Evaluating Multi-Agency Working in extremism prevention

Evaluation and Mentoring of the Multi-Agency approach to violent radicalization in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany (EMMA)

26th German Prevention Congress 2021 / 14th Annual International Forum, Köln, 10/05/2021

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THE FIGHT AGAINST RADICALIZATION AT A LOCAL LEVEL

How to fight it locally?

Diverse policy initiatives on local, regional, national level

Multi-actor structures = crucial, but…

What is needed for effective cooperation?

Multi-agency structures and working processes (MAW)

are crucial for

early and effective identification of individuals at-risk,

improved information-sharing,

joint decision-making and coordinated action

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Evaluation!

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EU-funded EMMA-project

The EMMA project: *Evaluation and Mentoring of the Multi-Agency approach to violent radicalization in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany*

EU funding: European Union's Internal Security Fund — Police Action Grant 871058 — EMMA

Timing: 2020-2022

Partners: Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG), Ghent University, RadarAdvies, Violence Prevention Netwerk (VPN)

Specific objectives

Identifying key factors for MAW

What works and under what conditions?

- Systematic Review -> measurable process indicators -> self-evaluation tool
- Participatory observations -> identify possible strenghts and pitfalls
- Interviews
- Focus groups

Improving coordination and communication

Improve coordination of services and lines of communication

- Self-evaluation tool for local actors involved in MAW
- Peer-to-peer assessment networks
- Mentoring: Individual consultancies for professional hands-on advice

Enhancing professional's ability

Guiding local actors to a more professional MAW approach

- Training modules and e-learning modules
- Peer –to-peer assessment networks
- => Translate lessons learned to their MAW

Specific objectives

Lessons learned

Transpose the lessons learned to all MAW agencies and policy makers

- Digital platform with hands-on information on diverse types of MAW (start-ups, advanced users/experts)
- Communication programma
- International conference to promote the tool and the platform
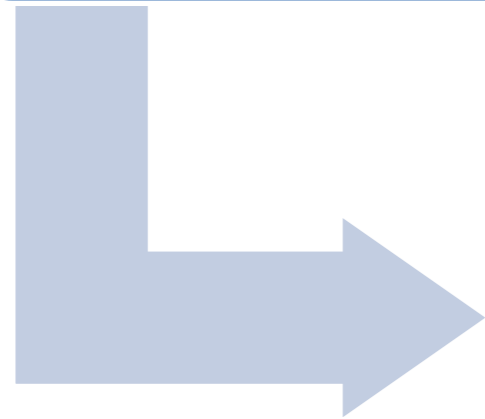
Standardized procedures

Dealing with the diverse MAW characteristics and structures specific to the local context

- NOT: towards standardized MAW construction
- Determine key factors and indicators for self-evaluation
- Analytical tools for advising, supporting and consulting with local MAW structures

Methodology

Process evaluation

- Field 'preparation'
- Evaluation research through interviews, observations and focus groups
- Systematic literature review -> self-assessment tool

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Mentoring

- Individual guidance
- Peer consultancy
- International workshops and training modules

radarAdvies bureau voor sociale vraagstukken · Violence Prevention Network e.V. · VVSG
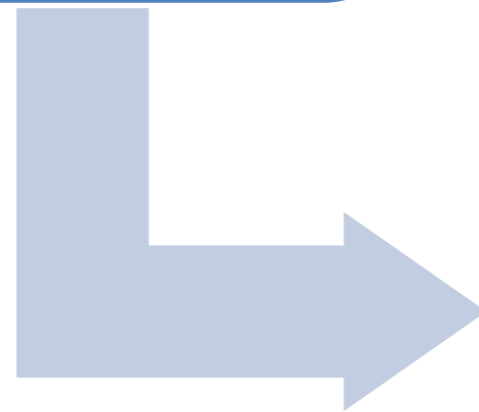
Extend

- Digital platform for all MAW officials

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THE EMMA PROJECT

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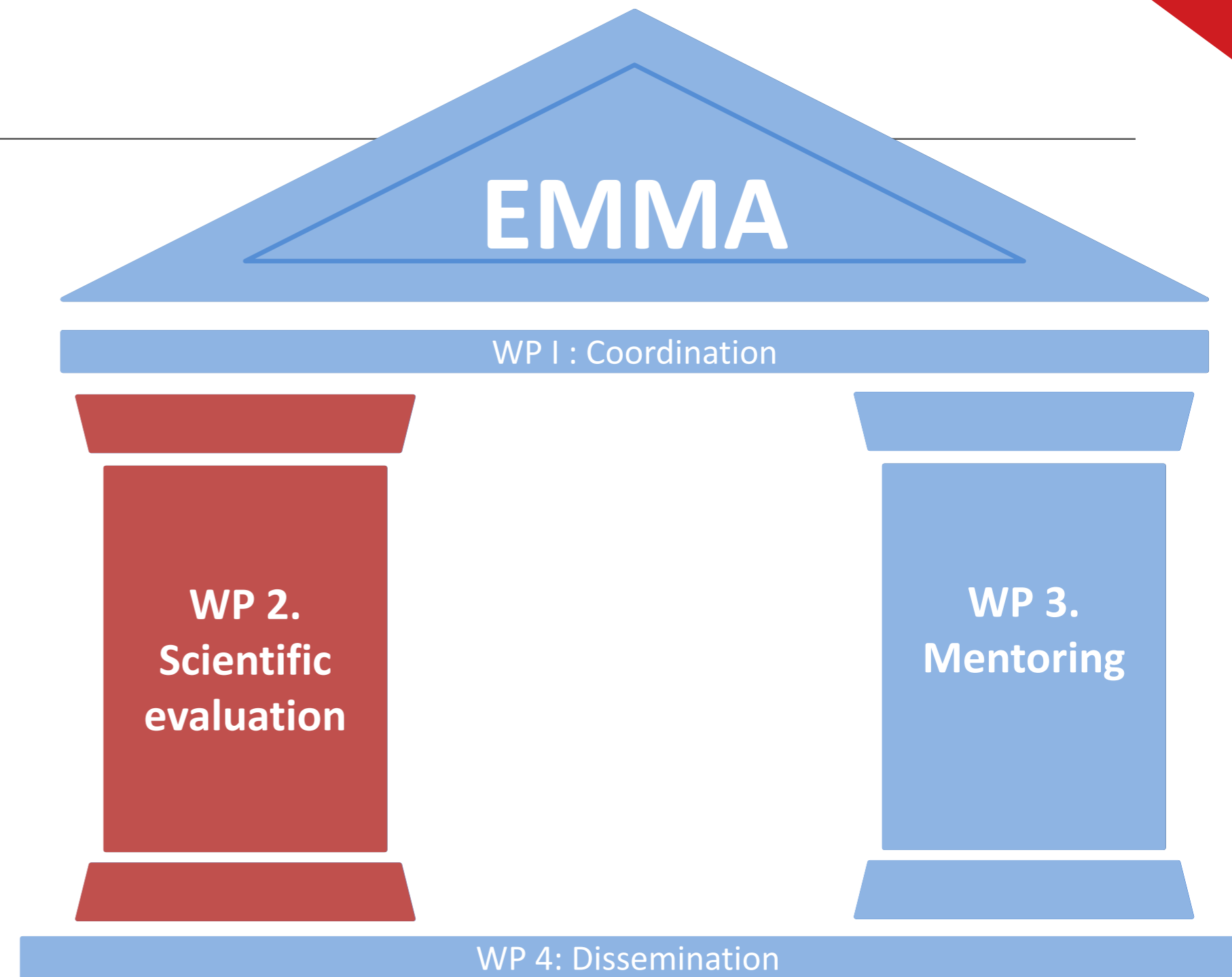
WP 2: The scientific pillar

Realistic proces evaluation (BE, NL, DE)

- HOW does the approach work?
- WHAT actually works?
- Under what conditions?

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WP I : Coordination

**WP 2.
Scientific
evaluation**

**WP 3.
Mentoring**

WP 4: Dissemination

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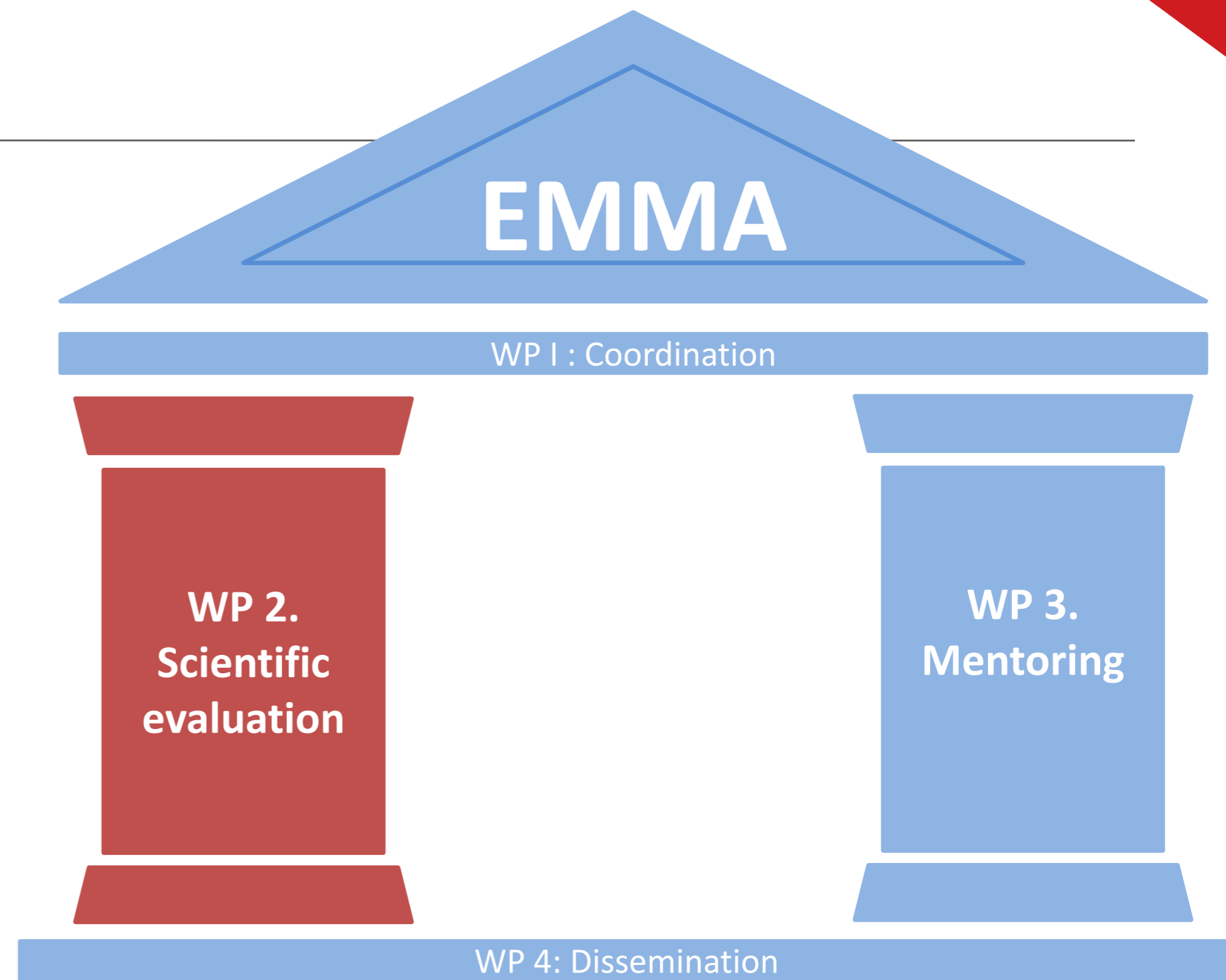
OBJECTIVES

SELF-EVALUATION TOOL

- Practical **self-evaluation tool for local MAW actors** with extensive manual
- Constructive **recommendations for MAW** approaches in the context of radicalisation

EMMA

WP I : Coordination

WP 2. Scientific evaluation

WP 3. Mentoring

WP 4: Dissemination

Research Aim

Perform a **process-evaluation** of the MAW approach in Belgium, Netherlands and Germany

Make **constructive recommendations**

for MAW in the context of radicalization

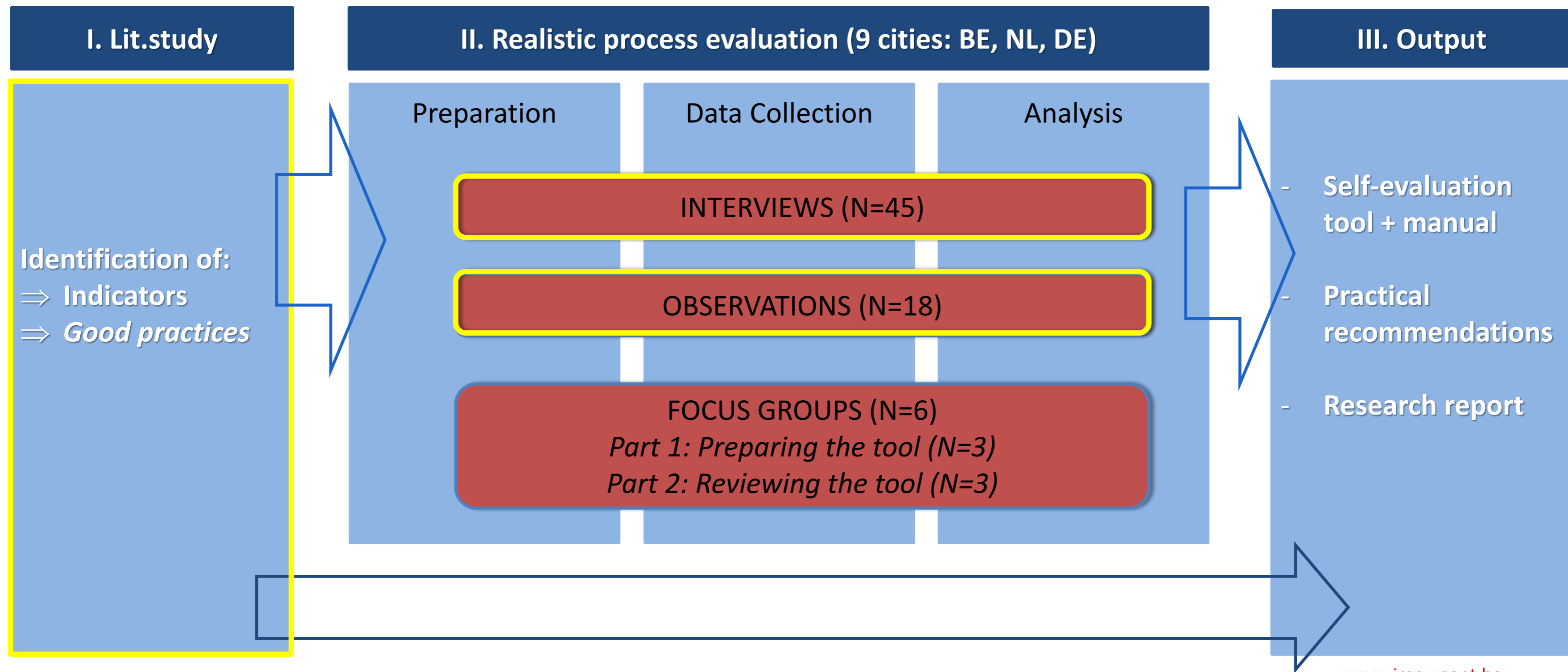and violent extremism

Realistic evaluation

- HOW does the approach work?

- WHAT works?

- And under what CONDITIONS?

Research question:

How and under what conditions does MAW in the context of radicalization and violent extremism work within the three countries?

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RESEARCH PHASES

I. Lit.study	II. Realistic process evaluation (9 cities: BE, NL, DE)			III. Output
	Preparation	Data Collection	Analysis	
Identification of: ⇒ **Indicators** ⇒ *Good practices*	INTERVIEWS (N=45)			- **Self-evaluation tool + manual** - **Practical recommendations** - **Research report**
	OBSERVATIONS (N=18)			
	FOCUS GROUPS (N=6) *Part 1: Preparing the tool (N=3)* *Part 2: Reviewing the tool (N=3)*			

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Research Planning

Feb '20 - Aug '21	**Systematic literature review**	Overview of good MAW practices Identify measurable process indicators/good practice indicators
May '20 – July '20	**Fieldwork preparation**	• Selection of 9 MAWs (3 cities x 3 = 9 cities) • Contacting MAW in each city • Prepare informed consents • Prepare interview schedules • Prepare observation lists
Sept '20 – Feb '21	**Fieldwork**	• Participatory observations (2 per city = 18) • Semi-structured interviews (5 per city = 45) - With local government actor(s), security actor(s) and socio-preventive actor(s)
March '21 – May '21	**Focus Groups**	Focus group to prepare self-evaluation tool (n = 3) 1 focus group per country (including the 3 MAWs per country)

May '21 – July '21	**Self-evaluation tool**	Using - Indicators of 'good practice' from lit. review - Qualitative results from process evaluation
Sept '21 - Oct '21	**Focus Group**	Focus group to evaluate self-evaluation tool (n = 3) 1 focus group per country (including the 3 MAWs per country)

Indicator list

Developed from screened literature (systematic lit. review)

Criteria for retrieving process indicators:
- *Occurrence*: repeated or single observation in the literature?
- *Evidence*: rationale for this indicator specified?
- *Usability:* is the indicator measurable (Or can it be transformed in a measurable indicator?)
- *Applicability*: could it be applied in the MAW context?

Grouped in 9 broad categories

As concrete and measurable as possible

Living document

Categories

- Information sharing
- Coordinated collaboration
- Approach
- Vision
- Case management
- Expertise
- Quality assurance
- Practical conditions
- structure

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LITERATURE STUDY: INCLUSION CRITERIA

1. (De)radicalisation

- Intervention/action/approach to prevent at-risk individuals and/or disengaging radicalised individuals

2. Local MAW

- At least 1 MAW intervention described at the local/meso level
- MAW: cooperation between several organisations/institutions

3. Evaluation

- Evaluation of the effect of one or more MAW approaches OR recommendations of good MAW practices
- No economic evaluations

STATUS AND FIRST RESULTS

SOURCE	Identified after title/abstract screening	Included in literature search after screening for inclusion criteria
Scientific literature	19	4
Grey literature (website search)	67	46
Expert literature	11	8
TOTAL	97	58

Next step:

Identifying literature using the snowball method

FIRST THOUGHTS

– **Little evaluation research** on MAW in the radicalization context

– Very **few scientific publications**. Mainly reports.

– Lack of **transparency** in research methods – *How did the evaluation happen?*

– **Most discussed** recommendations (top 3)

    1. Sharing information

    2. Collaboration between actors

    3. Composition of actors

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LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Roberts (2018): Detecting Radicalisation in Communities: The Role of Multi-Agency Partnership and the Power of Local Information

Research question:

Do local MAW partnerships play a significant role in the detection and prevention of radicalization?

Method:

– 18 semi-structured interviews + observations in three MAW partnerships in UK (Sussex, Surrey)

– Best and worst element in MAW partnership?

RAIS | RESEARCH ASSOCIATION for INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES
APRIL 2018

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Detecting Radicalisation in Communities:
The Role of Multi-Agency Partnership and
the Power of Local Information

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ABSTRACT: Following the 2017 UK terrorist attacks by extremist religious individuals, it is notable that politicians and individual commentators remarked on the pressing need for local partnership working in England (BBC question time, 5 June 2017; Faith Matters 2017; Brendan Cox 19 June 2017). For it is by this means, people working together in a community, that local information and intelligence can be accessed, especially relating to emerging radicalisation. The early warning

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

+
- Rapid information sharing
- Networks
- Good relations between actors

-
- Processes and procedures
- Time between meetings
- Long presentations

Some recommendations:
- Invest in relationships between MAW partners. Components playing a role:
  - Frequency of contacts
  - Duration of relationship
- Trust, openness and honesty in information sharing
- To gather layered information about individuals and their immediate environment: Engage in dialogue with local communities and involve a variety of organizations

Yes, powerful role for MAW partnerships in detection and prevention of radicalization

Ongoing research

Publication literature review

Realistic process evaluation (9 cities in BE, NL, DE) data collection and analysis

Outputs: self-evaluation tool for practitioners,

All results to be expected end of 2021/beginning 2022

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