Multi-Stakeholder Engagement in Rehabilitation

Malkanthi Hettiarachchi

The recruitment and grooming of a terrorist occurs at multiple levels. Terrorist groups radicalize vulnerable communities. These communities become a recruitment base that provides a steady stream of recruits to sustain the group's membership. Vulnerable youth connect with grievance narratives projected by charismatic messengers and seize the opportunity offered by terrorist groups to redress these grievances. Once recruited the individual is groomed into a culture of terrorism involving a series of rationalisations and justifications for violence. Reversing the process of radicalisation within a rehabilitative environment therefore also has to be conducted at multiple levels. Sri Lanka's rehabilitation and reintegration programme used the very components the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)[1] manipulated and denied civilians, to groom them into terrorism, to reverse the process of violent radicalisation in order to reintegrate the former terrorists back into the community.

Multi-stakeholder involvements in nurturing terrorism and in reversing this process through rehabilitation are two vital aspects in counter-terrorism. Terrorist groups involve and enlist the support of several agencies in the recruitment, sustenance and mobilisation of its members. Media platforms, non-government organisations (NGOs), faith-based organisations, educational institutions, financial systems, businesses, transport services, communication systems, families, civil society groups, advocates,

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[1] The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was a terrorist and insurgent group that invented the suicide belt, and whose preferred modus operandi was suicide bombings. The LTTE was militarily neutralised in May 2009, after a 30-year war. Approximately 12,000+ members of the LTTE handed themselves over or were apprehended for rehabilitation.

vocational trainers, psychosocial strategies and creative therapies such as art, music, drama, and cartoons are manipulated and abused by terrorist groups. These very same aspects must be engaged in counter-terrorism efforts, because if governments do not engage these organisations, institutions, and platforms, the terrorists will engage and occupy these spaces. Multi-stakeholder engagement has benefits and challenges that will be discussed in this paper.

Sri Lanka's Deradicalisation Programme

Sri Lanka's commitment to terrorist rehabilitation was founded on a presidential directive, that the members of the LTTE were "misled by the terrorist leadership into engaging in terrorist activity" but were "citizens" who would be given a second chance to re-engage in civilian life (DMHR, 2009).[2] The way forward was therefore to rehabilitate the former Tamil Tigers and reintegrate them into society.

Rehabilitation was an imperative, as it was a matter of national security. The state set up a dedicated Bureau for the Commissioner General for Rehabilitation (BCGR) for the rehabilitation, reintegration and aftercare of the former members of the LTTE. The BCGR was resourced by Ministry of Defence staff, under the Ministry of Prison Reforms and Rehabilitation. The BCGR worked in partnership with multiple government and non-government stakeholders: the security sector; and the Ministries of Defence, Justice, Prisons and Rehabilitation, National Reintegration and Reconciliation, Skills Development and Vocational Training, Women and Children, Health, Agriculture, Education, Sports, Cultural Affairs and Social Services. The BCGR was involved in the process of selecting and managing stakeholders, to ensure that the rehabilitation programme functioned effectively. Stakeholders included local non-government organizations (NGOs), international non-government organisations (INGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), faith-based organisations (FBOs), community volunteers, professionals, religious personnel, the media, and the public, private and business sectors. Given the level of influence and resources within these organisations, stakeholder management was crucial for the success

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[2] Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights, 2009, "National Framework Proposal for Reintegration of Ex-combatants into Civilian Life in Sri Lanka", Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights, Colombo: DMHR.

of the programme. Some stakeholders can be supportive and others criti-cal, therefore it was essential to win over and engage critical stakeholders for the success of the programme.[3]

The rehabilitation model was based on a holistic approach that includ-ed restoring six essential components in the lives of the beneficiaries of the rehabilitation programme. The six modes of rehabilitation and the com-munity engagement component were referred to as the 6+1 Model (BCGR 2013).[4] This included educational, vocational, spiritual/religious, psycho-logical, sports/extra-curricular, and social/cultural/family rehabilitation.

To manage such a holistic programme for over 12,000 detainees and inmates, there was no other agency with the capacity and commitment other than the security sector.[5] The BCGR resourced by the security sec-tor collaborated with a range of partners/stakeholders to conduct over 48 programmes to rehabilitate and reintegrate the former LTTE members. The beneficiaries of the programme were accommodated in Protective Accommodation and Rehabilitation Centers (PARCs) in the northern and eastern regions of the country.

Multi-Stakeholder Participation

Sri Lanka's deradicalisation programme tapped into a range of skills, competencies and knowledge within the government and non-govern-ment sectors to deliver its programmes. The BCGR identified the needs, strengths, difficulties, vulnerabilities and risks of the beneficiaries through a variety of assessments. Interventions were then prioritised and targeted based on need. The BCGR decided on the parameters of involvement and interaction of state and non-state actors within the rehabilitation programme. The response by the public, private, civil society and other

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[3] See: www.bcgr.gov.lk to view the several public and private sector organisations that resourced the rehabilitation programme.

[4] BCGR, 2013, *Rehabilitation of Ex Combatants*, compiled by D. Hettiarachchi, The Bureau of the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation (BCGR), Colombo: Department of Government Information.

[5] Study conducted in March 2018 with former members of the LTTE and 19 practitioners and experts highlighted the effectiveness of rehabilitation when managed by the military engaging multiple stakeholders. P. Ranasinghe, 2018, "The significance of the military role in rehabilitation of child soldiers with special reference to the right to education", Master's Thesis: University of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

non-governmental agencies was overwhelming. The BCGR enlisted the support of these agencies after vetting the agencies and individuals, examining their curricula, and ensuring that their agenda were in keeping with the ethos of the rehabilitation center and served the best interest of the beneficiaries to ensure reintegration. To date, Sri Lanka has rehabilitated and reintegrated approximately 12,206 former Tamil Tigers into the community. According to Kohler (2017), the "Sri Lankan rehabilitation and reintegration program can be counted among the most successful and best designed programs in the world".[6]

A holistic deradicalisation programme requires multi-stakeholder participation and collaboration, due to the skill and knowledge base contained within these organisations. The Sri Lankan deradicalisation programme enlisted the support of the sectors listed below.

Figure 1: Partnerships with Agencies in the Sri Lanka rehabilitation and aftercare programme.[7]

[6]   D. Köhler, *Understanding Deradicalization: Methods, Tools and Programs for Countering Violence*, Contemporary Terrorism Studies Series, New York: Routledge, 2017, pp. 247-248.

[7]   NGO = Non-Government Organisation, INGO = International NGO, NPO = Not for Profit Organisation, Svcs = Services, UNICEF= United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.

Terrorist groups aim to create a rift between the state and the people. They project the state as unfair and unjust, and attempt to secure the support of civil society agencies for their cause. When some of these civil society agencies sympathise with the terrorists' cause, they adopt an anti-government stance, thereby lending credibility advertently or inadvertently to the terrorists' agenda. Given that civil society and non-government organisations are powerful entities, in terms of influence, media backing and funds, nation states should identify the agenda of these organisations prior to enlisting their support. This is particularly the case as they are often financed by external agencies and interest groups—both domestic and overseas ones—that expect them to fulfil the terms and conditions of funding. It is vital that the programme does not become financially dependent on any civil society or non-government agency, because with financial control comes the authority to manipulate the rehabilitation programme. It is therefore imperative that the state sets up an entity that is able to manage the process of rehabilitation, provide sound leadership, enlist the support of civil society agencies and collaborate with multiple stakeholders to enrich the rehabilitation programme.

Soft Approach to Counter-Terrorism

The soft approach to counter-terrorism is aimed at (1) preventing radicalisation from taking root in the community by inoculating the community, starting from schools, sports clubs, youth groups, etc.; (2) preventing those radicalised from becoming violent by actively engaging in dialogue with university students, youth movements, etc.; and (3) deradicalising the violent extremist offenders through rehabilitation and reintegrating into society. The space for well-planned multi-stakeholder engagement is extensive within this three-pronged framework (Figure 2).

Figure 2: A three dimensional approach to prevent radicalisation and re-radicalisation.[8]

This paper focuses on one aspect of the soft approach to counter-terrorism, "Rehabilitation". Deradicalisation in rehabilitation is the downstream management of the violent radicals or extremists after they became actively engaged. If rehabilitation is to succeed, the focus must also include the reintegration and aftercare processes. It is rehabilitation, reintegration and aftercare that ensure that each beneficiary of the rehabilitation programme is sustained in the community. Sri Lanka's BCGR ensured the seamless transition of staff and services from rehabilitation into the community. Well-managed multi-stakeholder engagement was invaluable in all three phases of this rehabilitative process.

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[8] Hettiarachchi, M., 2018, "Assessment and Evaluation of Terrorist Rehabilitation Programs", chapter 8, in R. Gunaratna and S. M. Hussin (eds.), *Deradicalisation and Terrorist Rehabilitation: A framework for policy-making and implementation,* Routledge.
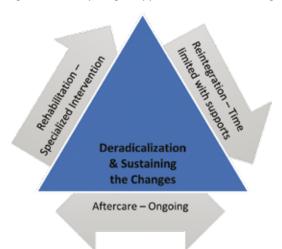
Figure 3: Three-pronged approach to rehabilitating and sustaining the change.[9]

The influence of state and non-state actors within the rehabilitation, reintegration and aftercare phases may vary based on the aims and objectives of the programme. The level of engagement that former terrorists are willing to accept is a challenge due to social stigma. There appears to be greater overt acceptance of non-state actor involvement once beneficiaries are reintegrated. However, with regard to Sri Lanka's programme, the beneficiaries continued to maintain contact with the BCGR staff of the Sri Lanka Army and Air Force involved in the rehabilitation and reintegration processes. This was evident during follow-up community assessments of radicalisation conducted by the author. Beneficiaries of the rehabilitation programme in 2007 voluntarily attended follow-up assessments in 2018, almost a decade after they had left the rehabilitation centers.[10]

Good Practice Guidelines for Effective Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

Several guiding principles formulated in the past seven years have highlighted the importance of the multi-disciplinary and multi-agency approach to rehabilitation and reintegration. Experts in the field have come together

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[9] Developed by author.

[10] Beneficiaries who had attended the Thelippalai and Pallekele rehabilitation centers in 2007 continue to maintain contact with the BCGR staff and attend events related to the BCGR.

to share effective and ethical principles used within current terrorist reha-
bilitation and reintegration programmes across the globe. Organisations
such as the International Center for Counter Terrorism (ICCT), the United
Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), the
Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF), Hedayah in Abu Dhabi, and the
International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ) have taken leader-
ship in bringing experts together to draft several Good Practice Guidelines
(GPG) documents that provide guidelines for emerging programmes.

Practitioners currently use the Rome Memorandum of Good Practices,
containing 25 practice guidelines, and the Addendum of six additional
principles for the rehabilitation and reintegration of terrorists (ICCT and
UNICRI, 2011; GCTF, 2015).[11] The Rome Memorandum outlines the impor-
tance of including cross-disciplinary services and training stakeholders:
Training for stakeholders (GPG5), integrating Cross-disciplinary services
(GPG7), inclusion of Psychologists (GPG8), Religious scholars (GPG10), Law
enforcement (GPG11), Victims and Advocates (GPG12), Former rehabilitees
(GPG13), Charismatic and Influential community members (GPG14), and
Families of beneficiaries (GPG23). The addendum cites the need for a *legal
framework to allow an effective integrated multi-stakeholder approach* to re-
habilitation and reintegration.

The Additional Guidance on the Role of Psychologists/Psychology
in Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programmes is a guideline on *how
psychologists as stakeholders can work effectively* in the rehabilitation of ter-
rorist detainees and inmates (Hedayah and ICCT, 2013).[12] The Additional
Guidance on the Role of Religious Scholars and other Ideological Experts

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[11] ICCT and UNICRI, 2011, "Rome Memorandum of Good Practices", International Center
for Counter Terrorism (ICCT) and United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research
Institute (UNICRI), December, https://www.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/Framework%20
Documents/A/GCTF-Rome-Memorandum-ENG.pdf. Also see: GCTF, 2015, "Addendum to the
Rome Memorandum of Good Practices for the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Violent
Extremists", September, Global Terrorism Forum (GCTF), accessed 26 March 2018, https://
www.thegctf.org/Portals/1/Documents/Toolkit-documents/English-Addendum-to-the-Rome-
Memorandum-on-Legal-Frameworks.pdf.

[12] Hedayah and ICCT, 2013, "Good Practice Guidelines for Psychologists/Psychology in
Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programs", Hedayah and International Center for Counter
Terrorism (ICCT), Abu Dhabi, May, accessed 26 March 2018, https://toolkit.thegctf.org/Portals/1/
Documents/En/Hedayah-ICCT_Psychology_Good_Practices.pdf.

in Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programmes is a guideline on *how religious scholars as stakeholders can work effectively* (UNICRI, 2013).[13]

The Abu Dhabi Memorandum on Good Practices for Education and Countering Violent Extremism contains 26 principles that can be used by practitioners in the field (GCTF, 2014).[14] The Abu Dhabi Memorandum identifies a *range of stakeholders and emphasises the need for training*: Multi-sectorial Training (GPG1), Collaboration between Educational sectors (GPG2), Trauma services (GPG10), Schools (GPG12), Training of teachers as stakeholders (GPG14), Private sector (GPG19), Media technology (GPG20), Gaming Technology (GPG21), Youth (GPG22), Community Leaders (GPG23), Families (GPG24) and Sports Arts Culture (GPG26).

The Malta Principles for Reintegrating Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) consists of 22 principles (Hedayah and IIJ, 2016).[15] The Malta Principles identify the different roles of a broad range of *cross disciplines in working together,* such as psychologists, social workers, religious scholars, law enforcement, family and community (GPG7), including victim voices (GPG12), formers (GPG13), and Charismatic members of the community (GPG14). Of much importance is the need for training multiple agencies to coordinate closely with reintegration officers (GPG11), training stakeholders not to undermine the reintegration process (GPG9), and conducting aftercare in close partnership with civil society agencies.

The Ankara Memorandum on Good Practices for a Multi-Sectoral Approach to Countering Violent Extremism consists of 19 principles.[16] These principles address the need for a multi-agency approach (GPG5), with a shared understanding (GPG6), cooperation (GPG7) and coordination

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[13] UNICRI, 2013, "Guidance on the Role of Religious Scholars and other Ideological Experts in Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programs", United Nations Crime and Justice Research Institute, Madrid, October, http://www.unicri.it/topics/counter_terrorism/UNICRI_SPAIN_Religious_Scholars_in_Rehab.pdf.

[14] GCTF, 2014, "Abu Dhabi Memorandum on Good Practices for Education and Countering Violent Extremism, Abu Dhabi, September, accessed 26 March 2018, https://www.thegctf.org/documents/10162/159880/14Sept19_GCTF+Abu+Dhabi+Memorandum.pdf.

[15] Hedayah, 2016, "Malta Principles for Reintegrating Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs)", Malta, October, accessed 26 March 2018, http://www.hedayahcenter.org/Admin/Content/File-26102016223519.pdf.

[16] GCTF, 2013, "Ankara Memorandum on Good Practices for a Multi-Sectoral Approach to Countering Violent Extremism", Antalya (December 2012) and Ankara (March 2013), accessed 6 August 2018, https://www.thegctf.org/documents/10162/72352/13Sep19_Ankara+Memorandum.pdf.

(GPG8). Public-private partnerships are discussed in GPG 9-13. Socio-economic collaboration is discussed in GPG14-17 including women as stakeholders. Building Trust and Training is highlighted in GPG 18 and 19.

These principles and policies were designed based on existing practices within programmes, in order to help those setting up rehabilitation programmes learn from other programmes. According to General Douglas Stone, "Sri Lanka practises all these aspects listed in the (Rome) memorandum, and it was before the memorandum was put together" in 2011 (Stone 2013).[17]

Stakeholder Enlistment and Management

The success of any rehabilitation programme is in managing the programme to ensure that beneficiaries can be reintegrated safely into the community. This task requires multi-stakeholder and multi-agency engagement. The Sri Lanka rehabilitation programme enlisted and managed stakeholders by following a set of principles to minimise failure and enrich the programme.

Identifying suitable stakeholders

Careful selection of agencies and professions for the programme will help protect the beneficiaries, the programme, the organisation, and national interests.

Partners need to be identified based on the need for their knowledge and skills. The need is based on the gaps in expertise, and for input at the optimal time. It is important not to duplicate the role and work carried out by the stakeholders.

Optimising stakeholder input

It is important to minimise duplication of stakeholder input, evaluate if there is an overlap between different roles and consider if one agency can fulfil several roles. Next, gaps in the services need to be identified and enlisting the support of state or non-government actors, especially those that are most suitable to augment and improve the rehabilitation

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[17]   Stone, D., 2013, "Rome Principles in Action", Hedayah Conference, Abu Dhabi, 3 June. Opening remarks by General Dr. Douglas Stone.

programme, should be considered. The government also needs to identify those stakeholders that can provide the best educational and vocational training for inmates, as well as staff, and can best engage with the beneficiaries. Finally, the timing of the engagement has to be determined since the intensity and frequency of engagement needs to be optimal.

Vetting stakeholders

Stakeholder agenda and goals should be aligned to the ethos of the facility because they need to work together as a team, towards agreed goals, and focus on completing the task undertaken. Stakeholders should not have competing interests or undermine the rehabilitation process. It is thus important to identify if the stakeholder has difficulty with working with the lead body in the rehabilitation programme or attempts to undermine other stakeholders. Stakeholders must possess an understanding of the contextual factors, values and work ethic, access training, and develop skills and knowledge in managing the particular terrorist population.

Managing conflicts

Stakeholders with competing agendas, difficulty working together, a need to drive the rehabilitation programme, or aspirations for power and recognition are likely to create conflicts. Therefore training of stakeholders to work together towards common goals in the interests of the beneficiaries and national security is essential. All state and non-state agencies identified as suitable for the rehabilitation programme following the vetting process need to be collaborative partners in the entire initiative.

Role of External Agencies

The Good Practise Guidelines for Effective Stakeholder Collaboration highlight the importance of a variety of external actors who can resource the programme. Sri Lanka's rehabilitation programme and other global rehabilitation programmes secure the support of external agencies. The skills and knowledge base within the external agencies are an invaluable resource when managed carefully as outlined in the previous section. The rehabilitation programme coordinators need to collaborate with these stakeholders to maximise their input.

Psychologists conduct programme design and evaluation. They can also train and supervise others in assessment and intervention, professional ethics, rapport building, and overcoming resistance. Psychologists can help address cognitive aspects such as ideological components, challenging cognitions, Socratic-method of therapy, assess justifications, challenge, and consolidate an alternative view.

Academics and Researchers function as external evaluators who can add to the cumulative knowledge on the efficacy of rehabilitation programmes. For example, Sri Lanka's rehabilitation programme was subjected to an external academic evaluation that produced strong indicators of a positive impact on participants' ideological convictions through the programme.[18]

Religious scholars can engage beneficiaries, provide correct theological knowledge, counter misconceptions, and possess skills in cognitive transformation.

Social workers focus on the wellbeing of the beneficiaries and their families, provide advocacy, ensure the families are supported while the beneficiaries are in rehabilitation and provide ongoing support upon reintegration.

Community aftercare experts help to identify early warning signs, continuously engage beneficiaries and their families, network with agencies, identify suitable specialised stakeholders, access the support of professionals and agencies, liaise with professionals and stakeholders, and monitor beneficiary and family progress.

Victims of terrorism provide an alternative perspective to the beneficiaries. This helps to reframe the moral justifications for violence, reassess suppression of norms, and creates an emotive impact on the beneficiaries when they are faced with the victims. The depersonalised distant and faceless victim is humanised, causing the perpetrator to experience dissonance and guilt, resulting in remorse and repentance, setting the beneficiaries on the path to engage in restorative justice.

Former terrorists' testimonies are powerful narratives that help dissuade individuals from joining terrorist groups and create a doubt in the

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18   Kruglanski, A. W., Gelfand, M. J., Bélanger, J. J., Gunaratna, R., and Hettiarachchi, M., 2014, "Deradicalising the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)", in A. Silke (ed.), *Prisons, Terrorism and Extremism: Critical Issues in Management, Radicalisation and Reform,* London: Routledge, pp. 183-196.

mind of the active terrorist. Beneficiaries are able to relate to why the "former" left the group. Such testimonies are impactful and provide an alternative realistic narrative to what is preached by radicals.

Families provide an emotive perspective that reflects the emotional suffering, shame, guilt and sadness, which is likely to resonate with active terrorists, creating guilt and remorse.

Community provides support to families of incarcerated members, which exposes the families to the community perspective of the impact of terrorism. These perspectives shared by the families with their detained family members are likely to create a shift in perspective.

The narratives of victims, formers, families and the community, if they resonate with their audience, are likely to create a cognitive opening to disengage. For example, Women without Borders is a non-profit organisation (NPO) that utilises the narratives of former terrorists, their families, and victims of terrorism to dissuade individuals from joining terrorist groups and to facilitate individuals to leave the groups. These aspects can be included within rehabilitation programmes, with caution.[19] When using external actors for therapeutic purposes, risks to the individuals and the organisation, and potential benefits to the beneficiaries must be considered. It is necessary to evaluate the anticipated change, protect both parties, time the intervention, and ensure the content is not reinforcing further radicalisation (of the perpetrator) or trauma (to the victim).

Conclusion

Terrorist groups depend on the community to sustain their membership and the support of several agencies to project themselves as a better alternative to legitimate governments. Governments thus need to actively engage government and civil society partners to reverse this process. While caution needs to be exercised when selecting stakeholders as partners, the value of government and non-government stakeholders have the capacity to enrich the rehabilitation, reintegration and aftercare programmes. Good practice guidelines emphasise the importance of multi-agency, multi-sectorial, and cross-disciplinary collaboration. These recommendations are made with emphasis on the need for trainers of

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[19] Edith Schlaffer, Non-Profit Organisation, www.women-without-borders.org.

stakeholders to work together with rehabilitation authorities, build trust between agencies and collaborate to achieve a common goal to ensure safer communities.

Rehabilitation programmes used in different countries are based on a variety of models.[20] The various programmes set their aims and objectives based on the capacity to manage this essential task. Some countries utilise a larger number of civil society organisations (NGOs, NPOs, academics, businesses, and media), with state agencies having minimal participation. Other countries utilise primarily state services. Still others use a blend of both government agencies and civil society agencies. However, the most effective programmes today are managed by the state and the state engages a range of civil society agencies after vetting them thoroughly. There is little benefit in programmes that are unsupported by the state, or have excessive civil society and non-government involvement.

Malkanthi Hettiarachchi is a Chartered Clinical Psychologist and counterterrorism instructor. She completed her PhD in Policing Intelligence and Counter Terrorism at the Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. She has worked within Terrorist Detention and Rehabilitation centers (Sri Lanka), and conducted interviews and assessments with inmates in detention facilities in the Philippines, Indonesia, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Libya, and South America. Mal has conducted training on terrorist rehabilitation programme design, prison management, deradicalisation and psychosocial skills training for military, police, prison and rehabilitation staff. She has also been engaged in setting up of rehabilitation services, and conducted supervision/training for rehabilitation professionals. She has presented on terrorist rehabilitation at conferences and workshops in Spain, Italy, Malta, The Hague, Tajikistan, Montenegro, Tunisia, Algeria, Oman, Abu Dhabi, Kenya, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Hawaii. Mal has primarily published in the field of rehabilitation and reintegration; radicalisation, deradicalisation, and re-radicalisation; and on terrorist mindset.

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[20]   D. Köhler, 2017, *Understanding Deradicalisation: Methods, Tools and Programs for Countering Violence*, Contemporary Terrorism Studies Series, New York: Routledge, pp. 241-276.