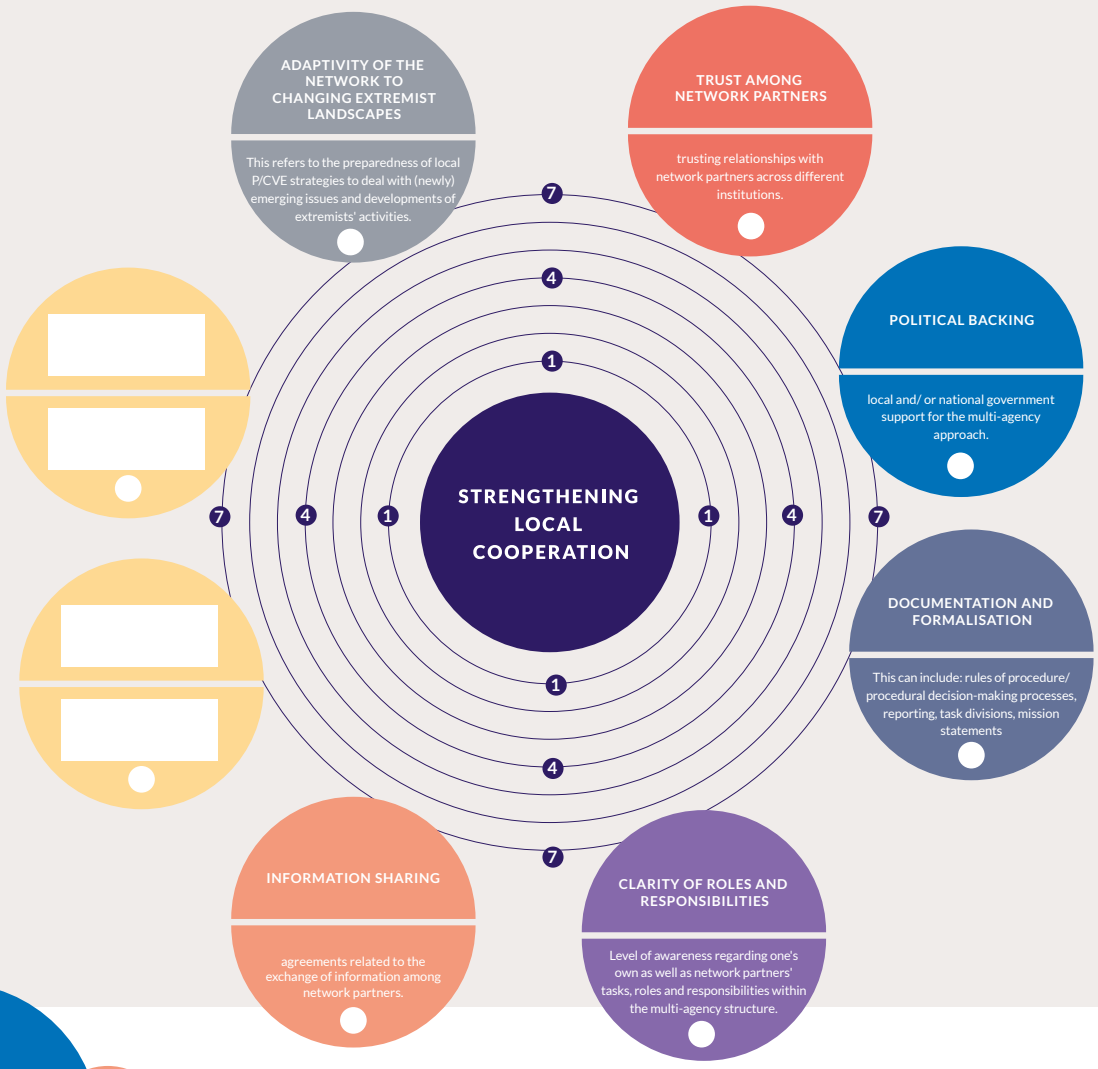
icommit

FACTSHEET MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION MODELS

The goal of the icommit project was to enable city-level P/CVE teams to improve their multi-stakeholder collaboration (MSC) structures. A central assumption (based on observations from previous related project work) being that city-level MSC networks face different challenges depending on whether they have just been founded or already have (long) established structures. While relevant to all, the below modules are phase specific in that modules 1 to 4 predominantly speak to those taking the first steps in their MSC and team-building journey, while modules 4 to 8 provide impulses to deepen and consolidate existing collaboration within established teams. However, it is importance to stress that all modules are relevant to all stakeholders at any stage of their collaboration, as to sustain collaboration over time takes adaptability to change whether that is a change in the composition of the MSC team or a changing risk picture. We believe that by targeting the support and training offered in the project more deliberately to the specific *developmental phase* a city finds itself in, we can achieve better and more applicable results.

In the icommit trainings, the exercise in Figure 1 served as a way for city teams to gain an understanding of where they situate themselves with a view to their MSC's overall development.



The below modules serve as guideposts to initiate the establishment or deepening of an existing multi-stakeholder collaboration and respond to the themes depicted in Figure 1 as well as to an underlying set of foundational elements identified over the course of the project, listed in Figure 2. Each module contributes to strengthening one or several of the foundational elements. Moreover, all modules contain exercises for independent implementation, which can be accessed in the project manual [insert title and hyperlink].

Foundational elements of multi-stakeholder collaboration

Empathy is commonly understood as the process of perceiving, being conscious of, sensitive to, and living through another person's emotions, thoughts, and experiences. In an MSC, it is crucial to be able to relate to the perspectives, role understandings, intentions, professional and institutional limitations of the other stakeholders in your team.

When stakeholders from different professional and institutional backgrounds collaborate, they need to develop **a shared understanding of terms and language** used to describe the problems they seek to address.

Inequalities and power relations can play a role in radicalisation processes and failure to acknowledge them limits the depths of our responses. For this reason, it is important to reflect on our position in society and ensure we **include under-represented perspectives** in collaborative projects.

Being open and willing to actively develop a more holistic understanding of radicalisation that extends beyond our professional and societal boundaries - **seeing the bigger picture** - as opposed to mono-casual explanations, allow us to intervene in more effective and creative ways.

What can make or break successful collaboration is whether all relevant stakeholders are **working towards a common (or multiple) goal(s)**. If a team is not working towards the same outcome, stakeholders are likely to question the value of their involvement.

First steps in multi-agency collaboration

Module 1 - Walk a mile in your colleagues' shoes

Each member of an MSC is influenced by their own institutional logics and personal (working) experiences which inform their individual approach to the field of prevention. To avoid frustration and to work together effectively and meaningfully, network members need to be able to empathise with the perspectives of other partners. The module contributes to building trust among network partners and strengthens the foundational element of empathy.

Module 2 - Speaking the same language

Clarity between MSC network partners around differences of terminology is essential and a shared language and understanding is needed to underpin situational responses and prevention efforts. The module contributes to a shared understanding of terms and language.

Module 3 - Looking through a gender lens

Radicalisation, recruitment, and participation in violent extremism and terrorism are all highly gendered and intersectional. Therefore, effective prevention must be responsive to these dynamics and seek to

mainstream gender and intersectionality across understandings of and responses to violent extremism. The module contributes to the adaptivity of the network to changing extremist landscapes, to building empathy, including under-represented perspectives and to seeing the bigger picture.

Module 4 - Understanding your local risk picture

For an MSC to effectively address radicalisation, it is important to develop a rich, holistic and granular picture of radicalisation pathways within the given local context. In the multi-level model of radicalisation, the micro/individual, meso/social and macro/structural level should be considered. The module contributes to adaptivity of the network to changing extremist landscapes as well as to seeing the bigger picture.

Deepening collaboration, strengthening relationships

Module 5 - Introduction to Theory of Change models

Theory of Change models are useful for teams who are just starting their collaboration to set common goals and agree upon outcomes but equally, are apt for established teams as a benchmark to monitor their progress, and to evaluate their performance against their stated goals. The module contributes to clarity of roles and responsibilities and working towards a common goal.

Module 6 - Putting things into practice

The project confirmed the assumption that collaborative learning is best done in practice. Thus, this module is designed to assess how well equipped an MSC team is to meet a challenge by collaboratively designing an intervention process. It contributes to all foundational elements as well as to building trust between network partners, clarity of roles and responsibilities, information sharing, documentation and formalisation as well as adaptivity of the network to changing extremist landscapes.

Module 7- Working with communities

For P/CVE projects to be meaningful they need to engage with the communities most affected by extremism. Collaboration with community partners can help build a better intelligence picture of local risk, credible community voices can act as powerful advocates for the legitimacy of P/CVE projects, and working with communities, especially those that feel marginalised, can help to circumvent stigmatisation and the creation of suspect communities. The module contributes to adaptivity of the network to including under-represented perspectives, changing extremist landscapes, and potentially political backing.

Module 8 - Gaining political buy-in

Securing local political leadership can help initiate MSC by providing resources (time, personnel, and funding), potentially support with the navigation of bureaucratic structures that can be a barrier to collaboration across different institutions and organisation, and critically drive a collaboration forward.

GET IN TOUCH WITH US

Violence Prevention Network/icommit project

Alt-Reinickendorf 25

D-13407 Berlin

+49 (0)30 407 55 122

icommit@violence-prevention-network.de

www.multiagencycooperation.eu

www.twitter.com/VPNDeradINT

European Forum for Urban Security

Violence Prevention Network

modus | zad

University of Bucharest

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