

Terms of Reference

Evaluation of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs Counterterrorism policy

IOB, 20 February 2020

1. Introduction

Terrorism is an age-old phenomenon that has undergone many types of classifications, shapes and identities.¹ The surge after 11 September 2001 has increased international attention towards counter-terrorism on an unprecedented scale. Since 2002, the world experienced a marked rise in terrorist attacks.² In response to this rise, there has been a huge increase in international counter-terrorism efforts. These efforts are highly diverse, including military interventions, development of preventive strategies and international cooperation, and community-based programmes aimed at addressing root causes of terrorism.

However, while policy frameworks are in place and funding has been made available, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of counterterrorism (CT), preventing violent extremism (PVE) and countering violent extremism (CVE) is underdeveloped, creating a lack of evidence on what works and what doesn't.^{3 4} This may result in wasting efforts, (precious) time and money and lead to initiatives being ineffective or even counterproductive.

The Government of the Netherlands supports counterterrorism efforts both nationally and internationally. The international component of the Dutch counter-terrorism efforts draws on both the Dutch National Counterterrorism Strategy 2016-2020 and the 2018 – 2022 Integrated International Security Strategy, in which the Government of the Netherlands outlined three strategic pillars: *prevention, defence and reinforcement*. Subsequently, these cornerstones inform targets, programmes and intervention areas. Counterterrorism and violent extremism are key areas in this strategy. In the Dutch National Counterterrorism Strategy 2016-2020 extremism is defined as *'the*

¹ The government of the Netherlands uses the following definition of terrorism: from ideological motives threatening, preparing, or carrying out serious violence against people, or acts aimed at causing societal disruptive property damage, with the aim of bringing about social change, inciting serious fear among the population, or influencing political decision-making (NCTV, <https://www.nctv.nl/organisatie/ct/terrorismebestrijding/index.aspx>, NCTb, 2011:20 and NCTV, 2016: 6.

² Institute for Economics and Peace. 2017. Global Terrorism Index 2017. Measuring the impact of terrorism, Sydney, <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2017/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2017.pdf>

³ C.f. Gielen, A.J. 2017. 'Countering Violent Extremism: A Realist Review for Assessing What Works, For Whom, in what circumstances and how?'. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, May 2017:1–19; Van Hemert, D., van den Berg, H., van Vliet, T., Roelofs, M. and in 't Veld, M.. 2014. Synthesis report on the state-of-the-art in evaluating the effectiveness of counter-violent extremism initiatives. IMPACT Europe project.

⁴ Definitions of CT, PVE and CVE overlap, and there is no single agreed upon definition. However, CT generally relates to activities that directly aim to address terrorist threats through security and justice services. PVE and CVE refer to activities that aim to mitigate violent extremism through non-coercive measures. Sometimes it is argued that CVE are non-coercive measures aimed at deradicalisation of violent extremists and that PVE is aimed at preventing recruitment to violent extremist ideologies. In practice CVE and PVE activities often overlap.

*phenomenon whereby persons or groups are prepared to violate the law or carry out activities that undermine the democratic legal order out of ideological motives’.*⁵ These activities can be either violent (acts of violence, assault or more serious forms of violence) or non-violent (hate speech, spreading fear, spread disinformation, demonize and intimidate).⁶

Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), responsibility for CT and CVE policy and interventions lies with the Counterterrorism and National Security Division of the Security Policy Department (DVB/TN). This covers a broad range of CT-related files, including but not limited to: returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters; international cooperation on CT, both bilaterally and in multilateral forums like the GCTF, the United Nations, and the EU; the CT activities in the EU; relations with other ministries on CT; and the effect of CT-measures on civil society. Therefore this evaluation mainly focus on activities of DVB/TN, however we will also look at coherence and cooperation with other partners. DVB/TN works with other regional and thematic departments, including the Stability and Humanitarian Aid Department (DSH), which is involved in PVE policies and interventions with respect to addressing the link with the root causes of violent extremism. DSH focusses on *preventing violent extremism* with the aim *‘to improve people’s resilience against violent extremism and to provide viable alternatives’*. DVB/TN also works closely with DMM, DAM, DAF and partners outside the MFA, such as the NCTV.

An evaluation of the pursued policy over the last years (2015-2019) could help the MFA in improving relevance and impact of its policy and programmes. Since CT and P/CVE is still high on the security agenda,⁷ a reflection on achievements and lessons learned comes at an appropriate moment. As discussed further below this evaluation will focus on three subjects:

1. Conditions for effectiveness of selected activities on P/CVE.
2. Dutch involvement in the GCTF.
3. The system of Regional Security Coordinators (RSCs).

These three subjects will be dealt with as separate studies, and contribute to a synthesis report.

2. Purpose and timeframe of the evaluation

The evaluation focuses primarily on the period between 2015 and 2020, thereby taking the start of the Dutch co-chairmanship of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF) and the setup of the network of Regional Security Coordinators (RSC) as the starting point. Where relevant, the evaluation will include activities that preceded this timeframe.

The evaluation has two main objectives:

- To assess the objectives of the MFA in the policy area of CT and P/CVE, and investigate the relevance, coherence and, where possible, effectiveness (see text box 1⁸) of MFA policies and interventions⁹ (**accountability**).
- To provide lessons and recommendations for future policy and programming (**learning**).

⁵ NCTV, 2016: 5.

⁶ <https://www.aivd.nl/onderwerpen/extremisme>

⁷ See Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, *Wereldwijd voor een veilig Nederland. Geïntegreerde Buitenland- en Veiligheidsstrategie 2018-2022*, 2018: 33-34.

⁸ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

⁹ This does not include kinetic interventions.

Text box 1. Relevance, coherence and effectiveness

According to the OECD-DAC criteria ‘relevance’ is defined as: *The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries’, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.* The question related to that being: Is the intervention doing the right things? In relation to this evaluation the Netherlands becoming co-chair of the GCTF and the setting up the RSC-network by the MFA can for example be perceived as interventions.

The criteria ‘coherence’ is defined as: *The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.* The question related to that being: How well does the intervention fit? In relation to this evaluation one can for example think of how DVB/TN interventions on the international level (for example within the GCTF) fits on the level of the other clusters within DVB/TN (regional and national) as well as the partners of DVB/TN within the MFA (DSH, DAM) or outside the MFA (NCTV).

The criteria ‘effectiveness’ is defined as: *The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.* The question related to that being: Is the intervention achieving its objectives? So, for example whether the objectives the MFA had for its co-chairmanship of the GCTF have been achieved or whether the RSC-network have strengthened bilateral and multilateral cooperation on CT and P/CVE.

As will be presented below in the overview of the MFA’s policies and interventions, the MFA’s activities on CT and P/CVE are broad and varied. This evaluation will not investigate every aspect of the MFA’s CT and P/CVE policies and interventions, but focus on selected elements. This selection is explained under scope on page 10.

Text box 2. Defining the MFA’s CT and P/CVE policies

Whereas DVB/TN focuses on the more specific security area (CT and CVE) and the more political dimension of PVE, DSH focusses on the more generic PVE(-relevant) area, incl. the link with other DGIS-departments. Activities in the PVE-area are (partly) funded from DSH including GCERF core funding and the UNDP regional programme (Africa).

3. Analysis underlying choices for focus and questions of the evaluation

Prior to making decisions on the focus of the evaluation, and to inform these decisions, IOB conducted the following exercises:

1. A **policy reconstruction**, to make an overview of the MFA’s policy priorities, strategies and activities regarding CT and P/CVE.
2. A **Delphi study**¹⁰, drawing on a panel of experts, and aiming to identify key trends in the field of CT and P/CVE and potential niche areas of policy and intervention.
3. A **stakeholder analysis**, mapping stakeholders and their leverage relating to the evaluation.

Below, this ToR presents a brief summary of these three exercises.

¹⁰ This study used the ‘Delphi method’, which was developed by the RAND Corporation as a way to obtain the most reliable consensus of a group of experts.

3.1. Policy reconstruction

A policy reconstruction was conducted to map the policies and interventions that were developed and implemented throughout the evaluation period. This reconstruction is based on interviews with MFA policy officers and a review of policy documents.¹¹

The responsibility for the MFA's policy on CT and CVE lies with DVB/TN. DVB/TN coordinates foreign policy on CT and CVE, and is the first point of contact within the MFA for the National Coordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (NCTV) and the intelligence and security services on matters related to national security:¹²

'DVB-TN provides, within a constantly changing environment, political interpretation and advice on external threats for national security. To this end, TN connects its international network with national partners. TN is at the forefront of promoting Dutch positions and results internationally, implementing Dutch policy or developing new foreign policy.'

DVB-TN is organized in four clusters, the national cluster, regional cluster, multilateral cluster and the intelligence and security cluster.

DVB/TN: National cluster: mainly involves MFA participation in national committees/working groups, and the chairmanship of the 'sanctions committee' ('beveiligingsoverleg'), which decides on national sanctions and freezing of assets. Furthermore, this cluster deals with the Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) question, which is a rather political sensitive subject. Other activities include:

- COMET: EU Council Working Party responsible for sanctions at EU level.
- Gemeenschappelijk Comité Terrorismebestrijding (GCT, Joint Committee Counterterrorism). Coordinated by the NCTV. DGPZ takes part.
- Dreigingsbeeld Terrorisme Nederland (DTN, Terrorist Threat Assessment Netherlands). Conducted by NCTV, DVB/TN facilitates the gathering of information and provides input.

Regional cluster: Coordination of CT and PVE activities in targeted regions. An important part of the cluster is the coordination of information and activities of its regional programme that has been initiated in the framework of the strengthening of the (international dimension within) national CT-policies. This includes both the creation of a network of Regional Security Coordinators (RSCs) as well as a budget for the funding of projects. In the past period this cluster has been in a transitional phase, defining more precisely and focussing on its core business ('international diplomacy and political work in the security and/or CT and P/CVE-specific area') vis-à-vis its partners in the area of development cooperation ('root causes'), wider security area and the wider diplomatic resp. political dialogue.

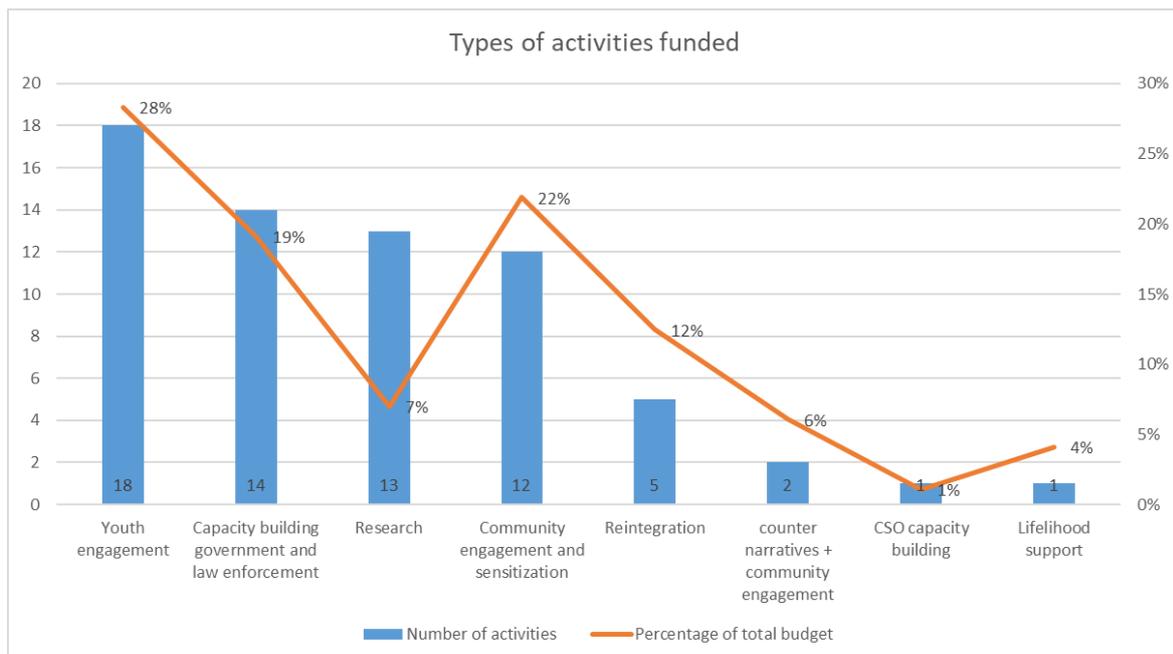
The RSC network was set up in 2015, and RSCs were placed in six regions (see table 2). Their objective is to report on and help address violent extremism and the threat of terrorism at the source. Amongst other things, they report on trends and changes in terrorism and violent extremism threats, laws and policies and politics of other countries regarding CT and P/CVE, and identify and supporting projects to that effect.

¹¹ What is presented here is a summary of the policy reconstruction. For more details, see the full policy reconstruction.

¹² Rijksportaal over DVB/TN.

Table 2: Regional Security Coordinator posts and working areas		
Region	Stationed at	Countries
Mashreq	Amman	Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon
Maghreb	Tunis	Tunisia, Libya, Algeria
Horn of Africa	Nairobi	Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania
Sahel and Sub-Saharan Africa	Addis Ababa	Focus: Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria (north east) and Chad. Flexible: Ethiopia, Benin, Mauritania, Sudan and Cameroon
South East Asia	Bangkok	Focus: Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Singapore and Philippines. Flexible: India, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Pakistan
Western Balkan	Sarajevo – <i>new region since October 2018, replacing the Gulf</i>	Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, North-Macedonia and Serbia
Gulf	Doha – <i>discontinued mid-2019</i>	Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, UAE

Projects identified and monitored by the RSC network are funded mainly from DVB/TN budget and the Stability Fund and serve to strengthen the information or diplomatic position of the Netherlands. This includes projects that strengthen the capacity of governments and civil society to combat radicalization and terrorism, with the emphasis on preventive measures. See the figure below for the most common types of activities between 2016 and 2019 regarding CT and P/CVE funded by the MFA, most of which have been identified by RSCs. The total budget of these 59 projects is about EUR 30 mln.



The regional cluster and the RSC-network on the ground are also a primary counterpart to DSH when including:

- coordinating the Stability fund;
- providing input for the PVE toolkit, which aims to ensure PVE- and conflict-sensitivity of wider ODA-funded programmes and projects.

Multilateral cluster: Coordination of Dutch participation in multilateral institutions and forums. In recent years, the work of the multilateral cluster has been dominated by the Dutch co-chairmanship of the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) between 2015-2019.

- The GCTF is an *'informal, a-political, multilateral counterterrorism (CT) platform. Central to the Forum's overarching mission is the promotion of a strategic, long-term approach to counter terrorism and the violent extremist ideologies that underpin it.'*¹³ Within the GCTF, policymakers, experts, practitioners and organisations meet to discuss new challenges and best practices related to CT and P/CVE, with the objective to produce international, non-binding policy recommendations (GCTF Good Practice documents, memoranda and policy toolkits).
- The GCTF-membership includes 29 countries and the EU, which meet annually at ministerial level, and biannually in a Coordinating Committee. The GCTF works in close partnership with the UN, and with the three 'GCTF-inspired institutions' that support the implementation of GCTF Good Practice Documents:
 - The Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) is a *'multi-stakeholder global fund'* that aims to work with local partners 'to strengthen community resilience to violent extremism'. The Netherlands is one of the bigger donors of GCERF and has a seat at the GCERF Board.
 - *Hedayah*, International Centre of Excellence for CVE. DVB has a chair in the steering board.
 - International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IJJ). The IJJ has 13 member states, including the Netherlands. DVB is represented in the governing board by the NCTV.
- The GCTF has five working groups: three thematic groups focusing on CVE, FTFs and Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law (CJROL) and two regional capacity-building working groups for the East- and West-Africa regions. The GCTF administrative unit coordinates the organization of the GCTF plenary and expert meetings.
- Between 2015 and 2019, the Netherlands was GCTF co-chair together with Morocco. During its co-chairmanship, the Netherlands invested in implementation of good practices, addressing new challenges ahead of the curve, and strengthening partnerships with the UN and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).¹⁴
- The Netherlands has also co-chaired the GCTF FTF Working Group (2014-2017) and (co-)led several GCTF Initiatives, amongst others on 'Addressing Returning Families of Foreign Terrorist Fighters' and on the 'Nexus between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism'.

Other activities of the multilateral cluster include:

¹³ <https://www.thegctf.org/About-us/Background-and-Mission>

¹⁴ The results of four years co-chairmanship have been shared with Parliament, see: [Kamerbrief over resultaten co-voorzitterschap Global Counterterrorism Forum \(GCTF\), 2 December 2019.](#)

- Global Coalition against Daesh. A coalition of 81 partners, in which DVB/TN plays an active role for instance by co-chairing of the Foreign Terrorist Fighters Working Group.
- EU – *Working Party on Terrorism (International Aspects)* (COTER). Capital based working party in which DVB-TN participates on behalf of the Netherlands.
- EU – *Working Party on Terrorism* (TWP). Capital based working party in which the NCTV – with input from DVB/TN - participates on behalf of the Netherlands.
- NATO – Permanent Representation NATO participates, DVB provides input.
- UN – Implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (GCTS) and the Plan of Action on PVE; membership UN Security Council 2018; cooperation with the UN in regional efforts; regular dialogue on international CT and PVE policies, programmes and international cooperation.

Intelligence and security cluster: coordinates with intelligence and security services, and prepares the MFA participation in the Council for Security and Intelligence (Raad Veiligheid en Inlichtingen, RVI). Although this cluster is part of DVB/TN, the cluster's activities cover a wide range of topics beyond counterterrorism.

3.2. Budget and resources

Counterterrorism is covered on the Foreign Affairs budget under article 2.2 '*Bestrijding internationale criminaliteit en terrorisme*'. This article covers several expenses¹⁵ of the MFA related to counterterrorism such as the Dutch efforts in the multilateral context, especially the co-chairmanship of the Global Counterterrorism Forum and the membership of the Global Coalition to Counter/Defeat ISIS as well as the yearly contribution to the International Centre for Counter Terrorism (ICCT)¹⁶. Furthermore, DVB/TN funds projects directed at CVE and PVE. These projects are financed by the Stability Fund¹⁷ (accounted for under article 2.4 MFA) and funds from the Cabinet's decision to strengthen counterterrorism efforts of the MFA (see below). The projects and programs, which are funded from budget article 2.2,¹⁸ are aimed at capacity building in regions that are a priority for the Netherlands to prevent and combat violent extremism and radicalization.

¹⁵ The budget of the MFA is published online, however it is rather difficult to provide exact numbers of budget and resources that have been allocated towards counterterrorism at the MFA as a whole, let alone the budget that has been spend.

¹⁶ 'ICCT is an independent think and do tank providing multidisciplinary policy advice and practical, solution-oriented implementation support on prevention and the rule of law, two vital pillars of effective counterterrorism. ICCT connects experts, policymakers, civil society actors and practitioners from different fields by providing a platform for productive collaboration, practical analysis, and exchange of experiences and expertise, with the ultimate aim of identifying innovative and comprehensive approaches to preventing and countering terrorism.' See <https://icct.nl/about/mission/>

¹⁷ Stability Fund has an annual reservation of EUR 6 million for C/PVE.

¹⁸ In addition to counterterrorism, under this policy article funds are allocated towards cybersecurity, the Global Forum of Cyber Expertise, and a yearly contribution to the Finland based European Centre of Excellence Countering Hybrid Threats as well. This will not be covered in this evaluation.

Strengthening the CT-chain of the MFA (GCTF and international CT-network)

In the Council of Ministers of 27 February 2015, it was decided to allocate EUR 42.6 mln. for the period of 2016-2020 towards the MFA (in particular DVB/TN) to strengthen its capacity in the fight against international terrorism and the prevention of radicalization.¹⁹

In mln. euro	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
MFA	9,4	10	10,6	7,6	5	42.6

Of the EUR 42.6 million, EUR 29 million was intended for (locally driven) research and capacity building programs into context-specific root causes of radicalization, the stimulation of opposition to violent extremist propaganda, the substantive strengthening of the GCTF co-chairmanship and providing training aimed at recognizing document fraud and identifying fraudulent visa applicants / passport holders. The remaining EUR 13.6 million was intended to strengthen the capacity on CT, preventing radicalization and violent extremism in the form of extra fte.²⁰ The strengthened CT-network, in the form of added fte, was build up from 2016 (see table).

The CT-network was strengthened by a network of six Regional Security Coordinators (RSCs) that was set up in 2015 and implemented in 2016 (see table 2). In addition, extra personnel was placed (5 fte) on GCTF-relevant diplomatic missions²² and staff (6 fte) was seconded to strategic posts in the period of 2016-2020.²³

The table shows the number of the total fte's added to the MFA to strengthen capacity on CT and P/CVE (RSC's and GCTF liaisons for example).²⁴ The peak of extra fte in 2017 and 2018 is due to the Dutch GCTF chairmanship until 2019.²⁵ Apart from the extra staff that was committed to the MFA during the GCTF chairmanship, 1,5 fte was available at DVB/TN to work in the context of the GCTF chairmanship.

EUR mln.	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Total (added) staff	2.6 mln. 13 fte	3.4 mln. 17 fte	3.4 mln. 17 fte	2.4 mln. 12 fte	1.8 mln. 9 fte	13.6 mln. ²¹

Budget and resources: Counterterrorism budget MFA in perspective

The MFA is one of the partners in the Dutch security chain to whom budget and resources are allocated to counter terrorism. Other ministries or governmental actors deal with counterterrorism and preventing violent extremism as well. Unfortunately, just as with the budget of the MFA, their

¹⁹ Kamerbrief Versterking veiligheidsketen, 27 februari 2015, beschikbaar via

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2015/02/27/kamerbrief-over-de-versterkingen-in-de-veiligheidsketen>

²⁰ KST 34300-V-9, November 2015: p.17.

²¹ The number of millions mentioned in this table are not additional but part of the 42.6 mln mentioned in the table above.

²² One extra fte was placed on the diplomatic mission in Ankara, Washington DC and Rabat, while two fte were added to the Dutch Permanent Representation at the UN.

²³ For example, secondments at the EEAS mission in Islamabad and the CVE research institute Hedayah in Abu Dhabi.

²⁴ The table shows the total of added fte, so the total added staff in 2017 and 2018 was the same (6 RSC's, 6 seconded staff and 5 fte added to diplomatic missions).

²⁵ DVB-TN 164/2015, internal memo.

budgets are not specific regarding their spending on counterterrorism. For example, the Ministry of Justice and Security has included a 'Counterterrorism and National Security' expenditure post in its budget. Although the budget provides some specification of the expenditure, it is not possible to show what part of the budget is allocated towards national security and what is allocated specifically towards counterterrorism. However, what can be said is that the estimated budget of budget article 'Counterterrorism and National Security' for 2020 is 266.427.000²⁶ whereas the budget of the MFA article '*Bestrijding internationale criminaliteit en terrorisme*' for 2020 is 13.751.000²⁷. To put the counterterrorism budget of the MFA even more in perspective one could look at the budget of the Ministry of Interior who, among other things is responsible for the General Intelligence and Security Service. The estimated budget of article 2 of this Ministry for example - 'National Security' -, is 297.861.000 which includes the budget for the intelligence service in 2020.²⁸ Other departments who are part of the security chain are for example the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Defence is among other things responsible for the Military Intelligence and Security Service as well as military operations which in some cases are (partly) focused on countering terrorism.²⁹ Unfortunately, their budget gives no indication of their budget allocated towards counterterrorism. The same applies for the Ministry of Finance, who deals with the financing of terrorism. Also based on their budget it is not clear what is allocated towards counterterrorism. What can be said however, is that the MFA has a modest budget in comparison to the other ministries.

3.3. Delphi Study

The Delphi method was developed in the 1960s by the RAND Corporation as a way to obtain the most reliable consensus of a group of experts. Drawing on a panel of experts, this study aimed to identify key trends in the field of CT and P/CVE and potential niche areas of policy and intervention. Responding to three questions, the Delphi panel resulted in three extensive lists of what the individual panel members consider relevant threats, trends and policy instruments. The various items listed by the panel members were subsequently ranked in order of importance. The results of this Delphi panel indicate the following:

- The field of CT and P/CVE is quite divided, and experts do not agree on what the most pressing issues were in recent years, and what the most pressing issues and most important policy instruments will be in the coming years.
- However, there was *moderate* agreement on a number of issues:
 - The most pressing issues in the past five years were 'ISIS', 'foreign terrorist fighters' and 'home-grown terrorism'.
 - The most pressing issues in the next two to four years are expected to be 'ongoing or increased geopolitical conflict in the Middle East' and 'increase of far-right extremism'.
 - The most important policy actions for the MFA in the next two to four years include 'focus on human rights', 'focus on conflict resolution and stabilisation in fragile environments', 'focus on flow and return and/or repatriation of foreign fighters',

²⁶ KST 35300-VI-2, 2019: p.82.

²⁷ KST 35300-V-2, 2019: p.32. As stated earlier, in addition to counterterrorism, under this policy article funds are allocated towards cybersecurity, the Global Forum of Cyber Expertise, and a yearly contribution to the European Centre of Excellence Countering Hybrid Threats as well.

²⁸ KST 35300-VII-2, 2019: p.48.

²⁹ The fight against IS in Iraq for the Coalition for example.

and promote knowledge exchange and fund research - investigate impact - promote M&E.

- Several issues overlap and reoccur in all three questions and are therefore important to note:
 - Promoting an evidence-base for CT and P/CVE: A first trend that can be observed between the three lists is the lack of substantive evidence underlying CT and P/CVE programming, and a call for strengthening M&E and the promotion of research and knowledge exchange.
 - Dealing with foreign terrorist fighters: Thousands of individuals, worldwide, travelled to Iraq and Syria to join extremist groups. The flow and return or repatriation of foreign terrorist fighters and their families is considered a crucial policy issue. Linked to this is the issue of imprisoned terrorist fighters, the risk of (further) radicalisation in prisons, and efforts to reintegrate and de-radicalise persons affiliated with extremist groups.
 - Human rights: There is a dual relationship between human rights and CT and P/CVE. On the one hand, there is a risk that certain CT and P/CVE measures (or abuse thereof) result in violations of human rights. On the other hand, human rights violations may contribute to an enabling environment for recruitment by extremist groups. The protection of human rights are therefore also considered as a vital element for P/CVE policies and programming.
 - Root causes and governance: Structural problems related to (or hindering) security, governance and social-economic well-being are not directly causing radicalisation and violence, but are considered important drivers. Efforts to promote conflict resolution, stabilisation and development are therefore considered to be crucial elements for preventing violent extremism.

The objective of the Delphi Study was to determine focus for the evaluation and help us to select particular subjects to investigate in more depth. Unfortunately, the Delphi Study did not show clear consensus on what subjects are a priority and therefore the Delphi Study was less helpful for the selection of the building blocks of the study.

4. Scope and building blocks

Given the broadness of the MFA's areas of operation in the field of CT and P/CVE (and of the field in general), this evaluation will focus on a selected set of subjects. Drawing on the exercises described above, and on further consultations with DVB/TN, IOB decided to **focus on the following three subjects**:

1. **Conditions for Effectiveness of selected activities** on P/CVE.
2. Dutch involvement in the **GCTF**.
3. The system of **Regional Security Coordinators** (RSCs).

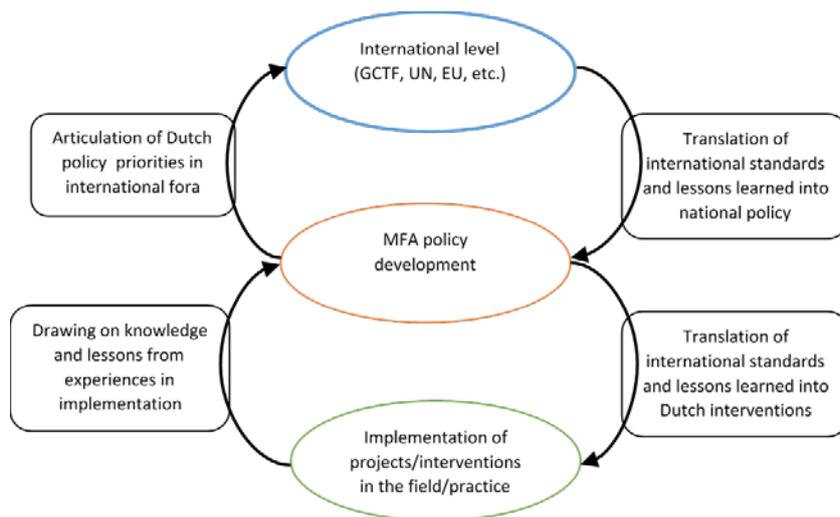
These three subjects will be dealt with as separate studies (described in more detail below), and contribute to a synthesis report. Each of the studies contributes to the two main objectives of this evaluation (accountability and learning, see section 2 Purpose and timeframe of the evaluation on page 2). This results in the following two main questions, which will guide both the synthesis report and the separate studies:

- What conclusions can be drawn about the relevance, coherence³⁰ and effectiveness of the MFA's policies and interventions in the field of CT and P/CVE?
- What lessons and recommendations can be drawn for future policy and programming?

4.1. Synthesis report

IOB will write **a synthesis report with policy recommendations**. This synthesis report draws on the three studies listed above, as well as on the policy reconstruction and Delphi study described under paragraph 3 of this ToR. The synthesis report will summarize the findings on the two main questions listed above, regarding the relevance, coherence and effectiveness of MFA policies and interventions, and provide lessons and recommendations. The synthesis report will pay attention to the cycle (see figure below) concerning the interrelationships between the international level, MFA policy development and interventions in the field. For example, how Dutch policy priorities are negotiated in the GCTF, and how GCTF best practices are translated in national policy or used for the identification of projects by RSCs. The synthesis will also look at the cooperation with other partners outside of the MFA.

In particular, the synthesis will look at the cooperation and exchange of information within DVB/TN and between DVB/TN and its partners regarding Foreign Terrorist Fighters. This subject is selected since it is a priority of DVB/TN and was considered an important theme in the Delphi Study. The studies on the GCTF and the RSC's therefore include specific questions on this subject.



Synthesis methodology

The synthesis draws largely on the policy reconstruction, Delphi study, desk study, and studies on the GCTF and RSCs. Further interviews with staff from the MFA (DVB, DSH, embassies) and other experts may also be conducted.

4.2. Desk study on the conditions for effectiveness of selected CT and P/CVE activities³¹

The MFA uses a reservation of EUR 6 mln. per year for P/CVE from the Stability Fund. In addition, between 2015 and 2019 DVB had a small project-budget available for P/CVE activities. There is little information available in project documentation about the effectiveness of these projects.

³⁰ With coherence we mean the coherence within DVB and policy coherence vis-à-vis other departments.

³¹ A separate ToR is drafted for this study with more details on focus and questions.

Knowledge about what works and what does not work in P/CVE activities is crucial input for future decisions on funding of projects. The results of this study will also feed into the study of the RSC's and in particular the projects they identify and monitor.

As part of this evaluation, a literature review is undertaken to gather and assess the available knowledge on the (conditions for) effectiveness of P/CVE activities. This literature review will focus on three specific categories of activities: 1) youth engagement, 2) capacity building of national government and law enforcement and 3) reintegration.³² These three categories were determined based on an assessment of most funded activities by the MFA (see also 3.2 Policy reconstruction). The majority of these projects are identified by the RSCs, and this desk study therefore also contributes to the study of the RSC network.

Desk study research questions

The *main research question* is: what is known about the effectiveness of 1) youth engagement, 2) capacity building of national government and law enforcement and 3) reintegration focused on CT and P/CVE?

Sub-questions:

- What evidence is there on what works (effectiveness)?
- What evidence is there on what doesn't work (not effective or counter-effective)?
- What conditions promote or hinder success?
- What are the assumptions underlying 1) youth engagement, 2) capacity building of national government and law enforcement and 3) reintegration focused on CT and P/CVE, and what evidence is available to support or counter these assumptions?
- What knowledge gaps are there regarding CT and P/CVE activities?

Desk study methodology

For each of the three categories, IOB foresees a separate systematic review that collects and synthesises evidence on (conditions for) effectiveness. A quick-scan of evaluative and academic literature shows that there is likely to be insufficient material available to answer all of the above questions. The systematic review on programmes focussed on CT and P/CVE (FOCUS) will therefore be expanded with a review of programmes with related target groups such as ex-combatants and gang members (RELATED).³³ In the case of reintegration programmes, for example, a systematic review will be conducted on reintegration programmes targeting (former) members of violent extremist/terrorist groups (FOCUS). Additionally, the review focusses on reintegration programmes targeting gang members and rebel groups (RELATED). The review draws on both the FOCUS category and the RELATED category to synthesise evidence on (conditions for) effectiveness. The review will however clearly differentiate between these two categories.

IOB will recruit consultants to undertake this desk study.

³² Categories are further specified in a separate ToR for this desk study.

³³ See also Dandurand (2015) who also discusses similarities between PVE programming and programmes focusing on gang violence.

4.3. Study on Dutch involvement in the GCTF

Between 2015 and 2019, the Netherlands was co-chair of the GCTF. Furthermore, the Netherlands was co-chair of the GCTF Foreign Terrorist Fighters Working Group between 2014, when the Working Group was established, and September 2017. As a result of this co-chairmanship, DVB/TN focused a substantial part of its resources, in terms of finance (for example contributing to the GCTF Administrative Unit) and staff, towards the GCTF. For example, in February 2015 extra funds were allocated towards the MFA by the Dutch cabinet: *'In view of the expected long-term nature of the current threat assessment, the government has decided to substantially strengthen the security chain on a number of points.'*³⁴ With these funds DVB/TN was able to recruit extra staff in the form of 'GCTF-liaisons' which were designated to strategic posts³⁵ in support of the chairmanship.

Given the substantial investment DVB/TN has made related to the GCTF and the fact that the Dutch chairmanship has recently ended, IOB considers an evaluation of the Dutch involvement in the GCTF as relevant and opportune.

GCTF research questions

Relevance and coherence

1. What were the Dutch considerations for becoming co-chair of the GCTF?
2. How is the GCTF perceived – both within the MFA as by GCTF other members – as organization?
 - a. How does it function?
 - b. How is the GCTF perceived vis a vis other fora who deal with CT/P/CVE? (UN, EU, NATO)
3. To what extent did the work of the national and regional clusters of DVB/TN feed into the policy priorities and objectives?
4. To what extent did the policy recommendations and best practices developed within the GCTF feed into Dutch policy?
 - a. To what extent were the lessons from the FTF Working Group relevant for the MFA and Dutch policy?
 - b. To what extent did the MFA adopt lessons from the FTF Working Group?
5. How was the cooperation and division of labour between the MFA and other Dutch departments, especially the NCTV?
6. What was the role and added value of the GCTF liaisons for the MFA?

Effectiveness

1. What objectives did the MFA have for its co-chairmanship of the GCTF?
 - a. What objectives did the MFA aim to achieve within the GCTF?
 - b. What objectives did the NCTV have for the Dutch co-chairmanship of the GCTF?
2. To what extent have these objectives been achieved, and what factors contributed/hindered achievement?
 - a. To what extent did the MFA influence the GCTF Good Practises?

³⁴ Kamerbrief Versterking veiligheidsketen, 27 februari 2015, beschikbaar via <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2015/02/27/kamerbrief-over-de-versterkingen-in-de-veiligheidsketen>

³⁵ There were five liaisons in support of the GCTF co-chairmanship. They were placed in Ankara, Washington, Rabat and New York.

- b. What was the Dutch contribution to The Hague-Marrakech Memorandum on Good Practises for a More Effective Response to the FTF Phenomenon?
3. What have been (intended or unintended) costs and benefits of the Dutch GCTF co-chairmanship for the Netherlands? (e.g. doors opened/closed)
4. What have been the key results of the GCTF during the Dutch co-chairmanship?
 - a. What has been achieved on the five strategic priorities set for the co-chairmanship?
 - b. How were GCTF best practices developed?
 - c. What has been the role of the Netherlands in achieving these results?
 - d. What is the benefit for the Netherlands of these results?
5. What plans and strategies are there to build on the MFA's involvement in the GCTF now that the Netherlands is no longer co-chair? (other objectives, other forums?)
 - a. Where are opportunities, and what should the MFA follow-up on?

Learning

- What lessons can be drawn for future policy based on the answers to the questions above?

GCTF methodology

The study on the Dutch involvement in the GCTF will largely draw on a review of (policy) documents and interviews. Interviews are foreseen with, among others, MFA policy officers (DVB/TN, GCTF liaisons, embassy staff), NCTV, other members of the GCTF – in particular Morocco (co-chair), US (predecessor) and Canada (successor) –, GCTF experts, etc.

IOB will recruit a consultant with expertise with the GCTF for this study. A separate ToR is foreseen for the recruitment of the consultant.

4.4. Study on Dutch system of Regional Security Coordinators (RSCs)

To contribute to the cabinet's commitment to reduce the international threat of terrorism, a network of regional security coordinators (RSC) was set up in 2015.³⁶ Their objective is to report on and help address violent extremism and the threat of terrorism at the source on an early warning and early action basis. Amongst other things, they report on trends and changes in terrorism threats, and laws and policies and politics of region and countries (where a threat of terrorism and violent extremism is present) regarding CT and P/CVE. The RSCs play a key role in translating international and Dutch policies to regional contexts. For this reason, they manage a portfolio of projects that also further insight on CT and P/CVE.

Given the substantial investment DVB/TN has made in the RSC network, IOB considers an evaluation of this network relevant and opportune. Moreover, DVB/TN is currently in the process of consolidating the RSC network and bringing more focus in the network's objectives and activities. This study aims to contribute to this process.

RSC research questions

Relevance and coherence

³⁶ KST 34 550-V-7, 2016: 24.

1. Why did the MFA set up the RSC network and what did it want to achieve through this network? Have these objectives shifted since 2015?
2. How does the work of the RSCs relate to the work of the national and international clusters?
3. How do projects identified by the RSCs take international best practises (GCTF, UN, EU) into account?
4. How do projects identified by the RSCs yield insights relevant to Dutch policy on CT and Dutch positions in international forums (e.g. GCTF, UN, EU)?
5. What is the relevance of projects identified by the RSCs with regard to the context in which projects are implemented?
6. How do RSCs and the projects they identify relate to activities of like-minded donors and/or the host countries, and is there coordination and cooperation?

Effectiveness

1. What is the added value of the RSCs for the information position of the MFA and Dutch government more broadly, for example regarding FTFs?
 - a. Who are users of information shared by RSCs (inside and outside the MFA)
 - b. What type of information is shared? (and what is shared most often) and in what form (e.g. diplomatic cables, email, by phone?)
 - c. Is the information shared by the RSCs relevant to its users (inside and outside the MFA) and considered to be accurate and up-to-date?
 - d. Have the RSCs built networks that yield timely and relevant information on CT trends? Are they embedded in similar networks of partners (e.g. EU and member states, the US and the UK)?
2. What is the added value of the RSCs for the identification of projects?
3. What type of projects are being funded and what results do they deliver: project results as such, but also information position of the RSC, and relations with partners and host countries?
 - a. What follow-up (if any) is given to projects (how are reports used, are projects continued or scaled up)?
 - b. How do reported results relate to findings from the desk study on effectiveness?
4. To what extent have RSCs contributed to strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation on CT and P/CVE?
 - a. To what extent have RSCs contributed to strengthening the bilateral cooperation, for example regarding FTFs?
 - b. Were any joint actions (between relevant Dutch departments and national departments, e.g. NCTV, justice, defence) facilitated by the RSCs with other countries? If so, what can be learned from these experiences?

Learning

- What lessons can be drawn for future policy based on the answers to the questions above?

RSC methodology

The study on the RSC network will largely draw on a review of (policy) documents and interviews, and will be conducted by the IOB team. Interviews are foreseen with, among others, all RSCs, former RSCs, DVB/TN, other departments within the MFA and external departments (NCTV, Defence). IOB will visit four of the six posts to interview RSC's, their counterparts and contacts, and to visit

projects. Given the relevance of the posts and the relatively large number of funded projects by these posts compared to others, IOB expects to visit Tunis, Nairobi, Sarajevo and Amman.³⁷

5. Limitations

The evaluation has a number of limitations:

- Given the broadness of the MFA's areas of operation in the field of CT and P/CVE (and of the field in general), this evaluation will focus on a selected set of subjects. The evaluation's conclusions are therefore not necessarily generalizable for the entire range of policy instruments and activities.
- As the policy reconstruction has shown, the MFA's policy on CT and P/CVE is very broad and general, and lacks clear and specific objectives and targets. This limits the extent to which effectiveness can be determined.
- The MFA is only one player within the Dutch landscape of actors working to counter and prevent terrorism. While the evaluation does look at the cooperation with direct partners (e.g. NTCV, Ministry of Justice and Security, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Defence), the evaluation is limited to the activities of the MFA.
- Given the nature of CT and P/CVE, information may not always be fully accessible to IOB.
- Given the sensitivity of the subject, not all findings from the evaluation may be made publicly available.

6. Deliverables

The evaluation will result in the following deliverables.

- Policy reconstruction (Dutch / internal)
- Delphi report (English / public)
- Study on Dutch involvement in GCTF (English / public)
- Study on Dutch RSC network (English / public)
- Desk study on effectiveness of selected CT and P/CVE activities (English / public)
- Synthesis report and recommendations (English / public)

In principle, each deliverable is published upon completion. Each of these deliverables will be shared with relevant stakeholders. During the evaluation process, IOB will maintain fully transparent communication with DVB and share proposals and research products. Each of the deliverables will also be presented and discussed with broader stakeholders within the MFA. Where relevant, public discussions may also be organised.

7. Access to documents

In accordance with the decision of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of 27 May 2019, IOB should receive full and unrestricted access to all data that is available to policy departments and implementing organisations. This also applies to state secret or otherwise confidential information, provided that the IOB-researchers involved have the required security clearances.

³⁷ Selection criteria include: number of projects identified by these posts, information output of RV's, political relevance of geographic location.

State secret and otherwise confidential information

The assigned IOB researchers have undergone a security clearance for access to state secret and otherwise confidential information. If necessary, confidential information will only be accessed on stand-alone computers or in a secured environment within the Ministry. State secret information will not be cited by name. In addition, representatives of the policy departments involved are asked to notify the researchers of any references in the draft report that are sensitive for security reasons.

8. Internal and external quality check

IOB (Arjan Schuthof, Rens Willems and Paul Westerhof) conducts the evaluation. IOB internal quality support will be given by Wendy Asbeek (chair), Paul de Nooijer, Sam Streefkerk and Sabine de Jager.

The external reference group is composed of policy makers of the MFA's Security Policy Department (DVB) (TBD), Joost van Elk (NCTV), Peter Knoope (independent), Liesbeth van der Heide (Leiden University) and Fulco van Deventer (Human Security Collective).

9. Timeframe

The provisional research design results in a timeframe for the evaluation, as presented below. Discussions with DVB can help fine-tune the timing of products to define relevant deadlines with most impact. E.g. timing of key deliverables can – depending on the subject – be matched to key decision moments.

	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	
Policy reconstruction	X	X	X	X	X	X	X																
Delphi: Identification of key trends		X	X	X	X	X	X																
Desk study: effectiveness of projects													procurement	X	X	X	X	X					
Case study 1; GCTF													procurement	X	X	X	X	X					
Case study 2: RSCs												X	X	X	X	X	X						
Synthesis report															X	X	X	X	X				
Synthesis to parliament																							X