



Australian Intervention Support Hub

RAMP-ing up responses to radicalisation in our communities: effective pathways to engagement

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We know that various sectors of our community are susceptible to extreme views that are in conflict with a peaceful, egalitarian and multicultural society. The example most often used is that of religious fundamentalism connected with warfare in the Middle East, but White Supremacism and misogyny are other areas of increasing concern.

Community organisations often have more regular and intimate contact with people who may be vulnerable to extreme views. Organisations may include: religious institutions, such as churches and mosques; charities that work with young people, the unemployed, and migrants; and sporting and cultural clubs. The question is whether these organisations are willing and able to deal with any radicalisation issues? What pathways are open to them, and how can effective ways of engaging be taught and encouraged?

It is unlikely that furnishing organisations with booklets outlining their legal and perhaps social responsibilities will help. A large body of research suggests that information provision is generally not persuasive, when it is accessed or digested at all. Instead, awareness can be thought of as only one, relatively minor, step.

Instead, it is helpful to consider behaviour change in four parts: Reward, Awareness, Motivation and Pathways, or RAMP. This framework has been used to understand behaviour change in organisations, primarily in South Africa (see references, below). Some examples of how each of these can apply to community organisation engagement in radicalisation follow.

Rewards are benefits that encourage certain kinds of behaviour. They are instituted from outside, by regulatory agencies, economic systems and social relationships. For example, if community organisation management thinks that by not reporting suspected illegal activity to the police, it will be rewarded with being left alone, with little risk of punishment, then that is a likely response. Alternatively, if community organisers know that reporting will result in obtaining useful resources to help them resolve problems in a respectful, cost effective way that does not jeopardise relationships with their clients, then that might be a likely response. Rewards tend to be contextual: less about what an organisation does, than about the regulatory and social system that surrounds it.

Awareness has two key parts – knowledge and sensibility. First you must know and acknowledge that something is a problem. Secondly, you must link the knowledge with a sense of responsibility to respond to and act on that knowledge. A community organisation might know that radicalisation is a risk among people they work with. That may not be enough for them to link this knowledge with their activities, or to do anything differently.

Motivation is the driver for action for the organization. These can be intrinsic factors (based on values and norms) or extrinsic factors (cost and legal obligations are two examples of extrinsic motives). In the case of community organisations handling possible radicalisation, they may be motivated by their interest in the safety and security of the radicalised person, the well-being of their broader community, and their community's standing and status in the eye of the public, government and/or media. They may also turn away because it is not the organization's core business. Whether these motivations are complementary or opposing, and whether they tend to support or discourage active intervention, will depend on many factors. One important factor is how authorities, such as law enforcers, relate to and are perceived by community organisations.

Pathway is about possible courses of action. In this case it means being able to implement appropriate and organisationally desirable responses to potential radicalisation. For example, if disclosure to authorities inevitable involves arrests and interrogation, it may not be considered a viable pathway. In addition, this capacity to act depends on resources, both internal and external. If organisations are pushed to the limit with service delivery and regulatory compliance, then it is unlikely they will willingly increase their burden in this area.

The following table offers some questions to help assess the current rewards, awareness, motivations and pathways, with an accompanying ‘strategic outcome’ that describes how we might like community organisations to respond to potential radicalisation.

Table 1: Applying the RAMP framework to extremism and radicalisation

	Assessment	Strategic outcome
Reward (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the rewards for organisations in actively engaging with radicalisation? • Conversely, what are the rewards for NOT engaging with potential radicalisation? 	Actors can see and understand benefits in actively engaging with radicalisation issues. Note that governments may need to be prepared for this ‘active engagement’ not involving disclosure to authorities, if it is not deemed necessary.
Awareness (A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the knowledge of key radicalisation issues by powerful or influential actors, organisations or sectors? • What is the predominant worldview of these actors? 	Actors have a worldview that sees the connection between their work with young people and alternatives to radicalisation
Motivation (M)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What motivates influential actors? • What drives their key decisions? • Do they see radicalisation as their ‘business’? 	Actors are motivated to intervene when they see radicalisation may be an issue, and this motivation is sustained over time.
Pathway (P)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What solutions exist to address the key issue? • What resources are available? • Does regulation enable action? 	Powerful or influential actors have the capability (skill, opportunity and resources), technology/practice, and enabling environment to act.

(Adapted from Honig et al 2015)

References:

Honig, M., Petersen, S., Herstein, T., Roux, S., Nel, D., & Shearing, C. (2015). A conceptual framework to enable the changes required for a one-planet future. *Environmental Values*, 24(5), 663-688.

Petersen, S., Shearing, C., & Nel, D. (2015). Sustainability transitions: An investigation of the conditions under which corporations are likely to reshape their practices to reverse environmental degradation. *Petersen, S., Shearing, C & Nel, D*, 85-105.

The RAMP framework is based on the influential work of **Prof Clifford Shearing** and colleagues, developed through researching corporations and sustainability in South Africa.

This policy briefing was prepared by **Deb Cleland** and **Val Braithwaite** from the Regulatory Institutions Network at ANU to illustrate the relevance of this approach to radicalisation.