

OPERATIONAL INDICATORS

Using analysis grids in order to obtain the profile of a violent
radical group or individual

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INTRODUCTION

THE RATIONALE OF THE ANALYSIS GRIDS

As of today, most research on terrorism and violent radicalization has focused on ideological aspects.

However, by focusing too much of what individuals think, we risk missing out on what terrorists do or are capable of doing. In particular, determining the actual operational capabilities of terrorist groups and individuals is instrumental in countering the threats they might pose.

For this reason we developed two innovative analysis grids allowing for the elaboration of typologies of radical violent groups and individuals. The rationale behind these analysis grids is to focus on the actual means at the disposal of such groups and individuals and to classify them accordingly.

WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM THIS APPROACH?

Two types of end users may benefit from this approach.

Law Enforcement Agencies could find the analysis grid useful in order to organise existing information on violent radical groups and individuals in a structured framework focusing on tangible aspects (as opposed to ideological ones).

Academics interested in adding new case studies to the sample used in the project could also use such grids.

METHOD

USING THE ANALYSIS GRIDS TO OBTAIN THE PROFILE OF VIOLENT RADICAL GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS

Each grid (groups and individuals) is composed of a dozen indicators, which are both qualitative and quantitative. Each indicator is characterized by three different options. For each indicator, the analyst needs to identify the indicator option that best corresponds to the studied case.

Example: Group ETA

Indicator: Capabilities (means at the disposal of the group for conducting its operations)

Option 1: rudimentary means
Option 2: artisanal weapons
Option 3: arsenal (firearms and explosives)

In the case of ETA, for the 'capabilities' indicator, Option 3 is the one that best represents their situation. Hence it should be selected.

By replicating this process for all indicators (command and control, range of methods...), the user can get a profile of the studied terrorist group.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

At this stage, 41 groups and 83 individuals have been analysed with the help of these grids.

This allows us to identify five typical clusters of groups and five typical clusters of individuals. Using these tools to develop profiles of additional groups and individuals can allow for:

Gathering and organising information on additional groups and individuals in a structured manner and focusing on tangible aspects (as opposed to ideological ones).

Linking the developed profiles of violent radical groups and individuals. This is described in *Clusters of Groups and Individuals*.

Drawing conclusions regarding the most appropriate level to tackle the threat posed by a particular group or individual. For example, Islamist violent radical groups appear to be less homogeneous than expected and may thus require counter-measures at different levels.

ANNEX: METHODOLOGY AT A GLANCE

