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**PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND DATA SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT:  
A GUIDE FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN PROGRAMS**

**National Center for State Courts  
96-WT-NX-0002**

**FINAL REPORT**

**Final Revised Draft**

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# **Performance Measurement and Data System Development: A Guide for Violence Against Women Programs**

## **Forward**

This Guide presents basic principles of performance measurement and key elements of data system design and implementation for those who plan, manage, or evaluate government and community programs, services, and other enterprises to reduce violence against women and improve the lives of survivors. The key objectives of this Guide are (1) to demonstrate the benefits of measuring the effects of program activities and services to improve both program operations and outcomes for survivors of violence against women, and (2) to provide guidance on designing and implementing data systems that function efficiently and competently to accomplish the goals of the organization or coalition of organizations developing the system.

The Guide draws in part on the experiences of grantees in the STOP (Services, Training, Officers, and Prosecution) Violence Against Women Formula Grant program that used STOP funds to develop or enhance data collection and communication systems. These experiences indicate that successful data system projects were planned strategically and collaboratively with government and community stakeholders and that project planners leveraged a variety of resources to extend the value of their STOP grants. The Guide presents examples of these projects and others to illustrate several of the points made about performance measurement and data system development.

The Guide concludes with a section on resources to assist program planners and managers who are interested in developing a performance measurement system or a data system to improve community and system responses to violence against women.

# Performance Measurement and Data System Development: A Guide for Violence Against Women Programs

## I. Introduction

Initiatives to stop violence against women have grown exponentially over the past decade as federal, state, and local governments, community agencies, and corporate and private foundations have directed significant resources to address this issue. Most observers agree that the majority of initiatives have improved responses to violence against women. Anecdotal accounts of success abound, and managers of programs and services typically produce statistics showing increased services or greater volume and breadth of clients to demonstrate their benefits. Few programs, however, have been able to gather and report data to document positive outcomes for their clients or their communities.

While strongly held beliefs in the benefits of a program based on its growth or experiences in individual cases may reflect reality, they are insufficient to

*Few programs can document their value with more than anecdotes or data showing increases in services or numbers of clients.*

demonstrate a program's success in providing effective remedies for victims or bringing about system change. Without evidence of their performance in achieving these goals, beneficial programs and services risk losing monetary, political, or community support. More importantly, without information

about how well they are performing, they are less likely to produce the positive outcomes for victims they set out to achieve. Programs and services aimed at reducing violence against women can gather and use the information they need to enhance their utility and financial sustainability by incorporating a performance measurement system into their daily operations and program management.

Performance measurement is an essential tool for understanding how a program or service is functioning so that trouble spots can be identified and addressed before they develop into major challenges to the program's goals. A performance measurement system can also help program managers see trends in client demographics and service needs, which in turn can help them determine where current resources should be allocated and new resources are warranted.

Performance measurement is not a substitute for program evaluation, which typically is a more comprehensive process that examines and documents a program's activities and achievements during a selected period of time. Program evaluation usually looks back over time to see not only if a program had its intended effects, but also how and why it made a difference. A well-designed performance measurement system can facilitate formal program evaluation by providing the baseline data required to show improved outcomes over time, as well as the programmatic information needed to determine whether and how particular program elements affect outcomes.

## **II. Principles of Performance Measurement for Programs Addressing Violence Against Women**

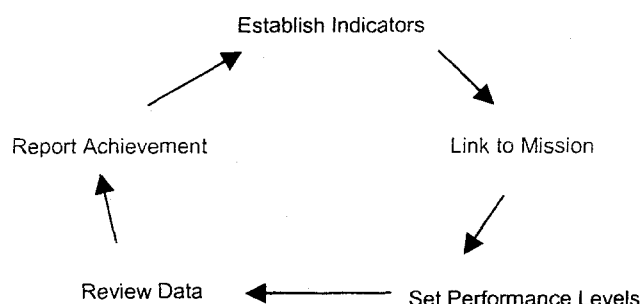
From the corporate world to community-based nonprofit agencies, managers are facing the challenges of accomplishing more with fewer resources. Achieving greater efficiency while maintaining the quality of products and services has become an essential element of success, if not survival, for businesses, institutions of government, state and local agencies, and nonprofit service providers.<sup>1</sup> Under the pressures of performing daily operations and meeting demands from customers, clients, and the public, managers and workers often believe they cannot spend precious time and money on developing systems to determine where inefficiencies lie and how quality can be maintained or improved. But the realities of economic downturns, reduced public and private funding, and increased competition for resources are forces compelling everyone to establish at least some measures of desired performance and a systematic way to collect data related to those measures.

Performance measurement is a management practice that promotes both efficiency and effectiveness in accomplishing the mission of an enterprise. Performance measurement is a dynamic process that typically entails five interconnected activities. These activities can be viewed as a cycle that repeats continually as an organization learns and evolves. How these tasks are carried out, which are given greater emphasis, and what other elements might be added vary across the types of organizations that engage in performance measurement.

- Establishing indicators of satisfactory performance
- Linking those indicators to the mission or goals of an enterprise
- Setting levels of satisfactory performance
- Reviewing performance data at intervals that facilitate performance improvement
- Periodically reporting the achievement of performance goals to those who need to know or use the information<sup>2</sup>



### Performance Measurement Process



This Guide demonstrates how five principles of performance measurement used in the corporate, government, and non-profit sectors can be applied to violence against women programs. Although other important concepts related to performance measurement may be valuable to particular programs, the Guide focuses on this set of principles because they are relevant to promoting effective initiatives to reduce violence against women and practical to implement within the constraints posed by limited budgets and staff.

#### Principles of Performance Measurement

- Measure what is important to accomplishing the goals of the organization
- Take the vital few measures, not everything someone might want to know
- Measure to improve performance, not just to report it
- Measure outcomes, not just outputs
- Measure initial, intermediate, and long-term outcomes

**1. Measure what is important to accomplishing the goals of the organization**

Performance measures have limited utility to an organization unless they reflect the mission, goals, and values of the organization.<sup>3</sup> “What gets measured gets attention” and “what gets counted counts” are two familiar maxims<sup>4</sup> that illustrate the importance of establishing performance measures that help an organization, program, or project focus its attention and resources on

**Using a Database to Monitor and Improve Practice**

**Helping Eradicate Abuse through Resources and Training, 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, Attorney General’s Office (Jacksboro, TN)**

Helping Eradicate Abuse through Resources and Training (H.E.A.R.T.) focuses on training, formulating, and distributing educational materials and assisting law enforcement through the creation of a domestic violence reporting instrument and a lethality assessment. In addition, H.E.A.R.T. maintains a database of domestic violence and sexual assault incidents and arrests throughout the region. The Unit facilitates communication between justice partners involved in domestic violence investigation, prosecution, and adjudication and service providers for victims of domestic violence. Information maintained by the Unit is used in decision-making, enhanced prosecutorial accountability, sentencing enhancements, increased batterer accountability through compliance monitoring, and stronger linkages and better communication across agencies serving victims of domestic violence.

accomplishing its goals. In contrast, activities that are not measured or counted do not get attention and do not count.

For example, a sheriff’s department that measures the amount of time between the receipt of a protection order from the court and service on the respondent is likely to assign enough deputies and vehicles to accomplish service as quickly as possible. On the other hand, a police department may develop a separate incident report for domestic violence calls, but it does not track whether the reports are filed and there are no consequences for officers who do not file reports. Although this police department may have intended to improve officers’ performance on domestic

violence calls with its incident reports, its lack of attention to the filing of reports suggests it does not truly value the information the incident reports provide or the role they play in guiding best practice.

An organization can create its own blueprint for success by aligning its performance measures with the outcomes it seeks to achieve. Identifying the desired outcomes and establishing the measures should be an inclusive process that captures a range of perspectives.<sup>5</sup> Tapping the ideas of program staff, volunteers, past program participants, and other stakeholders in the community will bring different values to the exercise.<sup>6</sup> Although some of the recommended

measures may not be incorporated into the system, having broader input should

**Sample Evaluation Measures**  
**Adapted from**  
***Creating a Domestic Violence Court:***  
***Guidelines and Best Practices***  
**Family Violence Prevention Fund**

- Domestic violence case volume, distinguished by case type, including cases heard in the domestic violence court and those transferred to other courts
- Percentage of temporary civil protection orders resulting in final orders
- Percentage of cases dismissed for non-appearance of the petitioner
- Percentage of cases in which respondent is served in time for the hearing on the final order
- Percentage of violation of protection orders charged criminally
- Percentage of victims having contact with advocates and types of referrals made
- Percentage of cases in which outreach to the petitioner was attempted
- Domestic violence arrests by type
- Arrest rates for offenders who flee the scene
- Percentage of dual arrests and female arrests
- Percentage of arrests resulting in prosecution
- Relationship between top charge at arrest and top charge prosecuted
- Dismissal rates
- Sentencing outcomes, including court-imposed conditions
- Recidivism rates
- Rates of compliance with court-ordered mandates
- Sanctions imposed for non-compliance
- Domestic violence fatalities

enrich and build support for using the measurement system.

Most programs derive benefits just from discussing their outcomes. The daily demands of running a program often leave no time for reflection about the program's goals.<sup>7</sup> An open dialogue allows staff to express their impressions and beliefs in a productive way that can lead to increased effectiveness before the measurement system is implemented.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, including program managers and staff in the development of the measures helps create a commitment on their part to make the system work.<sup>9</sup>

***2. Take the vital few measures, not everything someone might want to know***

The resources of programs to address violence against women are precious. Take a few well-targeted measures of the most important aspects of program operations and outcomes for those the program serves. One way to test the utility of a measure is to specify who would use the information the measure

would produce and how they would use the information. If the specific user and use cannot be identified, the measure should not be taken.<sup>10</sup>

In *Keeping Score: Using the Right Metrics to Drive World-Class Performance*, Mark Graham Brown says the maximum number of measures any organization should have is 20.<sup>11</sup> He has found in his work with major corporations that no single individual can regularly monitor and control more than 20 variables.

In Brown's experience, having too much data is the most common and serious problem with performance measurement systems.

Brown and others use the metaphor of a car's dashboard to illustrate vital data that should be monitored regularly.<sup>12</sup> A few gauges provide data about the things the driver needs to monitor frequently (speedometer, fuel level), a few that should be checked occasionally (oil level), and others that serve as warnings that something might be wrong (check engine light). Having more gauges than the driver can attend to is wasteful and distracting.

### Sample Measures for VAWA Funded Programs

Performance Category	Sample Measures
Productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ number of temporary protection orders served by number of deputies on duty in one week</li> <li>○ number of clients assisted in the court by number of legal advocates available</li> <li>○ number of sexual assault victims served by number of advocates</li> </ul>
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ fully completed domestic violence incident reports on 95% of domestic violence calls</li> <li>○ all eligible clients seeking legal assistance provided an attorney specially trained in domestic violence issues</li> <li>○ high client ratings of utility of service provided, e.g., 90% rate services as very useful</li> </ul>
Timeliness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ time from 911 calls to presence at scene</li> <li>○ proportion of protection orders served within 24 hours</li> <li>○ time from survivors seeking shelter to admission to a secure facility</li> </ul>
Cycle time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ time from filing a petition for temporary protection order to having the order in hand</li> <li>○ time from issuance of a protection order to entry into registry</li> <li>○ notice to victims of defendant's release from jail before defendant is released</li> </ul>
Resource utilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ all deputies on duty can be called upon to serve protection orders</li> <li>○ advocates are cross-trained to handle criminal and civil matters for clients</li> <li>○ on-call judicial officer for after-hours protection order petitions</li> </ul>
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ cost per night of shelter stay for one survivor</li> <li>○ cost per client for legal services</li> <li>○ cost per client for sexual assault kits</li> </ul>

### 3. Measure to improve performance, not just to report it

"You can't improve what you can't (or don't) measure."<sup>13</sup> In *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector*, Osborne and Gaebler advised that programs cannot distinguish success from failure if they do not measure performance.<sup>14</sup> A "critical enabler"<sup>15</sup> in achieving the

goals of any endeavor to reduce violence against women and improve the lives of survivors is the ability to measure performance.

For many programs, however, "performance measurement" equates to "reporting requirements." Reporting requirements will always be an essential component of program management. A performance measurement system can incorporate data required by boards of directors, funding agencies, law, or other authority, but the value of performance measurement extends far beyond the function of performance reporting.

An effective performance measurement system should consider who needs to have what information and when they need it.<sup>16</sup> Funding agencies may need quarterly or semi-annual reports that summarize performance measures because they are not involved in daily operations and are interested in overall performance.

**Database Use, Practice Improvements,  
and Program Sustainability**

**The Lawrenceburg Police Department  
(Lawrenceburg TN)**

The Lawrenceburg Police Department created a specialized Domestic Violence Unit and developed a supporting data system to collect and track information regarding domestic violence incidents. Analysis of the Domestic Violence Unit's data revealed that (1) 50 percent of the cases requiring continued investigations are referred to the Domestic Violence Unit and (2) 48 percent of domestic violence cases involved juvenile offenders and/or victims. This knowledge enabled the Department to direct greater resources toward domestic violence cases and the juvenile population. When STOP grant funds expired, the city of Lawrenceburg assumed full funding to ensure continued resources to address the high proportion of criminal cases that involve domestic violence and its juvenile population. The success of the Lawrenceburg Police Department's Domestic Violence Unit has been recognized and considered for replication in other Tennessee communities.

On the other hand, the people who are directly responsible for performing the work and their managers should have more detailed diagnostic data at briefer intervals to identify problems that are brewing or changes in service populations and needs. The two types of diagnostic measures discussed here provide data to compare current performance with the immediate past (trending performance measures) as well as with performance standards set by the program or agency (control performance measures.)<sup>17</sup>

Trending performance

measures allow managers to track performance at regular intervals to detect changes from the previous reporting period. What an appropriate interval is will

depend on the nature of the agency's practice or service. For example, the entry of protection orders into a registry might be accounted for and tracked daily, because lapses in entering orders endanger victims and hinder enforcement of orders. On the other hand, the number and proportion of temporary orders served on respondents might be counted and reviewed monthly, because this time interval accommodates variations across locations and work shifts but catches consistent service failures quickly enough to take remedial action.

Control measures are ranges of performance that an agency or community partners have determined to be acceptable or tolerable for accomplishing the goals of the endeavor. When performance is out of the range, the manager must investigate the reasons for the deviation and take steps to remedy the problem. In the example of entry of protection orders into the registry, the range of discrepancy between orders issued and orders entered should be zero. However, for service of orders, a jurisdiction might tolerate a failure rate of 5 to 10 percent.

Detailed diagnostic data in most circumstances should not be shared outside the organization because it is gathered to learn where problems lie, not to report progress. Furthermore, those who most need the data may be deterred from gathering it if others have opportunities to misuse the information in ways that penalize improvement efforts.<sup>18</sup> In the example of monitoring the entry of protection orders into the registry, daily monitoring data should be used by the manager of the registry to take corrective action, while monthly summary reports should be sufficient to explain to community and justice system partners any performance problems and actions taken to resolve them.

#### **4. Measure outcomes, not just outputs**

In both the private and public sectors, the focus of performance is evolving from accounting primarily for *inputs*, e.g., number of staff or amount of time services are available and *outputs*, e.g., number of clients served or brochures produced, to demonstrating positive *outcomes*, such as the number of clients achieving self-sufficiency through employment and appropriate housing and child care.<sup>19</sup>

Information about program inputs and outputs is necessary to account for and

allocate resources, but information about outcomes is essential for programs to recognize when changes are needed and to determine what those changes might be.

The United Way of America provides specific guidance on distinguishing between outputs and outcomes in its manual, *Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach*.<sup>20</sup> *Outputs*, such as the number and type of program activities, are information about the program, whereas *outcomes* are about the program's participants. Program outcomes are "benefits or changes for participants during or after their involvement with a program."<sup>21</sup> If survivors of violence against women are not better off after participating in a process or program activity, the process or program activity probably needs to be changed.

Several national organizations, including the United Way of America, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, the Child Welfare League of America, and the American Red Cross, provide technical assistance to local agencies, produce manuals for measuring outcomes, and conduct research and evaluation in local communities.<sup>22</sup> These efforts have led to the proliferation of organizations that have implemented outcome measurement systems. For example, by January 2000, 400 United Ways were asking programs they support to identify and measure the program's outcomes.<sup>23</sup> In a survey of 391 programs funded by six United Ways, over 75 percent of 298 respondents reported that implementing program outcome measurement had helped them to:

- Communicate program results to stakeholders (88%)
- Focus staff effort on common goals/shared purposes (88%)
- Identify effective practices within the program (84%)
- Compete successfully for resources/funding (83%)
- Enhance their record-keeping system (80%)
- Improve the service delivery of the program (76%)

### 5. *Measure initial, intermediate, and long-term outcomes*

The movement to end violence against women, restore its victims to safety and autonomy, and provide opportunities for survivors to lead healthy and productive lives is carried out in many ways by diverse organizations and sectors of government and the community. The influences both in favor of and opposed to achieving these goals are myriad. How can a special unit of the police department, a victim advocacy agency, or a specialized court know whether its services are effective in meeting the needs of the individuals who participate in those services when a variety of factors may impede or promote positive outcomes for their clients?

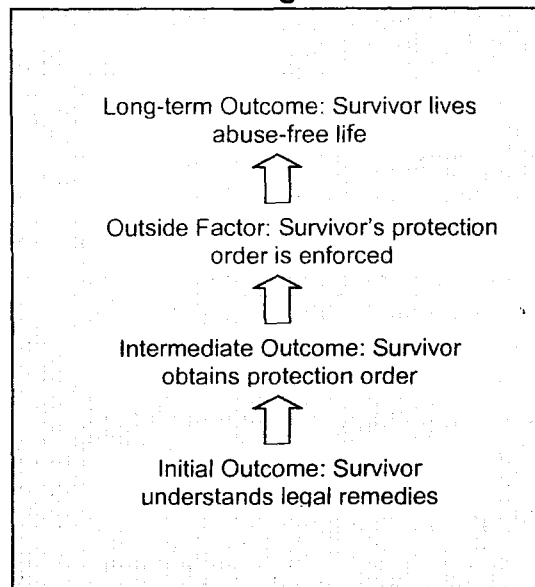
The United Way of America produces excellent materials for developing initial, intermediate, and long-term outcome measures. Many of these materials are referenced in the resources section of this Guide and can be obtained from the United Way of America web site, <http://national.unitedway.org>.

For many survivors of violence against women, a series of outcomes is needed or preferred. These outcomes build on each other and can be expressed as a set of if-then relationships that can lead to initial, intermediate, and long-term outcomes.<sup>24</sup> For example, if a victim advocacy program advises a domestic violence survivor of the legal remedies available to her

through a protection order and how to obtain one, then the survivor knows that she has options and opportunities to bring the power of the court to bear on the batterer to stop his abusive behavior. If the survivor knows about her options, then she can choose to obtain relief from the court. If the survivor obtains a protection order that addresses her safety and support needs and is enforced by the justice system, then she can take greater control of her circumstances and begin to make other changes to be free of abuse in her life.



## Initial, Intermediate, and Long-Term Outcomes for Legal Advocacy Program



There are obvious threats to these if-then relationships for the survivor's outcomes that the advocacy provider should take into account and try to address. The farther away from the program's activities with the survivor the if-then chain extends, the less connected the outcomes are to the program and the greater the likelihood is that other factors will intervene to influence outcomes. Establishing initial, intermediate, and long-term outcomes for the program's services allows the program to have expansive goals yet measure its effectiveness in relation to its level of control of the actions that might affect outcomes.<sup>25</sup>

The long-term outcome is subject to the influence of many factors, including, for example, the level of readiness the survivor had for change when she obtained the protection order, the intensity of the batterer's tenacity to maintain the relationship, the level of risk to her in challenging the batterer, the extent to which the justice system enforces any violations of the protection order, the availability of resources to the survivor, and the responsiveness of other services she might seek. Yet it is not unreasonable to expect that effective and appropriate services at the point of the program's intervention could lead to the long-term outcome. A basic test of whether a long-term outcome is an appropriate measure of the program's impact is to ask, "Can our program alone have a significant influence on this outcome?" The influence does not need to be total or complete; rather, the outcome should occur if the service is competent, the client is fully engaged, and negative actions of others do not occur.<sup>26</sup>

Developing a logic model is a common approach nonprofit organizations use to identify the factors that might influence outcomes for their clients both during and after their participation in the program.<sup>27</sup> A logic model contains the inputs and activities that are expected to produce outputs and outcomes. There should be a logical connection among the components of the model.

The logic model also should include contextual factors that the program may or may not be able to address. Examples of contextual factors are the level of cooperation of the court, the level of enforcement of orders by police, prosecutors, and judges, and the availability of services and economic opportunity in the community to meet other needs of the survivor. For a legal advocacy program, a logic model might look like this example:

### LOGIC MODEL FOR A LEGAL ADVOCACY PROGRAM

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Level of outreach to community (number of activities/sectors of community)</li> <li>○ Number of advocates</li> <li>○ Number of hours of operation</li> <li>○ Number of service locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Safety planning for clients</li> <li>○ Accompaniment to court</li> <li>○ Follow-up contacts</li> <li>○ Advocacy for system change</li> <li>○ Monitoring law enforcement response to clients</li> <li>○ Service referrals</li> <li>○ Developing service resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of clients who developed a safety plan</li> <li>○ Number of clients assisted with protection order petition</li> <li>○ Number of clients accompanied to court</li> <li>○ Number of follow-up contacts</li> <li>○ Number of monitoring contacts with law enforcement</li> <li>○ Number of referring agencies contacted by clients</li> <li>○ Number of service agencies in network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of clients with knowledge of options and their possible consequences [initial]</li> <li>○ Number of clients who obtain a protection order [intermediate]</li> <li>○ Number of clients who received effective response from law enforcement if sought [intermediate]</li> <li>○ Number of clients who find safe and affordable housing [intermediate]</li> <li>○ Number of clients who obtain safe and appropriate child care [intermediate]</li> <li>○ Number of clients who find stable and sufficient employment [long term]</li> </ul>

These principles of performance measurement presume that an organization or program has at least a minimum capacity to systematically gather, store, manage, and analyze data about the program and people it serves. For small organizations and

programs, this capacity can be as basic as having a computer, a good database software program, one or more individuals skilled in data entry and database management, and time allocated to gather data systematically, i.e., the same pieces of information gathered at regular intervals in the same way. Regardless of the size of an organization or program, a competent data system is a prerequisite for the systematic data collection, management, and analysis needed to support a performance measurement system. The remainder of this Guide offers recommendations for designing and implementing data systems that accomplish the goals of the data system and that competently support performance measurement of programs and services for reducing violence against women.

### III. Key Elements in Planning a Competent Data System

The most successful and well-designed automated data systems are those that are implemented following a comprehensive strategic information technology planning process. Strategic planning allows the system's stakeholders to develop a roadmap and determine priorities for technology implementation. The process seeks and incorporates the perspectives and values of all who will be involved in creating and using the data system as well as other stakeholders in the community who are expected to benefit from the services that the data system supports.

#### **Strategic Planning and Collaboration for Data System Implementation**

##### **Domestic Violence Court Technology Application and Resource Link (Brooklyn and Bronx, New York)**

[www.courtinnovation.org/center\\_1publications.html](http://www.courtinnovation.org/center_1publications.html)

In partnership with the New York State Unified Court System, the Center for Court Innovation developed and implemented the Domestic Violence Court Technology Application and Resource Link (Technology Application) in the Brooklyn Domestic Violence Court and the Bronx Domestic Violence Court. The Technology Application is a web-based intranet system. It provides electronic links between the specialized domestic violence criminal courts and the district attorneys offices, probation, victim advocates, and treatment providers involved in cases under the jurisdiction of the domestic violence courts.

The Technology Application facilitates court case processing; creates criminal protection orders on-line with the judge's electronic signature; tracks defendants' compliance with court-ordered batterer intervention, substance abuse treatment, and other terms of pre-trial release and probation; reports pertinent information from victims about safety issues, including alleged violations of protection orders; and coordinates service delivery to survivors.

Users of the Technology Application report that the system has improved practice within the court and among the partners in the specialized courts. Judges know the status of the defendants' compliance with court-ordered batterer intervention and other terms of orders. Legible and standardized protection orders are available instantly after a hearing for in-court service on the defendant and can be printed out by justice system partners in their offices. Signed orders are transmitted to the state protection order registry maintained by the New York State Unified Court System's Division of Technology. Victim advocates are better able to advise the court in a timely manner of defendant behavior that suggests heightened danger to the victim or the need for stronger controls on the defendant. All of these system features reduce significantly defendants' ability to use system gaps to evade accountability for their abuse and violence.

Key elements of strategic planning and collaboration that helped the Technology Application become a successful response to violence against women include the following:

- Strategic use of funds to develop the Technology Application: VAWA Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies funds for implementation in the Brooklyn Domestic Violence Court; VAWA STOP grant funds for expanding the system to the Bronx Domestic Violence Court; and a State Justice Institute grant to link criminal justice system partners, non-court victim service agencies, and batterers' treatment programs to the Brooklyn Court.
- Collaboration between the Center for Court Innovation and an advisory board composed of high-level representatives of criminal justice system agencies, victim service providers, and treatment providers.
- A thorough needs assessment of the partners already working together in the Brooklyn Domestic Violence Court and the Bronx Domestic Violence Court.
- Project staff consultation with line-staff of the system partners in an attempt to ensure that the Technology Application addressed the partners' operational needs and practice and security concerns.

Strategic planning also is essential to developing a data system that competently supports performance measurement as well as statistical and management reporting. Statistical and management reporting should be byproducts of information captured to support the work of the operation. An information system that does not help operations is more likely to be neglected by staff and to decline in accuracy and utility for any purpose.

Strategic planning helps ensure that (1) adequate resources are available to implement and maintain the system (including well-trained staff or outside support services), (2) the data required for program operations and performance measures exists and is accessible, (3) the software selected performs the analytic and reporting functions required for the performance measurement system, and (4) the hardware supports the software.

Collaboration is a fundamental component of strategic planning for a data system because it (1) helps ensure that the performance data captured by the data system is aligned with the outcomes an organization or program seeks to achieve, (2) provides greater

confidence that the system captures the most important information about program operations and outcomes for those the program serves, and (3) promotes commitments

of resources (time, funding, political support) from those who will develop, implement, maintain, and use the data system.

For the purposes of this Guide, the strategic planning process that can accomplish these goals is distilled to three basic steps:

1. establishing an organizational structure to guide and carry out the project
2. defining and communicating the goals of the project
3. developing a project implementation plan identifying the goals and requirements for technology.

The larger or more complex the technology project is, the more extensive the work will be to accomplish these three steps. Less complex projects, such as selecting software and hardware for a new project's data collection and reporting process, should follow the three basic planning steps even though the scope of the project is relatively limited. The individual tasks and sub-tasks related to these basic planning steps are described in the following paragraphs. For smaller projects, such as a single office, the work may not need to be divided into smaller groups. However, the project team should engage in all of the planning aspects presented. (Sample templates for specific planning and implementation tasks and task assignments for project participants are provided in the appendix.)

#### **1. Establish a technology steering committee, project teams, and working groups<sup>28</sup>**

The technology steering committee gives high-level direction to an organization's technology planning. Project teams and workgroups handle the details of individual projects. A generally accepted organizational structure includes these groups:

- the steering committee to oversee and guide the technology direction
- project teams that are the core working group for a particular effort
- several working groups tasked with researching and understanding specific pieces of projects
- users' groups supporting modifications.

**Sample Planning Structure for a Basic Level Project:  
Client Tracking System Within One Domestic Violence Service Agency**

**Steering or Planning Committee:**

- Executive Director of domestic violence agency
- Program area directors (shelter services, counseling services, legal advocacy, community outreach)
- Information services manager
- Programmer

• **Project Team/Working Group:**

- Programmer
- Professional staff from shelter services, counseling services, legal advocacy, community outreach
- Data entry/database management staff

**Sample Planning Structure for an Intermediate Level Project:  
Integrated Incident Report Tracking System Between Law Enforcement Agency and Prosecutor's Office**

**Steering Committee:**

- Chief of Police, Sheriff, Prosecutor
- Computer technology service manager, police department IT manager, sheriff's office IT manager, prosecutor's office IT manager
- Police department victim advocate, prosecutor's office victim advocate, domestic violence/sexual assault service agency representative

• **Project Team:**

- Police department domestic violence/sexual assault/stalking unit investigator
- Warrants division manager
- Lead prosecutor domestic violence/sexual assault/stalking unit
- IT staff of police department, sheriff's office, prosecutor's office
- Victim advocate
  - **Networking Working Group**
  - **Programming Working Group**

***Technology steering committee***

The project participants determine the membership of the technology steering committee. It should include both management and user level staff from all project participants. Often a technology expert serves on the committee to provide technology advice.

The technology steering committee makes guiding decisions about the technology direction, but it is not expected to make operational decisions concerning technology implementation and information systems. For example, the technology steering committee should define the goals and scope for the

technology project, and the project teams should set the objectives for reaching those goals during the course of their work. Depending on project team and working group findings, the technology steering committee may also develop timetables and make major decisions about such issues as system characteristics, the role of legacy systems (older computer systems still used because the replacement or redesign costs are high, often despite their poor compatibility with modern systems), and in-house or outside development.

The technology steering committee must be in a position to offer, debate, and decide policy questions that impact information processing within every organization and agency expected to participate. Some of the greatest policy decisions associated with technology include identifying strategic and staffing issues that impact technology use, security, confidentiality, and access to information systems. These are critical issues for data systems used to address violence against women.

**Sample Technology Steering Committee for a Major Project: Integrated Justice Information System**

**Participants:** Decision makers from participating organizations who can commit their organization such as the **Clerk's Office** (Clerk or authorized deputy), **Prosecutor's Office** (District Attorney or authorized subordinate), **law enforcement** (Police Chief and Sheriff or authorized subordinate(s)), **domestic violence service providers/agencies** (agency/project directors). Additionally the Technology Steering Committee should include **IT directors, or appropriate IT staff, from participating organizations** including city or county if appropriate.

**Issues/Tasks:** Set policy; find funding; set project scope; determine project participation; appoint project team to implement the project.

These policies should identify who may have access to the project participants' information systems and what level of access they should have, including project participants' staff, other governmental and community actors, and the public.<sup>29</sup> For example, authorized users of a protection order registry may include individuals who are

subject to a protection order and may access the registry to obtain a confidential address. Policies should be developed that anticipate and address this possibility. These policies must be consistent across all organizations and clearly articulated so that all system users understand them. In addition, the

technology steering committee should establish mechanisms for monitoring compliance with its policies.

The technology steering committee also should define a policy and plan to keep participants current on new developments in office automation and technology. The average release cycle of operating systems, software packages, and hardware is three to four years. Although the project participants may not be able to replace computer workstations on this schedule, the technology steering committee should plan to upgrade workstations within five years to ensure that the system can handle future demands and the technologies that will enable the system to meet those demands.

### ***Project teams and associated working groups***

The project team is the research, analysis, and working arm of any project. It is responsible for conducting most of the work related to developing the implementation plan, and its members should be given authority by the technology steering committee to make operational and other decisions relating to the tasks it must complete. The project team will develop and appoint individuals to working groups as necessary during the project.

The technology steering committee should recruit individuals from all operational areas who have strengths in management, operations, and technology. Project team members should be capable of handling project management functions, such as setting timelines, developing work plans, analyzing budgets, and understanding operational and performance measurement needs and issues.



**Sample Project Team for a Major Project:**  
Integrated Justice Information System

**Participants:** Staff knowledgeable in operations and IT staff from participating organizations such as **Clerk's Office** (criminal, civil, or domestic violence supervisor and IT staff), **Prosecutor's Office** (Assistant District Attorney for domestic violence, Victim/Witness coordinator, and District Attorney IT staff), **law enforcement** (any domestic violence specialists or appropriate supervisors, and IT staff), **domestic violence service providers** (supervisory staff and any IT staff available).

**Issues/Tasks:** Hire or appoint a project director; appoint work groups to explore various issues; establish policies and procedures for creation of database and maintenance, update, and integration of information; commit staff to tasks; approve standards and business practices; keep the Technology Steering Committee informed; negotiate with software vendor; manage implementation; evaluate progress against mission.

**Sample Working Groups for a Major Project:**  
Integrated Justice Information System

**Participants:** Operational users (supervisors and line staff) and IT staff from participating organizations who can address/research project issues for the project team. These groups may include project team members and other staff from the participating organizations such as the **Clerk's Office** (supervisor or clerks involved with domestic violence issues), **Prosecutor's Office** (domestic violence Assistant District Attorney, Victim/Witness staff, District Attorney office staff involved with domestic violence issues), **law enforcement** (staff assigned to domestic violence issues, e.g. dispatch staff), **domestic violence service providers** (staff with need for shared information)

**Issues/Tasks:** Explore project issues and report back to the project team to determine the project direction regarding these issues.

Project teams should include well-informed management and operational staff, particularly those involved in operational functions and program performance. Without operational user involvement in the development of automated systems, the teams may misunderstand and/or misdiagnose substantive functional and operational issues, needs, and problems. (Functional requirements are the functions the system must be capable of performing, and operational rules define when the system performs the functions.) For example, project team members should be knowledgeable about the performance measures the program has developed and what information the data system should capture for the performance measurement system. Team members also should understand how cases enter and leave the system and the timing and methods for collecting data about the cases.

Furthermore, the intended users of the new system may be reluctant to accept it. User support is key to the success of any automation project. No matter how much time and effort is spent on developing a system, it is likely to fail without user input and support.

Guided by the technology steering committee's policy direction and goals, the project team will define the operational aspects of projects and oversee work,

such as needs assessments, development of functional requirements, and ultimately the implementation plan. To carry out these responsibilities, the project team may develop and staff working groups to focus on particular project issues. The working groups should be composed of operational users of the automated systems and should be tasked with determining the functional and operational needs for the system.

Users' groups also should be established for existing automation systems and for new systems following their implementation. The users' groups should be made up of operational users with good understanding of operations and some technology knowledge. The users will work with technologists when developing new capabilities or modifying existing capabilities for automated systems. The users' groups should act as an intermediary between the users and developers, both collecting input from and communicating changes to users.

## 2. Define and communicate the project goals and scope

### *Define project goals and scope*

The technology steering committee must develop a set of requirements for

**Sample Project Goals:  
Integrated Data Collection and Data  
Interchange System**

**Mecklenburg County, North Carolina**

- To improve administration and inter-agency coordination of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking cases
- Provide comprehensive case and court histories of parties to judicial officers and court staff for decision-making
- Establish better case coordination among related cases
- Create a mechanism to provide seamless transfer of information among agencies supporting the domestic violence program
- Reduce or eliminate duplicate data entry and re-keying errors for all agencies
- Produce management reports to assist judicial officers and court administrators in making informed decisions

the system that establishes a vision for the completed system. These requirements are critical and must be established early on because they provide the guiding principles for the project team, working groups and, later on, consultants and vendors that come into the project. These high-level goals for the completed system also help in marketing the project to political decision makers by giving them a clear understanding of the project and its vision.

The technology steering committee should also clearly define the scope of the project. The project scope represents a deliberate executive-level decision about the

project and what should and can be realistically addressed by it. The scope

addresses such issues as project focus, information needs or case management information needs, and which organizations and agencies are involved, e.g., justice system partners, other government agencies, community service providers, the public, and other regional agencies.

It is crucial that the scope remains at a "realistic" level. In other words, the project should not be so large and encompassing in the beginning that it becomes paralyzed by its breadth. The scope can always be expanded later when some accomplishments have been made, but it must be manageable so that the project can move forward and some successes can be realized.

### ***Communicate with project participants and stakeholders***

After defining the project goals and scope, the technology steering committee should institute a process of sharing information about the project with project participants and other stakeholders, including political leaders, decision makers, and representatives of funding agencies. Involving these stakeholders in the early stages of the project will give them a sense of ownership, as well as a feeling of a "shared vision" of the project that will identify tangible benefits and show how local, state, federal, and other funding resources will achieve those benefits. The members of the technology steering committee should be primarily responsible for communications with decision makers.

It is essential to keep all stakeholders consistently up-to-date on project activities, progress, changes, and revised objectives. Regular communication ensures that interested parties and individuals remain informed and feel that they are "in-the-loop," reduces the fear of hidden agendas, and provides a forum for feedback. Communications should include mechanisms such as e-mail that allow all participants and their employees to provide recommendations, insight, or comments to the project team and working groups.

Another way to maintain the momentum of a project is to produce some "deliverables" that help stakeholders, as well as political leaders, understand in more detail the benefits of information systems. Deliverables help measure and demonstrate the project's progress, and include such activities as forming the technology steering committee, conducting needs assessments, developing an

implementation plan, and so on. It may be especially important for political leaders to see the project and its committees moving ahead with these tasks to sustain their support for the project.

### **3. Develop a project implementation plan**

The project implementation plan is the main goal of the technology steering committee, project team, and working groups. It will form the basis for decisions regarding technology acquisition and implementation and will create a roadmap for information technology in the future. The plan also will become the foundation and rationale for project funding and subsequent requests for proposals to design and implement the system.<sup>30</sup>

The implementation plan should document the functional and operational needs of the system (what functions the system should perform and the rules governing performance of the functions). The system requirements should be determined through a comprehensive needs assessment. Depending on the number of participants and the information systems associated with each, the needs assessment may require an outside consultant's time and expertise. The request for proposals to implement the system that may be issued should articulate the system requirements and direct responding vendors to describe the technical solutions for meeting those requirements.

Larger projects may require a project director to manage the development of the implementation plan; to coordinate the activities of the technology steering committee, project teams, and working groups; and, if needed, to supervise the process of selecting vendors to design and implement the system. For most large projects, the project director should dedicate all of his or her time to the project to ensure that the process stays on track, critical steps are not omitted, planning issues are addressed as soon as possible, and participants and other stakeholders are well-informed about the project's progress. The technology steering committee may designate a current staff member of one of the project participants or contract with a consultant to serve as the project director. In deciding who may have the requisite expertise to direct a large technology project, the technology steering committee should consider the candidates' ability and availability to continue

directing the project through the implementation phase (see Section 2 of Chapter IV. Implementing a Competent Data System, below).

The project plan should include the activities described below. The precise order of accomplishing these tasks may vary according to the project and may take more or less time to complete. Smaller inter-agency projects or projects within a single agency may not require all of these activities. Project planners should review all activities, however, to ensure that they do not overlook significant issues that might have adverse consequences for project implementation.

- ***Inventory and document current technology resources.*** An in-depth review of participants' existing automated systems, including hardware, software, communications infrastructure, and personnel resources, is an important exercise in this process. Understanding the existing automation environment provides crucial direction to agencies as they begin planning for the future. It lays the foundation for re-engineering existing processes to achieve efficiencies, reduction of redundant data entry, and more logical workflow processing so that agencies understand and improve their business processes before applying technology.
- ***Assess current technology resources.*** This task involves assessing the hardware platforms, software, communications, user workstation capabilities, database management systems, security protocols, and network connectivity of current information systems. Technology personnel resources should be assessed as well. This exercise will identify successes and problems with current systems and provide information needed to address current problems, issues, and system bottlenecks that may impede the desired information flow.
- ***Determine what data elements are needed for the performance measurement system and where the data is located.*** The participants should establish what data will be required to measure their respective agencies' performance and ensure that the data system will contain the data needed. This process may involve reviewing where data currently is available, how that data will be incorporated in or transmitted to the new data

system, and how the data will be accessible to the participants for their use in performance measurement. Keep in mind that “core data” should be gathered whenever possible. Core data is data that can be used to produce other information. The most common example of core data is dates, e.g., collecting birth date rather than age, collecting program start and completion dates instead of number of months in a program.

Data Category	Sample Data Elements
Survivor demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ birth date</li> <li>○ gender/race</li> <li>○ services offered to or used by survivors</li> </ul>
Offender demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ birth date/social security number</li> <li>○ gender/race</li> <li>○ address/employer</li> <li>○ previous protection orders/violations of orders</li> <li>○ outstanding warrants</li> <li>○ conditions of pre-trial release/probation/parole</li> <li>○ Brady disqualifiers</li> </ul>
Events related to survivors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Notification of offender's hearing dates</li> <li>○ service delivery dates</li> <li>○ legal remedies sought/obtained</li> </ul>
Events related to offenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ dates cases filed/disposed</li> <li>○ pleas/convictions/acquittals</li> <li>○ attendance/completion of BIP</li> </ul>

Performance Measure: Proportion of Clients Who Obtain Final Protection Order per Month		
Data Elements and Sources of Data		
Input Data/Sources	Output Data/Sources	Outcome Data/Sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of legal advocates               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DV agency records</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Number of hours advocates worked               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DV agency records</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Number of days legal advocacy services available               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DV agency records</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of clients seeking legal advocacy services               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DV agency records</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Number of clients who developed a safety plan               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DV agency records</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Number of clients assisted with protection order petition               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DV agency records</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Number of clients accompanied to court               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DV agency records</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Number of follow-up contacts with clients               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DV agency records</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of clients who know legal options               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DV agency advocate service logs</li> <li>○ DV agency client survey</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Number of clients who obtain a temporary protection order               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DV agency advocate service logs</li> <li>○ Court Clerk's Office records</li> <li>○ Protection order registry</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Number of respondents served in time for hearing on final order               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DV agency advocate service logs</li> <li>○ Court Clerk's Office records</li> <li>○ Sheriff's Office records</li> <li>○ Protection order registry</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Number of clients who obtain a final protection order               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DV agency advocate service logs</li> <li>○ Court Clerk's Office records</li> <li>○ Protection order registry</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- **Research standards, statutes, initiatives, and regulations at the local, state, and federal levels that may impact the system.** Surveying the legal, regulatory, and technology development environment will reveal potential impediments to implementing the technology project and identify issues that may pose challenges to the project. These issues might be technical, e.g., infrastructure will not support application, existing systems incompatible; fiscal, e.g., original goals too expensive to implement or funding is tenuous; political, e.g., conflicts with other technology projects proposed or underway; or legal, e.g., changing state law to allow electronic signatures in court orders. The technology steering committee should develop plans to overcome any identified issues and plan for addressing unexpected issues.
- **Assess safety, privacy, cultural, and practical limitations to sharing data.** Project teams must ask why certain processes and methods for data sharing occur. Are there mandates or rules forcing certain business processes, or do particular functions take place simply because “they have always been done this way?” The participants should pay particular attention to data sharing and access issues that affect the safety and privacy of survivors of violence against women.<sup>31</sup> For example, are certain items of information that reveal the identity or residence of a survivor necessary to the mission of the project? Can the system be designed to block access to information that typically is public record (e.g.; civil court files are generally available to the public)? Are there ways to keep home and work place addresses confidential?
- **Re-engineer current processes to gain efficiencies and effectiveness.** Once the project teams have researched why certain processes are in place, they must look at ways those processes can be improved, replaced, or removed for operational and functional efficiency.
- **Define user requirements for program operations and performance measurement.** This includes identifying what data is needed to perform the work of the participants. Data requirements should focus on core



information, e.g. birth dates rather than age. Statistics and reporting should be byproducts of the information collected to do the work.

#### Data Exchange Among Participating Agencies

##### Wheatland Police Department (Wheatland, WY)

The Wheatland Police Department installed a fiber optic link between the Platte County Court House, the Wheatland Town Hall, and the Wheatland Police Department. This infrastructure enhancement supports the exchange of data and facilitates access to automated information systems maintained by the county's criminal justice partners. Orders of protection are more readily available from the court to law enforcement officials via this link. Police incident reports of domestic violence calls are also more readily available to prosecutors and the court.

- **Develop functional requirements for the system.** The functional requirements should include broad issues such as integration of disparate information systems and specific requirements such as data fields and reporting formats and methods. The technology steering committee should identify (1) potential integration between the participants' information systems, (2) potential integration between new or emerging technologies such as electronic filing, document imaging, interactive voice response telephone systems, and the Internet, and (3) an appropriate migration

path for participants' information systems (a series of conversion steps that allow an organization to evolve smoothly to newer hardware and software to keep pace with changing technology). The technology steering committee should appoint project teams or users' groups to assist in developing the business functions and translating these to system requirements.

- **Develop data sharing standards.** In any project with multiple participants it is important to develop standards for sharing information between organizations and agencies, including data element standards, and standards that address data exchange, transmission, and collection, as well as security standards. This will include developing standards that incorporate existing local, state, federal, and industry standards.
- **Create an implementation plan.** This component will include a project schedule and timelines and should focus on an incremental or phased approach to system implementation. A phased approach will allow for some early successes that will build trust, meet some early goals, and help secure

additional funding. The implementation plan should also address management and administration issues regarding the system.

#### Incremental Implementation of a Statewide Database

##### Virginians Against Domestic Violence (Williamsburg, VA)

Virginians Against Domestic Violence (VADV) is Virginia's statewide coalition of domestic violence and sexual assault providers. Since 1995 VADV has engaged in the systematic and strategic development and implementation of a plan for statewide collection of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking information to document programs, services, and target populations. One of the first steps involved the identification of a common set of data elements to ensure that all agencies could report the same information. This step evolved into a larger domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking data project, initially involving the preparation of standardized forms to document domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking activity.

In 1997, VADV began planning a statewide electronic data collection system. VADV decided upon a web-based data collection system using a highly secure html format and developed the software and scripts for data entry into the web-based reporting system. After a six-month pilot period, the system went live and was implemented statewide in October 1999. The website, [www.vadata.org](http://www.vadata.org), is accessible 24 hours a day/seven days per week. Each domestic violence agency can access the site and, using an assigned password, enter into the data entry portion of the site.

The goals of these data collection efforts are to improve services at the local level to meet the needs of target populations and to change domestic violence policies at the state level. The Internet-based data collection system is working well and has performed beyond expectations. The information and data extrapolated from the system have been used to enhance operations and increase services to victims across the state.

For example, statistics for one northern Virginia city indicated a 22 percent unfavorable rating of law enforcement response to the needs of sexual assault victims. When this information was presented to the chief of police, department policies, practices, and procedures were changed to improve interactions with sexual assault victims, to improve services to victims of sexual assault, and to decrease the unfavorable ratings of law enforcement. One of the steps taken was to involve staff from the sexual assault crisis agency in training to increase the sensitivity of officers to the needs of sexual assault victims.

- **Establish evaluation measures.** These evaluation or performance measures will test the system for its ability to meet the needs of all levels of users. These are measures of the data system's performance, not the performance of the program it supports.

## Strategic Planning and Collaboration for Data System Implementation

### The Protection From Abuse Database Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence

The Protection from Abuse Database (PFAD) is a court-based automated civil protection order database. PFAD was developed by the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV) working in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Office of Court Administration. PFAD provides Internet access to accurate and current records to counties enforcing both local and out-of-county protection orders. Local law enforcement can view the civil court clerk's records 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

PFAD is unique in that it has all of the following features: (1) it is a full-text database (information is entered and stored in fields and the entire order is available electronically), (2) it is Internet-based, (3) it provides access to advocates and private attorneys assisting petitioners to create the documents needed to obtain a protection order, and (4) it archives the online records when those orders become inactive. PFAD automates the protection order process, allowing each case to be completed online, along with the datasheet required for entry of the order into the Pennsylvania State Police protection order registry. The datasheets completed on PFAD are legible and the condition codes are error free, which is critical to maintaining accurate records in the statewide registry.

PFAD is an important complement to the statewide protection order registry maintained by the Pennsylvania State Police, which contains only current orders and purges cases upon expiration of the order. PFAD archives these records to make them available to law enforcement, prosecutors, and the courts. This information can assist the justice system to better assess new cases presented to the court.

The elements of strategic planning and collaboration have been instrumental in the success of PFAD in improving the system's response to violence against women:

- Collaboration among PCADV, the Administrative Office of the Pennsylvania Courts, civil clerks of court, law enforcement, district attorneys, public defenders, judges, legal services attorneys, and advocates.
- Clearly defined goals and the expectations of the participants in the process. The primary goal was safety for victims of domestic violence, which meant PFAD must provide easy accessibility to information to courts, law enforcement, and litigants' representatives.
- Design features to promote the safety and privacy of domestic abuse survivors in the design, implementation, and maintenance of the database. The PFAD project planned security measures that assumed some authorized users of the system would be respondents in protection order cases or friends with them.
- An assessment of the technology used in courthouses, domestic violence programs, and law enforcement offices to determine how all of them could best communicate with each other.
- Design features to help Pennsylvania comply with the full faith and credit provisions of the Violence Against Women Act and future use of XML technology to facilitate interstate enforcement of protection orders.
- At least one week of training on the use of PFAD in each participating county. The training addresses technology issues, the protection order process, and increasing safety for survivors who use the court system to obtain relief from domestic abuse.
- Full-time technology support to the counties, available by telephone from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday and on-site.

#### **IV. Implementing a Competent Data System**

The project implementation plan developed during the project-planning phase is the blueprint for implementing the data system. The technology steering committee and the project teams will continue to guide and carry out the implementation process. A critical decision that must be made is whether staff of one or more of the project participants can accomplish the implementation process or whether the services of outside consultants or vendors should be used for some or all of the process. Regardless of the decision the technology steering committee makes, the implementation process will entail four basic steps: (1) developing the system design; (2) managing implementation; (3) training system users; and (4) continued planning throughout the systems development life cycle. These basic steps are outlined below.

##### **1. *Develop the system design***

This step can be accomplished by selecting a commercial off-the-shelf application, developing and issuing a Request For Proposals (RFP) for the desired system, or designing the desired system in-house. No matter which approach is taken, the functional requirements, i.e., what the technology must do to support the work, must be identified and translated to system requirements for the information system. After the system requirements and process are defined, the system can be designed. Once the system has been designed, either by in-house staff or by a vendor, the steering committee and project team will select the technology to support the system design, e.g. programming language, database software, data access, and transfer modes.

To develop a system using an outside vendor, a RFP may need to be written and issued. The RFP process requires three distinct steps: identifying qualified vendors, preparing the RFP, and issuing the RFP. The RFP should include system requirements to allow the vendor to design the system. The vendor will offer suggestions for the specific technology needed to support the system design. After the RFP is developed and issued, the technology steering committee and project team must evaluate the responses and select a vendor. If a RFP is not to be used, i.e., particular vendors can be engaged to do the work,

the vendor/developer will need to meet with the project team to clarify the system requirements to prepare the system design.

## **2. *Manage implementation***

The technology steering committee should appoint or hire a project director to manage the implementation of the system. The project director should act as the project liaison to the technology steering committee, track project schedules, monitor project costs, and report project status to the technology steering committee. The project director should maintain continuous communication among designers, project participants, and intended users. A key to success is to address and resolve issues as soon as possible after they are identified. Prior to accepting the system, the project director should coordinate a thorough evaluation of the system's performance, including testing the system with system users.

## **3. *Training for system users***

Initial and continuing user training is absolutely necessary. Without user training, implementing the best technology is like a having a Cadillac without knowing how to drive. Training is best planned, delivered, and updated if an individual is assigned to be a training coordinator. When the information system is first installed, the users should be provided initial training prior to the system going into production. The training should provide refresher courses and general overview courses to the users. It is particularly important to provide additional training in conjunction with system updates. System modifications introduced with new software releases must be effectively communicated to the users. Additionally, the users should be kept informed of and prepared for system changes.

## **4. *Continued planning: The systems development life cycle***

Systems development incorporates several key stages, including planning, acquisition, development, and implementation. These stages should be viewed as a "life cycle," i.e., it is an ongoing process that is never completely finished.<sup>32</sup> The successful implementation of an automated system does not signal the end of the planning process; quite to the contrary, systems

implementation signals the beginning of a new phase of planning, a phase that focuses on systems upgrade, enhancement, and/or replacement.

With rapid advances in hardware and software, new system functionality is available almost immediately after one system is implemented. This reality does not suggest that an agency should prolong procurement for the most state-of-the-art system, because the planning and implementation phases of a data system project will never keep up with this cycle. It does indicate, however, that the planning process continues after a system is installed, taking into consideration new technology, functionality, and capability. In addition, with new systems implementation, user expectations quickly change and the demands placed on the system quickly escalate.

Moreover, new state and federal mandates that impact participants and the data they capture continue to emerge. The technology steering committee must continue to track state and federal criminal justice information system initiatives and other pertinent projects. This knowledge will allow the committee to stay up-to-date on those activities that may have an impact on information systems and include them in the planning cycle.

The systems development life cycle generally follows a three-to-five year timeline. At the completion of one implementation, planning should continue, and by the end of three years the existing plan should be enhanced or a new plan developed. Acquisition processes should be underway during the fourth year, and by the fifth year, implementation of a new or upgraded system should be well underway.

The Technology Steering committee should define a policy to keep current on new developments in office automation and to keep participants technologically current. Equipment upgrades should be planned to ensure that the system can handle future technologies. Planning this replacement cycle from the beginning will help prevent the surprise of later needs.

## **V. Final Thoughts on Performance Measurement and Data Systems**

Government and private resources are unlikely ever to be sufficient to address the multitude of critical issues and needs in our society and in our local

communities. Competition for these resources is a fact of life for those who struggle every day to provide direct services, to secure support for those services, or to bring about system change. A key element of success in this contest is the ability to show the funding sources, as well as the policy makers who set funding priorities, that their support has helped achieve positive results.

Organizations, programs, and services dedicated to ending violence against women typically must apply their limited resources in ways that optimize benefits to the people they serve. They must find efficient methods for obtaining funding and other resources, delivering appropriate services, and ensuring that those services are effective. Accomplishing these tasks can be a significant challenge to an organization.

A performance measurement system can help organizations meet this challenge by providing the information programs need for stability and sustainability, quality control, and program improvement. The process of designing a performance measurement system focuses attention on the mission and goals of an organization and directs energy and resources toward activities that accomplish those goals. An organization can measure the outputs and outcomes that program activities produce to systematically assess whether the program is bringing about positive changes for its clients. The knowledge gained from the performance measurement system can assist program managers in improving program operations, allocating resources, revising policies and practice, promoting change in other organizations and justice system partners, lobbying for legislative change, and securing political and financial support.

A performance measurement system should be supported by a competent data system that allows the organization to gather, analyze, and use data in a timely and efficient manner. A data system need not be complex to be competent; a well-designed database of basic information gathered in the daily course of business can suffice. Regardless of the size or complexity of the data system, however, it must be designed and implemented in a thoughtful and coherent way. Strategic planning and collaboration within and among organizations and programs are essential elements of both developing useful performance measures and implementing effective data systems.

This Guide offers the basic principles of performance measurement and data system design and implementation. The resources section of the Guide provides direction in finding more detailed information and additional assistance in developing performance measurement and data systems. These resources include publications, web sites, and a sample worksheet for establishing an organizational structure to guide and carry out a data system project. Community and governmental organizations, programs, and projects of all sizes can benefit from tapping these resources to more effectively use their resources to end violence against women.



- <sup>1</sup> Newcomer, K.E. (1997). Using performance Measurement to Improve Programs. In Newcomer (Ed.), *Using Performance Measurement to Improve Public and Nonprofit Programs: New Directions for Evaluation*, 75, 5-14; Brown, M.G. (1996). *Keeping Score: Using the Right Metrics to Drive World-Class Performance*. New York, NY: Quality Resources.
- <sup>2</sup> Newcomer, note 1.
- <sup>3</sup> Brown, note 1.
- <sup>4</sup> Keilitz, I. (2001). *Show Me the Data: Ten Good Reasons Why You Should Measure Court Performance*. Retrieved from National Center for State Courts Institute for Court Management Web site: [http://www.ncsc.dni.us/ICM/distance/Performance\\_Standards/2001\\_08/printer.html](http://www.ncsc.dni.us/ICM/distance/Performance_Standards/2001_08/printer.html).
- <sup>5</sup> Newcomer, note 1; Plantz, M.C., Greenway, M.T., & Hendricks, M. (1997). Outcome Measurement: Showing Results in the Nonprofit Sector. In Newcomer (Ed.), *Using Performance Measurement to Improve Public and Nonprofit Programs: New Directions for Evaluation*, 75, 15-30.
- <sup>6</sup> Plantz, Greenway, & Hendricks, note 5.
- <sup>7</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>8</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>9</sup> Harbour, J.L. (1997). *Performance Measurement*. Portland, OR: Productivity Press.
- <sup>10</sup> Harbour, note 9.
- <sup>11</sup> Brown, note 1.
- <sup>12</sup> Harbour, note 9; Brown, note 1.
- <sup>13</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>14</sup> Osborne and Gaebler (1992). *Reinventing Government*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- <sup>15</sup> Harbour, note 9.
- <sup>16</sup> Performance Measurement Team, Department of Management and Budget (2001). *Fairfax County Measures for Results: A Guide to Advanced Performance Measurement*. Retrieved from the Fairfax County, Virginia Web site: [http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/omb/advanced\\_pm\\_manual\\_2001.pdf](http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/omb/advanced_pm_manual_2001.pdf).
- <sup>17</sup> Performance Measurement Team, Department of Management and Budget, note 16; Harbour, note 9.
- <sup>18</sup> Meador, D. (1999). Measuring to Report...or to Learn? In Senge, P.M., Kleiner, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R., Roth, G., & Smith, B, *The Dance of Change*, 298-302. New York, NY: Doubleday.
- <sup>19</sup> Harbour, note 9; Newcomer, note 1; Plantz, Greenway, & Hendricks, note 5.
- <sup>20</sup> Hatry, H., van Houten, T., Plantz, M.C., and Greenway, M.T. (1996). *Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach*. Alexandria, VA: United Way of America.
- <sup>21</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>22</sup> Plantz, Greenway, & Hendricks, note 5.
- <sup>23</sup> United Way of America (2000). *Agency Experiences with Outcome Measurement: Survey Findings*. Alexandria, VA: United Way of America.
- <sup>24</sup> Plantz, Greenway, & Hendricks, note 5.
- <sup>25</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>26</sup> Hatry, et al., note 20.
- <sup>27</sup> Plantz, Greenway, & Hendricks, note 5; Burt, M.R., Harrell, AV., Newmark, L.C., Aron, L.Y., Jacobs, L.K., et al. (1997). *Evaluation Guidebook for Projects Funded By S.T.O.P. Formula Grants Under the Violence Against Women Act*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute; Hatry, et al., note 20.
- <sup>28</sup> Harris, Kelly J. (2000) *Integrated Justice Information Systems Governance Structures, Roles and Responsibilities*. Sacramento, CA: SEARCH, The National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics, <http://www.search.org/images/pdf/Governance.pdf>; *Report of the National Task Force on Court Automation and Integration* (1999). U.S. Department of Justice. <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/177601.pdf>.
- <sup>29</sup> *Public Access to Court Records: Guidelines for Policy Development by State Courts*. [www.courtaccess.org/modelpolicy](http://www.courtaccess.org/modelpolicy)
- <sup>30</sup> IJIS Industry Working Group. *Integrated Justice Information Systems Guidelines for Procurement* (2000). [http://www.ijis.org/library/reports/IWG\\_Final\\_White\\_Paper\\_Procurement.pdf](http://www.ijis.org/library/reports/IWG_Final_White_Paper_Procurement.pdf).

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<sup>31</sup> *Public Access to Court Records: Guidelines for Policy Development by State Courts*, note 29.

<sup>32</sup> *Report of the National Task Force on Court Automation and Integration (1999)*, note 28.

## RESOURCES

### PUBLICATIONS

An Informed Response: An Overview of the Domestic Violence Court Technology Application and Resource Link (2001).

([http://www.courtinnovation.org/center\\_1publications.html](http://www.courtinnovation.org/center_1publications.html))

Automating Court Systems (1996). National Center for State Courts.

Creating A Domestic Violence Court: Guidelines and Best Practices (2002)

(<http://www.endabuse.org>)

Evaluation Guidebook for Projects Funded By S.T.O.P. Formula Grants Under the Violence Against Women Act. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

(<http://www.urban.org/author/htm>)

IJIS Industry Working Group, Integrated Justice Information Systems Guidelines for Procurement (2000)

[http://www.ijis.org/library/reports/IWG\\_Final\\_White\\_Paper\\_Procurement.pdf](http://www.ijis.org/library/reports/IWG_Final_White_Paper_Procurement.pdf)

Integrated Justice Information Systems Governance Structures, Roles and Responsibilities (2000). SEARCH, The National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics. <http://www.search.org/images/pdf/Governance.pdf>

Leading Change (1996). Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach. Alexandria, VA: United Way of America. (Order from United Way: 1-800-772-0008; item #0989; \$5.00)

Measuring Program Outcomes Training Kit (1996). (Order from United Way: 1-800-772-0008; item #0990; \$35.00; includes 23-minute video).

Outcome Measurement Data Management Systems for Agencies (2001).

(<http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes/publctns.htm>)

Performance Measurement Team, Department of Management and Budget (2002). A Manual for Performance Measurement: Fairfax County Measures Up – 2002.

[http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/omb/basic\\_manual\\_2002.pdf](http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/omb/basic_manual_2002.pdf)

Performance Measurement Team, Department of Management and Budget (2002). Fairfax County Manual for Data Collection for Performance Measurement – 2002.

[http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/omb/data\\_collection\\_manual\\_2002.pdf](http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/omb/data_collection_manual_2002.pdf)

Performance Measurement Team, Department of Management and Budget (2002). Fairfax County Manual for Surveying for Customer Satisfaction – 2002.

[http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/omb/survey\\_manual\\_2002.pdf](http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/omb/survey_manual_2002.pdf)

## RESOURCES

Performance Measurement Team, Department of Management and Budget (2002). Fairfax County Manages for Results: A Guide to Advance Performance Measurement. ([http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/omb/advanced pm manual 2002.pdf](http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/omb/advanced%20pm%20manual%202002.pdf))

Report of the National Task Force on Court Automation and Integration (1999). U.S. Department of Justice. <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/177601.pdf>

Quality Counts: A Manual of Family Court Performance Measurement (forthcoming, winter 2002). Family Court of the State of Delaware.

Specialized Felony Domestic Violence Courts: Lessons on Implementation and Impacts from the Kings County Experience (2001). (<http://www.urban.org/author/htm>)

Strong Governance Structures for the Integration of Justice Information Systems (2000).

Public Technology, Inc. <http://it.ojp.gov//manage/files/PTI-Mission.pdf>

## WEB SITES

Center for Court Innovation: <http://www.courtinnovation.org>;  
[http://www.courtinnovation.org/center\\_1publications.html](http://www.courtinnovation.org/center_1publications.html)

Fairfax County Office of Management and Budget-Performance Measurement:  
[http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/omb/perf\\_measure.htm](http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/gov/omb/perf_measure.htm)

National Center for State Courts: <http://www.ncsconline.org>

Public Access to Court Records: Guidelines for Policy Development by State Courts.  
[www.courtaccess.org/modelpolicy](http://www.courtaccess.org/modelpolicy)

United Way of America:

- Home Page: <http://national.unitedway.org>
- Outcome Measurement Resource Network:  
<http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes>
- Outcome Measurement Publications:  
<http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes/publctns.htm>

Urban Institute: <http://www.urban.org>

## Sample Templates for Specific Planning and Implementation Tasks and Task Assignments

Project Participants	Executive Responsibilities Tasks													
	Provide vision and focus for the scope of the project	Appoint steering committees and task forces (e.g., technology, policy, management)	Direct and coordinate the initiative	Approve strategic plan	Set policy	Approve additional agencies and participating members	Set priorities	Resolve conflict	Monitor progress	Secure funding	Approve annual budget	Control funding	Approve funding	Other
Prosecution Prosecutor District Attorney County Attorney State's Attorney														
Law Enforcement Sheriff Police														
Service Providers Legal Services Victim Services-DV* Victim Services-SA* *Government & community-based														
Courts State Supreme Court Judges Clerks Court Services Courts of General Jurisdiction Judges Clerks Court Services Juvenile or Family Court Judges Clerk Court Services Courts of Limited or Special Jurisdiction Judges Clerk Court Services														
Defense Legal Aid Public Defender														

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Bar Association														
Corrections Jail Administrators State Corrections														
Probation/Parole County State Federal														

Project Operations Responsibilities										
Project Participants	Establish policies and procedures for establishment of database and the maintenance, update, and integration of information	Negotiate with vendor of software	Commit staff	Approve standards and business practices	Keep the executive board informed	Implementation	Monitor participants for compliance to plan	Evaluate against mission	Other	
Prosecution Prosecutor District Attorney County Attorney State's Attorney										
Law Enforcement Sheriff Police										
Service Providers Legal Services Victim Services-DV* Victim Services-SA* *Government & community-based										
State Supreme Court Judges Clerks Court Services Courts of General Jurisdiction Judges										

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Project Participants									
Clerks Court Services Juvenile or Family Court Judges Clerk Court Services Courts of Limited or Special Jurisdiction Judges Clerk Court Services									
Defense Legal Aid Public Defender Bar Association									
Corrections Jail Administrators State Corrections									
Probation/Parole County State Federal									

	Planning Responsibilities					
Project Participants	Review strategic justice information technology projects in, for example, police, court, corrections, and city attorney's office	Determine vision, strategic plan, goals and objectives for justice information systems programs	Implement and oversee the strategic plan	Solicit input from all participating agencies and jurisdictions	Determine integration needs among stakeholders	Other
Prosecution Prosecutor District Attorney County Attorney State's Attorney						
Law Enforcement Sheriff Police						
Service Providers Legal Services Victim Services-DV* Victim Services-SA* *Government & community-based						
Courts State Supreme Court Judges Clerks Court Services Courts of General Jurisdiction Judges Clerks Court Services Juvenile or Family Court Judges Clerk Court Services Courts of Limited or Special Jurisdiction Judges Clerk Court Services						



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Defense Legal Aid Public Defender Bar Association						
Corrections Jail Administrators State Corrections						
Probation/Parole County State Federal						

	Funding and Resource Development Responsibilities					
Project Participants	Obtain funding	Determines funding priorities	Approves the annual budget	Identifies other resources	Commits staff	Other
Prosecution Prosecutor District Attorney County Attorney State's Attorney						
Law Enforcement Sheriff Police						
Service Providers Legal Services Victim Services-DV* Victim Services-SA* *Government & community-based						
Courts State Supreme Court Judges Clerks Court Services						

	Funding and Resource Development Responsibilities					
Project Participants	Obtain funding	Determines funding priorities	Approves the annual budget	Identifies other resources	Commits staff	Other
Courts of General Jurisdiction Judges Clerks Court Services Juvenile or Family Court Judges Clerk Court Services Courts of Limited or Special Jurisdiction Judges Clerk Court Services						
Defense Legal Aid Public Defender Bar Association						
Corrections Jail Administrators State Corrections						
Probation/Parole County State Federal						

	Other Responsibilities									
Project Participants										
Prosecution Prosecutor District Attorney County Attorney State's Attorney										
Law Enforcement Sheriff Police										

	Other Responsibilities									
Project Participants										
Service Providers										
Legal Services										
Victim Services-DV*										
Victim Services-SA*										
*Government & community-based										
Courts										
State Supreme Court										
Judges										
Clerks										
Court Services										
Courts of General Jurisdiction										
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Court Services										
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Public Defender										
Bar Association										
Corrections										
Jail Administrators										
State Corrections										
Probation/Parole										
County										
State										
Federal										

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