



Evaluating Countering Violent Extremism Programs: Current Practices, Challenges, and a Means Forward

The evaluation of countering violent extremism (CVE) programs gives policymakers valuable insight about the effectiveness of programming, however, only the most rigorous research designs enable practitioners to test their programs reliably, but these are often the most challenging and costly research designs to implement.

There are multiple reasons why individuals and groups resort to terrorism, it is difficult for practitioners to both design CVE programming that will reduce the threat and choose outcome measures to evaluate.

Practitioners need to take advantage of recent advances in research on the radicalization process in which researchers started to identify common pathways toward the use of terrorism. CVE practitioners and policy makers can use this information to design preventive CVE programming and to develop outcome measures to analyze.

Summary

THE EMERGENCE OF CVE PROGRAMS

Terrorism is a rare tactic used by individuals and groups to achieve political, ideological, religious, social, or economic objectives. Although only a small percentage of individuals resort to the tactic, a single attack can cause immense damage. Consequently, authorities have taken action both at home and abroad to reduce the threat of terrorism. Because governments regard terrorism as a security concern, state security apparatuses -- such as military, intelligence and law enforcement agencies -- are usually the primary actors engaging in counterterrorism measures.

However, the magnitude of the 9/11 attacks and subsequent large-scale attacks prompted authorities to seek additional methods, beyond the traditional "hard" measures, to counter terrorism. Instead of relying solely on military raids and waiting for individuals to "cross the line" and commit a crime to be able to arrest them, governments sought to include "soft" measures into the counterterrorism toolkit to create a more comprehensive counterterrorism strategy.

What emerged was a set of policies and programs that seek to reduce

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ABOUT CGP

The Center for Global Policy (CGP) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. CGP is the first independent, non-partisan American think tank working exclusively on issues at the intersection of U.S. foreign policy and the geopolitics of Muslim-majority countries. We aim to enhance U.S. security and global stability by empowering our foreign policy decisionmakers with pragmatic recommendations grounded in informed and nuanced analysis.

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terrorism by using¹ non-punitive measures, known largely as Countering Violent Extremism, or CVE, efforts. CVE programming seeks to reduce terrorism by addressing violent extremism, defined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as the act of “encouraging, condoning, justifying, or supporting the commission of a violent act to achieve political, ideological, religious, social, or economic goals.”² Whereas terrorism refers to the actual act of violence, violent extremism refers to an ideology that accepts and justifies the act of violence.

Four general components are associated with CVE: prevention, intervention, de-radicalization, and disengagement efforts. Prevention and intervention programs are designed for individuals who have not committed crimes. De-radicalization and disengagement programs, on the other hand, are designed for individuals who have committed crimes. Altogether, CVE programming provides authorities with multiple options to potentially reduce the threat of terrorism.

Countries around the globe have embraced the concepts behind CVE; however, many continue to wonder if the CVE programs are effective. Scholars and practitioners have struggled to answer this question since the early years of CVE and have made little progress. Although there are multiple evaluation frameworks for practitioners to use, to date, few rigorous evaluation studies exist that can link a CVE program with decreasing the threat of terrorism.³

Why is this the case? What are CVE practitioners currently doing to evaluate their programming, and

can evaluations be improved? This policy brief answers these questions and suggests a more holistic evaluation approach for future CVE evaluation efforts.

BASIC COMPONENTS OF CVE EVALUATIONS

Comprehensive evaluations can provide policymakers with valuable information regarding the strengths and weaknesses of programs and assist policymakers with funding decisions. However, some research designs yield more reliable and informative findings than others.

There are six key components to any evaluation: the research objective, research subject(s), research design, research method, measures/data, and the analysis. Evaluations consist of an analysis of program outputs, outcomes, or both. Output assessments, also referred to as “process” assessments, provide a general descriptive assessment of the program, such as the number of events associated with the program or number of program participants. Outcome evaluations study the observed changes in the target population, behavioral or otherwise, that emerge due to the program. Outcome evaluations can focus on either the direct effects of the program on the participants or the indirect effects of the program on non-participants.⁴ Thus, the research subjects of an evaluation can include both program participants and non-participants.

Several research design models are available for CVE practitioners to use in evaluating their programs. These models range in complexity and the degree to which practitioners can claim causality. The most basic research designs are descriptive in

nature and simply record program output metrics. Researchers are unable to determine the effectiveness of their programs using this research design.

Practitioners who seek to evaluate program outcomes can choose from a variety of different research design options. The most common include post-program evaluations, pre- and post-program evaluations, quasi-experimental designs, and experimental designs. Post-program evaluations usually involve data collection at one point in time to observe any retrospective changes in the target population of interest. Pre- and post-program research designs go a step further and evaluate research subjects both before the program started and after to observe any changes.

Although researchers are able to observe outcomes using these designs, it is not possible to determine the effectiveness of the programs. These research designs do not enable researchers to distinguish between the effects of the program and other factors that may also influence the observed changes in the research subjects.

Quasi-experimental and experimental designs are the most advanced. These designs allow researchers to determine whether a program directly influenced an observed change. Quasi-experimental research designs compare pre- and post-program evaluations of individuals who participated in the program to those that did not. Since participants choose whether or not to participate in quasi-experimental designs, there are still concerns that another factor may explain the observed changes,

but these concerns are minor compared to the previous research designs.

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In experimental designs, researchers randomly assign individuals either to participate in the program or not to participate. Randomization eliminates bias that can occur from confounding factors when comparing changes in two groups. Because of this, researchers can then evaluate the changes in the two groups both before and after a program to determine program effectiveness without the possibility that another confounding factor is driving the results of the analysis. The table below outlines the five common types of research designs for program evaluations discussed above.

In all five options, practitioners can use different methods to collect data, measures of change, or output metrics. For data collection, practitioners can conduct interviews, surveys, or focus groups to name a few options. Practitioners can also rely on a variety of ways to measure the outcomes or changes of interest and output metrics. The outcome measures vary based on the content of a program. Practitioners may want to measure changes in behavior and attitude or structural changes such as a participant’s employment status.

However, the usefulness of the outcome measures in determining program effectiveness is contingent on both the methods used to collect data and the research design of the

| TYPE OF RESEARCH DESIGN | METRICS OF ANALYSIS | ABILITY TO CLAIM CAUSALITY | CONCERNS OF BIAS INFLUENCING RESULTS |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH DESIGN | Output metrics | No | Major |
| POST-PROGRAM RESEARCH DESIGN | Outcome metrics | No | Major |
| PRE AND POST-PROGRAM RESEARCH DESIGN | Outcome metrics | No | Major |
| QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH DESIGN | Outcome metrics | Yes | Minor |
| EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH DESIGN | Outcomes metrics | Yes | None |

evaluation. For output assessments, CVE scholars commonly use metrics such as recording the number of participants or the rate of recidivism.

CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS OF CVE EVALUATION RESEARCH

Similar to all social science research, CVE evaluations are prone to limitations and challenges in understanding the totality of results. Six key challenges hinder CVE evaluation research. The first, and most basic, challenge is one objective of CVE programs: the end of terrorism in all of its manifestations. Some have argued that terrorism is a strategic tactic, and as such, it will never be eliminated from warfare. This means that CVE programs can only attempt to reduce terrorism while acknowledging the impossible task of eliminating the tactic.

Second, the radicalization process is complex; it involves social, economic, psychological, political, ideological, and environmental influences. We know from various studies that individuals radicalize and turn to violent extremism⁵ for a multitude of reasons. Simply put, there is no single path toward violent extremism. This complexity makes it difficult for CVE practitioners to link their program's focus with reducing terrorism.

Third, as with all social science research, it is difficult to claim absolute causality -- that is, the intended effect of X on Y. As outlined above, only certain research designs enable an evaluator to claim that a program caused an observed change in a target population. Often, it may be another factor rather than the program itself that caused the change.

Fourth, CVE programs seek to achieve long-term objectives. For instance, one objective of a CVE intervention program is to prevent individuals from resorting to violence not just in the short-term, but also years down the road --similar to disengagement programs where one objective is to ensure individuals remain disengaged from violent groups. The challenge is that longitudinal evaluation studies are costly and difficult to implement. It is simply easier for researchers to disregard the long-term effects of programs and only evaluate the short term.

Fifth, accessibility to the data needed to evaluate CVE programming and the results of prior evaluations is limited. Personal experience has shown it is difficult to obtain data on program evaluations conducted by government entities. Moreover, privacy concerns limit the amount of information that is releasable to researchers and the information that practitioners can obtain concerning their clients.⁶

Sixth, either a CVE practitioner or external evaluator needs to be trained in research methodology to effectively carry out a CVE evaluation and analyze the results. Although a trained external evaluator is ideal and increases the credibility of the evaluation by eliminating conflicts of interest, external evaluations are costly. Moreover, while not impossible to acquire, competency in research methodology takes time and resources. Thus, resource constraints that reduce the possibility for external review and limited knowledge in research methodologies among CVE practitioners pose major challenges for CVE evaluations.

With these questions in mind, how can CVE practitioners overcome the challenges of evaluating the impact of CVE programs, and to what extent are they succeeding?

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NOTABLE EXISTING MODELS WITH WIDESPREAD APPLICABILITY

Several toolkits exist to help CVE practitioners potentially overcome some of the challenges outlined above. Notably, three of these toolkits have the potential for widespread applicability in the CVE field.⁷ The first is the “Violent Extremism Risk Assessment-2” (VERA 2) model.⁸ Developed by renowned researchers D. Elaine Pressman, Thomas Rinne, Nils Duits, and John Flockton, this risk assessment model provides a list of empirically backed factors for practitioners to conduct an initial risk assessment of an individual through direct engagement with the individual.

The model is designed to identify the most important risk factors, which then can help practitioners develop a tailored program for an individual. Rather than using additive scores to assess risk, the model calls for a structured professional judgement analytical approach, wherein a trained professional uses the framework to make an informed judgement about an individual’s risk to society. The framework uses risk indicators that fall within three critical categories: beliefs, attitudes, and ideology; contextual features and intention to act; and historical background and capacity. CVE practitioners can then use this model as a guide to evaluate whether or

not a program directly resulted in changes in an individual's risk assessment.

Prominent CVE researchers Michael Williams, John Horgan, and William Evans also developed a suite of measures that can be used to assess CVE programs.⁹ In their evaluation of a U.S. CVE program, the Montgomery County Model, the authors provide 99 indicators that practitioners or researchers can incorporate into a survey-based research design. The measures are intended to supplement any program-specific measures designed to evaluate the programming. The advantage of a suite of measures is that any practitioner can use this suite and then compare the results of their program evaluation with other evaluations that used the same suite.

through the multiple stages of an evaluation. In a checklist format, the toolkit provides practitioners with a crash course on the fundamental components of a research design and guides practitioners through the process of determining program objectives, choosing a research design, and developing outcome measures.

Rather than simply listing the various possible research designs that practitioners can use, the toolkit includes an interactive element. Practitioners answer questions on worksheets to help them identify key program components, such as their program's objectives and target populations. The answers to these questions are then used to help practitioners identify what research design is best for their CVE program. The toolkit also gives practitioners worksheets to help them analyze the results of the evaluation and ultimately improve their CVE programs. For practitioners with little background in research methodology, this toolkit serves as a valuable "go-to guide."

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However, as will be demonstrated in the discussion of current evaluation practices among CVE practitioners, there is not a consensus among academics or practitioners on what measures to include in an evaluation. Moreover, the relationship between the measures and an individual's propensity to engage in violent extremism is not scientifically proven with this particular suite.

The two models described above give practitioners detailed outcome measures; the last model gives practitioners information on the wide range of research designs available for CVE evaluations.¹⁰ The RAND CVE Toolkit walks practitioners

CURRENT EVALUATION PRACTICES AMONG U.S. CVE PRACTITIONERS

A survey of CVE practitioners in the United States reveals the evaluation experiences among nine organizations: one state program and eight local programs. The organizations include both recipients and non-recipients of the 2016 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) CVE Grant. Most of the programs are multi-faceted, including two or more CVE components: training/education, prevention, intervention, de-radicalization, disengagement, and counter-narratives. For confidentiality

concerns, program names are excluded from the survey results; numbers are assigned to the different programs to avoid confusion.

The recipients of the DHS CVE Grant proposed programs fall into one of five categories: developing resilience, challenging the narrative, training and engagement, managing intervention activities, and building capacity. Although grantees are bound to these categories, all CVE programs can be evaluated in some way regardless of their classification. As part of the terms and conditions of the DHS grant, recipients are required to provide performance data on a quarterly basis to DHS. In the grant application, DHS also encouraged applicants to include a description of the methodology for measuring program progress and success. However, DHS did not provide further guidance on how to conduct formal evaluations, which opens the possibility for practitioners to use research designs that cannot properly evaluate program effectiveness.

Out of the nine programs included in the survey, only one -- Program 1 -- had been previously evaluated. This externally funded evaluation, conducted by a third party, utilized a quasi-experimental research design to analyze the short-term objectives of the program. For the other programs, the lack of evaluations is primarily due to the state of current implementation efforts. Most of these programs have not been fully implemented, partly due to funding delays from the 2016 CVE Grant. However, all of the programs plan to conduct evaluations.

Practitioners' knowledge regarding what will be included in future

evaluations varies. Many practitioners stated that the research designs are still being developed, but the general structures of the designs were known. All of the organizations plan to incorporate output analysis within their evaluation studies. The organization managing Program 2, was planning to primarily use a post-program analysis, and five organizations managing Programs 3-7 were planning to use a pre- and post-program analysis. Only one organization, managing Program 8, planned to use a quasi-experimental research design, which will be conducted by a third party.

Practitioners will use a variety of research methods to collect data for their evaluations. Programs 2 and 5 will rely on surveys, Program 6 on interviews, and Program 9 on observational analysis. Programs 7 and 8 will use multiple data collection methods including surveys and interviews. Even though all of the programs include both short and long-term objectives, as seen in past evaluation studies, all but three of the proposed evaluation studies -- Programs 6, 7, and 8 -- will only collect data regarding short-term objectives. However, the proposed research designs for two of these studies -- Programs 6 and 7 -- will prevent the practitioners from being able to make causal claims about their programming.

Unsurprisingly, since program outputs are relatively easy to capture, all of the organizations seek to record output statistics within their evaluations. Among the most popular output data are participation rates and the recorded number of events. Outcome measures, however, are more difficult to choose, given the lack of agreement among scholars

on the subject. Thus, it is unsurprising that the majority of organizations did not know what outcome measures will be included in the evaluation.

However, some organizations did report their intended outcome measures. For example, an evaluation of Program 2 -- which seeks to undermine extremist narratives by empowering faith leaders to implement cross-faith peacemaking actions -- will observe changes in knowledge of violent extremism and connectivity among faith leaders. Another program, Program 5, seeks to both train law enforcement and community leaders on the indicators of violent extremism and build connections between law enforcement and the community. That program will use an evaluation to observe multiple changes within their target populations, including changes in the community's perception of law enforcement, trainees' perceptions of violent extremism, and changes in the public's behavior in reporting indicators of violent extremism.

CURRENT EVALUATION PRACTICES OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

CVE programming is part of several countries' counterterrorism strategies, so evaluating CVE programs is of interest abroad as well. The United Kingdom, a first mover CVE country, has conducted evaluations of its CVE programming, known as Prevent, since at least 2008. That year, the U.K. government commissioned a national evaluation measure for Prevent programming. The indicator, named National Indicator 35, set specific targets for local practitioners to meet in order to obtain funding from the government. According to some researchers,

the effectiveness of Prevent programming was determined by a set of four indicators: community engagement; knowledge and understanding of violent extremism; development of a Prevent action plan; and effective oversight, implementation, and evaluation of the action plan.¹¹ However, the Prevent strategy was also limited because the evaluations were a product of self-assessment by CVE practitioners instead of the result of an external monitoring process. Since then, evaluation work of Prevent programming has continued, but neither the results nor methodologies are available to the public.

Elsewhere in Europe, monitoring and evaluation also remains a top priority. Similar to the RAND CVE Toolkit, IMPACT Europe created a toolkit to provide practitioners with guidance on evaluating CVE.¹² More comprehensive than RAND's, IMPACT Europe's toolkit includes a knowledge database of radicalization factors, detailed information on the types of evaluation designs, and a way for practitioners to share their evaluation results with others. Practitioners are able to filter through submitted evaluations to learn more about the results of other programs or obtain examples of a research design.

For example, if a practitioner wants to incorporate a focus group into a research design, the practitioner can filter the submitted evaluations by "focus group" and the search will return 39 submitted evaluations. Practitioners can learn information such as the evaluation method and the type of evidence used in an evaluation. However, CVE practitioners in Europe face

evaluation problems similar to those facing practitioners in the United States. One disengagement program in Sweden, known as EXIT Sweden, (co-sponsored by the Ministry of Interior) has experienced monitoring and evaluation difficulties due to data limitations. Under the Swedish Personal Data Act, it is not possible for the organization to store detailed and sensitive data such as a client's address or even full name. Clients are only referred to by first name, birth year, and the country in which they reside.

This information is not enough to monitor the clients' progress after completing the program.¹³ This is not to say that the program has not been evaluated in some way, or that evaluation is not a priority. As mentioned by prominent researcher and director of EXIT Sweden, Robert Orell, "Not all CVE programs are going to be successful, so we need to rethink how to evaluate success and try to test what is effective and what is not."¹⁴

Focusing outside of Europe, the network called Researching Solutions to Violent Extremism, or RESOLVE, is composed of experts and organizations who collaborate and support local research that seeks to understand the drivers of violent extremism.¹⁵ The network, sponsored by the State Department, U.S. Institute of Peace, and U.S. Agency for International Development, focuses its efforts in six regional areas: the Balkans and Caucasus, Horn of Africa, Middle East and the Levant, North Africa and the Sahel, South and Central Asia, and Southeast Asia. In addition to sponsoring research projects, the network enables scholars to share their research findings.

A WAY FORWARD

Given the limitations and challenges associated with evaluating CVE programming, both non-governmental organizations and government institutions can benefit from more research, sharing results and the exploration of methods that can give greater -- and more unbiased -- details on outcomes.

The complexities of terrorism and the radicalization process complicate practitioners' abilities to link the outcomes of their programs with reducing terrorism. This is particularly true for preventive programming. However, research on the radicalization process is changing from concentrating only on indicators of radicalization to identifying common pathways to radicalization.¹⁶

"Given the limitations and challenges associated with evaluating CVE programming, both [NGOs] and government institutions can benefit from more research, sharing results and the exploration of methods that can give greater -- and more unbiased -- details on outcome."

Even though the study of radicalization indicators does not yield predictive utility for practitioners to identify at-risk individuals from a random group of people,¹⁷ practitioners can still take advantage of the study of common pathways to design preventive programs to address these pathways. This concentrated approach will mean that preventive programming will not prevent everyone from turning to terrorism, but then in general, preventive programming is unlikely to prevent all acts of terrorism. The approach would yield advantages for evaluation purposes. Concentrated programming that addresses the most common pathways will make it easier for practitioners to link

their program outcomes with reducing terrorism.

Unlike preventive programming, other types of programs -- interventions, de-radicalization and disengagement -- should be individualized. As others have argued, these programs are better suited to offer tailored programming to address the different needs of individual clients.¹⁸ Since these programs are individualized, practitioners are able to determine the precise reasons why an individual has chosen to either support or engage in terrorism. This is important for evaluation research. Once the reasons for radicalization emerge during the initial assessment, practitioners are then able to create the corresponding outcome measures to test for individual-level changes as a result of the program.

considered joining ISIS; however, a close friend encouraged the client to participate in the intervention program.

Based on this information, the practitioner can create both an intervention program to meet the client's needs and choose a third party to evaluate the program's efforts. In this hypothetical situation, the program would be designed for a specific type of individual -- namely an individual who suffered from personal trauma, and was unemployed and a recent Muslim convert with contact with a recruiter. The evaluation would then include outcome measures related to these issues.

The way evaluation results are shared among scholars and practitioners should then reflect the nature of the evaluations. Instead of a website with recorded evaluation data for program-wide success rates, a website is needed to allow visitors to understand the individualized nature and success rates for CVE programming. Since it is not unreasonable to expect individuals to share similarities, this evaluation network sharing approach would allow a practitioner to go to a website and input the suspected reasons for using or supporting terrorism, along with other factors, to find other programs that served a similar client and the evaluation results of those efforts.

Not only will practitioners be able to understand what others are doing when faced with a similar client, but this type of evaluation sharing at the individualized level will allow practitioners and researchers to conduct cross-program comparisons that are more reliable and accurate.

“Concentrated programming that addresses the most common pathways will make it easier for practitioners to link their program outcomes with reducing terrorism.”

Take, for example, a hypothetical situation: A client agrees to participate in an intervention program, and a CVE practitioner conducts an initial assessment of the client. Through direct conversation with the client, the practitioner learns that after a traumatic personal event and the loss of a job the client turned to religion for guidance and became a Muslim convert. To learn more about the religion, the client sought information online and came across a chatroom. In the chatroom, the client met an ISIS recruiter and became familiarized with ISIS's interpretation of Islam. After conversations over several months, the recruiter offered the client a job and new life abroad fighting for ISIS. The client

A practitioner will be able to make an educated decision to either replicate the program or change slightly the content of the program. The field will then be able to move beyond determining what programs, if any, are successful in meeting program objectives to being able to determine the effectiveness of variations in program content addressing similar client needs.

Finally, CVE practitioners should strive to use external evaluators for program evaluations. External evaluation helps eliminate concerns of conflicts of interest and increases the credibility of evaluation results. Two major challenges preventing this from happening include financial limitations and the difficulty in finding external evaluators. Even though policymakers need to continue to designate additional funds for program evaluation, practitioners can be proactive and find external evaluators on their own by using existing tools developed to connect potential collaborators.

One such tool, Research4Impact, is a networking site that connects people from academic, nonprofit, and government sectors who are interested in collaborating.¹⁹ Developed by researchers Adam Levine, Jake Bowers, and Donald Green, the networking site allows users to create a profile to tell others about their research goals and to help potential collaborators find each other.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS

The good news is that more CVE practitioners are incorporating evaluations into their programming than before. However, although CVE scholars have put forth multiple

toolkits for CVE evaluations, there is a gap between scholars' recommendations and the way CVE practitioners determine what to include in program evaluations. Unsurprisingly, CVE practitioners and external evaluators are choosing relatively simple research designs over complex research designs. This will limit practitioners' ability to claim their programs are responsible for reported changes in their target populations and thus limit their ability to claim their programs are effective in achieving outcome measures of interest.

Moreover, these evaluations will primarily evaluate only short-term objectives, leaving the long-term implications of CVE programming unknown. Finally, none of the surveyed organizations indicated plans to evaluate the indirect effects of CVE programming -- a decision that obscures the potential negative unintended consequences of CVE programming. Despite some progress within the CVE field, additional changes are needed both among practitioners and from the CVE policy community. The points below summarize the main evaluation recommendations for practitioners.

- Use available CVE evaluation toolkits for guidance
- Strive to conduct quasi-experimental and experimental research designs
- Strive to evaluate both short and long-term implications of CVE programming
- Strive to evaluate both the indirect and direct effects of CVE programming
- Strive to use external evaluators and existing platforms designed to connect practitioners with evaluators

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Require CVE evaluations to study both the direct and indirect effects of the programming.

There needs to be a shift from a sole focus on effectiveness of CVE programs to evaluation studies that evaluate both the direct and indirect impacts of programming. Although CVE programs, especially prevention programs, yield potential benefits beyond terrorism prevention, few rigorous empirical studies evaluate the indirect effects of CVE programming.

Expanding on this aspect of CVE programming will allow researchers to answer questions about the potential negative consequences of CVE. For example, do intervention programs lead to problems of over-reporting, and what are the negative consequences of this for certain populations? Moreover, focusing on the indirect effects of CVE programming will enable practitioners to determine the widespread reach of their programming beyond program participants.

A holistic evaluation approach to CVE is needed to rigorously evaluate all aspects of CVE programming to ensure these programs are doing more good than harm. Incorporating measures to evaluate the indirect effects of programs into the research design is not an unreasonable requirement. Compared to studying the effectiveness of programs in reducing terrorism, evaluating the potential negative consequences is arguably easier, given the complexities associated with terrorism. However, these studies should be conducted using the same empirical rigor as direct impact studies.

Promote the use of quasi-experimental and experimental research designs. Rigorous empirical designs should become the norm rather than the unicorns in CVE research. Quasi-experimental and experimental research should be the goal for all research designs.

Encourage individualized programming and evaluations.

With individualized programming, practitioners can adjust the content of the program to meet individual client needs. However, evaluation studies must take into consideration tailored programming. One way to encourage practitioners to adjust evaluation studies and disseminate evaluation results is to encourage them to outline the context surrounding the individual to allow practitioners to share and compare program results among programs that serve clients with similar pathways to terrorism.

Increase collaboration and the availability of evaluation results.

One major limitation for scholars is the lack of access to the raw data used for the evaluation and evaluation results. Evaluations should be subject to peer review and one way to promote peer review is to make the results, including the raw data, accessible to scholars for replication purposes. Scholars are only able to conduct cross-program comparisons and improve on prior research designs if this information is available.

A monitoring-evaluation-learning database, similar to IMPACT Europe's database and the RESOLVE Network, for U.S. CVE efforts would benefit both practitioners and policy makers. The database would encourage practitioners to share

evaluation results, to learn about other programs, and to create a synthesized list of best practices in the field.

Continue funding CVE research.

Finally, evaluation research is costly, and community programs typically do not have the funding to conduct the needed advanced research evaluations. In fact, all of the nine programs included in the survey will primarily use external funds to conduct evaluation research.

“A holistic evaluation approach to CVE is needed to rigorously evaluate all aspects of CVE programming to ensure these programs are doing more good than harm.”

Continuing to offer government grants or encouraging a private-public fund CVE evaluation research will contribute immensely to effective monitoring and evaluation of CVE activities, and to learning opportunities for practitioners.

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