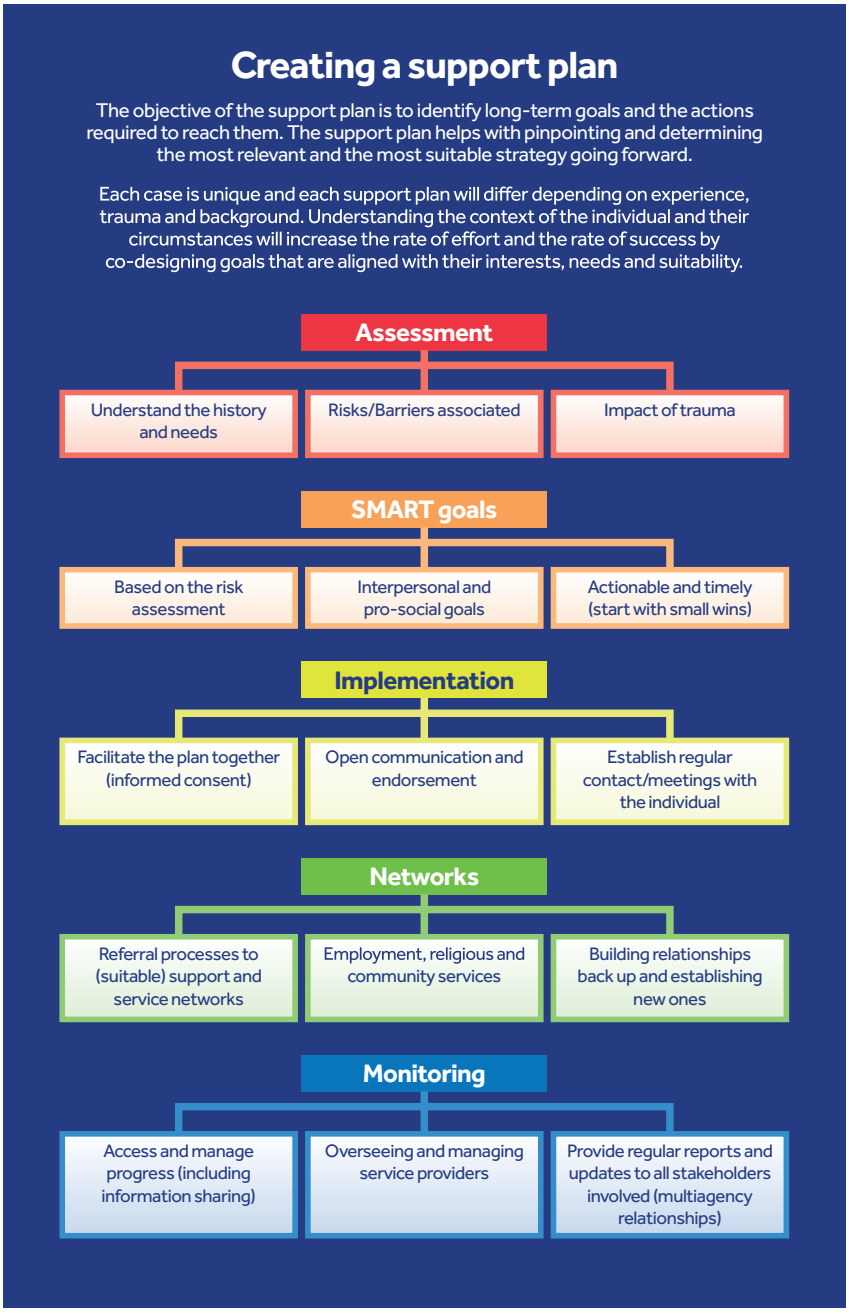
This links directly back to managing partnerships and networks. The case manager or service provider allocated to oversee the returnee and their family will need to liaise with their protective factors (extended family and friends), community leaders (formal and informal) and local services to foster networks that can support the returnee in the long term. The shared goal is to engage in positive pathways, not reintroduce old habits or thinking patterns that led to their extremist behaviour in the first place.

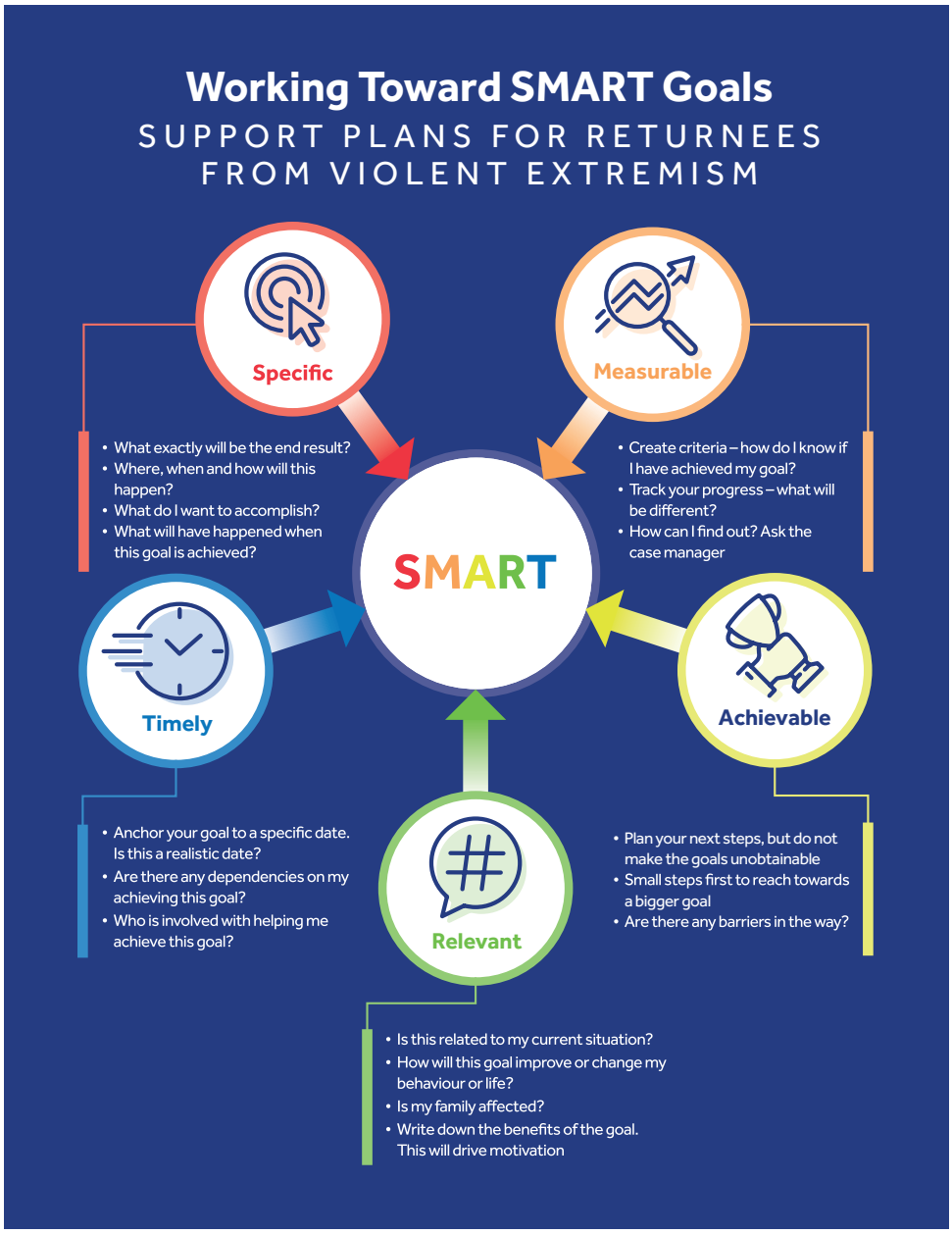
The support plan fosters willing participation in the community that is not only robust but pro-social. It is likely to include mental health support for cognitive development, resilience building and prevention/coping strategies on relapses. The plan should enable proactive behavioural changes such as developing new relationships, disengaging from

old ones (decreased attachment to extremist/militant connections) and allow new interests to grow that meet the returnee's needs.

The support plan will present challenges. There will be times when rehabilitation will be difficult and need to be addressed through counselling and mentoring. The returnee will be confronted with their beliefs and values, even questioned on their extremist views and former activities. These areas should be facilitated by a professional (psychiatrist, practitioner, religious leader, etc.), and you, as the frontline worker, may feel pressure when the returnee is reflecting on their changes. In order to maintain the returnee's engagement with the programme, it is imperative to have intervention steps in place to accommodate isolation, loneliness and guilt. Reinforcing to the individual that they are improving, and we are all here to help, brings comfort.

The plan aims to assist both the returnee and their family (if appropriate) with basic support and guidance to divert them from any extremist behaviour or anti-social connections. The plan should aim to empower vulnerable individuals with the skills to think critically, understand values and create and achieve goals. The goals will be flexible and can change over time depending on progress, internal and external factors and the mindset of the returnee. This emphasises the importance of developing (or maintaining) relationships with service providers, community leaders (formal and informal), civilians and local and government parties.



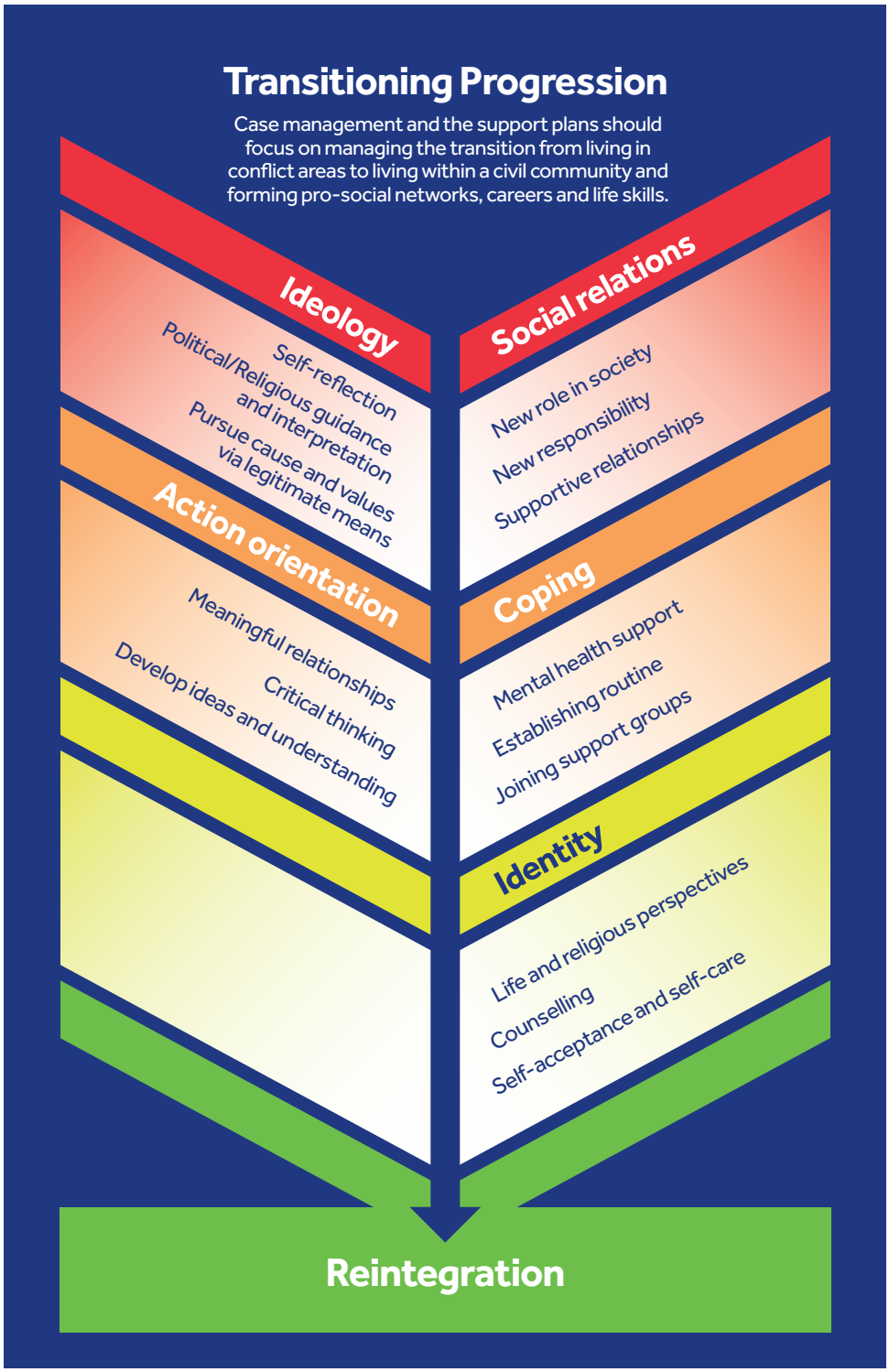


8.2 Transition

Effective reintegration for returnees (and their family) requires a direct transition progress. The change from living in a conflict zone or among a violent extremist group to becoming a member of a wider community can often be challenging and overwhelming. The individuals involved will need appropriate reassurance in each support area to maintain distance from any negative or violent/extremist behaviours and values.

Successful reintegration has been associated with individuals who have made significant changes in six different domains: social relations, coping, identity, ideology, action orientation and disillusionment.[5]

5 Drawn from the Radar violent extremism assessment tool developed by K. Barelle and S. Harris-Hogan. Referenced in: van der Heide, L., van der Zwan, M. & van Leyenhorst, M. (2019). The Practitioner's Guide to the Galaxy – A Comparison of Risk Assessment Tools for Violent Extremism. ICCT Research Paper, September 2019. https://icct.nl/publication/the-practitioners-guide-to-the-galaxy-a-comparison-of-risk-assessment-tools-for-violent-extremism/



If the returnee is incarcerated, the transition plan should recognise their progress towards more acceptable behaviours and, based on risk assessments, should focus on moving them to progressively less restrictive settings and including social reintegration transitions such as outings or day leave.

Support to facilitate the reintegration process is necessary to facilitate continuing education and secure employment, build relationships and counter the stigmatization that often accompanies individuals who are alleged to have been involved in terrorism.

8.3 Adult reintegration

Even though there is little empirical data, there is academic literature to support reintegration programmes and interventions. As stated in a Council of Europe handbook on the management of violent extremists:[6]

'These include interventions being delivered within a holistic approach that address psychological, social (including familial) and practical issues associated with effective disengagement and reintegration; tutors of courses well-educated, informed, credible, competent, wise and compassionate with the confidence to rebut beliefs that permit violence; intervention should challenge ways of thinking which support violence, including "us and them"

6 European Committee on Crime Problems and Council for Penological Co-operation (2016) 'Council of Europe Handbook for Prison and Probation Services Regarding Radicalisation and Violent Extremism'. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, p. 19.

mentalities and dialogue should be meaningful, focussed, tailored and cover critical themes over a sufficient duration.'

This correlates with best practice of managing a returnee's successful reintegration into the community and back into their personal and social networks. The impact of peers, community members and local authorities can either be positive or negative depending the effectiveness of the goals of the returnee and the services being provided.

Due to the complexities of having individuals return to the community after participating in violent extremism or fighting in a violent extremist conflict domestically or internationally, each case needs to have an individual approach. Upon return, the first proactive step to take is to ask the returnee, 'What do you need'? This is not to reward the returnee; rather, it is to provide an incentive that is equally as powerful as what they had when they were involved in violent extremism and to draw them back into the community. It is important to consider the different needs and expectations related to gender when engaging with returnees from violent extremism, as this will affect their needs, experiences and opportunities.

What they need will depend on their personal values and could be a friend, dignity, respect, housing, access to health care or a religious guide. Depending on their answer, you can incorporate 'what they want' into their support plan and their needs assessment. You can attach the need with a goal and include the steps on how to successfully achieve 'what you want/need' together. Increasing a sub-set of skills – including higher education levels, socio-economic skills and life training – can ignite motivation and reintegration. By doing so, you are creating and opening opportunities that they might not have had access to prior to leaving.

You also need to look at the fault lines around the community and review the reasons that pushed returnees towards acting on their extremist ideologies. When a returnee is a 'widely discussed figure' and has been presented in the media as a risk to the community, this does not bode well for proactive reintegration or for their support plans. Communicating a healthy and upfront message is critical. Using multiple campaigns can assist depending on the strategy being used for that individual.

Barriers can arise, the main concern being personal security. There is a fear that all returnees who participated in a violent extremist group are being watched/monitored by the authorities and so are their families and associates. This fear of coming to the attention of the police can cause people to withdraw and stay away from the returnee. Investing in community policing can be an effective way to reduce the mistrust between communities and the police that may stand in the way of effective reintegration. If the returnee's personal networks are limited, going online can become their virtual space for connecting and making friends. This can be damaging for their rehabilitation. Setting up a mentoring or coaching outlet can assist in increasing communication skills and social networking such as being involved in a club or community group (art class, debating, music, drama, sport etc.).

Your role as a frontline worker is introducing the referral system and knowing where to find the most appropriate services for the returnee's risk and support plan. The support of family, friends and the local community can prevent any further radicalisation to violence; without adequate support, the individual may want to go back to what they know and where they had a sense of belonging and felt valued. The networks and services that make up this support will look very different in different communities, for example, there may be a big difference depending on whether you are based in a city or in a village.

When the support plan is active and being delivered, the environment is crucial to its effectiveness. The returnee once believed and expressed their values, beliefs and emotions with violence and illegal actions. Take these emotions and passions and turn them into a legitimate skillset. Help them put that energy into their goals, whether these be in employment, education, family or a hobby.

You will need a contingency plan if their direct support network (family and friends) are radicalised. This will deter the reintegration process and a new stream of social networks will need to be introduced and built up. Relocation can also be an option depending on housing availability.

Adult Reintegration

RETURNEES FROM VIOLENT EXTREMISM

01

Communication

A local communication strategy, based on understanding the individual circumstances and liaising with the community.

02

Planning

A tailored approach for each individual returning and immediate risk assessment using multiagency approach.

03

Engagement

Direct contribution to the individual's needs and goals. The individual may be referred to community, health care and other specialist services.

04

Networking

Increase wide social networks including family, friends, community groups, employment, education and civil society.

05

Ongoing support

There is a long-term need for ongoing reviews, feedback and advice. There is no end date. Forming attachments, connections and support networks will be a continuing journey.

8.4 Child and young person reintegration

Children (here defined as being under the age of 12 years old) and young persons (here defined as being 13 to 19 years old) generally have an easier transition back into the community.

Regardless of their circumstances, children who have been involved with violent extremism are victims. They should be protected from media and political scrutiny and their situation should not be made public. Issues arise when a child is born in a conflict zone and has no identifying documents, i.e., is stateless.

A multiagency approach is essential when repatriating children and young people as it will increase child protection and mitigate the risks attached to their development and safety. They have had early exposure to violence, and the impact of trauma will be unknown until the assessment phase. They may have been exposed to malnutrition, loss of a parent/s, loss of siblings and displacement from society. They may be less emotionally, socially or physically advanced than their age peers. Factors to be considered include their reintegration back into the schooling system and access to trauma and grief counselling.

A strategy meeting with all parties involved will need to be conducted prior to the child's return. Security checks should be carried out, including checking whether the family is known to and/or previously contacted by the authorities. Background checks with the education system and health services should be conducted to gain any insight into the history of the child/ young person's family. If possible, a dedicated case manager should be assigned specially to review and manage a returnee with children and be advised by the other people who are involved in the multiagency approach.

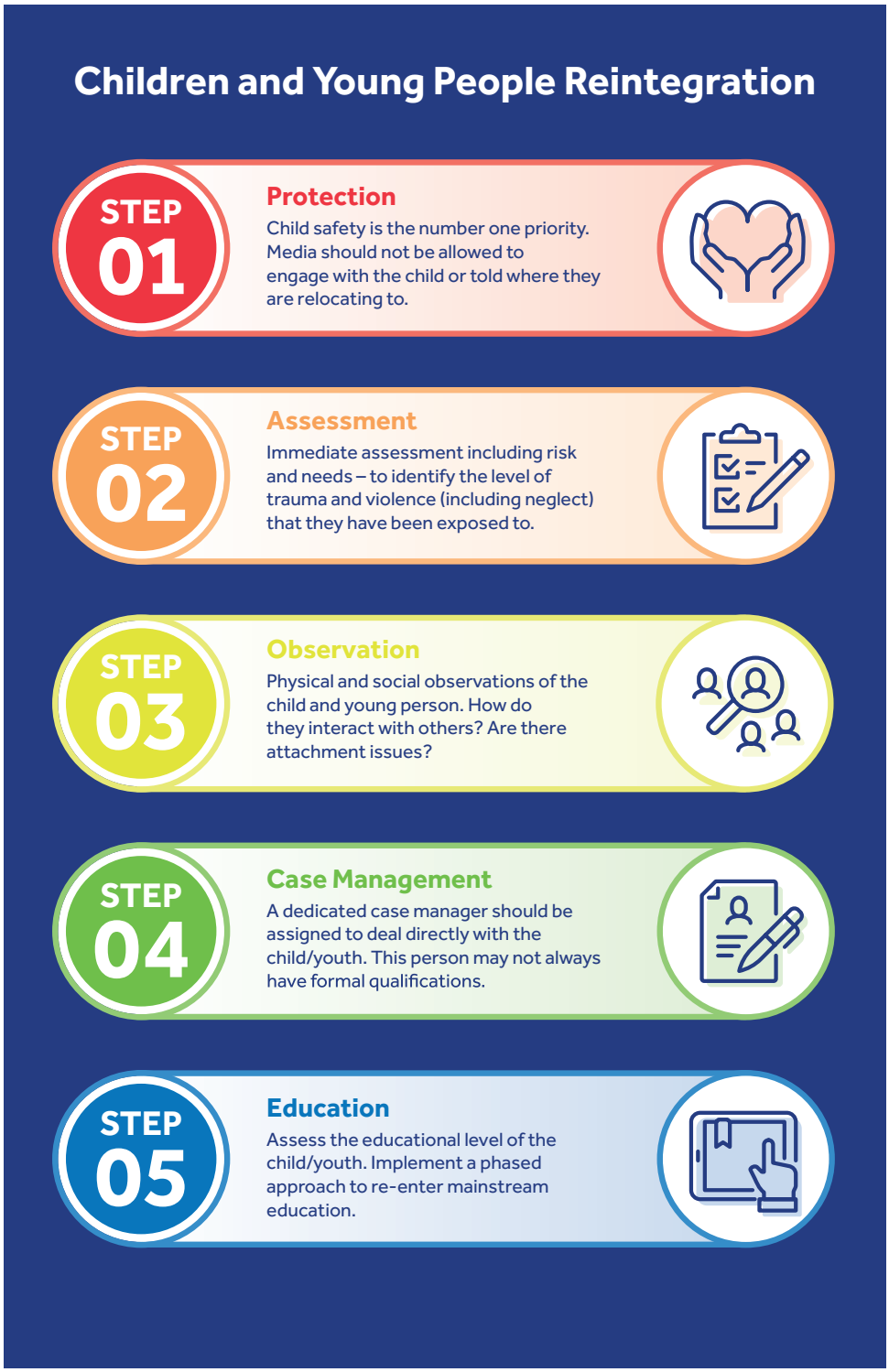
On arrival, there should be a specialised psychological assessment of the child. Having a child psychologist involved from the outset and then measuring the child's progress over time is fundamental to track change and rehabilitation. Otherwise, it is very hard to know whether a child is a counterterrorism/ extremist risk going forward. However, knowing and understanding the level of trauma can help manage current and future risks to the child. Initial observations and foundational information should be collected and analysed. This includes such basic information as who accompanied the children/ young person on their journey back.

Physical observations need to be undertaken straight away by a health-care professional. These include looking for any bruises, marks, physical disabilities and head lice and assessing general hygiene. Secondary assessments then need be conducted, which include initial screening for any diseases resulting from having no access to vaccinations – such as tuberculosis (TB) and measles – and any signs of sexual trauma and neglect.

During the screening and assessment stages, it is imperative to find out the child's lived experiences. This includes their daily routine, basic needs, what they would have for breakfast and dinner, etc. Who did they live with? Where did they live? How many women lived in the household? These questions can assist with and indicate the level of trauma they were exposed to. If the health professionals and case managers start with the hypothesis that the children and young people have been exposed to trauma, emotional harm and psychological abuse, they can work backwards to provide the most suitable rehabilitation and reintegration process. In cases where older children (12 years and upwards) have returned, it is presumed that they have witnessed and been involved with extreme violence and abuse. One of the risk assessments that will need to be conducted is to find out whether these children have been both perpetrators and victims.

Attachment styles start early in childhood, and it important for both their emotional and social development that children form an attachment to a parent (or a caregiver). If the child and/or young person has not formed these relationships, issues that may arise extend from poor cognitive development to lack of emotional regulation, insensitivity, anti-social behaviours and withdrawing from social situations. In many cases, these issues may not be apparent, but further intervention may still be needed to protect them from any further psychological harm. The child/ young person may also demonstrate surprising resilience.

Once these assessment and protocols have been established, the next step is integrating back into the schooling system with a phased approach depending on the child and young person's intellectual ability and social maturity. This can be reviewed in Chapter 11: 'Training Objectives'.



8.5 Community cohesion

For provide the best opportunity for a returnee and their family to succeed and reintegrate seamlessly, the community will need to accept the individual and their family (including children). The most in-depth and well-defined support plan and best practices approaches will not work unless the community has a role in rebuilding their relationships with the individuals and forming trust and connection with every person involved.

In order to build community cohesion, acceptance and resilience you need to be proactive by getting the community members and leaders involved in the reintegration process as early as possible. The

priority and focus are often on the family and the returnee, with little intervention and support to the community. Thus community healing and trauma support is often overlooked, yet it is a powerful tool to assist the members in accepting the returnees and their families.

When an individual leaves their home, their community and their country, it is often due to feeling disconnected from the society in which they grew up. When they leave, the connection between themselves and the community is further broken. The community feels hurt and betrayed, and they do not relate to or understand the reasoning behind that individual leaving.

While there is no sticking plaster fix, the relationship can be re-established by building rapport rather than disciplining. The focus should be on bridging the gap and having minimal media attention as this brings a negative stigma to not only the returnee and their family but also the community. Consult first with community leaders (formal and informal), review the support plans with them and involve the service providers who will assist with the reintegration processes. Have a community leader sit on the multiagency panel for that individual and/or their family with children being involved. This can also include having a parent and teacher on the panel if the child and/or young person is returning to mainstream schooling. Review the grievances and the trauma together to enable protective factors that work at a grass-roots level. Utilise the community's expertise and knowledge of their citizens and their town. Allow the members to be active in the tailored support plan so that they can review the benefits and mitigate the risks together.

Although the government or authorising body will have some control of the situation, gradually shift the responsibilities and accountabilities to the local and community bodies. In order to change the behaviour, attitudes and mindset of the community, the government should also invest its resources into uplifting the community either through tax incentives or by providing funding to local service providers to run reintegration and rehabilitating programmes. This will enable a less top-down approach and allow the central government to step back and give support to the local intervention space.

In some countries, for example, in parts of Nigeria, governments have introduced a programme where it will assist two community members for every returnee they support. Creating an incentive and reward for communities that help support reintegration has drastically increased community buy-in, acceptance and harmony. There may also be other effective strategies for incentivising acceptance. Essentially, the goal is to create partnerships and not division.

To shape community perception, the communication strategy should be transparent and at a local level that involves all members and includes training for frontline staff and service providers. Utilizing local support networks, religious institutions, the education system, health districts and small businesses will generate productivity and resilience. The benefit of this strategy lowers tension and increases engagement, which in return opens up acceptance and belonging. Just like the support plan of the returnees and their families, it is ongoing, long-term and does not fixate on an end date. The same approach is transferred to building community cohesion and acceptance (reducing racism and sharing different cultures and values through training and education). Building and maintaining strong partnerships is a lifelong commitment and will take time; however, the community and the members will benefit from the resources and adaptability that will be made available to the whole community including those returning.


Community Cohesion
Building positive relationships and partnerships among both the local government authorities, the local community and the returnee from violent extremism and their family
• Transparency from the beginning
• Well informed and supported
• Training for all frontline services and local providers so that they understand the issue and what they need to do
Communication
1
• Multiagency approach (get everyone involved)
• Create opportunities for all involved
• Provide healing and trauma counselling to community members
• Provide the community and service providers with education on different cultures, beliefs and values to promote openness and diversity
Long-term commitment
4
Bridging the gap
Acceptance
2
• No end date
• Continuous support to uphold community harmony and track relationship development
• Increase adaptability over time
Partnerships
3
• (Re)build new and old relationships
• Use local services and businesses
• Encourage businesses to take part (tax incentives, etc.)
• Funding and resourcing should be allocated to the community

9. Monitoring and Review

9.1 Information sharing and compliance

In order to develop and execute a fully functional and bespoke support plan, information needs to be shared and delivered across a range of stakeholders (internal and external). However, there are different types of information, including 'general', 'need-to-know', 'sensitive' and 'classified'.

The initial meeting prior to the individual returning from conflict should include general information from government authorities that is shared with the local authorities. This will start the planning process that includes case managers/workers and any frontline support providers. General information includes the age, race, culture, demographic, history and background of the returnee, which is not considered 'classified' for frontline workers who will be dealing directly with the individual.

Information sharing is critical between government departments and their local partners – for example, Home Affairs/ Home Office and police – when developing the reintegration process and providing the most suitable rehabilitation programmes. This includes conducting checks and providing available background information from the justice, education and health-care systems. Information sharing can become problematic and more sensitive when there are children and young people involved as their identity needs to be kept out of the media for their own safety and protection.

Information sharing can create long-term partnerships among governing bodies, local authorities and the community. The process for sharing information should be transparent, and the information that is shared should be sufficiently detailed to be relevant and practical. The authorities should acknowledge the risk (and acceptance of risk from the community) and outline the mitigations required to ensure the safety of the community and returnees disengaging from militant/ extremist groups. The risks involved in reintegration are often systemic. Safety precautions need to be put in place for the immediate and the extended community without excluding the returnee. Therefore, the most support will need to be provided to high-risk returnees. If information is not available or shared with the appropriate parties, the risk will be high and the community response will be detrimental to any positive reinforcements.

The reliability of individual reintegration support plans will be based on the initial risk and needs assessment that should be conducted prior to and upon return. Once the information has been shared with the appropriate parties, the compliance component will be initiated. Information about the returnee's family, support networks, current needs and support plan will remain the responsibility of the case manager.

Sharing information is often a challenge, especially with social services, but 'need-to-know' information must be shared with frontline workers such as professionals in health care and education (for children and young people).

Practitioners can play a major part in building a culture of sharing information when it is needed and appropriate, even before they deal with cases of returnees. It is important to consider what the law requires (and this will vary between countries, and even provinces within the same country). However, the law alone does not create a culture of sharing information. People may be more willing to share information if they know how you will be using it. When governments are asking for information from civil society, it is crucial to create an environment of trust by explaining how the information will be used and upholding that commitment. Within government, leaders need to instruct their agencies to share information and to clearly explain why this is important. This may be particularly necessary for law enforcement, prisons and security agencies that do not have a long tradition of sharing information with outsiders.

The information collated needs to be updated regularly, including any changes to the individual's goals and progress. This includes updated risk and needs assessments. If by any chance there is a change to the security threat of the returnee, the central government needs to inform the local authorities and community members, otherwise the risk to the community increases.

In order to protect the personal information of the returnee and their family, only essential elements of information should be shared. A form should be created and signed off by the returnee on the level of information that they are willing to share with the community and with any service providers.

The advantage of the multiagency approach is that it allows all parties involved to keep information updated and shared across each provider. Up-to-date information is vital to the safety of both the returnee and the community.

It is highly recommended that a formal process be implemented in order to share information readily and protect the personal information of the returnee and their family. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) and service level agreement (SLA) between central government, local authorities and any service provider at a local level involved in the reintegration phase should be put in place. Objectives should include:

- Keeping the community safe
- Ensuring the safety of all persons involved in the reintegration process
- Facilitating opportunities where possible including housing, employment, religious guidance, education and training
- Providing ongoing support where possible for both the returnee, their family and community members
- Supporting training and learning components for frontline staff and educational officers

The MOU should detail where appropriate what information needs to be shared and what can be kept between the service provider and the returnee.

The SLA will outline:

- How the services are being provided,
- The training and reporting capabilities needed
- Timeframes for behavioural progression
- Engagement levels
- Improvements needed for the reintegration model and support plan to be applicable and operational.

For example, if the returnee is attending religious counselling and suddenly stops attending, the religious leader should alert the case manager as soon as possible. The same principle would apply if a child stops attending schools or changes their behaviour (e.g., withdrawing from social activities or demonstrating aggression or contempt for their peers), which could indicate a danger to themselves or others.

The SLA will manage the threat and alleviate safety concerns of the individual and others. Information and resources can be shared with the group of people or organisations supporting the returnee. Specialists within the community can review alternative actions and see what is and is not working for the returnee and their family. This will be beneficial for the multiagency perspective as we can track and understand the principles of learning for each goal and activity being conducted. The returnee will be able to take responsibility for their own rehabilitation experiences, and a variety of assessments can be used to track behavioural progress (if any) and improvement. This can include, but is not limited to, self-assessment, engagement levels, independent evaluations from psychologists, goal achievements, mental health assessments and daily progress reports from the case managers and/or teachers, religious guides, coaches and mentors involved.

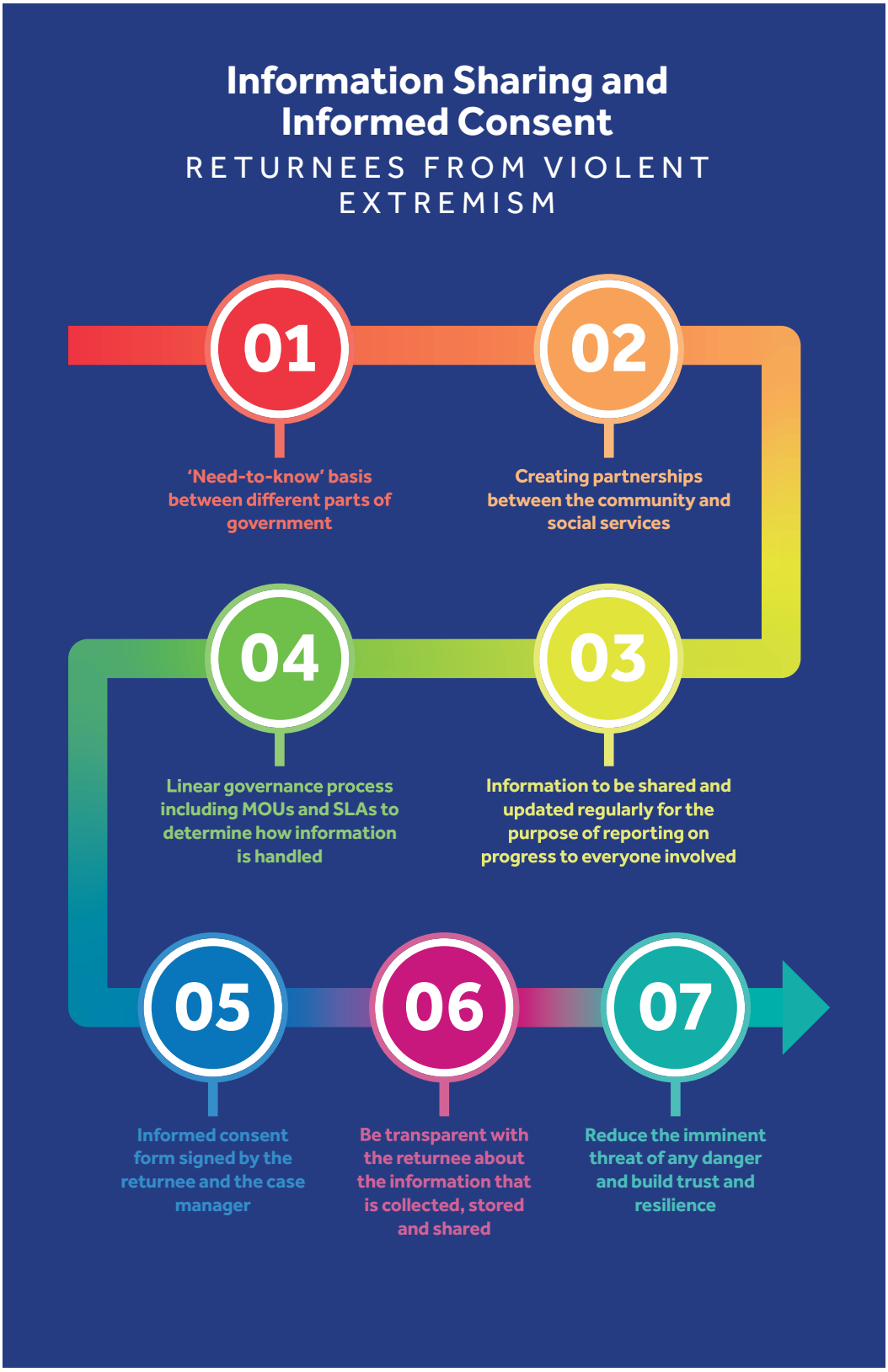
9.2 Informed consent

Informed consent is an agreement between the returnee (and any family member who is also on a reintegration and support plan) and the case manager (and local authorities). It is a voluntary provision that gives permission to service providers involved in the support plan to share and disclose information about the returnee. Informed consent does not mean classified information about the returnee's criminal history will be shared with the community. Rather, the form enables the sharing of information (in confidence) with the appropriate providers involved. The shared information is used for personal development, social inclusion, behavioural measurements and the safety of the returnee and the community.

The information disclosed to service providers will only be on a 'need to know' basis and only be used to identify suitable services that will be included in the support plan created by the case manager, professionals and the returnee. The information collected should be stored securely with safeguards to strengthen and improve success, not diminish it. The information should only be released if there is an imminent threat to safety.

It is important that the returnee understands how, where and when their information is being collected, used and shared. This builds trust and rapport between the parties. It also allows room for the case manager and returnee to discuss and raise any concerns together.

If the person participating in the reintegration support plan is a child or a young person below the age of majority, the parent or guardian should also sign the form so that all parties are in agreement. It is important that transparency concerning any exchange of information is not jeopardised. The objective of the support plan is to build trust and resilience so that conflict is minimised and reintegration is a positive step forward, not backwards.



10. Family and Community Support

Building the capacity of the family, friends and extended social support networks and communities is vitally important for the successful reintegration of individuals. The support that should be provided to families and communities so that they can fulfil their important role in the returnee's reintegration may take different forms, including:

- Involvement in the individual's rehabilitation from an early stage whether in prison, overseas and/or engaged with the extremist organisation
- Training, education or guidance that helps support the understanding of individual family members and the community around reintegration and resilience against violent extremism
- Assistance for the financial, emotional and social adjustments that occur when the individual returns to the family environment
- Providing a single point of contact for families or community members
- Connections to social services and other support providers and resources
- Practical resources such as for daily routines, support in going to school, finding a job, etc.

10.1 Building protective factors

The family and community will need to be supported to provide positive, pro-social reinforcement. Different families and communities will require different types of support. Some will represent protective factors like resourcefulness and close and positive relations to the person in question. Others may well represent risk factors in the form of poor resources and relationships or even a direct negative, ideological influence.

Support can be anything from assisting the family, friends or community members to address their emotions and anxieties, all the way to encouraging and coaching families or community members to actively challenge and deconstruct some of the extremist narratives.

Practitioners can help parents, other family members and friends adjust their communication and interaction with the returnee if the individual is at risk of becoming re-radicalised or re-engaging in violent extremism.

Tips for achieving this include:

- Engage the family and community as early as possible
- Give encouragement and support
- Be clear with boundaries and rules
- Be collaborative and cooperative
- Be honest and transparent about contacts with police and security services
- Identify a network of support that can assist
- Be responsive to cultural needs
- Provide systemic support, addressing all needs affecting the family's overall well-being.

10.2 Fostering long-term commitments

Reintegrating returnees requires a whole-of-society approach that involves long-term commitment and investment. The factors that contributed to an individual joining an extremist organisation to begin with are complex and often persistent. They reflect deep political, social and individual factors that often cannot quickly or easily be resolved or eliminated. While some factors may be mitigated in the short term, such as finding an individual a job, they will remain risks if that individual lives in a community with low employment opportunities, meaning if they lose their job they will find it difficult to get another one.

Whilst governments have a role to play in the provision of resources, funding and access to information, individuals, families and communities need to be engaged in long-term projects, processes and interventions that are sustainable and organic and can outlast and survive government funding cycles and grants.

One way to assist in the development of long-term, community-driven resources is to build networks of peer support within communities. By assisting networks to form and investing a small amount of resources in facilitation, training and support in the early stages, practitioners can gradually shift the ownership and investment of the interventions to the community, while retaining oversight, responsibility and – wherever possible – some financial assistance.

As well as supporting and investing in local individuals and community groups, there are many small non-government organisations and civil society groups that can be supported to

provide locally driven, long-term social enterprise interventions and services. Many organisations, groups and services have already established credibility, understanding and experience in this space, and these organisations should be supported to manage governance and finances so they can provide grass-roots service delivery and meet government administration requirements.

CASE STUDY

Vilvoorde Family Discussion Groups (Belgium)

In 2014, the Mayor of Vilvoorde instituted a countering violent extremism (CVE) programme to respond to the high number of individuals leaving the town to join violent extremist groups in Syria. As part of a multi-modal approach, it set up a discussion group for family members. The city provides the discussion group with a place to meet and the facilities it needs. The rest of the group's needs are supplied by the families themselves. It is family-driven, locally run and sustained by the participants themselves.

11. Training Objectives

11.1 Learning and development

Learning and development should be led by those who are perceived as legitimate and trustworthy. Training can be locally driven either from non-government organisations, service providers and/or practitioners. Governments can have an indirect role in the delivery (funding and governance). However, to foster ongoing and positive learning, training should be conducted by those who are front-facing to the community.

Learning and development (for all parties involved) is a crucial component for community integration, developing empathetic skills, life skills, critical thinking and professional judgement tools. This helps community leaders (formal and informal) and frontline workers to have a positive influence on the returnees and their families by providing them the most suitable set of tools and resources available for each group.

The learning plans should include:

- Design and/or delivery of internal (professional training for workers) or external (community-based) events where there are clear learning outcomes based on best practice. These can include conferences, workshops, online learning modules and webinars.
- Robust outcomes – clear capabilities with practical steps to build skills. There should be a focus on learning from others and learning on the job and a mix of learning events (conferences, online etc.).
- Expert specialists – consulting with other professionals who have been involved in reintegration interventions and other returnees and their families.

Creating a training charter will ensure learning plans are effective. The charter should consider:

- Risk assessments with violent extremists
- Mental health assessments
- Returnees' exposure to violence and trauma
- Identifying and understanding what to look for in anti-social behaviour (e.g., indicators of relapsing into radicalisation)
- Learning resources for teachers, counsellors and youth workers
- Classifications and knowledge building of returnees and those exposed to radicalisation in conflict zones
- Training on unconscious bias and discriminatory views
- Specialised training (frontline staff) for women returning to the community
- Specialised training (frontline staff) for children returning to the community
- Case management training – how to create targeted and tailored support plans (customised interventions based on the needs and risk assessments by community and health professionals)
- Security and safety measures for the community, the workers and the returnee and their family

The charter should be developed at a grass-roots level and the training should be led by and for the community. This approach will encourage people to talk openly and engage with their support network and workers. Open referrals between service providers will play a central role as the charter can direct what pathways or training will be needed to increase knowledge, experience and exposure regarding intervention and rehabilitation.

How training is delivered will affect how the community and frontline staff respond to its value and intent. This is why training should be tiered into four categories:

1. Basic training – what is extremism, indicators of radicalisation, what is intervention, values and ethics, cultural understanding, bias and discrimination, religious fundamentals, support networks available, public safety, preventative awareness, process and guidelines

2. Community training – available to the public/ members of the community (family, friends, neighbours, parents, business owners, locals)

3. Frontline training – working directly with returnees and their families (case managers, social workers, religious leaders, youth workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, practitioners, doctors, teachers, principals, counsellors, education officers, police officers)

4. Advanced training - in-depth risk and needs assessments, countering violent extremism, tailored interventions, trauma/ violence counselling, training of children, adolescent and young people, behavioural disengagement, victim impacts, cognitive development, psychosocial – grief counselling, security classifications of terrorists and returnees and strategic policy

11.2 Frontline staff training and capability building

Training for frontline and operational staff should be mandated across the board. This not only enables the team to be equipped with the necessary tools but also helps them to make informed decisions for the individuals and the community:

- Knowing how to reintegrate people who have been exposed to trauma and who feel like they have no home or a place of belonging is vital when developing support plans.
- Having partnerships in the community to assist with employment, education, housing, substance abuse counselling, mentoring and victim support can reduce recidivism or relapsing.
- Understanding the risks, threats and identified concerns raised by specialists in the needs assessment can contextualise an individual's reintegration support plan.
- Utilising expertise and building foundations to establish rapport and trust is indispensable to positive outcomes.
- Having experienced and knowledgeable frontline staff opens up perspectives and makes for better support and reintegration plans.

Customised and relevant training for frontline staff will indirectly build connection and trust due to the level of practices and guidance offered. Frontline workers play a wide-ranging role within the community and they formulate and foster relationships for the returnee. They are not solely focused on placing individuals back into the community; rather, they provide long-term support for community and self-based values, developing capabilities and engaging and motivating the individuals to be employable and marketable.

With the appropriate practitioners, academics and specialists, 'training of trainer' programmes can be developed and a learning and development committee for returnees and their families can be set up to share best practice methods linked to evidence-based learning and experience. Leveraging relationships from different sectors such as the government, non-government organisations, community-led organisations, public and private service providers and medical professionals will develop deliverables and skillsets. This includes terminology, behaviours, maintaining and developing social cohesion, reporting, analysis and research across the cadre of professionals.

In order to deliver expertise across the board, training will need to be delivered consistently and regularly. This is particularly important for specific needs training and capability building for the case managers involved. An overall capability appraisal should be conducted when a new member begins work in order to provide fit-for-purpose training and bridge any knowledge gaps to ensure sustainability and cooperation between parties.

11.3 Community training and resilience

Civil society has an important role to play, from lowering barriers and re-humanising a complex situation to creating opportunities and second chances to assist the returnee and their family. By introducing training to the community, you create an entry point of acceptance and the first step to building resilience.

Programmes, workshops and courses aimed at countering violent extremism, de-radicalisation and counterterrorism are often mistrusted in the mistaken belief that they have an alternative agenda. This is often connected to suspicion of surveillance from and secrecy between government bodies and law enforcement. Training and knowledge awareness programmes will build community buy-in, minimise risks and threats to those returning and create understanding of the returnee's personal identity and their story.

Community training opens up people's awareness of situations otherwise unknown to them, such as other religious beliefs and types of

worship. Those who not understand or have no knowledge of different religious practices can make damaging assumptions. For example, mosques do not breed terrorists but individuals are usually groomed in small groups or online. A lack of understanding can cause tension and lead people to be unforgiving.

The appropriate awareness training can provide members of the community with guidance from experienced leaders in that field. Having a local strategy based in various locations around the community can bridge the knowledge gap and build up a comprehensive foundation based on facts, not misconceptions. By utilising this style of training, you can create partnerships and alliances between the community and religious centres including their leaders.

Within the local strategy for community training and resilient uplift, partnerships should also be developed between local support services including outreach programmes, women's groups and youth groups. The next step is to reach out to people who are involved in local activities, whether sporting coaches, dance teachers, music tutors, retail workers, storekeepers, university students, mothers or fathers. These parties can form protective factors and build awareness and resilience as everyone is working together and not against one another.

If a training charter is established, there will be a multifaceted approach where central government will have a minor role. This can include, for example, digital learning courses available online, access to bite-sized learning with 30-minute webinars on reintegration, rehabilitation, vulnerabilities, mental health and the importance of safety and protection for all parties.

There will also be a blended learning approach including face-to-face workshops and prevention and intervention programmes on local risks and the process you need to follow if there is an incident. These should be followed up by the provision of guidelines, fact sheets and online learning materials.

11.4 Training and resourcing for schools

When a child or young person returns from conflict (whether they were born overseas or not), a phased approach should be used to successfully reintegrate them back into mainstream schooling. This should be based on the risk and needs assessment that was conducted at the beginning of the child's return.

Depending on the circumstances of the child and their family's return, parents may choose to change the child's name to deter media attention from the community and the school.

Factors such as cognitive and intelligence testing and whether the child has attended school previously will determine what grade they will be entered into. There are cases where the child has been held back a year based on their intellectual and reasoning abilities.

With a phased approach, a resource toolkit and training will need to be available at all times for teachers, principals, staff members and counsellors. The role of training is to bridge any institutional gaps and prevent the child/young person and their family being blamed.

In some countries, such as the United Kingdom, a dedicated education officer is allocated to the child or young person. Their role is to assist with the transition and facilitate social cohesion and building strong networks within the school community. In some contexts, it will not be possible to provide a dedicated support officer, but it may be possible to have someone who is available by phone to give the teacher suggestions.

Forming a social inclusion panel can establish direct lines of communication with the school. The panel can include the school, parents and representatives from civil society and government bodies. They can discuss safeguarding measures and share advice based on the unique circumstances of the returnee.

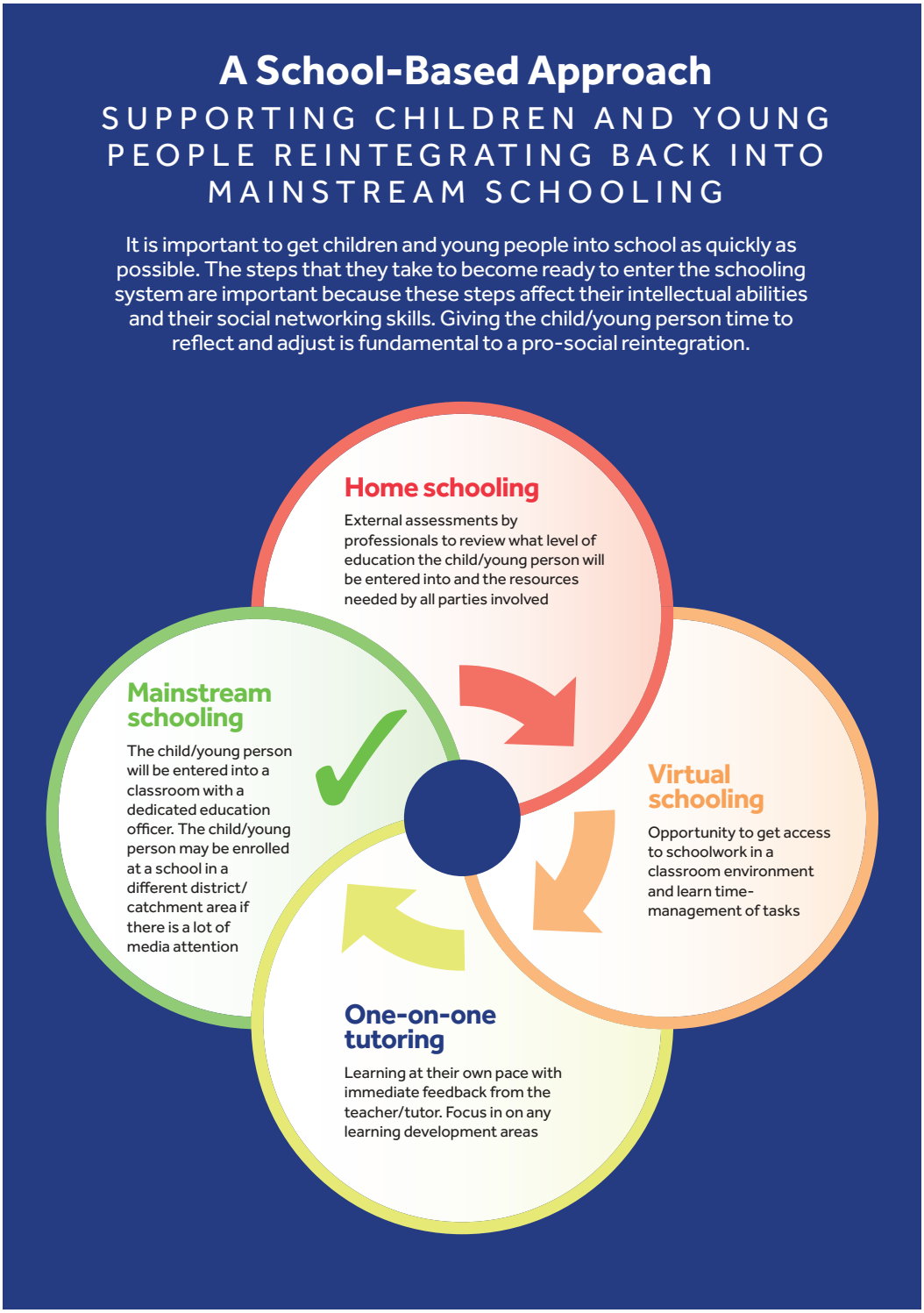
Mentoring programmes need to be established, and all students can also benefit from training workshops on the value and importance of inclusion. No child should be excluded from any school-based activity and should be represented within the school and the community.

With the appropriate and current training methods, staff within the schooling systems can gain the knowledge and skillset to identify problems and issues within the classroom. They will also have the awareness to notice behavioural issues that could be occurring within the home or community. The Safe Spaces Initiative paper reported that training and educating teachers, psychologists and other school and university staff had prevented 120 violent/ extremists' incidents over the previous decade.[7] Building capabilities and raising the

7 Muslim Public Affairs Council (2016) 'Safe Spaces: An Updated Toolkit for Empowering Communities and Addressing Ideological Violence'. Washington, DC: MPAC, p. 9. https://www.mpac.org/safespaces/files/MPAC-Safe-Spaces.pdf

school system's awareness levels will increase understanding of some of the impacts of the broader community and the messages children and young people receive.

Rather than using punishment as a method of discipline when children and young people ask questions on religious and ideological beliefs, they can be educated and feel safe to ask those questions. The classroom should enhance curiosity without children or young people feeling marginalised, excluded and even punished for having those discussions.



12. Recommendations

This Commonwealth Secretariat Guide for Proactive Reintegration makes 25 recommendations for managing the reintegration of violent extremists and their families. These recommendations relate to seven areas:

- Preparation (4 recommendations)
- Assessment (3 recommendations)
- Developing networks (4 recommendations)
- Planning (5 recommendations)
- Monitoring and review (2 recommendations)
- Family and community support (3 recommendations)
- Training (4 recommendations).

ASSESSMENT

01

Risk and needs assessment

Assessments should always be used in context. Focus on strengths as well as risks. Multi-disciplinary – include social workers, psychologists, religious/ideological experts, and law enforcement. Informs the baseline assessment of risk and the interventions required to meet needs.

02

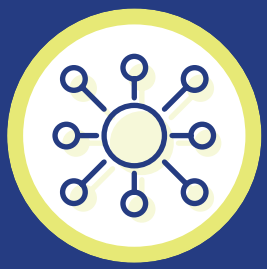
Psychosocial assessments

Conduct over a period of time through observing relationships, connections and interactions with family, friends and the community. Include macro-, meso- and micro- level factors in the assessment. Assess the family, social networks and the community for risks and opportunities.

03

Assessment tools

Use structured tools and experienced practitioners to assess specific violent extremist risk and consider all levels of risk and strengths. Develop individual goals that are specific to violent extremist risk.



DEVELOPING NETWORKS

01

Psychological safety

This is a human need. To establish rapport and trust, you need to feel safe and empowered. This opens up communication channels and opportunities for social inclusion. If the community is hostile, protection and buy-in are compromised.

02

Motivational and engagement needs

Each individual is different with a different set of needs. Use individualised and tailored approaches based on the context of the returnee's environment. Mentoring and coaching are effective to motivate and engage.

03

Building trust

Trust is crucial to successful reintegration. Acknowledge the individual's story and show respect. Remain non-judgmental and open-minded. This will build credibility and a positive relationship.

04

Partnerships (community and government)

Form partnerships in a variety of areas, including the community and local and central government organisations. All parties contribute to a common goal of strengthening networks, building resilience and forming allies. It is an integrated model for delivering services.

PLANNING

01

Support plans

Build the support plan together with the case manager, the returnee and the family. Link the plan directly to the risk and needs assessments. Involve the partners and networks supporting the reintegration process. Use SMART goals. Consult specialists where required to increase engagement and to provide coping strategies.

02

Transitioning

Slow and incremental change is most successful. Transitioning should include consideration of changes across six domains: identity, ideology, action orientation and disillusion.

03

Adult reintegration

Utilise different strategies based on the support plan and the returnee's goals. Be guided by what the returnee needs and wants. Try to avoid negative gossip or media attention. Create personal networks to build self-worth and a feeling of belonging. Channel their passions and beliefs into a legitimate skillset.

04

Child and young person reintegration

Utilise special case managers and people with expertise in dealing with young people. The impact of trauma and exposure to violence can heavily influence their support plans and reintegration into the community and into education. Conduct assessments of physical health as well as cognitive assessments. Review attachment styles and any development delays prior to contacting any rehabilitation services.

05

Community cohesion

Engagement and communication with communities is a priority and the first step prior to reintegrating any returnee and their family members. Initiate community healing to form acceptance and enable local services to assist in the support plans. Use the community's knowledge and expertise. This will build rapport and decrease the negative stigma attached to the returnee.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

01

Information sharing and compliance

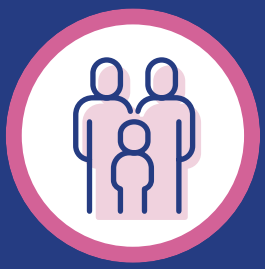
It is crucial to share information with everyone that is involved. Be transparent and accurate. The information that is provided should be valid because it will be used to form and collate assessments, goals and support plans. Information needs to be continually reviewed. Even though it is important to share information, information should only be shared with people who need to know, to protect the returnees.

Create service level agreements and memoranda of understanding so that everyone is clear about their responsibilities and everyone is protected.

02

Informed consent

An agreement between all the parties needs to be written and signed. The agreement should be disclosed to all the service providers. Tell the returnee and their family how information about them will be collected, stored and who it will be shared with. There must be transparency and trust, otherwise the returnee's engagement and participation will be affected.



FAMILY & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

01

Building protective factors

Each person and each family is unique, with their own individual experiences, values and beliefs. Support will come in different forms. Ensure boundaries are set, but be encouraging. Be responsive and provide systemic care when needed. Ensure that there is a single point-of-contact with a family member t counter negative connotations.

02

Obstacles and barriers

If members of the returnee's family hold extremist beliefs, it can hinder a successful reintegration. Exercise diligence and review the risk assessments on family and protective factors. Changing the returnee's housing situation may be the most appropriate option.

03

Fostering long-term commitments

Reintegration is a long-term goal. It will not happen quickly. It requires ongoing commitment and investment. Development of organic, community-led support and interventions and services will have the most longevity and success.

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

01

Learning and development

Provide learning and development opportunities across all platforms to build a knowledgeable and capable support team that will deliver the best ongoing support and most suitable reintegration plans.

02

Frontline staff training and building capabilities

Build knowledge on what role frontline staff can play in reintegrating returnees by designing relevant and current training for all staff involved. Deliver a range of training from general awareness and foundation training to expert training. Include blended learning options.

03

Community training and resilience

Community training with a local strategy will open doors for empathy and understanding. Build awareness to work with and not against one another to increase community resilience and positive culture.

04

Training and resourcing for schools

Ensure that there is a phased approach to reintegrating children and young people back into mainstream schooling. Implement safeguards and allocate specific education support officers where that is possible. Provide bespoke training resources to raise awareness and skills among teachers, school principals and staff.

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