INDEED

Evidence – Based Model for Evaluation of Radicalisation Prevention and Mitigation

Deliverable No. 2.2

D2.2 SMART Hub Roadmap Evaluation Report

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Abstract:

This is the SMART (Stakeholder Multisector Anti-Radicalisation Teams) Hub Involvement Roadmap Evaluation Report. It builds on the discussion that was conducted during the INDEED project's General Assembly (GA) in Cluj on 3 – 5 October 2022, which focused on the learning experiences of partners and discussed ways to better implement SMART Hubs. The SMART Hubs involve the INDEED project's stakeholders that include key first-line practitioners working in the field of PVE/CVE and De-radicalisation (Law Enforcement Agencies, prison and probation services, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil society organisations (CSOs), social and health services, youth organisations), policy makers including EU, national, local and regional authorities, and education and research sector.

This evaluation is expected to help the INDEED project achieve its objectives by improving its engagement with its stakeholders. It is also expected to help project's decision-making body about future courses of action regarding SMART Hubs involvement/ engagement.
The evaluation is expected to enhance accountability, identify good practices, and direct resources and skills to improve the project's engagement and communication strategies or activities during and beyond the project's lifetime.

The SMART Hub Involvement Roadmap Evaluation would help (1) Assess success or failure to achieve the goals of the SMART Hub; (2) Identify challenges in the SMART Hub engagement; and (3) Provide solutions to improve SMART Hub engagement.

The evaluation draws on the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines (2021) for its conceptual and methodological groundings, uses a Decentralised Joint Evaluation Framework and Thematic Evaluation as its main methodology to correspond and supplement the INDEED project's co-creation methodology. This evaluation (e.g., concept and methodology) are kept simple for (1) ease of use; (2) exercise openness, transparency, and honesty; and (3) result oriented-ness to help the project improve its practices.

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List of Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
INDEED	Strengthening a comprehensive approach to prevent and counteract radicalisation based on a universal evidence-based model for evaluation of radicalisation prevention and mitigation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
PVE	Preventing Violent Extremism
EBEM	Evidence-Based Evaluation Model
EU	European Union
LEA	Law Enforcement Agency
PU	Public
R	Report
SMART Hub	Stakeholder Multisectoral Anti-Radicalisation Team
DJEF	Decentralised Joint Evaluation Framework
WP	Work Package
CO	Confidential
GA	General Assembly
PATRIR	Peace Action, Training & Research Inst Of Romania
PPHS	Polish Platform for Homeland Security

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This deliverable (D2.2) concerns the evaluation of the SMART (Stakeholder Multisector Anti-Radicalisation Teams) Hubs Involvement Roadmap. It builds on the discussion conducted during the INDEED project's General Assembly (GA) in Cluj on 3 – 5 October 2022 to reflect on the learning experiences of partners and identify ways to improve the SMART Hub involvement in the future.

The SMART Hubs involve the INDEED project's stakeholders that include key first-line practitioners working in the field of Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE), Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and De-radicalisation (DeRAD) (Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs), prison and probation services, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil society organisations (CSOs), social and health services, youth organisations), policy makers including European, national, local and regional authorities, and the education and research sector.

The SMART Hub Involvement Roadmap identified how first-line practitioners and policy maker experts which have relevant expertise in the areas of PVE, CVE and De-radicalisation can and will be continually involved and engaged throughout the project using a co-creation approach. The SMART Hub involvement in different activities and contexts plays an important part in achieving the project objectives. **Specifically, the Smart Hubs are to:**

- Ensure that relevant practitioners and policy makers are placed at the centre of the INDEED research;
- Offer the network of SMART Hubs (stakeholders) the space to contribute to the development and design of the INDEED Toolkit with integrated results they will use; and
- Provide nuanced opportunities for directing the scientific and empirical research priorities.

The evaluation results indicate that the SMART Hubs have **strengthened** the existing networks as well as form new networks that involve a wide range of stakeholders dealing with PVE/CVE/DeRAD and crime prevention. The SMART Hubs provide a platform for these stakeholders to network, gain visibility, explore opportunities of collaboration, identify challenges, and devise tools needed to mitigate the threat/challenges. The results also suggest that the SMART Hubs bridge research with practice and facilitates the accessibility to professional and social networks that despite playing a crucial part in addressing violent extremism or violent radicalisation, are hard to reach or accessible.

However, the results amid re-iterating the critical contributions that the SMART Hubs make to the INDEED project including its multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary features, have also identified certain challenges that require attention. The **main challenges** in involving SMART Hubs with the INDEED project activities are lack of communication, resources and time, and disconnection between institutions that can undermine effective development, implementation, and evaluation of CVE/PVE/DeRAD and crime prevention initiatives.

The evaluation results make a **set of recommendations** aimed at enhancing SMART Hub involvement/ engagement by improving accountability, identifying good practices, and directing resources and skills. The main recommendations include improved communication, better involvement/ engagement planning, greater identification of SMART Hubs members, focusing on local stakeholders, involving more policy makers to influence change, forging trust and exercising transparency, and a more efficient management of the SMART Hubs at the project level.

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2 INDEED PROJECT OVERVIEW

INDEED aims to strengthen the knowledge, capabilities and skills of PVE/CVE and De-radicalisation first line practitioners and policy makers in designing, planning, implementation and in evaluating initiatives[1] in the field, based on evidence-based approach. INDEED builds from the state-of-the-art, utilising the scientific and practical strengths of recent activities – enhancing them with complementary features to drive advancements and curb a growing rise of radical views and violent behaviour threatening security.

The INDEED methodological framework is based on the '5I' approach i.e 5 project phases: Identify; Involve; Innovate; Implement; Impact. At the core of INDEED's work methodology is an interdisciplinary and participatory approach, which includes the co-creation of individual project phases and implementing them with the close engagement of multi-sectoral stakeholders. The creation of SMART Hubs (Stakeholder Multisectoral Anti-Radicalisation Teams) as part of INDEED is intended to facilitate this process.

The selected results of the project are:

1. The Universal Evidence-Based Evaluation Model (EBEM) for evaluation of radicalisation prevention and mitigation.
2. A practical EBEM-based Evaluation Tool.
3. A collection of user-friendly repositories (repositories of radicalisation factors and pathways into radicalisation; factors strengthening resilience to radicalisation, repositories of evidence-based practices) for practical use by practitioners and policy makers.
4. Targeted curricula and trainings (offline/online).
5. Lessons Learnt and Policy recommendations.

All results will be integrated and openly accessible in the INDEED multilingual Toolkit for practitioners and policy makers in the field for the entire lifecycle of PVE/CVE and De-radicalisation initiatives, from design to evaluation.

INDEED promotes the EU's values and principles; heeding multi-agency and cross-sectoral methods, including gender mainstreaming, societal dimensions and fundamental rights.

2.1 WP2 OVERVIEW

Work Package 2 (WP2) is placed within the heart of the INDEED methodological framework, having a fundamental role in implementing the phases Identify and Involve. Specifically, it will engage with PVE/CVE and De-radicalisation practitioners and policy makers as a focal to gather empirical data which will inform the INDEED outputs.

The main objectives of WP2 are:

1. Engage key first line practitioners, policy makers (e.g. with the involvement of policy makers from all the relevant levels: EU-level, national-level, but also regional and local authorities) to be involved in the INDEED activities, establish Stakeholder Multisector Anti-Radicalisation Teams (SMART Hubs) and develop a roadmap for repeat engagement throughout the project.
2. Identify gaps in the current designing, planning, implementation and evaluation of policies, strategies, programmes, actions and interventions in use by SMART Hub

[1] The INDEED project defines and uses INITIATIVES as policies and strategies, long term comprehensive programmes, short term actions and ad-hoc interventions.

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practitioners - to advance the state of the art in PVE/CVE/De-rad and other security threat preventive measures.
3. Synthesise findings and establish a baseline of core needs, gaps and potential solutions defined by practitioners and policy makers; enabling the development of the next generation of PVE/CVE and De-radicalisation methods.
4. Gather requirements for the most desirable and feasible training and evaluation tools to be developed through the INDEED project; ensuring that the project's outputs are bespoke to the needs of practitioners and policy makers. The results obtained in WP2, coupled with WP1 will be used to develop the EBEM and EBEM-based Evaluation Tool (WP3), conduct evidence-based evaluations (WP4) and the design of training activities (WP5).

The WP2 results formed the foundation for further work in other work packages such as WP3 (Development of the Evidence-Based Evaluation Model (EBEM) for radicalisation prevention and mitigation and an Evaluation Tool dedicated to the PVE/CVE and De/radicalisation initiatives), WP4 (Evidence-based evaluation of European, national, regional and local PVE/CVE and De/radicalisation initiatives), WP5 (Strengthening Practitioners', Policy makers' Field Competencies for Evidence-based Practice), and WP7 (Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation) amongst others.

2.2 SMART Hubs' Goals

The INDEED project's SMART Hub concept, guided by a co-design philosophy and grounded in a sectoral and geographical dimension, becomes an environment of real multi-agency, multi-stakeholder, multi-/interdisciplinary cooperation bringing together all parts of Europe (North, South, East and West), serving to build a European security ecosystem and strengthening the European Security Model. The SMART Hubs serve the following main goals:

- **Strengthening Practitioner Networks:** It is highly desirable that close and sustainable linkages between practitioners are formed throughout and beyond the implementation of a project. Network theories posit that close ties are more resilient than long ties for instigating systems of innovation and change (Centola & Macy, 2007). The formation of hubs may serve to 'shorten' and strengthen links between stakeholders;

- **Ensuring Complementarity:** Bringing together stakeholders that share complementary goals can lead to more productive engagement and outcomes. It may also provide a guiding rationale for the selection of participants as well as geographic distribution of the consortium and project stakeholders;

- **Enabling Comparative Analysis:** A key challenge to collecting end user requirements to develop co-designed solutions is that the needs of practitioners will widely vary between sectors. This approach allows for PVE/CVE and De-radicalisation initiatives to be compared and distilled through evidence-based research conducted with practitioners for direct use by them;

- **Iterative Cycles of Engagement:** End users are at the centre of the development of any solution. As such, this approach facilitates frequent and purposeful engagement to gather requirements, co-design, and pilot solutions to ensure high impact outcomes;

- **Multi-Disciplinary Approach:** This approach allows scope for multi-disciplinary and multi-method research. Although tasks should aim to adopt a cohesive methodological approach to allow comparisons to be made, different ontologies and epistemologies can be applied as required by the task.

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2.2.1 IMPORTANCE OF SMART HUBS

The integration of first-line practitioners, policy makers and other relevant stakeholders as part of INDEED is taking place using the SMART Hubs concept, involvement roadmap, and is supporting the project's co-design[2] philosophy.

This user-oriented, multi-stakeholders, multi-agency, and multi-disciplinary approach to the INDEED project is helping to the identification, analysing, and comparing scientifically tested solutions that work and that do not work and allowed to build a solid scientific multi-disciplinary basis for the construction of a universal Evidence-based Evaluation Model (EBEM) for radicalisation prevention and mitigation (WP3)[3], complemented by multi-agency insights and lessons learned from WP2 practice.

The network of SMART Hubs approach to evidence-based evaluation constitutes the project's main research methodology facilitating the construction of universal scientific model, an EBEM-based Evaluation Tool (WP3), an evaluation of initiatives, such as policies and strategies, programmes, actions, and interventions will be carried out (WP4), and development of the training Toolkit established under WP5[4]. The network of SMART Hubs enables INDEED's stakeholders to proactively be involved from the very beginning of INDEED to ensure a user-centred co-design of the project outcomes that will be of direct use and applicability by the various stakeholders.

The findings of this evaluation while may improve SMART Hub engagement with the INDEED project, might also have certain limitations. The main limitation is related to the amount, accuracy, and timeliness of the data, as the SMART Hub engagement is in its initial stages and in some instances, the engagement has not been consistent.

The deliverable is divided into three main parts.

- **Part 1** provides an overview of the SMART Hub Involvement;
- **Part 2** discusses the evaluation concept, methodology, goals, and the questions used to generate data;
- **Part 3** provides an analysis of the responses collected from the partners, followed by a set of recommendations for the project partners to improve their engagement with the SMART Hub members.

[2] **INDEED's definition of 'Co-design'** means that PVE/ CVE / and De-radicalisation practitioners and policy makers, as experts in the field, will become central to the design and the implementation processes of the INDEED project. Co-design has its roots in the participatory design techniques developed in Scandinavia in the 1970s. This term is a synonym for 'participatory, co-creation and open design processes.'
[3] Development of the Evidence-Based Evaluation Model (EBEM) for radicalisation prevention and mitigation and an Evaluation Tool dedicated to the PVE / CVE / De-radicalisation initiatives.
[4] Strengthening Practitioners', Policy makers' Field Competencies for Evidence-based Practice.

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3 PART 1: SMART HUBS INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The INDEED project's SMART Hubs are perceived to play a critical role in helping it deliver on its objectives. The project has developed, based on its tasks, a **SMART Hub Involvement Roadmap** to guide and inform SMART Hub involvement and engagement during and potentially beyond the project's life e.g., utilisation activities/ events.

3.2 STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT ROADMAP

The INDEED project's SMART Hubs are formed and implemented through a geographical SMART Hub methodology, as described in detail in D2.1. The 'Stakeholder Involvement Roadmap', which provides a comprehensive list of activities identified from Work Packages and Task Analysis. The **roadmap clearly marks all tasks that require SMART Hub involvement**, and divides them into the three years of the project's duration.

3.2.1 DEFINITION OF INVOLVEMENT ROADMAP

This sub-section provides a working definition about the stakeholder involvement roadmap, setting guidance on how once identified the stakeholders are envisioned to be involved in different stages of the project.

> *The stakeholder involvement roadmap is **a step-by-step practical plan on how to initially involve different stakeholder groups in the various stages of the project**. The involvement's key objectives will be to create awareness, encourage stakeholders to involve in the project, provide the main activities in which the stakeholders are expected to involve, prepare the ground for a sustained engagement, and enhance the project's sustainability and exploitation of results in the future.*

This definition is used in INDEED project to ensure the effective involvement of its stakeholders using an interdisciplinary, participatory, and harmonised approach.

3.3 SMART HUBS ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

The stakeholder engagement highlighted in the previous part of this deliverable, as well as in D2.1, applies to all activities involving stakeholders in general. However, **individual partners will have the ability to adapt the general stakeholder engagement and its principles to tailor to their activities in a way that suits their working methods and requirements and commitments of specific stakeholders**. Additionally, the partners are required to uphold the general stakeholder selection criteria to ensure an optimal outcome for their engagement.

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Figure 1 An illustration of the SMART Hubs engagement framework/model

Whilst the relationship between the INDEED project partners and the network of SMART Hubs is intertwined, mutual, and inclusive the engagement by the SMART Hubs takes place through multidisciplinary participation. Participation is integrated through the co-creation, exploration, experimentation and evaluation of innovative ideas, shared experiences, and models in real life use cases. In and/or through doing so, the SMART Hubs engage in offering their expertise, insights, and experience about their efforts to tackle various kinds of radicalisation, violent extremism and/or terrorism to inform the development and design of the INDEED project's toolkit (WP5), to fill the knowledge gaps (WP2), inform the validation of the project, and communication, dissemination, and exploitation of the project's outputs (WP7).

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PART 2: SMART HUBS ROADMAP EVALUATION: CONCEPT AND METHODOLOGY

3.4 INTRODUCTION

The INDEED project's evaluation draws on the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines (2021) for its conceptual and methodological development and implementation. The INDEED project uses a Decentralised Joint Evaluation Framework (DJEF), which is operationalised through the use of thematic evaluation. DJEF provides an ability to enhance the co-design of the planning, implementation, and utilisation of the evaluation results across partner countries. Additionally, since DJEF is implemented through a partnership and cooperation of stakeholders, it builds confidence, and its results are more likely to be taken up by its stakeholders to inform change. Also, a thematic evaluation helps to address specific questions e.g., at a specific agency/ partner and facilitates a perspective on multi-agency needs and expertise beyond the results of one individual partner/agency. It also allows for a comparative analysis of the strengths and weaknesses that require improvements regarding SMART Hubs involvement and engagement and its sustainability.

3.4.1 WHAT IS EVALUATION?

An evaluation is a critical component of a project and can function as an important way of ensuring that it is going into the right direction, using its resources efficiently, and doing all it can do to achieve its intended results. Regular evaluation of performance at a project level can provide the project with a continuous improving learning and practicing experience. As such, an;

> *evaluation is an assessment, conducted as systematically and impartially as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional performance. It analyses the level of achievement of both expected and unexpected results, by examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality.* (UNDP 2021, 1).

The INDEED project uses this definition to build an evaluation concept and a methodology for the planning and implementation of its evaluation processes and activities. Using this concept, this task evaluates the SMART Hub Involvement Roadmap to assess whether it has achieved SMART Hubs goals, as illustrated in Section 1. **The deliverable seeks to create credible and evidence-based information to inform and improve SMART Hub involvement and engagement in the future.**

Figure 2 below is a simplified illustration of the INDEED project's evaluation and its results such as learning, transparency, and accountability that will help it achieve its intended results.

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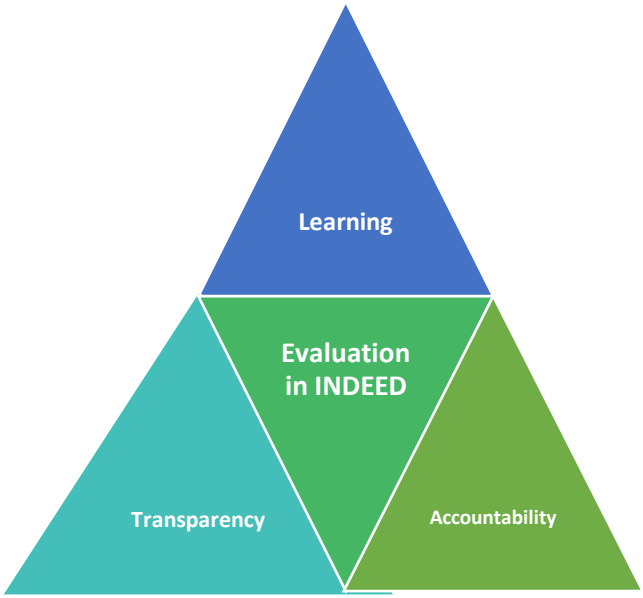

Figure 2 The INDEED evaluation function – adapted from UNDP (2021)

3.4.2 WHY EVALUATE SMART HUB INVOLVEMENT ROADMAP?

Evaluation is critical for the INDEED project to achieve its objectives in involving and engaging its SMART Hubs across a wide range of activities during and potentially beyond its lifetime. As illustrated in Figure 2, INDEED's evaluation of its activities and SMART Hubs involvement and engagement is envisioned to identify its areas of strengths and weakness, support accountability and capture its learning experiences/knowledge to strengthen the project further and sustain its relationships with its relevant stakeholders. **Thus, the evaluation of the SMART Hub Involvement Roadmap is viewed as a:**

- A means of strengthening learning within the INDEED project e.g., among stakeholders such as partners, advisory board, and done to support better decision-making;
- A way of enhancing accountability and transparency to build trust at the project level, as well as amongst its stakeholders in relation to the conduct of its activities and the design and development of its outputs;
- A tool of creating evidence-based knowledge about what has worked, what has not, and to identify the underlying factors;
- An opportunity to develop objectives, accurate, and rich data to help the project to make informed management decisions and plan strategically for its future tasks/ activities.

3.4.3 GOALS

The main goal of the Evaluation of the SMART Hub Involvement Roadmap is to;

> Assess the ***effectiveness*** of SMART Hub involvement/engagement in achieving SMART Hubs goals in the first half of the project implementation.

Effectiveness for the purpose of this task is concerned with doing the right task (e.g., involving the right stakeholders in the right task/activity), completing activities and achieving goals (e.g., successfully involving stakeholders as expected and getting them make sufficient and expert contributions). Simply, effectiveness is concerned with the ***intended*** end results.

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3.4.4 WHAT TYPE OF EVALUATION DOES INDEED USE?

3.4.4.1 Decentralised and Joint Evaluation: the approach

Decentralised evaluation approach is used in INDEED to assess the attainment of intended results and contributions from SMART Hubs, which will feed into the development of the project's outputs. This approach helps to examine key issues e.g., effectiveness, areas of strength, weaknesses, and areas of improvement for strategic decision-making actions regarding SMART Hubs involvement and engagement with the project. It will be joint in nature, involving a range of stakeholders of a topic of mutual interest that is co-guided and implemented. This evaluation type also complies with the INDEED project's co-design philosophy and to facilitate a collaborative evaluation to optimise cooperation, promote independence and accountability, and learning from a wide range of partners/ stakeholders.

3.4.4.2 *Thematic evaluation*

This deliverable uses a thematic evaluation methodology to assess INDEED's performance in a specific area of SMART Hubs involvement and engagement with the project. Effective involvement and engagement are critical to ensuring sustained contributions from SMART Hubs to deliver on its objectives. This methodology is helpful in focusing on a particular theme/ area, as well as allows for the evaluation of cross-cutting sub-themes e.g., relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency across several outcomes or results areas.

The objectives, scope, and questions for a thematic evaluation vary depending on the subject matter. **In the evaluation of the SMART Hubs Involvement Roadmap, evaluation questions are developed to adhere to the specific objectives of the Roadmap**, as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1 An illustration of the Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions included in the Matrixes 1-2	
SMART Hubs strengths	• If, to what extent INDEED SMART Hubs strengthened practitioners' networks in partner countries? • Was the SMART Hub developed with new practitioners/ networks or with existing practitioners/ networks)?) • What are SMART Hubs' main areas of strength? • To what extent are SMART Hubs relevant to the project's objectives? E.g., to what extent the experiences and skills of SMART Hub meet the project requirements?
Comparative analysis	• To what extent are SMART Hubs inclusive of the project target groups? • To what extent are the varying sectoral requirements distinguished clearly through the SMART Hubs?

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	• To what extent does the diversity of SMART Hubs help complement each sector's requirements?
SMART Hub involvement challenges	• If any, what were the main challenges hindering SMART Hub implementation? • What were the main factors causing these challenges? • In what ways did these challenges hinder results? • If any, what steps did you take to mitigate these challenges? • Did these steps work? Why and why not?
Improvements	• If any, what are the main areas of SMART Hubs' involvement/ engagement that require improvements? • What are the main reasons for these improvements? • What are the main solutions you think will support achieving the proposed improvements? • Who do you think should lead the process of implementing change in SMART Hubs involvement/ engagement?
Sustainability	• Will the SMART Hub involvement/ engagement last? • To what extent are the SMART Hub involvement/ engagement results likely to continue? • What are the factors that can undermine sustainability? • In what ways can the SMART Hub involvement/ engagement results be sustained? E.g., the main tools/ approaches to ensure sustainability.

3.4.5 Instructions for filling the Matrixes by INDEED partners

- Matrixes 1 and 2 were filled by the SH Focal Points in each partner country;
- SH Focal Points were strongly encouraged to involve their colleagues involved in running activities with SH in filling these Matrixes to facilitate a diversity of experiences/ opinions.
- SH Focal Points/ colleagues primarily provided data on **THEIR** geographical SH, e.g., CENTRIC focused on the UK SH.
- If deemed appropriate or necessary, SH Focal Points/colleagues were encouraged to provide their experiences/ opinions on the overall SH involvement/ engagement in which case it must be clearly indicated.

3.4.6 Data analysis method

The INDEED project uses a reiterative thematic analysis method in its evaluations to reflect and to respond to the thematic evaluation it implements. The goal of a thematic analysis is to identify themes, i.e., patterns in the data that are important or interesting, and use these themes to address the research or provide an analysis of a particular issue. A thematic analysis method interprets or makes sense of data to address a problem. A thematic analysis

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method is helpful in analysing data by allowing for digging deeper into the main areas such as strengths/ weaknesses, and areas of improvements. This method can highlight the underlying factors that affect the implementation of a task/ activity/ programme through the identification of the main themes that appear predominantly in the data across a particular area. A thematic data analysis also facilitates specific policy or management recommendations to address problems/ barriers in a specific area such as weaknesses or proposed solutions. However, a thematic data analysis method may have some limitations. While thematic analysis is flexible, this flexibility can lead to inconsistency and a lack of coherence when developing themes derived from the research data (Holloway and Todres, 2003).

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PART 3: SMART HUBS ROADMAP EVALUATION: PRESENTATION OF THE EMPIRICAL DATA

3.5 INTRODUCTION

This section of the deliverable provides an analysis of the responses collected from the INDEED project partners about their experiences of implementing geographic SMART Hubs across the project partner countries. Drawing on the multi-sectoral SMART Hubs' engagement and its significance as the core component of the INDEED's interdisciplinary and participatory approach facilitating the co-creation of individual project phases and implementing them. **The evaluation was designed in a way that met the objectives of the SMART Hubs** (Matrix 2 – Annex 2). An evaluation at this stage would help the project to get to the nuances regarding its strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations/ suggestions to improve its future activities. This evaluation would further identify new areas of engagement and help develop practices/ activities, which are effective in sustaining engagement in the future.

The data collected from the partners demonstrate that the geographic SMART Hubs involve a wide range of the types of stakeholders. The data also demonstrate a wide range of the areas of expertise or interests, skills, and resources that each of the SMART Hubs brings to the project and makes relevant contributions to the project's outputs. The data further illustrate that partners use different types of activities to engage the SMART Hubs to deliver on the INDEED project's objectives. Figure 3 is an illustration of the types of stakeholders, areas of expertise/ influence, involvement/ engagement phase/stage, engagement forms/tools, and frequency.

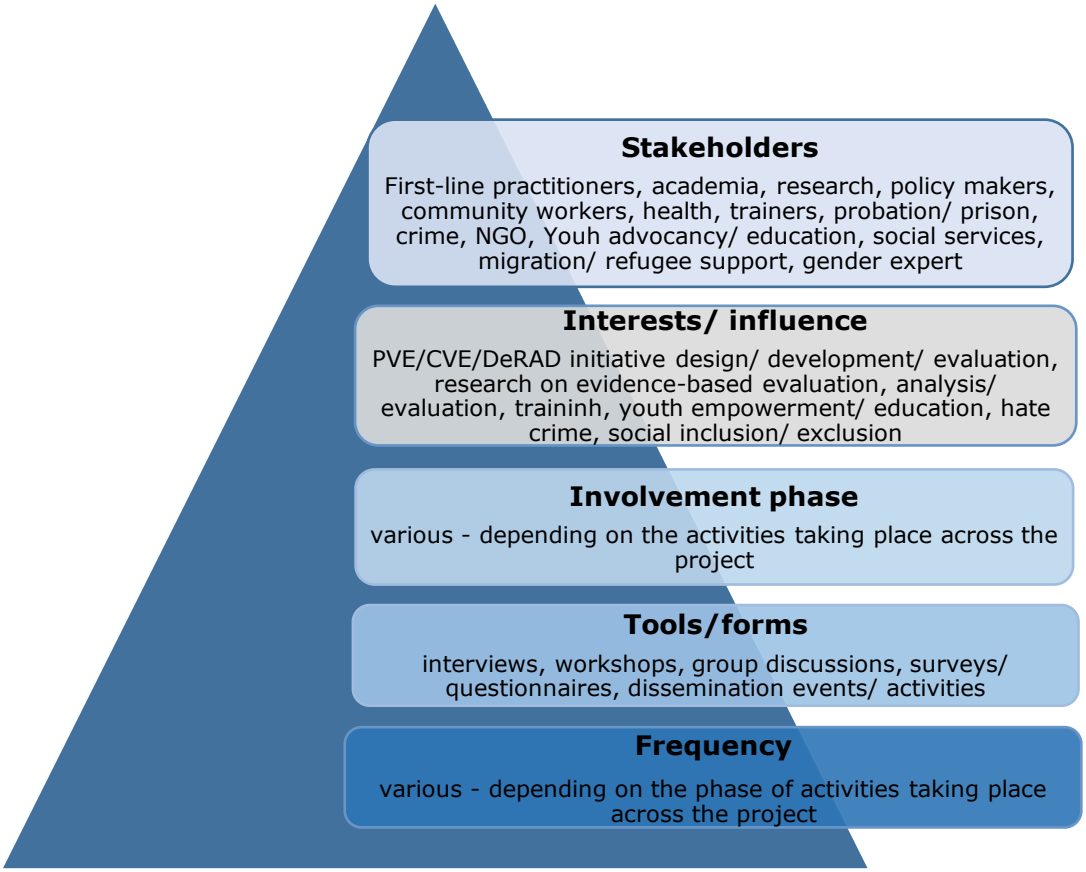

Figure 3 An illustration of the types of stakeholders, areas of expertise/ influence, involvement/ engagement phase/stage, engagement forms/tools, and frequency

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The multi-sectoral SMART Hubs' engagement constitutes the core component of the INDEED's interdisciplinary and participatory approach. It facilitates the co-creation of individual project activities and their implementation. Evaluation of the SMART Hub involvement with the INDEED project at the end of the half of its implementation is crucial for assessing whether the project is meeting SMART Hub goals. An evaluation at this stage will help the project to get to the nuances regarding its strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations/ suggestions to improve its future activities. This evaluation will further identify new areas of engagement and will help develop practices/ activities, which are effective in sustaining engagement in the future.

The set up (e.g. composition, size) of the geographic SMART Hubs varies across partner countries. In some countries, SMART Hubs include four members whereas in others, they include a large number of members e.g., in Poland, Romania, Finland, and Belgium. Across the geographic Hubs, first-line practitioners are most represented compared to the other stakeholder groups e.g. NGOs, academia, and research institutions. Some SMART Hubs involve members beyond the INDEED project's stakeholders. In Romania (PATRIR), the geographic Hub also includes teachers, student and youth organisations, migration and refugee support workers, and gender experts. Similarly, PPHS in Poland organised a series of the INDEED project's *'Hands-on webinar on formulating standardised assumptions of preventive programme'*, which engaged a wide range of stakeholders that extend beyond the project's target groups.

Partners have presented project's results to the geographic Hubs such as the digital repository, Evidence-based Evaluation Model (EBEM) concept and initial design/development activities/ results, results from WP1 (e.g. scientific) and WP2 (empirical research).

Table 2 below provides a synthesis of the evaluation reports provided by the project partners. Annex 6.1 provides a full synthesis of the evaluation responses.

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Table 2 Analysis of the empirical data

 **Main Strengths**	• Expanding existing and creation new professional/ social networks; • Multi-sectoral, inter-disciplinary and facilitating cross-sector engagement and collaboration; • Providing networking opportunities for professional and social connections; • Enhancing visibility, explore interactive tools and assist each other in their efforts within the field of PVE/CVE/DeRad; • Bridging research and academia to forge more constructive relationships; • Eliciting user requirements to develop user-driven, fit for purpose, and fit for needs tools; • Provide a dynamic, iterative and diverse testing and validation platform that can help the project to share, disseminate and test its outputs with wider stakeholders.
 **Comparative Analysis**	• SMART Hubs are inclusive, include members beyond the project's target groups that further enhances their strengths, benefits, and contributions; • SMART Hubs include relevant stakeholders, experts and first-line practitioners of the PVE/CVE field, securing the interdisciplinary character of the project's results; • SMART Hubs help collect varying sectoral requirements to inform the stakeholder-driven tools; • SMART Hubs highlight the nuances, differences, and similarities in academia and practice in the PVE/CVE field; • Inclusion of a wide range of SMART Hub members complements sectoral requirements, facilitating the implementation of the project's co-creation methodology.
 **Involvement Challenges**	• A lack of 'time', 'resource' and 'workload' undermines the implementation of SMART Hubs across the partner countries; • It is a challenge to maintaining 'consistent communication' with SMART Hub members and to sustain their interests in the project, forge and maintain trust in sharing data/ expertise; • It is a challenge to recruit members with relevant expertise in the field of PVE/CVE/DeRAD and crime prevention; • Language is a challenge—most of the SMART Hub members do not speak English, triggering the need to translate all materials into a local language and back into English; • The absence of 'clear' and 'practical' guidance regarding "what is next" for the SMART Hubs, and the lack of 'knowledge' regarding how to utilise this network to optimise the project's results and outputs throughout project's lifespan or beyond.

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Improvements

- Provision and implementation of 'more guided' and a 'uniform, standardised' approach for involving SMART Hubs, and ensuring collection of 'standard' contributions from all partners;
- Diversify SMART Hubs as much as possible, and facilitate their inclusion by using in-person and digital tools. Use more on 'real use' cases examination during the SMART Hubs activities to generate more relevant results;
- A 'more sustained and systematic' collaboration to advance the interdisciplinary character of the engagement/ involvement, reinforcing and facilitating timely and robust exchange of opinions, methodologies, and proposed solutions;
- A 'more centralised' approach to coordinating the SMART Hubs activities to ensure their consistent and well-organised engagement/ collaboration;
- A more 'targeted' dissemination of results with different stakeholders and a 'persuasive promotion' of the project's key benefits and priorities;
- Establishing a communication plan that outlines the goals, expectations, and benefits of the SMART Hubs engagement and facilitating more flexible engagement/ meetings (e.g., time, distance, costs);
- The Work Package Leaders and Task Leaders should provide the Focal Points a consistent support through a 'co-led' effort;
- Where language is a barrier, key results/ outputs should be translated into local languages to ensure widen the reach of the project results and enhance their sustainability.

Sustainability

- Project-wide 'consistent' efforts through regular communications, dissemination of results, frequent activities to elicit stakeholders' requirements/ needs would enhance sustainability;
- The results should not be treated as the creation of the INDEED project alone, rather as a 'platform' for mutual engagement and exchange of expertise and knowledge facilitated through a co-creation methodology and inclusion of SMART Hub members in the design, testing, and validation of the project results;
- Creating synergies between different projects in the field and regularly updating the members would help sustain the SMART Hub involvement/ engagement with the project;
- Establish networks of relevant stakeholders at 'local' level to facilitate a more accessible and convenient SMART Hub involvement with the project;
- Create an involvement plan that provides clear instructions, goals, objectives, and a monitoring mechanism and regularly communicate results with the SMART Hub members to ensure sustainability.

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3.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 3 Recommendations to improve SMART Hub Involvement Roadmap

 **Better communication**	A 'standardised' and 'unified' communication procedure should be implemented by all partners for managing relationships with stakeholders. The communication procedure must not be limited to the SMART Hub members and should include all partners, particularly the Work Package Leaders, Task Leaders, SMART Hub Coordination Team, and Focal Points.
 **Better involvement/ planning**	'Standardised' and 'structured' SMART Hub involvement which sets clear 'objectives' and 'activities' to help SMART Hub members understand and regulate their engagement should be developed and implemented across the INDEED project. The plan must be clear and provide a practical roadmap to better show and manage expectations. The plan must provide a sense of 'value' and 'purpose' and include activities that respond to needs and interests of participating stakeholders and the actual individual involved.
 **Better identification of members**	Whilst it can be challenging to gather the 'most' relevant SMART Hub members in some countries, 'relevance' must be given priority. The skills and expertise that the SMART Hubs contribute to the project should be capable of 'contributing' to and 'advancing' the field rather than simply boosting the number of SMART Hub members.

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Focus on local-level stakeholders

The geographic SMART Hubs should be 'localised' and 'tailored' to the needs of local target groups. Currently, most of the PCVE/CVE/DeRAD institutions are 'state-centred' and 'exclusive', making interactions between the relevant stakeholders at local, national, and regional levels more difficult. Localisation of SMART Hubs can best serve local situations and need, meet stakeholders' 'exclusive' requirements, and address the realities of each context. Engage with national policy makers persistently to achieve changes in policy and practice.

Forging trust - exercising transparency

For the SMART Hub members to keep confidence in the network, the Coordination Team, Work Package Leaders, Task Leaders and Focal Points must regulate their activities and engagement with 'transparency' by sharing meeting reports, disseminating project results and giving the SMART Hub members the opportunity to discuss their requirements.

Leadership/Management of SMART Hubs at project-level

The process of SMART Hub involvement must be 'co-led'. The SMART Hub Coordination Team, Work Package Leaders, and Task Leaders should provide support and guidance to Focal Points to help them perform their activities more efficiently, to ensure that the Focal Points are able to work proactively and effectively in managing SMART Hub involvement.

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4 CONCLUSIONS

Deliverable D2.2 is a report on the SMART Hub Involvement Roadmap in the first half of the INDEED project implementation. The evaluation aimed at highlighting the strengths, challenges, and areas of improvements needed to further enhance SMART Hubs' engagement with the project during and potentially beyond its lifetime.

The evaluation used a systematic method to assess and to understand how well the SMART Hub goals are achieved. The findings of this evaluation are significant for the INDEED project to successfully deliver on its objectives by involving the geographic SMART Hubs in a more efficient way.

The evaluation suggests that the concept of geographic SMART Hubs implemented through a co-creation methodology plays a significant part in benefitting the INDEED project as well as the SMART Hub members by providing them a platform to network, interact with similar professional and social networks, highlight their requirements/needs to feed into the project's outputs, and prepare for taking up the project's results.

The evaluation also sheds light on the areas/practices that need improvements for future involvement/engagement.

The deliverable provides clear indications, by providing a set of concrete recommendations to help the project determine what actions should be taken to improve its involvement or engagement with its stakeholders.

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6 ANNEXES

6.1 ANNEX

Evaluation questions that the partners must answered

SMART Hubs strengths	1. Geographic SMART Hubs are developed with both new and existing practitioners/networks, yielding a wide range of benefits. 2. The partners have suggested that the INDEED SMART Hubs strengthened practitioners' networks across the consortium countries significantly, in multiple ways. 3. The SMART Hubs' multi-sectoral, multi-agency, and interdisciplinary network approach facilitates a cross-sector engagement and collaboration and is viewed as a major benefit and strength of the INDEED project. Promoting and facilitating the culture and spirit of collaboration across sectors and agencies in the PVE/CVE/DeRAD field is deemed particularly important for 'sharing' data on threats, which is vital to effective interventions amid growing complexity of violent extremism and violent radicalisation. 4. The majority of responses have reported that SMART Hubs provided a 'platform' that generated 'networking' opportunities for the INDEED target groups to broaden their professional and social networks, connect to the 'like-minded' institutions/ individuals and 'join' their expertise to achieve better results. 5. Responses have indicated that SMART Hubs offered a ground for the project's target groups to gain 'visibility', explore 'interactive' tools and 'supplement' each other in their efforts in the field of PVE/CVE/DeRAD. The varying activities that engage SMART Hubs are important for the stakeholders to present themselves and their work, and make their impacts felt. 6. The responses illustrate that SMART Hubs enhanced 'accessibility' to professional or social networks, which can function as invaluable resource, which are not always accessible due to numerous reasons, but are crucial to optimising the project's results through their expert and practice contributions. 7. SMART Hubs are reported to 'bridge' academia with practice, which is pertinent to effective design and implementation of PVE/CVE/ DeRAD initiatives and their evaluation. Currently, there is a lack of sustainable relationships between these fields, underpinned by varying factors e.g., lack of trust, communication, and knowledge. It was highlighted by one of the responses 'it was considered as extremely helpful for academic and professional researchers to share experience and feedback with first-line practitioners implementing DeRad initiatives.'

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	8. Some of the responses stated that SMART Hubs could improve 'the tricky' and 'the dynamic triangle of designing, implementing and evaluating' PVE/CVE or DeRAD initiatives by exchanging expertise and experiences and providing a more inclusive definitions for a particular threat e.g., violent extremism that PVE/CVE/DeRAD initiatives seek to address. Additionally, networks of stakeholders are viewed to mitigate the current 'state-centred' interventions that are often exclusive of relevant stakeholders e.g., practitioners and local authorities and are difficult to implement and evaluate at the regional and local levels. 9. SMART Hubs enable the INDEED project to achieve its objectives and meet its requirements. 10. The overwhelming majority of respondents agreed that the inclusion of a wide range of stakeholders within the SMART Hubs provide the project with expertise, experience, and validation resources to deliver on its objectives. In some instances, it was reported that SMART Hubs were 'intuitive', 'innovative', and the 'first initiative of its kind', bringing together practitioners at the national level in the field of PVE/CVE-DeRAD and promoting the culture of sharing experience locally/nationally. Representatives of different sectors participate in SMART Hubs, which is a very rare for most. This multiagency perspective is perceived extremely valuable, as practitioners themselves emphasise, when discussing various topics e.g., radicalisation prevention, training design, and evaluation. 11. SMART Hubs help implement the project's co-creation methodology more effectively by contributing 'exclusive' expertise in a variety of activities (e.g., workshops, interviews, surveys), as well as drawing on the benefit that the project offers to improve their practice. 12. SMART Hubs provide a dynamic, iterative, and diverse 'testing' and 'validation' platform that will help the INDEED project to share, disseminate, and test its outputs with wider stakeholders who are most likely to take them up and use them in their daily practices to address PVE/CVE/DeRAD challenges. In some countries, activities with SMART Hubs have been used for sharing and varying the INDEED model as well as for presenting the digital repository to verify and collect additional user requirements. It was reported by one of the partners '*Overall, the SHs are very useful for understanding what the response of practitioners and policymakers to the results of the project is and for gathering their feedback and recommendations*.' Another respondent has reported that '*All the participants highlighted the need to be trained and informed about evaluation … at the moment, evaluation is not carried out in … and there is a misrepresentation of what evaluation is, so INDEED project results could be very relevant for the … SH*.'
Comparative analysis	1. The geographic SMART Hubs implemented across the partner countries are inclusive of the project target groups and, in some instances, include members beyond the project's target groups that further enhances SMART Hubs' strengths, benefits, and contributions. 2. The majority of SMART Hubs are reported to have managed to adequately engage relevant stakeholders, experts and first-line practitioners of the C/PVE field, securing, in this way, the interdisciplinary character of the activities e.g., workshops. SMART Hubs are reported to represent all the necessary sectors which are normally needed for the designing, implementation, and evaluation of a given PVE/CVE/DeRAD initiative.

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	3. The majority of responses have suggested that the varying sectoral requirements are distinguished clearly through the SMART Hubs. The activities involving SMART Hubs e.g., workshops, interviews, and group discussions ensure the incorporation of sectoral requirements into the model aimed at the evaluation of PVE/CVE/DeRAD initiatives in a holistic manner. 4. The inclusion of various institutions into the SMART Hubs helps complement each sector's requirements, by providing a more holistic and comprehensive engagement with the INDEED project. It is suggested that each sector brings unique perspectives and expertise to the project that can help address the different tasks/requirements of the project. The involvement of the practitioners working in different sectors ensures that their recommendations are tailored to the needs of their specific sector. Additionally, a more innovative approach and solutions to the tasks or issues that may arise during the project can be achieved through the collaboration between different sectors included in the SMART Hubs. 5. As highlighted earlier too, the majority of the partners reported that a major advantage of the project and the SMART Hubs is the opportunity for Research/Academia to meet First-line Practitioners, which makes it easier for practitioners to ensure correct theoretical attitudes and vice versa. Also, diversity of SMART Hubs helps complement each sector's requirements through mutual exchange of gaps and needs. It was stated by a partner '*… this multisectoral approach gives a unique chance to work comprehensively on a relevant topic. In many cases, this would be impossible without the connection and involvement of the SMART Hub network*.'
SMART Hub involvement challenges	1. There are certain challenges that hinder SMART Hubs' effective implementation and are underpinned by certain factors. 2. The majority of partners highlighted 'time', 'resource', and 'workload' as the main challenges undermining SMART Hubs' implementation across the partner countries. The responses suggest that in working with experts and top specialists, the biggest challenge is their time availability. Additionally, it is often a challenge to gather the SMART Hub members together or get a response (e.g., to the survey) within the specified timeframe. 3. Maintaining a 'consistent communication' with SMART Hubs' members to sustain their interests in the project, forge and maintain trust in sharing data/expertise is highlighted as a challenge that requires improvements. 4. The lack of 'adequate' background about radicalisation amongst practitioners in relation to the design and evaluation of PVE/CVE/DeRAD initiatives is a factor that may affect the efficacy of the SMART Hubs. Similarly, the engagement of individuals is often a problem, as sometimes it is difficult to ensure that SMART Hub members participate in the meetings and take a proactive part in activities. 5. Language is another challenge, as most of the SMART Hub members are unable to speak in English and this triggers the need to translate all materials into a local language and then from a local language into English. 6. The lack of 'clear' and 'practical' guidance regarding "what is next" for the SMART Hubs, and the lack of 'knowledge' regarding how to utilise this network to optimise the project's results and outputs throughout project's lifespan or beyond is a key underlying factor.

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	7. These challenges are reported to hinder project results in different ways, which are however 'not a matter of concern', as was reported by most of the partners. These challenges could potentially bar 'the most relevant' practitioners/ stakeholders to participate within SMART Hubs, limit the diversity of perspectives, and hold them back from taking up the project results.
Improvements	1. The partners have identified certain areas of SMART Hubs' involvement/ engagement that require improvements. These areas include provision and implementation of 'more guided' approach to involving/engaging SMART Hubs in the project's activities, which could help all partners to use a 'uniform, standardised' approach to their local networks and ensure collection of 'standard' contributions from all the consortium's partner countries. 2. Some of the partners have suggested to enhance the 'diversity of perspectives' through the inclusion of 'more' stakeholders, particularly first-line practitioners and facilitating their inclusion by using both in-person and digital tools. Additionally, dwelling more on 'real use' cases examination during the SMART Hubs activities could yield more relevant results. 3. Provision of more involvement opportunities for the SMART Hubs and improving dissemination tools and activities about the project results was highlighted as an area requiring improvement. These improvements are likely to play a key role in sustaining partnership and rolling out project outputs to wider stakeholders. 4. A 'more sustained and systematic' collaboration between the INDEED project and the SMART Hubs would advance the interdisciplinary character of the engagement/involvement, reinforcing and facilitating timely and robust exchange of opinions, methodologies, proposed solutions as well as a critical review of the different sectoral and universal requirements of the whole PVE/CVE/DeRAD field. 5. Partners have also highlighted that the examination of real use cases during SMART Hubs workshops/ activities could contribute to a more comprehensive and universal understanding of the different aspects of violent radicalisation, strengthening, in parallel, the practical skills and the know-how of the SMART Hub members on how to tackle radicalisation in real-world conditions. Hence—such diagnostic and interdisciplinary engagement and presentation of the project tools could be seen as a practical simulation and training for the SMART Hub members. 6. The partners have suggested certain ways to achieve these improvements. It has been suggested that a 'more centralised' approach regarding the SMART Hubs, perhaps through the appointment of a task-leader with an overall coordination responsibility of the SMART Hubs would help make improvements. 7. The partners have also suggested 'the strategic dissemination' of the SH's results with different stakeholders as well as a 'persuasive promotion' of their key benefits and priorities that can attract more first-line practitioners and experts of different sectors, disciplines, and areas of interest as an effective way of improving this collaboration. 8. Some of the partners have suggested that communicating more regularly with the SMART Hubs, creating a communication plan that outlines the goals, expectations, and benefits of the SMART Hubs engagement with the project, and increasing the usage of online tools for communication to allow for more flexible engagement/ meetings (e.g., time, distance, costs) would help the project to achieve improvements.

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	9. It is also suggested that more support should be provided to the Focal Points (by Work Package Leaders and Task Leaders), who are, sometimes, less able to prepare an agenda and content for SMART Hubs and make meaningful and sustainable relationships and disseminate project results in a more efficient way. However, some partners have suggested that SMART Hubs involvement/ engagement should be viewed as a 'joint' responsibility by all consortium members. 10. In some instances where language is a barrier, it is suggested that key project results/outputs should be translated into local languages to ensure widen the reach of the project results and enhance its sustainability.
Sustainability	1. The majority of the partners have expressed that the SMART Hub involvement/ engagement would last, subject to 'consistent' efforts from all partners. These efforts would include more regular dissemination of results, frequent activities to elicit their requirements/ needs, and help them address violent radicalisation more effectively. Essentially, should not be viewed as the creation of the INDEED project alone, rather as a 'platform' for mutual engagement and exchange of expertise and knowledge facilitated through a co-creation methodology and inclusion of SMART Hubs in the design, testing, and validation of the project results. 2. Some of the partners, drawing on their previous experience, have highlighted that creating synergies between different projects in the field and regularly updating the members would help sustain the SMART Hub involvement/ engagement with the project. 3. Establishing networks of relevant stakeholders at 'local' level would facilitate a more accessible and convenient involvement/ engagement with the project, thus—enhancing sustainability of the project results. 4. The responses have also highlighted the 'lack of resources', 'realistic expectations', and the increasing workload of the practitioners to undermine sustainability. It is also reported that the lack of clear and consistent communication with the SMART Hub members would undermine the sustainability of their involvement with the project and its outputs. 5. Designing a plan and giving clear instructions about the SMART Hub involvement/ engagement can help ensure that the SMART Hubs are on track to achieving their goals and objectives and that their engagement is sustainable. The plan should include goals, objectives, and activities that can be tracked and monitored over time. 6. Overall, widening the project results 'audience' by running a comprehensive effort to introduce the results and their significance in advancing the field and addressing language accessibility would enhance sustainability during and potentially beyond the project's lifetime. The majority of the partners have highlighted that SMART Hubs are best placed to advocate and enhance project results sustainability.

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