Using the Indicator Bank for
Preventing Violent Extremism

Introduction

In March 2018 UNDP and International Alert launched *Improving the impact of preventing violent extremism programming: a toolkit for design, monitoring and evaluation.* This Toolkit provides guidance to development practitioners and specialists to improve the design, monitoring and evaluation of programmes that focus on Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE).

The toolkit offers a comprehensive set of tools on all stages of PVE programming, responding to an urgent need to improve efficiency, targeting and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of such programmes to ultimately improve impact. Comprising four sections, the toolkit covers the whole programme cycle from design to evaluation. It starts by laying the foundations of good practice for projects related to PVE, such as conflict and gender sensitivity. Next it offers analysis tools for identifying factors of vulnerability and resilience to violent extremism in the project context, building theories of change, and developing indicators and monitoring. It then provides guidance on developing a monitoring strategy, collecting data and evaluation. Accompanying the toolkit is an online indicator bank with over 230 PVE-relevant indicators which can be tailored for programmes and adapted for specific country contexts.

About the Indicator Bank

The Indicator Bank contains a range of output and outcome indicators (quantitative and qualitative) that are relevant to, and have been used in, PVE programming. The Indicator Bank is organised around the core programming areas of UNDP following also the Secretary-General's Plan of Action for PVE (including Corruption, Dialogue and Reintegration, Media, Human Rights and Rule of Law, National Action Plans, Local Government, Youth Engagement, Schools and Universities, Participatory Decision Making, Social Cohesion, Socio-economic Alternative, Faith-based/ Religious Leaders and Gender Equality).

The Indicator Bank is designed to be used by practitioners and takes the form of a sortable database on excel, where users can sort by: programming Area; example programme objective; target group; qualitative/quantitative, type (output or outcome), and whether the indicator is PVE specific (projects with a specific PVE objective) and PVE-relevant (projects without a specific PVE objective, but which contribute to a PVE outcome or goal). Users can also review data collection tools and means of verification, risks of using indicators in a PVE context and resources. The Indictor Bank was not designed to be the definitive resource on PVE indicators, but to be used in conjunction with other resources, research and analysis. A range of institutions are researching, testing, developing and adapting indicators for PVE policy and programming globally, a wide variety of complementary resources exist to help

practitioners identify relevant indicators. In addition, given the relevant newness of the PVE sector and difficulty in accessing publicly available M&E data for PVE programmes, not all of the indicators presented have been tested in a PVE context and therefore should be used with careful consideration of relevance within the context.

It is important that users of the Indicator Bank tailor and contextualise these indicators, based on the nature of the PVE programme, context dynamics and VE programme the intervention is addressing. The indicators contained in the Bank should not be taken as a "blueprint" rather used as a springboard to help practitioners identify which combination of indicators would be most relevant, useful, feasible and appropriate to measure.

There are seven principles which underpin using the Indicator Bank:

1. Understand the PVE rational for the indicator before you use it. Ensure that the indicator is aligned to the Theory of Change, VE context analysis and that you have considered assumptions behind its use and its associated data collection methods.

2. Use a combination of indicators to help mitigate against perverse assessments that may not reflect reality. Be sure to understand the theoretical constructs each indicator is measuring enough to find a right balance of indicators.

3. Triangulate and use different means of verification for indicators, to help verify the data and eliminate bias.

4. Consider the relativity of design hierarchies in indicators. One project's outputs can be another project's inputs. The same can apply to outcomes and goals, or impact. Ensure that the hierarchy of indicators are calibrated to the scope and parameters of the specific project.

5. Consider the limitations of the indicators which may not be able to capture the complex nature of PVE change occurring and therefore, rely on more tangible indicators of change often at the project level to capture the nature of change.

6. Ensure assumptions behind indicators are unpacked and made explicit, and that risks associated with using the indicators (including data collection) are considered and regularly reviewed.

7. Consider how sensitive or responsive indicators may to the degree of change suited for your programme timeframes. Indicators may need fine-tuning to suit specific project parameters (scale, timeframe etc.)

For more guidance on how to use the Indicator Bank, please refer to the Toolkit (pages 81 – 83).

Hints to Remember…

Indicators should be contextually relevant and tailored to the context. Where possible use tried and tested indicators, which have generated useful and reliable data, context analysis and research can help to identify these. It is advised to develop indicators through a participatory process and reviewed to see where they have been used in similar programmes in the same context. Attempting to use these indicators 'off-the-shelf' without input from relevant stakeholders can be problematic, especially in the emerging field of PVE. When using this bank, a good vantage point for conversations is to ask: 'How does this indicator fall short in measuring the specific change we are interested in?' and 'What would we need to take into consideration to modify this indicator for our context and programming purposes?'

The Indicator Bank is designed to be updated and refined through learning from using and testing indicators. We encourage practitioners to add or refine indicators based on experience and evidence from programming and research, including adding more contextualise indicators and indicators of change in other relevant programming areas.