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Evidence - Based Model for Evaluation of  
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# 8 TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL EVIDENCE-BASED EVALUATIONS

1

**Integrate  
evaluation to  
the initiative  
plan**



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Many challenges in  
evaluation can be  
avoided when the  
**evaluation is planned  
together with the  
initiative** itself.





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This means that the  
initiative's plan also  
details **how it will be  
evaluated.**





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The **first** evaluation  
can take place  
already in this  
planning stage.





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**Many decisions taken  
in the early days** of the  
initiative's lifespan  
determine what kind of  
evaluation designs,  
methods and data can  
be used in later  
evaluations.



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## Secure funding and resources for evaluation



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One common  
challenge for  
evaluation is that  
**there is no funding**  
for it.





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This seems to be particularly common with long-term programmes and short-term actions that rely on **limited-term project funding.**







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In these cases, the funder may require that the initiative is evaluated, but there are **no extra resources allocated** for this purpose.

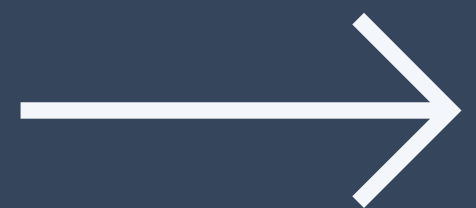




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An evaluation, even in its more simple forms, requires rather **significant resources**. It should be clearly **planned** where these resources will come from.





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It is recommended  
that funding for  
PVE/CVE/De-rad  
initiatives have  
**a dedicated budget  
for evaluation** on top  
of the funding for  
implementing  
the initiative itself.



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**Define the  
initiative's design  
and objectives  
clearly**



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The **starting point** for virtually any type of evaluation is a clear understanding of its objectives, implementation plan and the underlying assumption about how the planned actions are supposed to produce the intended outcomes (**theory of change**).





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Ideally, the objectives  
and theory of  
change are carefully  
developed in the  
**planning stage** of  
the initiative.





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If objectives have not been properly defined, it is **difficult** to conduct a high-quality evaluation.



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**Develop initiative's  
data monitoring  
practices with  
evaluation in mind**







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The kind of  
evaluation it is  
possible to  
conduct depends  
strongly on **what  
kind of data is  
available.**





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There are many kinds of data that can be collected during the evaluation, but some evaluation designs require data that can only be collected at a **specific point in time.**





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For instance, in order to reliably evaluate an initiative's impact on participants, there should be some **information about their situation** at the time when they started.





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An evaluation, even in its more simple forms, requires rather **significant resources**. It should be clearly **planned** where these resources will come from.





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Evaluation almost  
always requires **good  
documentation** of  
the initiative's  
activities.





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When the initiative has  
**systematic  
monitoring and  
record-keeping  
practices** that are  
informed by the needs  
of future evaluations,  
the necessary data will  
exist when needed.





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Insufficient monitoring practices do not make evaluation impossible, but they **significantly limit** the available options and can have a **negative impact** on the reliability of its results.



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## Focus on learning



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An evaluation is at  
its most useful  
when it is **planned  
and conducted  
for learning  
purposes.**





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This means that the evaluation is **designed to support further development** of the initiative and it includes a clear **plan for how its results will be used.**





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It is recommended the evaluation not to be connected to funding decisions but instead to be **conducted in the middle of a funding period.**





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This provides the most **constructive environment** for conducting the evaluation without pressure to show success, providing a genuine opportunity to use the results for the initiative's improvement.



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## Involve key stakeholders in evaluation planning



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Evaluations often  
tend to be a **top-  
down process** in  
which the objective  
and design are **set by  
the funder.**

Experience has  
shown that this is **not  
a very productive  
strategy.**





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Instead, it is usually better to take a more **participatory approach** and involve key stakeholders, especially those implementing the initiative, in the evaluation process **from its very beginning.**





**Including stakeholders**  
allows for creating the  
ownership and trust  
necessary to achieve  
reliable results.

When stakeholders are  
actively included in the  
planning process, it  
**shows that their views,  
knowledge and  
experience are valued.**







When the evaluation responds to the needs of those involved in implementing the initiative, the evaluation **no longer presents itself as an extra task that is required by someone else;**





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instead  
it is seen as  
**something**  
**beneficial** for  
developing their  
own work.





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This  
provides further  
**motivation to  
cooperate in  
producing the data  
needed for  
the evaluation and  
being honest about  
possible weaknesses  
and failures.**



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**Make sure the  
evaluator has a  
good understanding  
of the PVE/CVE/  
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When the evaluation is conducted by an external evaluator, it is good to **make sure that the evaluator is familiar with the PVE/CVE/Derad field and its specific characteristics.**





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While many  
**common evaluation  
types and methods**  
can be applied to  
the evaluation of  
PVE/CVE/De-rad  
initiatives,





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it is rather **difficult**  
**to make sense of**  
**any data or**  
**observations**  
without having a  
good general  
understanding of  
the field.



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**Think early about  
ethics and ways to  
ensure data  
availability**







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One common challenge in evaluations of PVE/CVE/Derad initiatives is that **ethical and security concerns can limit access to data.**





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Government authorities  
and those  
implementing the  
initiative can be  
**hesitant to share  
information**, especially  
when it includes details  
about an **individual's  
political opinions or  
personal matters.**





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**Security aspects  
can limit access  
to sites where  
interviews or  
observations  
could be  
conducted.**





It is recommended to **find out early on what kinds of ethical, security and legal limitations there are for data sharing**, and to think about ways to reach the best possible results within these limits.



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# Bonus tip!





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Another set of  
challenges derives  
from the **sensitive  
and stigmatised  
nature of violent  
extremism.**





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An initiative's target groups and individuals can be difficult to reach and build trust with because of the **fragile situation and relations with people involved in extremism.**





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They may also be  
**unwilling to share  
their true views,** as  
those may be  
perceived as  
socially undesirable  
and stigmatised.







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Therefore, it is recommended to **think carefully about whom to choose as an evaluator**, to win the trust necessary for collecting the data – and do it in a way that does not jeopardise the individuals' trust in the initiative itself.