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Indicators of Inputs, Activities, Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts in Security and Justice Programming

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Practice Products for the CCVRI
Improving Measurement in DFID Crime, Conflict & Violence Programming

This document is one of a series of Practice Products developed under the *Conflict, Crime, and Violence Results Initiative (CCVRI)*. The full set of products is intended to support DFID country offices and their partners to develop better measures of programme results in difficult conflict and fragile environments.

DFID recognises the need to focus on the *results* of its work in developing countries. To this end, DFID strives to account better for our efforts on behalf of UK taxpayers, offering clarity regarding the value and impact of our work. The Results Initiative operates under the assumption that we will achieve our development objectives with our national partners more effectively if we generate—collectively—a clear picture of the progress being made.

Within DFID, the Conflict Humanitarian and Security Department has established a partnership with a consortium of leading organisations in the fields of conflict, security and justice to develop more effective approaches to the use of data in the design, implementation and evaluation of programmes that contribute to reducing conflict, crime and violence.

In addition to producing these Practice Products, the consortium has established a Help Desk function to provide direct and customized support to country offices as they endeavour to improve measurement of results in local contexts.

The Help Desk can be accessed by contacting helpdesk@smallarmssurvey.org.

The views expressed in this Practice Product are the sole opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of all consortia partners. This Practice Product does not reflect an official DFID position.

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Document Summary

Title:
Indicators of Activities, Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts in Security and Justice Programming

Purpose and intended use of this document:
This guidance note describes the key differences between activity, output, outcomes and impact measures, provides example indicators, and discusses relevant data sources and approaches.

Key questions this document addresses:
What are the differences between activity, output, outcome and impact measures? How can indicators be developed that reflect these key programming concepts? What data sources can indicators draw upon? What challenges should program managers be aware of when selecting indicators?

Key messages/essential "take aways":
When and how to use indicators; what to measure; how to choose data sources.

Intended audience of this document (including assumed skill level):
DFID program staff responsible for developing indicators to monitor and evaluate programmes and/or populate logframes.

Key topics/tags:
Activity, output, outcomes, impact, indicators, evaluations in fragile and conflict-affected settings Monitoring, Security, Justice, Logframes.

Authors and their organizations:
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Cross-references to other documents in the series:
Evaluating Security and Justice: Frequently Asked Questions

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Glossary of Terms

Activities: the actions of DFID staff and their partners that are designed to meet a project's objectives.

Data Source: information that may be used as the basis for measurement, including public surveys, administrative records, interviews, focus groups and observations. Encompasses information collected specifically for the purpose of measurement and pre-existing sources, such as budgets, reports and legislative documents.

Fragile and conflict-affected settings: countries, regions or localities that are either experiencing violent conflict, at risk of conflict, or facing the aftermath of war or other forms of violent upheaval.

Impacts: higher level strategic goals, such as increased access to justice or improvements in public safety.

Indicator: a quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor.

Inputs: the raw materials that provide a basis for security and justice programs. Inputs can include money, technical expertise, relationships and personnel.

Logframe (Logical Framework): A project planning and oversight tool consisting of indicators and milestones for key inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts.

Objectivity: an important feature of research that is based on facts and includes steps designed to minimize the impact of the biases or personal preferences of the researcher, funder or others involved in the research on the findings.

Outcomes: the benefits that a project or intervention is designed to deliver.

Outputs: the tangible and intangible products that result from project activities.

Results chain: a graphical representation of the hypothesized relationship between project inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts.

Theory of change: a set of assumptions about the relationship between project activities and goals.

Value for Money (VFM): the optimal use of resources to achieve intended outcomes.

Abstract

Indicators are used in security and justice programming to monitor activities, describe the outputs of projects, track outcomes, and assess whether they are meeting their intended targets. Each of these 'levels' of measurement requires tailored indicators that address different facets of programming; from the building blocks of DFIDs work to the wider impacts on security and justice. This guidance note describes the key differences between activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts, provides example indicators, and discusses relevant data sources and approaches. It may be of particular interest to DFID program staff responsible for developing indicators to monitor and evaluate programmes and/or populate logframes.

Introduction

DFID security and justice programmes operate in a wide variety of settings, often encompassing large geographic areas, with diverse sets of partners and beneficiaries. While empirical data can provide a powerful tool for increasing the effectiveness of programmes, the need to respond quickly to emergent safety and security situations in transitional and post-conflict countries can take precedence over measurement considerations. Furthermore, safety and security initiatives typically operate in regions where there is little existing information and limited capacity to collect new data. Yet, it is exactly these settings where effective interventions are most needed.[1] Without a coordinated system of performance measures, it may be impossible to know what a project achieves, who it serves and whether it is effective.

The Results Chain provides a theoretical model for defining the interrelated components of a project that are required for its success (inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts). By developing indicators that track these different components you will be able to assess whether an initiative is being implemented as planned, if it is leading to improvements in safety, security and access to justice, and whether it is necessary to adjust project activities to maximize benefit and overcome unanticipated obstacles. Without data on inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts it may be impossible to distinguish between security and justice projects that are yielding their intended benefits and those that need to be modified or shut down. A coordinated set of indicators will address the following five levels of measurement (described in more detail in section three of this note).

Inputs: the raw materials that provide a basis for security and justice programs. Inputs can include money, technical expertise, relationships and personnel.

Activities: the actions of DFID staff and their partners that are designed to meet a project's objectives. Example activities include hiring staff, purchasing equipment, constructing prisons or other facilities, commissioning legal guidelines, and providing other forms of technical assistance.

Outputs: the tangible and intangible products that result from project activities. Outputs may include police officers vetted by an oversight project, cases heard by a new mobile court program, or lawyers trained as part of a legal education initiative.

Outcomes: the benefits that a project or intervention is designed to deliver. For example, a community policing project may be designed to improve confidence in the police or increase the willingness of crime victims to assist in investigations.
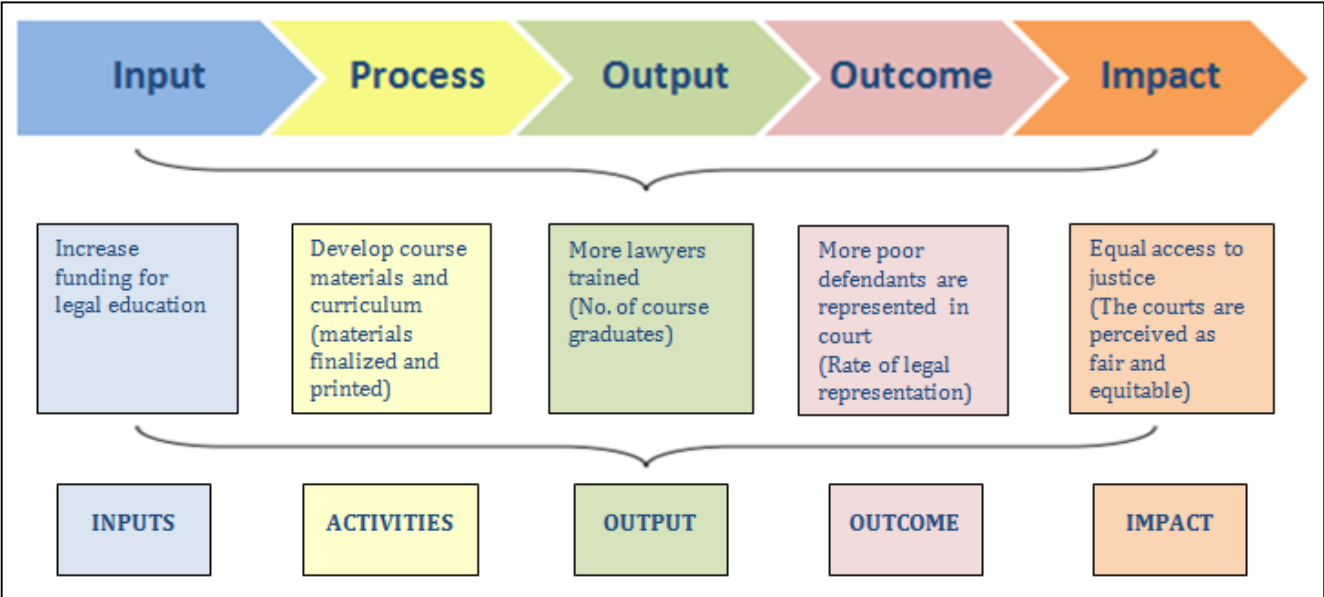
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[1] For further discussion of challenges collecting data in fragile and conflict affected states see *Results in Conflicted-Affected States and Situations*. DFID (2012).

Impacts: the higher level goals to which you hope your project will contribute, such as increased access to justice for the poor or improvements in public safety.

These different levels of measurement are most meaningful when tracked in combination. The following graphic, adapted from a DFID report, illustrates the 'results chain' for a legal education project.

The DFID Results Chain

Input	Process	Output	Outcome	Impact
Increase funding for legal education	Develop course materials and curriculum (materials finalized and printed)	More lawyers trained (No. of course graduates)	More poor defendants are represented in court (Rate of legal representation)	Equal access to justice (The courts are perceived as fair and equitable)
INPUTS	**ACTIVITIES**	**OUTPUT**	**OUTCOME**	**IMPACT**

The objectives and structure of this guidance note

This guidance document, a product of the CHASE Conflict Crime and Violence Reporting Initiative, offers practical advice on developing performance measures (or 'indicators')[2] that track these key components of security and justice programmers, with particular reference to the challenges inherent when collecting data in fragile and conflict affected settings. It may be of particular interest to DFID program staff responsible for developing indicators to monitor and evaluate programmes and populate logframes.

The first section of this note summarizes some of the benefits of using coordinated sets of indicators. The second section provides an example of how a Theory of Change model can be used to define the important elements of a project and provide a basis for developing indicators. The third section provides guidance on how to design input, activity, output, outcomes and impact indicators, including example indicators. The note concludes with a discussion of some of the data sources that are most commonly used to populate indicators, providing guidance on the use of balanced sets of indicators that draw on multiple sources of information.

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[2] DFID defines an indicator as "a quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor"; *DFID Monitoring, Evaluation and Lesson Learning Guidelines.*

Section One: Why track Inputs, Activities, Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts?

By tracking these core components of a project you will be able to:

Document the services that are provided by a project or intervention: Indicators can be used to track the resources that are used in development programming, and the activities of project staff and their partners. Information on *inputs* and *activities* is essential as a management tool, to determine if projects are efficient and economical, and to inform decisions about whether, and how, to scale up or replicate those that are successful.

Assess whether projects are meeting their goals: By tracking indicators on outcomes and impacts you will be able to assess whether an investment in security and justice programming is delivering the anticipated benefits. By disaggregating outcomes and impacts by region, or comparing data for different demographic groups, indicators can provide information on how benefits are distributed, and highlight areas for improvement.

Ensure that projects are implemented as planned and provide feedback necessary to adjust design: Projects almost always experience unanticipated obstacles to implementation. This is a particular problem when working in fragile and conflict-affected states and situations (FCAS) where inadequate resources, a lack of basic infrastructure and political instability can easily derail projects. Well-designed *activity* and *output* indicators can help managers detect obstacles and take swift remedial action.

Provide information necessary to conduct Value for Money (VfM) assessments: DFID defines value for money as consisting of three related components: Economy (are project inputs being purchased at the right price?); Efficiency (what is the relationship between investment in inputs and the outputs that are produced?); and, Effectiveness (are outputs leading to the expected outcomes?).

The guidance note on Indicators and VFM in Governance Programming states that "*VFM is high when there is an optimum balance between all three elements, when costs of relatively low, productivity is high, and successful outcomes have been achieved*".[3] Determining the extent to which a project achieves this balance requires indicators at each point in the results chain.

Demonstrate effectiveness to constituents, national stakeholders and the recipients of justice services: To maximize the impact of safety and security programming it is essential that projects have the support of national governments and are viewed as credible by the recipients of justice services. By documenting the services delivered (outputs) and results

> **Measuring the Effectiveness of Multilateral Initiatives**
> DFID's results framework includes four 'levels' of measurement, ranging from specific indicators of DFID Organizational Effectiveness, such as workforce diversity, procurement, and finances (level 4), through to country performance against the MDG targets and associated indicators (level 1). The second level, one tier below the MDG indicators, focuses on the outputs and outcomes that can be attributed to DFID interventions, including those provided in collaboration with development partners. *DFID's Results Framework: Managing and Reporting DFID Results* provides guidance on developing indicators that can capture the shared aspirations of multilateral initiatives.

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[3] DFID 2011. "Indicators and VfM in Governance Programming." Briefing Note, July 2011. Retrieved from: <http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/PDF/Outputs/Mis_SPC/60797_GovernanceIndicatorsVFMNoteFINAL.pdf>

achieved (outcomes) by development projects, indicators can build confidence in security and justice programming and demonstrate effectiveness to donor governments and taxpayers.

Expand successful projects: Indicators can maximize the impact of scarce development resources by highlighting projects that are successful and should be expanded, and those that are unsuccessful and should be either adapted or discontinued.
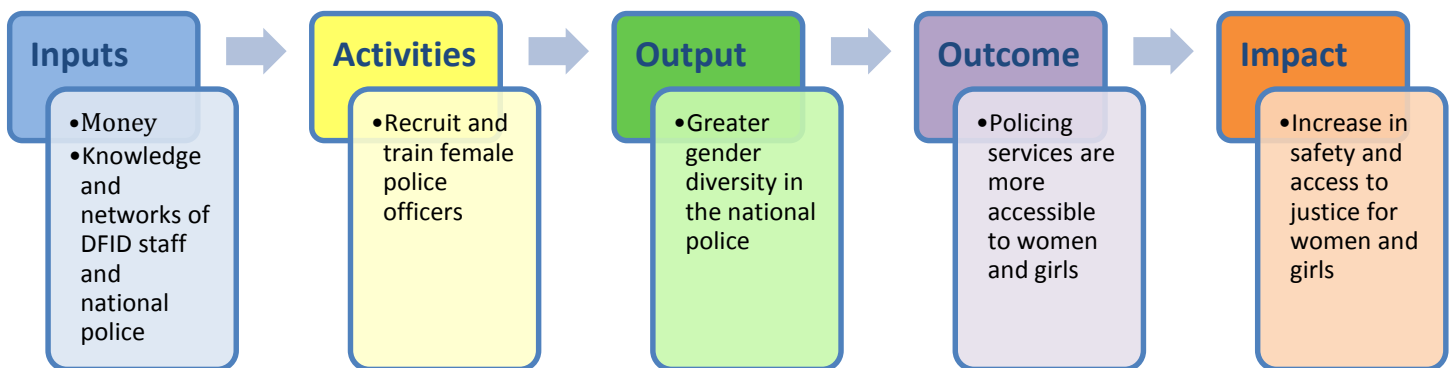
Coordinate services with development partners: IDFID typically operates in settings where there are multiple development organizations with similar objectives are working on justice and security issues. By describing the *activities* of DFDI programmes and explicitly stating their intended *outcomes* and *impacts* of DFID programming, indicators can help streamline support from multiple donors.

Section Two: Theories of change

The process for developing indicators should begin at the project conceptualization and design phase. As a first step, you should be able to clearly articulate the theory of change that underpins your project. A theory of change is a statement that explains "why we think certain actions will produce desired change in a given context."[4] The theory of change for your project can be as simple as "if we conduct *A* activities, to produce *B* outputs, in *C* settings, then we will produce *D* outcomes, which will ultimately contribute to *E* impacts." By clearly and explicitly describing the way that you expect your investments of time and resources to produce the intended benefits, you will provide a firm foundation for developing indicators that capture those project elements that are important to measure.

For example, a simplified version of the theory of change for a project that seeks to establish dedicated Specialized Gender Desks (SGDs) as a way of increasing the accessibility of police services for women and girls, might read: "If we provide funding, training and technical assistance to the national police in three rural districts (activities) to establish specialized gender desks in twelve police stations (outputs), we will increase the ability of women and girls to safely access justice in the areas served by these stations (outcome) and reduce the overall threat of gender-based violence (impact)." The CCVRI guidance document "Practical Approaches to Theories of Change in Conflict, Security & Justice Programmes" provides further guidance on developing theories of change.

Figure 1: An abbreviated theory of change for a specialized gender desk project

Inputs	Activities	Output	Outcome	Impact
•Money •Knowledge and networks of DFID staff and national police	•Recruit and train female police officers	•Greater gender diversity in the national police	•Policing services are more accessible to women and girls	•Increase in safety and access to justice for women and girls

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[4] For a more detailed discussion of theories of change and their use as a basis for programme measurement see, "Practical Approaches to Theories of Change in Conflict, Security & Justice Programmes." Retrieved from: <http://conflict.care2share.wikispaces.net/file/view/theories+of+change+part+1+Final+(30MAR13).pdf>

Once you have developed a theory of change for your project, the next step is to think about the project elements that are important at each stage of the theory of change. Initiatives may look good on paper yet may be impossible to implement or fail to yield the anticipated benefits. By carefully designing indicators that track the various components of a theory of change, you will be able to test whether the theorized relationships between inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts hold true in practice. This will allow you to make adjustments to the project design. For example, if you gather information on the *activity* of staff training in police stations with specialized gender desks and the *outcome* of reports of GBV in the same stations, you may find a relationship between the type of training provided and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) reporting rates. Similarly, *outcome* indicators that assess public perceptions of the police may reveal firmly-held beliefs about the risks associated with reporting GBV that continue to act as barriers to reporting long after SGDs are established. These insights can be used to improve the program design by adjusting training programmes or designing education and outreach efforts to increase community awareness of gender responsive services. <u>Even with foresight and careful planning, these types of obstacles are rarely apparent until a programme is operational. Carefully designed indicators will allow you to detect emergent problems and modify your project accordingly.</u> For an example of input, activity, output, outcomes and impact measures for an SGD project, see Table 1 in Annex A.

In many cases, the success of your project will be contingent on a combination of activities or outputs. For example, for a gender-based violence project to succeed it may be necessary to inform women and girls of their rights as well as ensuring that they have access to confidential services to report violent crimes and if only one of these pieces is in place, the project may fail entirely. In this case it would be important to include paired or 'sibling' indicators that track educational and capacity building activities in tandem. In other cases, it may be important to track the performance of multiple institutions. For instance, an initiative to reduce the use of pretrial detention may require the collaboration of the police, courts and prosecution agencies.

Implementation failure and theory failure

There are two common reasons that security and justice projects founder:[5] implementation failure and theory failure.

Implementation failure occurs when a project fails to achieve its goals because of insufficient resources or unforeseen obstacles to implementation. Implementation failure is a particular problem in FCAS; the infrastructure required to implement a project may be decimated by conflict, forced migration may mean that it is not possible to hire local project staff with the requisite skills, and conflict affected regions may be inaccessible because of safety concerns. Projects can also fail because the intended goals do not align with the interests, priorities or capacities of local partners -often referred to as the 'absorptive capacity' of a project.[6] Communicating with local government and civil society partners throughout the design phase and including indicators that address their concerns can minimize the risk of implementation failure.

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[5] For further discussion of reasons for program failure see, OECD DAC (2008) Guidance on Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities (Paris: OECD Publishing p. 41). Retrieved from:
<http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dcdndep/39774573.pdf>
[6] See Lamb. R.D., Mixon. K. and Halterman. A (2013) "Absorptive Capacity in the Security and Justice Sectors: Assessing Obstacles to Success in the Donor-Recipient Relationship. Center for Strategic and International Studies. Retrieved from:
<http://csis.org/files/publication/130626_Lamb_AbsorptiveCapacitySecJus_WEB.pdf>

By assessing whether a project is achieving important project milestones indicators can provide early warning of implementation failure. For example, indicators for a community education project might track inputs indicators (e.g. project staffing and funding) and outputs (e.g. the number of people participating in community forum) to determine whether the project has sufficient resources to meet training targets.

Theory failure describes underlying flaws in the project design. For example, an access to justice program may be based on the theory that providing funding and assistance to build courts in rural areas will increase access to the formal justice system. However, communities in rural areas with deep-rooted customary justice systems often continue to rely on informal courts to resolve disputes regardless of the physical accessibility of the formal system. For example, a study conducted in Malawi found that subordinate courts located in rural areas were under-utilized by members of the local community. A lack of legal awareness meant that local residents didn't know which types of cases could be taken to the formal courts, and there was a general mistrust of these institutions. Access problems were compounded by the fact that these courts were often staffed by magistrates who operated independently and were rarely available to hear cases. In this scenario, a program that is based on the theory that physical access to the courts equates to accessibility would likely fail, unless it was accompanied by initiatives to increase public awareness and enhance the efficiency and accountability of rural courts.[7]

By tracking outcomes and impacts, indicators can provide early warning of theory failure. However, if a project is based on false theoretical assumptions, the only option may be to terminate the project and redirect funds to alternative interventions. The risk of theory failure can be minimized by basing projects on tested intervention models, and consulting national experts about the assumptions that are implicit in your project design. Theories of change provide a useful basis for these discussions, allowing others to critically examine and evaluate the theoretical assumptions that underpin your project.

Section Three: Indicators of Inputs, Activities, Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts

While the design of indicators should be based on common principles, there are additional considerations which are specific to each of the 'levels' of measurement. The following section discusses the various levels of measurement along the results chain, and provides guidance on indicator development.

Input Indicators: What resources are required?

Assessing whether you have the inputs required to implement a project may seem like an obvious initial step. However, projects can falter if the necessary resources are not available in the right place, at the right time. This is a particular problem in FCAS, where a

> **Using Gantt Charts to track inputs**
> A Gantt chart is a simple project management tool that describes the resources required to implement an initiative and planned project activities in a spreadsheet or calendar format. Because Gantt charts describe the timing and sequence of key project events (such as receiving permissions to proceed with a project, hiring staff, and securing equipment) they can provide a basis for developing input indicators that track whether a project is achieving project milestones according to the original timetable.

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[7] Scharf, W. et al. "Access to Justice for the Poor of Malawi?" Retrieved from: <http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/SSAJ99.pdf>

combination of safety concerns, logistical challenges and damage to local transport infrastructure as a result of conflict can hamper efforts to transport essential equipment, personnel, salaries and other materials to project sites. Developing input indicators to monitor the availability of essential resources can provide early warning of these challenges. For example, as part of a project to address problems of pretrial detention in South Sudan, the United Nations provided computerized case management systems to prisons across the country. However, many of the prisons located in rural areas either had no electricity to power computers or experienced frequent blackouts. Many of the corrections staff working in these prisons had not used computers before, which further limited the impact of the project. Indicators which tracked these essential inputs would help maximize impact.

To the extent possible, input indicators should draw upon existing project management tools. Budget reports, requisition orders and transport manifests can provide information on the resources available to your project, and may provide an indication of potential delays. Curriculum vitas and reference letters for key project positions can be used to determine whether staff members have the requisite skills and qualifications. Letters of support and memoranda of agreement from key partner agencies can provide evidence of the partnerships and logistical support required to implement a project.

Checklist for developing Input Indicators

✓ Have you identified input indicators that describe the resources that are available and where those resources are located?
✓ Do you have indicators of 'intangible' inputs like staff qualifications, letters of support for your project, or other agreements to provide logistical or political support?
✓ Will your indicators allow you to identify the cause of shortfalls in resources?
✓ Are your input indicators responsive – i.e. do they provide early warning of the kinds of logistical challenges that may limit project effectiveness?

Activity Indicators: What your project does

Activity indicators are essential in order to understand the extent to which a project was delivered as planned, and to highlight obstacles to implementation. By describing the various project components in specific and measurable terms, including the resources required and individuals responsible for various tasks, activity indicators provide an important project management tool. They are most valuable when you are able to connect a given set of activities to a particular output or outcome (*see section on the Black Box Effect*).

It is important that activity indicators capture those elements of the project that are essential for its success. For example, the credibility of your mobile court program may be contingent on the support of tribal elders and other influential community leaders in the areas where you are working. In this case, you should track the *activity* of meeting with these key stakeholders to explain the objectives of your program and how it will benefit members of their community.

Who, what and where?
Activity indicators should include three essential elements; *who* conducted the activity, *what* they did, and *where* were they working. For example, when delivering a police training program, it might be important to know whether DFID staff or contractors delivered the training, what the training sessions

covered, how long each session lasted, and whether the training was provided in metropolitan police districts, rural districts, or both. You may not know which activities will be essential for your project's success, and your choice of indicators should be informed by conversations with those who are responsible for delivering services and the intended beneficiaries (e.g. police, arrestees or members of religious or ethnic minority communities).

Checklist for developing Activity Indicators

✓ Do your indicators describe the range of activities that are essential for your project's success?

✓ Do they describe *who* provided *what* and *where*?

✓ Do they include cost measures, to determine project economy and efficiency?

✓ Is it possible to disaggregate your indicators to determine a unit cost for activities conducted in different project sites and at different times?

✓ Do you have a system that allows you to track activities (as well as outputs and outcomes) on an ongoing basis?

✓ Have you checked that you have the correct activity indicators by consulting key stakeholders, including DFID staff and project partners?

Output Indicators: What your project produces

Output indicators describe the delivery of products, including, but not limited to: the providing training and technical assistance; creating standards and legislative documents; investing in buildings and infrastructure; and hiring staff required to implement a project. When combined with measures of inputs and activities, output indicators can provide measures of economy and efficiency, describing the relationship between investments in a project and products.

It is usually important to track output indicators at regular intervals over the life course of an initiative, as a way of assessing progress towards project goals and detecting delays. While achieving project outputs offers no guarantees that your project will be successful, without achieving your outputs the chances of success may be slim.

Outputs or outcomes?
There is often confusion about the differences between project outputs (products) and outcomes (the short and medium term benefits that those products deliver). One easy way to distinguish between outputs and outcomes is to consider whether the indicator describes project effectiveness (an outcome). For example, installing fingerprinting technology in district police precincts and training the police on forensic techniques are both *outputs*; they offer no indication of whether the new technology is actually used or whether it improves police effectiveness. The *outcomes* for this project, their short to medium term effects, may include increased use of forensic evidence in court, changes in the rate of successful prosecutions, or reductions in the use of police interrogation as the primary method of gathering evidence. Going one step further, potential long term *impacts* for a project of this sort might include reductions in the rate of violent and property crimes and/or increased public confidence in the police.

When working in FCAS, the infrastructure required to implement a project may have been seriously damaged, requiring an initiative to build capacity from the ground-up. In these settings, it is important

that expectations about the outputs and outcomes that can be achieved are realistic. For example, Kosovo emerged from conflict in 1999 without a police force. International efforts initially focused on hiring and training police officers, purchasing essential equipment, building and renovating facilities and developing a governance structure for the newly created policing authority. However, in addition to tracking the reconstruction efforts, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) collected information for a range of outcome indicators using public opinion polls, monitoring reports, crime data and information on disciplinary infractions to monitor whether the newly created police force was respectful of human rights and equipped to maintain law and order.[8] Outcome indicators informed the development of the Kosovan police service by identifying deficits in training and oversight that needed to be addressed as part of the reconstruction efforts.

> **Gender Sensitive Outcome and Impact Indicators**
> "The promotion of a fair share of benefits for women and men, or women's empowerment, should be an aspect of the outcome and impact of all development policies/projects concerned with impacting on people's lives. This should be reflected in Outcome and Impact Indicators and, where possible, in the wording of the Outcome/Impact statement."
> *Guidance on Using the Revised Logical Framework, DFID How To Note.*

As with activity indicators, it is often important to measure regional differences in project implementation. For example, your project may exceed your expectations in those jurisdictions where you have the support of local politicians, but fail completely in places where your project is blocked by community leaders or other influential figures. Similarly, when working in conflict-affected states, you may find that project outputs vary widely depending on the security situation in the areas where you are working or the level of political instability.

Quantitative output indicators, that describe the number of tasks achieved or products produced are often important measure of progress. However, it may also be important to describe the quality of your outputs by, for example, asking training participants whether the information provided was clear, comprehensive, and relevant to their work.

> **Output Indicators Checklist**
>
> ✓ Do you have indicators for all of the outputs that you expect to contribute to project success?
> ✓ Do you have some measures which describe the quality of outputs, as well as the quantity?
> ✓ Do your output indicators describe the outputs produced in different project sites and who participated in their production (where relevant)?
> ✓ Do your output indicators provide information necessary for replication (e.g. by providing a clear connection between project activities and outputs)?

Outcome Indicators: What your project achieves

Well-designed outcome indicators are important mechanisms for ensuring transparency and accountability, describing the return on donor investments and the benefits that a project delivers. Whereas *output* indicators often rely on De Jure measures, describing things like the creation of

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[8] Bajraktari, Y., Boutellis, A., Gunja, F., Harris, D., Kapsis, J., Kaye, E. amd Rhee, J. (2006) *The PRIME System: Measuring the Success of Post-Conflict Police Reform*. New York: United Nations.

legislation, provision of training or purchasing of equipment, *outcome* indicators should be De Facto – describing the real world changes that these outputs will produce. For example, creating legislation or purchasing medical equipment is rarely the end goal of a project; outcome indicators should measure the protection of rights or improvements in health that result from these activities and outputs. Compared to impact indicators, which typically represent long-term and high-level goals that are beyond the immediate control of an individual project, outcomes should be directly linked to your project outputs. Because outcome indicators define the criteria for assessing whether your project is successful, they should be realistic and achievable given your capacity and resources. Outcome indicators should only state *what* will be measured, rather than providing baseline data or target figures.

Effective outcome indicators typically combine quantitative and qualitative measures, describing the number of people benefitting from a project and the nature of those benefits. For example, outcome indicators for a crime reduction project may include changes in the number of people experiencing violent crime (a quantitative indicator) alongside perceptions of public safety (a qualitative indicator). Because they are designed to measure the ultimate results of your project, it is often important to include the perceptions and experiences of the intended beneficiaries (e.g. arrestees, police officers, or members of the general public). It is essential to include gender sensitive and pro-poor indicators, describing the extent to which your project benefits different groups.

Outcome indicators checklist

✓ Do your outcomes indicators draw on existing data wherever available?
✓ Do they describe the perceptions and experiences of program participants and other beneficiaries?
✓ Do they only include what is to be measured (and not information on targets or benchmarks)?
✓ Are your outcome indicators relevant, measurable and realistic?
✓ Do they include information that is important to key stakeholders, funders and intended beneficiaries?
✓ Would a non-specialist be able to interpret the results?
✓ Do your indicators describe issues that are important to vulnerable groups, and can you disaggregate the results to describe the experiences of women, girls and other vulnerable groups?
✓ Are they pro-poor?
✓ Do your indicators include De Facto measures of project outputs (describing changes in practice or experiences) in addition to De Jure measures?

Impact Indicators: How Your Project Contributes to Higher-Level Strategic Goals

Impact indicators describe progress made towards higher-level goals. They are akin to statements of purpose, describing those objectives that are shared with other development partners and national government agencies, such as reducing poverty, increasing access to justice, or improving the accountability of national institutions. While it is typically not possible for an individual project to achieve impacts without the contribution of others, impact indicators provide an important mechanism for coordinating services with those working on similar projects and can illustrate the

connection between your project and the priorities of other development organizations and national governments. In settings where multiple national and international actors are working on related issues, agreeing upon shared objectives and adopting a common set of impact indicators can be an important step towards a coordinated approach to security and justice programming.

The following example describes a balanced set of impact indicators developed by the Papua New Guinea Law and Justice Sector Secretariat to monitor progress towards the overarching strategic goal of "a just, safe and secure society for all".[9] These four performance measures are one of three baskets of indicators designed to assess progress toward "improved access to justice and justice results". In combination, these four indicators measure three facets of access to justice. The first indicator assesses the extent to which members of the public receive training on their rights (responding to a general lack of awareness of basic rights). The second two indicators track the availability of legal representation in the formal court system (indicator 3) and a more general measure of legal advocacy and support across settings (indicator 2). The final indicator assess the delays within the courts systems, by tracking the amount of time that people are held in detention while awaiting trial. Selecting outcome and impact indicators that illustrate the connection between DFID activities and national strategic plans can help ensure national government support and participation for a new initiative.

Papua New Guinea Law and Justice Sector Strategy: Remove obstacles that prevent access to just results

Indicator 1: Number of people receiving human rights awareness and services from civil society organizations (CSOs) and formal agencies. *Data sources: CSO Survey, reports from formal (government) agencies.*

Indicator 2: Number of people receiving legal/paralegal and/or advocacy services from CSOs and formal agencies. *Data Sources: CSO survey, administrative data from Public Solicitor's Office.*

Indicator 3: Number of cases defended in court by the Public Solicitor. *Data Source: Administrative data from Public Solicitor's Office.*

Indicator 4: Average time that remandees are detained. *Data source: Administrative data from Corrections Service.*

Source: 2007 Law and Justice Sector Annual Report, Govt. of Papua New Guinea

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While beyond the immediate sphere of influence of your project, the link between your outputs and the intended impacts should be credible. In some cases it may be possible to test the relationship between outcomes and impacts by capitalizing on opportunities to conduct 'natural experiments.' For example, it may be impossible to claim a causal link between a gun amnesty project that seeks to reduce the number of automatic weapons in circulation in a large city and community-wide perception of safety; the impact of one project may be too small to measure and changes in public opinion may be affected by political and socioeconomic factors that are beyond the control of the project. However, it may be possible to demonstrate a relationship between the same program and improvements in public perceptions when working in small communities or remote areas where there are no other projects with similar objectives. It may also be possible to compare impact indicators for your project site with another similarly situated area where you are not working.

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[9] Law and Justice Sector Annual Performance Report 2007. PNG Law and Justice Sector Secretariat. Retrieved from: <http://www.lawandjustice.gov.pg/www/html/560-sector-performance-reporting.asp>

Section Four: Selecting data sources

Once you have developed a theory of change for your project and decided on the inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts that are important to measure, you will need to identify potential data sources. Your choice of data sources will depend on available resources and the focus of your project. For example, indicators for a public education project may use surveys or focus groups to collect information on public awareness. Alternatively, if you are piloting a capacity development program, you will probably need to find data sources that describe the number of buildings constructed or justice professionals trained. While there are a number of commonly used sources of indicator data, most can be broadly categorized as quantitative or qualitative measures.

Quantitative measures
Quantitative measures use numerical summaries such as percentages, rates, or absolute numbers. These measures are commonly used as indicators of activity and output, such as counts of the number of people receiving legal advice from a paralegal project, or the amount of food provided by a prison aid project. Quantitative indicators are amenable to comparison over time or between settings. You could use quantitative indicators to track changes in reported crime over time, for example, or differences in per capita homicide rates between rural and urban jurisdictions. However, indicators that are based solely on counts can be misleading and it is important to ensure that valuable information is not lost in the process of turning complex concepts into a numerical measure. For instance, an uptick in recorded homicides could either be the result of increased violence or changes in the way that conflict fatalities or deaths resulting from domestic violence are classified.

Public surveys and information from administrative records such as police arrest books, prison rosters, or budgeting systems are the most commonly used quantitative data sources. However, anything that can be counted can be turned into a quantitative measure. For example, observations of the proportion of police officers that are women, the average length of detention for people held

awaiting trial, or counts of the number of articles in the local media mentioning police corruption cases could all provide quantitative data.

Qualitative measures
Qualitative measures provide a detailed description of complex phenomena based on interviews, documents or other sources of narrative information. They can provide detailed information on the activities, outputs and outcomes of a project. For example, you may choose to conduct interviews with former prisoners to learn about their experience of incarceration, or review court transcripts to assess the nature of language barriers to accessing legal services. Because of their flexible nature, qualitative measures are particularly suited to issues that are complex, nuanced or where there is little existing information to provide a basis for quantitative measures. Qualitative indicators are often combined with quantitative measures to provide a detailed assessment of issues that are not easily quantifiable, or to provide nuance and contextual detail to numerical findings.

Commonly used data sources for qualitative indicators are diverse, including: information collected via in-depth interviews and focus groups with justice professionals, community leaders, or government officials; interviews or focus groups with people involved in the justice system, or members of the general public; observations of conditions in police stations, prison or court houses; reviews of legislation, human rights assessment, media reports or other documents; or any other way of systematically collecting narrative information on your projects implementation or impact.

For a summary of commonly used quantitative and qualitative data sources see table 2.

Table 2: Commonly used data sources

Data Source	Description	Quantitative Measure	Qualitative Measure	Examples
Administrative Data	Quantitative information compiled routinely by government institutions, international organizations and civil society groups.	x		• Percentage of criminal case prosecutions brought which result in conviction: a) SGBV cases; b) all cases • Percentage of judges who are women
Public Surveys	Information gathered through surveys of the general public, which can be used to generate ratings for indicators based on public perceptions or experiences. In some cases, you may be able to use findings from surveys carried out by other organizations to supplement original data collection.	x	x	• Percentage of the population that say they feel safe in their communities • Percentage of the population that say they trust their local law enforcement
Expert Surveys	Information you gather confidentially from individuals with specialized knowledge based on their experience or professional position. The choice of experts is crucial and must be tailored to the questions being asked.		x	• To what extent do you agree that alleged incidents of police misconduct are seriously investigated and prosecuted? • How often are children who are accused of a criminal offense represented in court by an advocate or legal counsel?
Focus Groups	Focus groups bring together structured samples of a range of social groups to gather perceptions in an interactive group setting where participants can engage with one another. Focus groups can be quicker and less costly than large representative surveys.		x	• What are the main challenges faced by women and girls when trying to access justice? • Level of awareness of chiefs and other community leaders of human rights issues and laws and their implications for customary law.
Observations	Data gathered by researchers or field staff. This information can be collected through in-depth case studies or systematic observations of a particular institution or settings.	x	x	• Percentage of minimum daily calories received by prisoners in select prisons • Review of police files of those in custody to determine whether they include identity, charge, age, etc.
Documents & Legislation	Information culled from written documents. Can be used to verify the existence of certain laws and procedures and to understand the powers of a particular institution.		x	• Do the police have a current strategic plan and budget? • Do the courts periodically produce publicly available accounts of spending?[10]

Adapted from: *The United Nations Rule of Law Indicators: Implementation Guide and Project Tools.*

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[10] References: Governance and Conflict Indicators Report; DFID How To Note: Guidance on Using the Revised Logical Framework; Measuring Progress toward Safety and Justice: A Global Guide to the Design of Performance Indicators across the Justice Sector; Developing Indicators to Measure the Rule of Law: A Global Approach; United Nations Rule of Law Indicators Implementation Guide and Project Tools.

Combining quantitative and qualitative data sources

The following indicators have been selected for illustrative purposes from a larger set of output indicators used to assess the quality and speed of case processing for a DFID Access to Justice and Security program in Sierra Leone. The first two indicators provide quantitative measures, describing the time taken for cases to progress through the courts and their ultimate outcomes. These indicators are important measures of efficiency but are ambiguous; a reduction in processing time and increases in conviction rates may *either* reflect increased efficiency *or* a court system that arbitrarily accepts and convicts all cases quickly and without due process. The third, qualitative, indicator provides a check on this ambiguity, allowing state and non-state sector actors to comment on the quality of case processing. This third indicator could be further strengthened by focusing on the quality of *decision making,* in addition to processing, and including the opinions of defense attorneys or other legal specialists who are not directly involved with the court system.

Output Indicator 4.1: Average number of days taken to process criminal cases (in the provinces) (a) Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) cases; b) all cases (time taken from initial case registration in magistrates' court to case 'disposal' in the High Court). *(survey)*

Output Indicator 4.3: Percentage of criminal case prosecutions brought which result in conviction: a) SGBV cases; b) all cases. *(monitoring reports)*

Output Indicator 4.5: Perceptions of local state and non-state justice sector actors of the quality of criminal case processing in magistrates courts. *(survey)*

Data collection checklist

The following checklist and accompanying flowchart (figure 2) describe some of the key questions that you will need to consider when selecting data sources for your indicators.

What existing data sources can I use?
For reasons of efficiency, you should use existing data sources whenever possible. National governments collect large amounts of information on the services that they provide, including the number of police officers and judges, prison populations, arrest rates, court cases, and the budgets allocated to the police, prisons and courts. In many cases, governments, civil society groups, and international organizations also conduct national or local opinions surveys and censuses. Your colleagues from DFID or international development partner agencies may have already collected and analyzed information that can provide a baseline measure for your project. Furthermore, there

> **Leveraging local resources**
> As part of the implementation of the United Nations Rule of Law Indicators Project, researchers trained UN field staff from the justice, prisons and police sections to conduct observations and collect field data in Haiti, Liberia and South Sudan. For example, collocated UNPOL officers were asked to review police files of detainees being held in regional police stations, and verify whether files included names of detainees, grounds for detention, whether they were adults or children, and date of arrest. Similar data on prison records were collected by collocated UN staff from the from the corrections advisory units. In South Sudan, this assistance resulted in the collection of observations in 197 different police stations and posts.
> *Source: The United Nations Rule of Law Indicators: Implementation Guide and Project Tools.*

are numerous off-the-shelf indices describing governance issues ranging from press freedoms to corruption and accountability, many of which have global or near-global coverage.[11]

Even if you are not able to identify an existing data source that is relevant to your project, you may be able to capitalize on other data collection or programmatic activities to collect information. For example, adding a question to an ongoing public survey, or using existing assessment visits as to observe conditions in police stations or courthouses can provide cost-effective options for collecting information.

Is there a 'proxy' measure available?
Most projects have one or more core elements that are essential for any meaningful assessment of project effectiveness. For example, when selecting indicators for a crime reduction project you will need some way of detecting changes in rates of victimization. The 'gold standard' approach in this case would be to conduct two victimization surveys of a representative sample of the population living in project target areas: the first, before your project starts to provide services and the second, a follow-up survey after the project has been operational for some time. However, the cost of conducting large-scale public surveys can be prohibitive and you may need to consider using proxies, or indirect measures, that relate to the topic of interest. In this example, you could choose to use the number of assault victims admitted to hospital emergency rooms, or you could use information from focus groups with healthcare staff and community representatives as proxy measures for assessing the violent crime rate.

> **Controlling for bias using 'baskets' of indicators**
> Collecting data from more than one source becomes increasingly important when working in FCAS, where the existence of reliable data is often limited. To control for this bias, it can be beneficial to use "baskets" of indicators and a variety of data sources to cross-check data within a particular dimension. For example, the United Nations Rule of Law Indicators tool requires the collection of more than one data source to populate indicators that may have inherent bias due to the availability of reliable data. An indicator assessing prisoner nutrition and the quality of food provided to prisoners, for example, gathers data through both expert surveys as well as field data from observations to produce a more conclusive rating.

Is the information reliable and complete?
You will need to consider potential gaps and biases in any measure that you use as a basis for your indicators. In FCAS, a lack of capacity may mean that information is incomplete and regional conflicts or local infrastructure problems may mean that information is not collected in some regions. If you have reason to suspect that a data source is incomplete or compromised for other reasons, you should look for a second source of information from an independent source as a method of verifying its accuracy. For example, you may be able to verify official data on prison populations by conducting targeted population counts in a subset of prisons.

Does the measure describe changes in the practices or experiences of justice actors or members of the public?
There are many examples of laws and policies that are designed to safeguard the rights of members of the public but are never implemented. While the creation of new rules, procedures or legislative mechanisms may be essential milestones for your project, it is usually important to also assess the extent to which they are applied in practice. For example, a project to increase access to free legal defense counsel should include a De Facto measure of the number of people represented by a lawyer in

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[11] For a directory of existing international indices, see "Governance Indicators: A User's Guide." (Oslo Governance Center). Retrieved from: <http://www.undg.org/docs/11652/UNDP-Governance-Indicators-Guide-(2007).pdf>

court, as well as De Jure measures of the right to counsel or the number of lawyers appointed and trained.

Is the measure pro-poor and gender sensitive? In most settings, women, girls, the poor and the disenfranchised are disproportionally affected by crime and insecurity and typically face the greatest difficulties accessing justice. There may be specific issues, such as hate crimes or GBV that predominantly affect specific groups. In many situations, marginalized and vulnerable groups do not have a legitimate voice, and unless steps are taken to include their perspectives in project assessments, their needs and experiences may be overlooked. When designing indicators it is important to consider whether the measures capture the experience of these groups. This may be achieved by: disaggregating findings from administrative

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Four attributes of gender sensitive indicators

1. **Disaggregated by sex:** indicator findings are reported separately for men and women.
2. **Gender specific:** the indicator measures an initiative that is targeted at women, such as women's crime reporting desks.
3. **Implicitly gendered:** the indicator addresses an issue which is of specific relevance to women and girls, such as rates of domestic violence or rape.
4. **Chosen by women rather than men:** the indicator is chosen by female community members and reflects the specific needs and priorities of women.

Source: Measuring Democratic Governance: A Framework for Developing Pro-Poor and Gender-Sensitive Indicators.

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data requests or public surveys to highlight the experiences of vulnerable groups; addressing issues which are of specific concern (such as rates of GBV); or ensuring that representatives from ethnic or religious minority communities are included as focus groups participants or survey respondents.

Figure 2: Data source selection flowchart
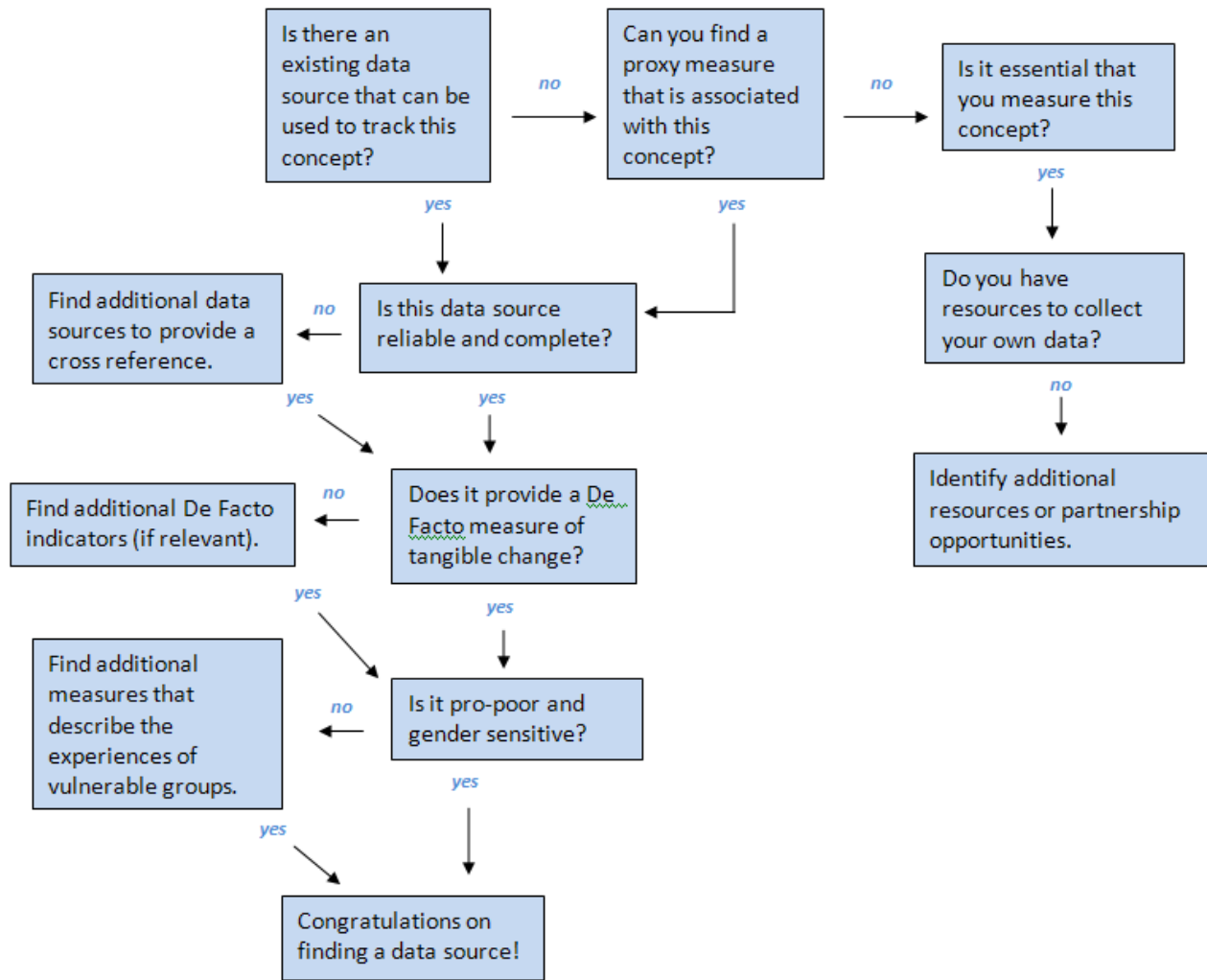
Developing a data collection plan

Once you have developed a series of indicators that are tied to the various components of your project, the next step is to decide who will be responsible for collecting and analyzing data, how frequently the information will be collected and how it will be reported. The answer to these questions will depend largely on the nature of your project and stage of implementation. For example, it is usually important to collect some baseline data before a project starts. Baseline measures for an anti-corruption project, for instance, may include the proportion of survey respondents who report paying a bribe to a police officer in the year before the project commenced. Once the project is operational, subsequent rounds of data collection can be compared against this baseline to monitor outcomes.

Projects typically face the greatest implementation challenges during the initial startup period and it will be important to collect information on inputs and activities from day one. In contrast, outcomes and impacts can take months or years to emerge. For instance, If you are measuring changes in the rate of violent recidivism resulting from a project that provides skills training and employment opportunities to former combatants you may need to wait several years for program participants to

graduate from training programs and return to their communities before assessing rates of reoffending. Budgets for these projects should reflect the need to collect information over an extended period.

In many settings, the information that you collect to assess safety and security initiatives may be the only source of data on important justice issues. For example, a public survey about rates of crime reporting or interviews with victims of gender based violence that document experiences of police contact can provide valuable data for national policy makers seeking to improve the operation of the justice system. Similarly, it may be possible to pool resources with other international organizations working on related issues. Coordinating data collection in this way can save money while building the evidence base for policies to improve safety and security.

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Annex: Example theory of change and indicators for a project to establish specialized gender desks (SGDs)

	Theory of change	Indicators
Inputs	*The project will provide…* • Money to pay for recruitment, training and construction • Permission from Ministry of Justice to establish project • Management structure to deliver services • Knowledge, experience, networks and other resources of DFID staff and national police	• Project budget • Proposal and management plan with budget, timeline, staffing structure, management plan, communications strategy, etc. • Letters and other evidence of support from MOJ and senior police officials • Qualifications and experience of DFID staff and consultants
Activities	*Project staff and partners will use these resources to…* • Recruit 25 female police officers to staff SGDs in three districts • Provide training on gender responsive service to staff working on SGDs • Modify the structure of stations to create areas that allow women to report crimes confidentially	• Number of female officers recruited • Number of training sessions provided • Number of staff receiving training • Qualifications and experience of consultants providing training • Number of police stations renovated, disaggregated by location
Outputs	*As a result…* SGDs will be established in twelve stations representing a mix of urban and rural areas	• Number of stations with active crime reporting desks established • Number of hours per week that SGDs are fully staffed and operational • Number of women and girls living within six hours travel time of project target stations • Whether SGDs meet international standards • Qualitative indicators of police station environments including barriers to confidential reporting and/or staffing of desks.
Outcomes	*This will lead to…* Women and girls being able to safely report crimes without fear of intimidation	• Number of incidents reported to SGDs • Nature of incidents reported • Extent to which women and girls in the catchment areas of stations included in the project perceive policing services to be more accessible. • Change in the proportion of women or girls experiencing some form of GBV that file a report with the police
Impacts	*And contribute to…* A reduction in the overall rates of gender-based violence in these areas	• Survey data on change in rates of GBV, disaggregated by setting of offense (public/private settings) • Change in the incidence of GBV homicides • Changes in the perceptions of risk of violence amongst women and girls • Change in number of emergency room admissions of girls and women • Change in the rates of GBV for at-risk or vulnerable groups such as girls and young women and rural residents