



URBAN SAFETY PROJECT **CRIME PREVENTION BACKGROUND PAPER**

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Senior Rule of Law Advisor

March 2017



The Asia Foundation
Improving Lives, Expanding Opportunities

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About The Asia Foundation and the Urban Safety Brief Series

The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia. Informed by six decades of experience and deep local expertise, our programs address critical issues affecting Asia in the 21st century—governance and law, economic development, women’s empowerment, environment, and regional cooperation. In addition, our Books for Asia and professional exchanges are among the ways we encourage Asia’s continued development as a peaceful, just, and thriving region of the world. Headquartered in San Francisco, The Asia Foundation works through a network of offices in 18 Asian countries and in Washington, DC. Working with public and private partners, the Foundation receives funding from a diverse group of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals.

The Urban Safety Brief Series aims to provide Myanmar policymakers at national and local levels, and other interested stakeholders, with analysis and examples of policies and practices, which potentially could be applied or adapted to enhance people’s safety in urban areas in Myanmar. The Asia Foundation has a wider policy research agenda looking at urban governance and public financial management and the Urban Safety Brief Series is a complimentary body of work. The Urban Safety Brief Series is supported by the Government of the United Kingdom (UK). The views expressed in the series are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the UK Government or The Asia Foundation.

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About the author

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1. INTRODUCTION

In order to help the people of Myanmar benefit from peace and security, The Asia Foundation has established plans to achieve three outcomes in its Urban Safety Project. These are:

1. Township-level safety and security actors better understand urban safety challenges, and community priorities;
2. Safety and security-related actors improve their problem-solving skills as well as enhance collaboration and communication efforts;
3. Inter-agency and expert policy dialogue and practice on urban safety is strengthened among relevant actors at state/region and national levels.¹

In support of the planning for this project, The Asia Foundation commissioned its Senior Rule of Law Advisor to draw up this background paper about how crime prevention methods could be used effectively to achieve the above outcomes. This includes a review of the benefits that come from establishing legitimacy in the role of the state safety and security actors who will be involved in this urban safety initiative.

2. A MODEL OF CRIME PREVENTION

In the academic literature, crime prevention has been described in a number of ways.² One of the most commonly used ways divides crime prevention into three categories, as follows.³

1. Primary prevention, which aims to prevent crime before it happens by introducing universal policies and practices.
2. Secondary prevention, which targets individuals at high risk of offending with the aim of reducing their personal involvement in criminality.
3. Tertiary prevention, which deals with convicted offenders by offering treatment program and other approaches intended to reduce the probability of further offending.

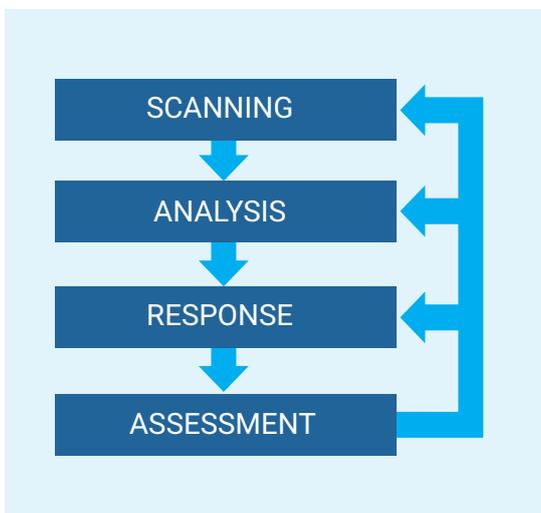
This approach can be applied to all types of crime, from volume crimes such as criminal damage and theft, to organized crime and terrorism.

1. Urban Safety Project Master Inception Deliverables v20170214 Draft to FCO (Yangon: The Asia Foundation, 2017).
2. Throughout this paper 'crime' is taken to include volume crime (theft, car crime and burglary) as well as violence, organized crime, disorderly behavior and terrorism.
3. Paul John Brantingham and Frederick L Faust, "A conceptual model of crime prevention," *Crime and Delinquency*, Volume 22: 1976, 284–296.

3. METHODS OF CRIME PREVENTION IN URBAN AREAS

3.1. PROBLEM SOLVING

The method of policing most consistently shown to address each of the above categories of crime prevention⁴ is *problem-oriented policing*⁵ (referred to in this paper as problem-solving policing). This approach, proposed originally by Herman Goldstein,⁶ is a structured approach to addressing specific problems. It aims to apply rational and evidence based analysis of problems and their solutions to a community safety context. Problem solving systematically identifies and analyses crime and disorder problems, develops specific responses to individual problems, and subsequently assesses whether the response has been successful. It has been shown to work particularly effectively in urban areas and would be an effective way of implementing many of the key strategic actions of the National Crime Prevention Strategy 2017-2019 that relate to urban areas.⁷

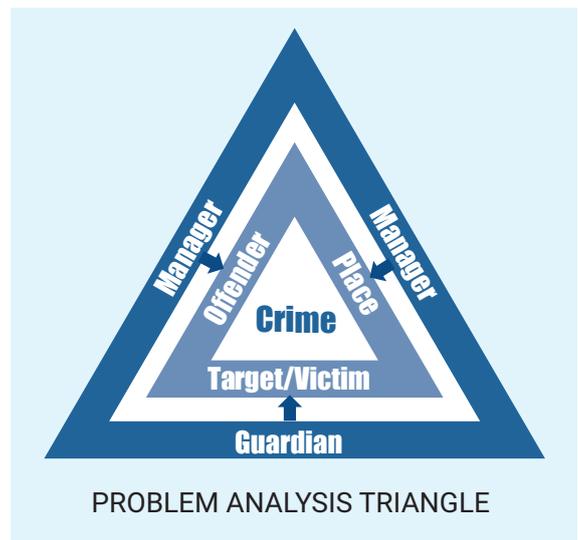


A number of different problem-solving models have developed. SARA is the most commonly used model and comprises four stages: scanning, analysis, response, and assessment. The SARA model is a cyclical process—not a linear one. It requires assessment on an ongoing basis to determine whether or not the response is effective. This enables responses to be modified, if necessary, throughout the initiative. The following gives a description of the four SARA steps. Further explanation of each of the steps is available on the US’s Center for Problem-Oriented Policing website.⁸

Scanning: identify and prioritize problems, in particular those relating to the safety of women and children. Scanning should involve an early review of clusters of similar, related or recurring incidents. These are then prioritized and the priority crime and/ or community safety problems are selected for further examination. The National Reassurance Policing Programme in the UK found that involving the community in identifying and defining problems can lead to better results⁹—this is discussed further in the section headed *Community Engagement*. It is important in this phase to pay particular attention to crimes where the risk of harm is very high, even when they are not raised as a problem by members of the community; for example sexual crimes against women and children.

4. Gloria Laycock, Policing and the prevention landscape. (London: University College London, 2016).
5. David Weisburd et al., “Is problem-oriented policing effective in reducing crime and disorder?” *Criminology and Public Policy*, Volume 9, Issue 1, February 2010: 139–172.
6. Herman Goldstein, *Problem-Oriented Policing* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1990).
7. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *National Crime Prevention Strategy*, The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, (Yangon: UNODC, 2017).
8. <http://www.popcenter.org/about/?p=sara>.
9. Rachel Tuffin, Julia Morris, and Alexis Poole, *An evaluation of the National Reassurance Policing Programme* (London: Home Office, 2016).

Analysis: gather information and intelligence to identify underlying causes of the problem and to narrow the scope of the problem as much as possible. This involves a detailed review of data to identify the underlying causes of the particular problem as well as researching what is known about the problem type and identifying what data is available that relates to this problem. This also makes use of another tool, namely the Problem Analysis Triangle¹⁰ (see graphic), which enables analysis of the problem from the three main perspectives of offender, victim and location. The better your analysis, the more relevant and tailored your response to the problem can be.



The College of Policing (England and Wales) describes a number of analytical techniques that could be considered for use in the analysis phase of a problem-solving initiative in Myanmar.¹¹ These include: crime pattern analysis which identifies the nature and scale of crime and disorder trends, linked crimes or incidents; hot-spot identification which focuses on locations that display significantly higher than usual levels of crime and/or incidents; and crime and incident series identification, where number of similar crimes or incidents are identified as probably being committed by one offender because they are linked by modus operandi, signature behavior, intelligence or forensic evidence. A summary of the full list can be found in Annex A.

When conducting the analysis phase of a problem-solving initiative, it is important to have high quality data and to consider all three parts of the problem analysis triangle.

Response: tailored activities designed to address the causes of the problem, as identified in the analysis phase. This involves engaging with the public and partners to come up with different options for interventions by searching for new ideas and researching what has worked in other areas. Once the most appropriate option has been selected, a response plan, including objectives for the initiative and the role of relevant partners, is created. It is important the plan articulates how its actions sit within the primary, secondary and tertiary categories of crime prevention (See SARA steps 1-3).

In relation to primary prevention, research has shown that changing situations changes behavior—including criminal behavior. This approach is known as Situational Crime Prevention (SCP) and the associated body of research on SCP has demonstrated that there are at least five major mechanisms through which crime can be prevented.¹² These are:

1. Increase the perceived risks, such as increasing the perceived probability of capture by focusing on known offenders. This could include, for example, directed police patrols in areas of high crime.

10. The Problem Analysis Triangle helps highlight potential partners for the police, in terms of identifying the manager of the location, a handler for the offender and a guardian for the victim. Partners can be numerous and varied. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100418065544/>.

11. <https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/intelligence-management/analysis/>.

12. Ronald V Clarke and John Eck, *Become a problem solving crime analyst in 55 steps*, Available from www.popcenter.org.

2. Increase the perceived effort of committing the crime. This includes target hardening such as introducing locks, bars, pin numbers, etc.
3. Reduce the perceived rewards by, for example, tagging goods in shops with ink capsules or gluing bank notes when stolen from cash carriers.
4. Remove excuses by making the rules clear, for example through use of signage.
5. Reduce provocation by, for example, controlling taxi queues when bars close.¹³

Situational crime prevention is another key strategic action of the National Crime Prevention Strategy 2017–2019.¹⁴ It is important that the state actors involved in The Asia Foundation project are encouraged to think differently and creatively about their contribution to primary crime prevention. For example, the police should think about going beyond their traditional responses such as using increased patrol to deter criminal activity. Deterrence does work in small areas of high crime,¹⁵ but is expensive and has less of a long-term effect than other situational crime prevention methods.

As for secondary prevention, a response plan could, along with other suitable methods, include early intervention programs for children and families at high risk of offending. There is a wide body of research which shows how effective this approach can be in stopping young people from offending and it is consistent with the National Crime Prevention Strategy. Evidence for this approach and practical examples of how to make it work can be found on the website of the UK's Early Intervention Academy.¹⁶

Finally, consideration should be given to tertiary prevention in the response plan. For example, the plan should incorporate methods which reduce re-offending, in particular in cases where women and children are at risk of harm.

In planning an initiative to address a specific crime problem, practitioners will need to consider the mechanism, the moderators (i.e. what might determine whether or not the mechanism will work—e.g. the context), how to implement it and how much it might cost.¹⁷ These five elements have now been incorporated into the What Works Centre for Crime Reduction web-based toolkit,¹⁸ which could be used in planning responses in this project.

Assessment: measure if the response had the desired effect—make changes to the response if required. The purpose of this phase is to determine if the objectives set out in the response plan have been attained. This is done using a comparison of pre and post intervention data (qualitative and quantitative). Ongoing assessment of the intervention is needed to ensure its continued effectiveness.

A Campbell Collaboration Systematic Review found that problem-solving approaches have a positive effect on the problems they target.¹⁹ Problem solving works best when there is: a clear focus on particular

13. Laycock, Policing, 2016.

14. UNODC, National Crime Prevention Strategy, Myanmar, 2017.

15. Anthony Braga, "Hot spots policing and crime prevention: A systematic review of randomized controlled trials" *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, Volume 1, 2005: 317–342.

16. <http://www.eif.org.uk>.

17. Laycock, Policing, 2016.

18. The toolkit is available here <http://whatworks.college.police.uk/toolkit/Pages/Toolkit.aspx>.

19. David Weisburd et al., The effects of problem-oriented policing on crime and disorder. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, 2008:14.

types of crime rather than total crime; good analysis and intelligence gathering; partners working together; sufficient appropriate training for those involved; time given to practitioners on the ground to problem-solve properly; and sufficient investment in the resources needed for collecting, compiling, analyzing and sharing data.²⁰

3.2. REPEAT VICTIMIZATION

The identification of repeat victims and re-offending behavior are particularly important in relation to crimes against women and children, such as domestic abuse and serious sexual crimes. A Home Office study of domestic violence in the UK found that there is a heightened risk period for repeat victimization. A household with one call to the police for a domestic abuse related incident has a probability of 0.8 of another within one year. After the first incident, 35 per cent of households suffer a second incident within five weeks of the first. After a second incident, 45 per cent of households suffer a third incident within five weeks.²¹

Any problem-solving plan should consider how high-risk victims of domestic abuse and sexual crime are protected from future harm. In the UK, the method used to achieve this is called 'Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conferences' (MARAC). A MARAC is a meeting where information is shared about the highest-risk domestic abuse cases, (which form the vast majority of victims) between representatives of agencies such as police, health, child protection, housing practitioners, probation and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors. After sharing all relevant information they have about a victim, the representatives discuss options for increasing the safety of the victim and turn these into a coordinated action plan. The primary focus of the MARAC is to safeguard the adult victim. The MARAC will also make links with other multi-agency organizations to safeguard children and manage the behavior of the perpetrator (see section on reducing re-offending below).

At the heart of a MARAC is the working assumption that no single agency or individual can see the complete picture of the life of a victim, but all may have insights that are crucial to their safety. The victim does not attend the meeting but is represented by an independent advisor from the voluntary sector who speaks on their behalf.²²

It is also important to analyze repeat victimization across other crimes because academic evidence shows that being a victim of any crime is a good predictor of future victimization. For example, a famous study in the UK found that on the Kirkholt estate, 'once a house had been burgled, its chance of repeat victimization was four times the rate of houses that had not been burgled at all'.²³ Preventing repeat victimization has a high chance of success compared with other methods and is therefore a very efficient use of resources. Also it protects the most vulnerable social groups because repeat victimization is highest, both absolutely and proportionately, in the most crime-ridden areas which are where the most vulnerable are likely to live.²⁴

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20. College of Policing, The effects of problem-oriented policing on crime and disorder: What Works Briefing. [http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Briefings/Documents/CoP\(What%20works\(online_land_POPV3\).pdf](http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Briefings/Documents/CoP(What%20works(online_land_POPV3).pdf).
 21. Graham Farrell and Ken Pease, *Once Bitten, Twice Bitten: Repeat Victimisation and its Implications for Crime Prevention* (London: Home Office Police Research Group, 1983).
 22. <http://www.safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/MARAC%20FAQs%20General%20FINAL.pdf>.
 23. Ibid.
 24. Ken Pease, "The Kirkholt Project: Preventing Burglary on a British Public Housing Estate" in Ronald V. Clark (ed) *Situational Crime Prevention: Successful Case Studies* (New York: Harrow and Heston, 1991).

3.3. REDUCING RE-OFFENDING

In any problem-solving plan, thought should be given to introducing restorative justice conferencing, which is effective at reducing re-offending in relation to violent crimes, particularly when offered as a supplement to other treatment options, but there is no evidence of success in reducing re-offending by property offenders.²⁵ This approach is particularly effective with young offenders. UNICEF defines restorative justice as ‘...an approach in which the victim/survivor and offender, and in some cases other persons affected by a crime, “participate actively together in the resolution of matters arising from the crime, generally with the help of a facilitator.”²⁶

Another important part of tertiary prevention is the way offenders are managed in prison and after their release back into the community. It is estimated that approximately 10 percent of the offending population in England and Wales are responsible for half of all crime and a very small proportion (less than one percent) are responsible for one in ten offences.²⁷ In the UK, the Integrated Offender Management approach brings statutory agencies such as prisons, probation, police, health and local government together with voluntary organizations to pool their resources to tackle the factors commonly associated with re-offending. These factors include: substance misuse, pro-criminal attitudes, difficult family backgrounds, unemployment, homelessness, and mental health problems.²⁸ They are the problems or needs that are more frequently observed in offender populations than in the general public.

3.4. LEGITIMACY AND PUBLIC COOPERATION

Research has found that a policing approach that motivates the public to cooperate with the police and to not break the law could have significant benefits for crime prevention.²⁹ The research found that the most important factor motivating people to cooperate and not break the law was the legitimacy of the police. When people thought the police were on the ‘same side’ as them, they were significantly less likely to commit crime and more inclined to say they would help the police. Crucially, police legitimacy had a stronger effect on these outcomes than the perceived likelihood of people being caught and punished for breaking the law. This approach is sometimes referred to as *procedural justice*.

The legitimacy of the police in the eyes of the public is primarily based on people thinking officers would treat them with respect, make fair decisions and take time to explain them, and be friendly and approachable. Research has also found that, for officers to behave in a way that fosters legitimacy and cooperation by the public, they too need to believe that they are being treated with fairness and respect internally within their police force. Called organizational justice, fairness at a supervisory and senior level was associated with officers ‘going the extra mile’ without personal gain, valuing the public, feeling empowered and supporting fair and ethical policing methods.³⁰

25. <http://whatworks.college.police.uk/toolkit/Pages/Intervention.aspx?InterventionID=24> (accessed 14.08.16).

26. https://www.unicef.org/tdad/index_56040.html.

27. Home Office. Criminal Justice: The Way Ahead. CM 5074. (London: Home Office, 2001).

28. Ministry of Justice, Transforming Rehabilitation: a summary of evidence on reducing reoffending. (London: Ministry of Justice Analytical Series 2013).

29. Andy Myhill and Paul Quinton, It’s a fair cop? Police legitimacy, public cooperation, and crime reduction. An interpretative evidence commentary (London: National Policing Improvement Agency, 2011).

30. Quinton et al., Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing. An interpretative evidence commentary. (London: College of Policing, 2015).

These findings show that fair decision-making and positive public interaction are not only important in their own right, but are also instrumental in preventing crime in the longer term. Legitimacy and public cooperation are therefore crucial aspects of a successful problem-solving initiative. The public in the townships concerned in this project are best placed to know what the issues and problems are in their neighborhoods, and can help specify the nature of these problems and which causes greatest harm. This builds trust in the state actors³¹ and may also lead to them proposing solutions to problems which could be more effective than standard police responses—and also help to deliver them.³²

3.5. DIALOGUE BETWEEN STATE ACTORS AND CITIZENS

In the UK, US and many other countries, public confidence and cooperation have been sought through an approach which is most often referred to as *community policing* in the US, and neighborhood policing or citizen-focused policing in the UK. The central principle behind this approach is that of facilitating dialogue between state actors and citizens to identify and implement solutions to local problems. There is evidence that this approach works in urban areas to prevent crime, increase feelings of safety, and improve legitimacy. However, this is dependent upon all concerned having the willingness and capacity to participate fully, and there being a presumption that state actors will respond to the citizens' input—unless there is a justifiable reason not to.³³ A summary of the critical success factors for implementing community engagement can be found in Annex B.

3.6. PARTNERSHIP AND MULTI-AGENCY COOPERATION

Partnership approaches are largely built on the premise that no single agency can deal with, or be responsible for dealing with, complex community safety and crime problems. Partnership work can be described as a cooperative relationship between two or more organizations to achieve a common goal. It forms an important part of the Urban Safety Project which seeks to strengthen inter-agency and expert policy dialogue and practice on urban safety matters.

Partnership is key to the long-term success of urban safety initiatives. This is clearly articulated by the UN-Habitat project which states that reducing crime in urban areas is everybody's responsibility. It goes on to say that, *success depends on partnerships between local governments and other stakeholders to plan and carry out strategies and activities that aim to eliminate violence, crime, and insecurity. Tackling crime and insecurity is a key part of good urban governance. Good urban governance values citizenship and inclusion by consulting and involving all citizens in their decision-making and planning—including those who are marginalized and living in poverty.*³⁴

31. Rachel Tuffin, Julia Morris, and Alexis Poole, An evaluation of the National Reassurance Policing Programme (London: Home Office, 2016).

32. Herman Goldstein, Problem-Oriented Policing (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1990); Sarah Forrest, Andy Myhill and Nick Tilley, Practical lessons for involving the community in crime and disorder problem-solving (London: Home Office, 2005).

33. Andy Myhill, Community engagement in policing, Lessons from the literature (London: National Policing Improvement Agency, November 2012), (first published 2006).

34. <https://unhabitat.org/urban-themes/safety/>.

An international assessment of the effectiveness of partnership working suggests that partnership working is effective in addressing crime.³⁵ In their report, the researchers set out their assessments of what worked in relation to particular crime-focused initiatives. They also identified a number of common themes in relation to what makes partnership working effective.

In summary, partnerships are more likely to be effective if they:

- have a clear focus on the problem to be targeted, and activities to be targeted at the problems identified;
- have shared values/norms;
- have strong leadership together with a clear structure, and defined roles and responsibilities within the partnership (including a core management group);
- have people within them who have prior experience of partnership working;
- co-locate their delivery teams to facilitate regular communication between partners;
- establish an evidence-led and data-driven approach to support problem solving; and
- adopt a flexible approach and avoid over-burdening the partnership with strict bureaucratic structures.³⁶

An evaluation of crime prevention partnerships in the US also identified several additional benefits of partnership activity over and above the impact on crime prevention, and these are particularly salient in the Myanmar context. This work suggests that when partnerships work effectively they can: increase the accountability of organizations; reduce duplication and fragmentation of services; build public-private linkages; increase public awareness of and participation in crime prevention initiatives; strengthen local community organizations; and be transformational, permanently altering the way agencies do business (e.g. better data-driven decision making, emphasis on problem solving and prevention).³⁷

35. Geoff Berry, Peter Briggs, and Lauren van Staden, *The effectiveness of partnership working in a crime and disorder context. A rapid evidence assessment. Research report 52* (London: Home Office, 2011).

36. *Ibid.*

37. Denis P. Rosenbaum, "Evaluating multi-agency anti-crime partnerships: theory, design, and measurement issues," *Crime Prevention Studies*. Vol 14. UK: Willan Publishing, 2002.

4. CONCLUSION

This background paper provides evidence that supports The Asia Foundation's intention to use a problem-solving approach to crime prevention in urban areas at the township level. In particular, it reinforces aspects of the project's theory of change which places significant weight on helping state actors to establish legitimacy in the eyes of the public, by involving them 'in both the identification of the problem and its resolution or mitigation'.³⁸ It also provides evidence for the benefits, in terms of reduced crime and improved legitimacy, for different government departments, NGOs and voluntary organizations working in partnership. Such an approach will require those involved to be willing to learn new ways of working. State leaders and supervisors will need to be aware that their front-line staff are significantly more likely to treat the public with fairness and respect, and so gain legitimacy and cooperation, if they too have been treated with fairness and respect internally within their own organization.

Establishing dialogue with people in urban areas is not only the most effective way of achieving improved community safety and security during the life of the project, it is also an effective way of helping these communities to build the capacity and capability they need to protect themselves from harm in the future.

38. Urban Safety Project Master Inception Deliverables, 2017.

ANNEX A

Problem Solving: Analysis Techniques

The College of Policing (England and Wales) describes a number of analytical techniques that could be considered for use in the analysis phase of a problem-solving initiative in Myanmar.³⁹ These are summarized below.

- Crime pattern analysis which identifies the nature and scale of crime and disorder trends, linked crimes or incidents, hot-spots of activity and common characteristics of offenders and offending behavior.
- Hot-spot identification which focusses on locations that display significantly higher than usual levels of crime and/or incidents. These may be identified as priority locations for problem-solving responses.
- Crime and incident trend identification.
- Crime and incident series identification where number of similar crimes or incidents are identified as probably being committed by one offender because they are linked by modus operandi, signature behavior, intelligence or forensic evidence.
- General profile analysis which examines the characteristics of victims, or common characteristics of offenders displaying particular offending behavior.
- Demographic and social trend analysis which examines how demographic and social changes within an area or within a demographic group can affect levels and types of crime and disorder.
- Network analysis which provides an understanding of the nature and significance of the links between criminal groups or organizations.
- Market analysis which identifies the criminal market around a commodity or service.
- Criminal business analysis which is used to develop an understanding of how criminal techniques work.
- Risk analysis which supports the assessment of the scale of the risk posed by individual offenders, criminal groups or crime types to potential victims, the public generally, and law enforcement agencies
- Subject analysis which provides detailed analysis of an individual victim, witness, suspect or offender.
- Results analysis which evaluates the effectiveness of enforcement or preventive activity.

More detail about these techniques can be obtained from the College of Policing (England and Wales) website.⁴⁰

39. <https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/intelligence-management/analysis/>.

40. Ibid.

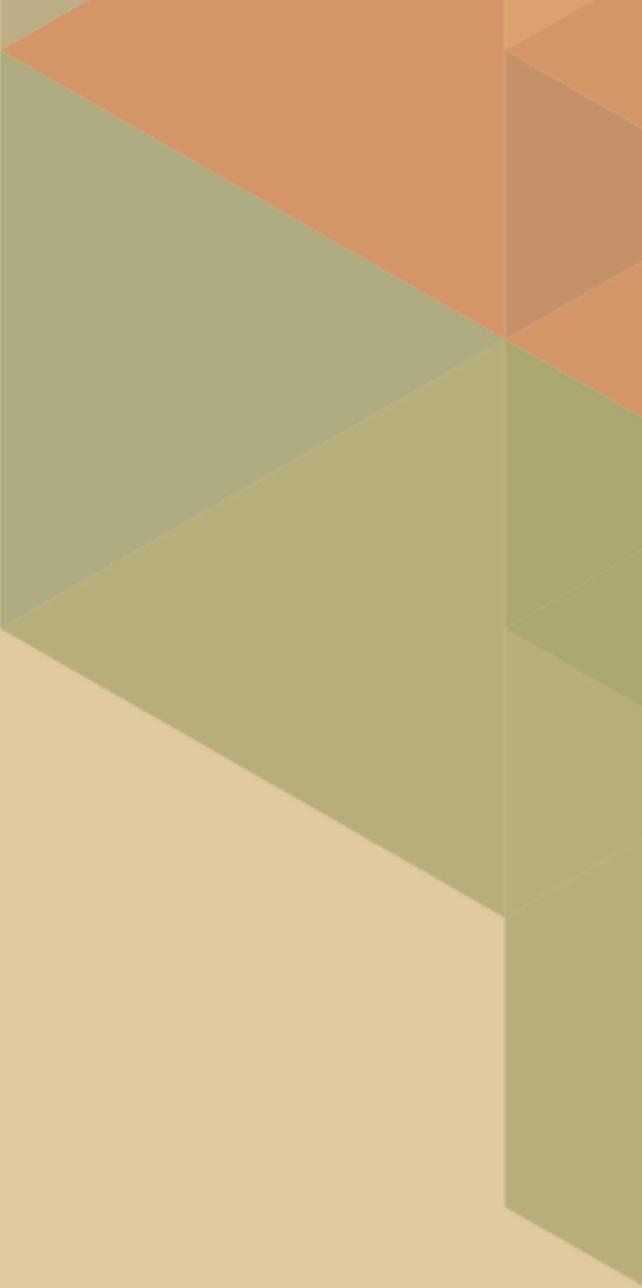
ANNEX B

Dialogue between state actors and citizens: Critical Success Factors

In one of the few attempts to synthesize and summarize the lessons learnt from all the research conducted about this subject, Myhill (2012) identifies several critical success factors for implementing dialogue between state actors and citizens, including:

- Organizational commitment and culture change – because the police service is some way from understanding the benefits engagement can afford;
- Mainstreaming – it needs to be seen as ‘core work’ rather than the responsibility of a particular department or project;
- Sharing power with communities – too often engagement is done ‘to’ rather than ‘with’ communities;
- Tailoring and local flexibility – local officers need to be afforded discretion about how to make engagement work in particular contexts, rather than being held to inflexible, generic standards of practice;
- Performance management – performance assessments need to reward effective engagement work;
- Training and capacity building – both police and public need ‘up-skilling’ to make engagement work;
- Confidence and trust – engagement rarely happens in ‘clean sites’ and very often there is a legacy of poor relations, especially for minority ethnic communities, that police need to appreciate and work within;
- Communication – partnerships need dialogue, not one-way broadcasting;
- Partnership working – especially for community policing programs, police need to engage their public sector partners as well as themselves, to tackle ‘quality of life issues.’⁴¹

41. Myhill, Community engagement, 2012.



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