

# GUIDE TO DESIGNING INTEGRATED VIOLENCE PREVENTION INTERVENTIONS

## Sharing Knowledge



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National Treasury  
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cooperation**

DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

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## FOREWORD

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## ACRONYMS

ABA	Area-based approach
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CAP	Community action plan
CBO	Community-based organization
CPTED	Crime prevention through environmental design
CSPS	Civilian Secretariat for Police Service
DDM	District Development Model
DHS	Department of Human Settlements
ECD4ALL	Early Childhood Development for all
GBV	Gender-based violence
GIZ-VCP	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit - Inclusive Violence and Crime Prevention Programme
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies

IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IGR	Intergovernmental relations
JCPZ	Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo
JCSP	Johannesburg City Safety Programme
JDA	Johannesburg Development Agency
KfW	German Development Bank
LGBTQ+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer
MBDA	Mandela Bay Development Agency
NMBM	Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SAPS	South Africa Police Service
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence

SPUU Helenvale	Safety & Peace through Urban Upgrading (NMBM)
SPUU Mamelodi East	Safety Promotion through Urban Upgrading (City of Tshwane)
VPUU NPC	Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading Not for Profit Company
WPSS	2016 White Paper on Safety and Security

## ABOUT THESE BOOKLETS

These booklets grew out of the idea that the collective knowledge about violence prevention in the technical and financial cooperation within the South African-German Development Cooperation should be shared to facilitate the institutionalisation, upscaling, adaptation of, and fostering of synergies amongst, successful violence prevention approaches.

Beginning in 2018, this collective knowledge was gathered through a dedicated joint measure, under the title: "Knowledge Management across the Field of Violence Prevention within the South African-German Development Cooperation" (hereafter: the knowledge management project). The learning exchange centred on four programmes implemented by the German Development Cooperation, on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), with South African partners:

### Financial Cooperation through the German Development Bank (KfW)

- Safety Promotion through Urban Upgrading (SPUU Mamelodi East) in the City of Tshwane,
- Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU) in the Western Cape Province,
- Safety and Peace through Urban Upgrading (SPUU Helenvale) in Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NMBM), and

### Technical Cooperation

- Inclusive Violence and Crime Prevention Programme implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

Between April and November 2019, violence prevention stakeholders from all spheres of government and selected civil society organisations in the South African-German development cooperation participated in this knowledge management project. Participants from various sectors debated and reviewed practical solutions, with the objective of providing evidence to be used in increasing community safety and preventing and reducing violence and crime in South Africa.

## WHO THIS GUIDE IS FOR

This **Guide** speaks mainly to stakeholders from various sectors who are working together on area-based interventions. We refer to such stakeholder groups as "integrated teams." The **guide** is also meant for other politicians, government officials and practitioners interested in violence and crime prevention. The lessons in each of the booklets are mainly informed by the experiences of municipal officials and other implementers; but their intended audience stretches to role-players involved in violence prevention from other spheres of government and civil society. Government officials, policy-makers and elected leaders at municipal, provincial and national levels may be especially interested in these findings.



Participants exchanged lessons learned during workshops in 2019

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The **Overview** of the **Guide** should be read before all of the other booklets. Once the reader has gained an understanding of the methodology and of key concepts from the **Overview**, the booklets can be read in any order. The booklets were specifically developed so that their order could be shuffled according to the needs of the reader and to avoid creating an artificial hierarchy or chronology of "first to last" chapters.

Together, the six other booklets detail an interwoven set of strategies that are crucial to effective, integrated, area-based violence prevention. To understand how each of these strategies is linked with the others, and to most effectively act upon the lessons they hold, all of the booklets ought to be read.

The **Case Study Booklet** can be referred to at any time for more information about the interventions explored in this knowledge management process.



The six booklets within the Guide

## METHODOLOGY

The experiences and lessons described in these booklets were captured during

- Case study interviews for 14 case studies from the City of Cape Town, City of Tshwane, NMBM, City of Johannesburg, King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality, Theewaterskloof Municipality and Gauteng Province;
- Two exchanges between practitioners and municipal officials from the City of Cape Town, NMBM and the City of Tshwane; and
- Two larger workshops between municipal, provincial and national officials, practitioners and other civil society actors from across South Africa.

The insights for these booklets were verified in a peer review session and through correspondence with each partner involved in the interventions. Data collection and analysis were framed by the themes of the **2016 White Paper on Safety and Security** (2016 WPSS), the mandate of the **Integrated Urban Development Framework**, and the social-ecological model<sup>1</sup>.

The infographic on the right shows how the methodology of this knowledge management project relates to the policy framework [the "soil" at the bottom of the page], the interventions [the roots of the tree], and the resulting lessons learned [leaves]. The metaphor of a tree comes to mind, as the various interventions are "rooted in the soil" of the six themes of the **2016 WPSS**. The "roots" of the tree are explored in case studies of interventions featured in the Case Study Booklet. From these roots, a participatory knowledge management process grew. This process of sharing knowledge through exchanges, workshops and interviews, as illustrated by the trunk of the tree, branches off into six leaves, which are the six booklets that make up the **Guide**.

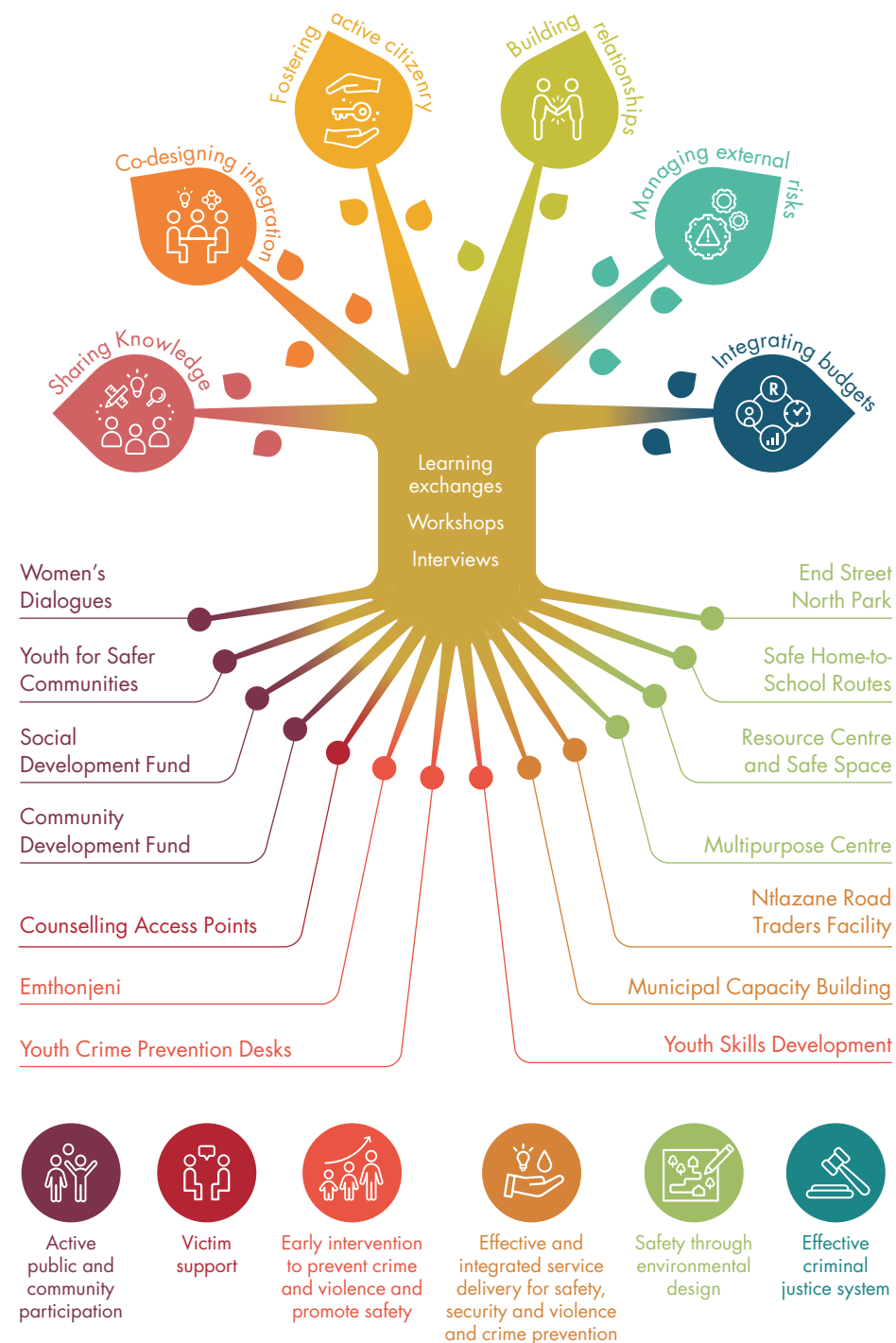
The tree stresses the importance of a "Whole-of-Government" and "Whole-of-Society" approach and of everyone playing a role in violence prevention, as is reflected in the emerging knowledge products. The most pertinent knowledge gathered stretches into six "branches" (or strategies) - from there, the "leaves" unfurl as the six booklets of the **Guide to Designing Integrated Violence Prevention Interventions**.

The six booklets in the **Guide** are:

- Sharing Knowledge,
- Fostering Active Citizenry,
- Co-designing Integration,
- Building Relationships,
- Managing External Risks, and
- Integrating Budgets.

These booklets share the stories of practitioners and government officials, unfolding the lessons they have learned through implementing violence prevention interventions. Hence, the evidence collected in this project is based on experiential knowledge. These stories and lessons learnt aim to capture wisdom and qualitative data which are valuable to future violence prevention interventions. Their reflections are intended to complement more quantitative forms of monitoring and evaluation.

This **Guide** is process-oriented; but it is not a recipe for guaranteed success. It offers considerations for those designing interventions within South Africa's violence prevention landscape.





## DEFINING VIOLENCE

Violence, especially interpersonal violence, is one of the leading causes of death in South Africa and disproportionately affects young people, both as victims and perpetrators. Perpetration and victimisation is also starkly gendered among men and women, respectively. People living in South Africa feel increasingly unsafe, partially because the murder rate has followed an increasing trend since 2011<sup>2</sup>. Crime is distributed unevenly, with poorer areas typically experiencing more violent crimes. This social inequality between rich and poor is deeply rooted in apartheid's race-based socio-spatial injustice, which is a major contributor to violence and crime, along with other risk factors, such as:

- Areas of high unemployment, poverty and deprivation;
- Unsafe, disconnected and poorly designed environments;
- Substance abuse;
- Low social capital; or
- Poor rule of law and high corruption.

There are three categories of violence based on the identities of perpetrators and victims<sup>3</sup>:

**Self-directed violence** refers to violent acts a person inflicts upon him- or herself, and includes self-abuse (such as self-mutilation) and suicidal behaviour (including suicidal thoughts and acts).

**Interpersonal violence** refers to violence inflicted by another individual or by a small group of individuals. This includes both family and intimate partner violence and community violence.

**Collective violence** is the instrumental use of violence by people who identify themselves as members of one group against another group or set of individuals, in order to achieve political, economic or social objectives. This can manifest in genocide, repression, etc.

## DEFINING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

While gender-based violence (GBV), or victimisation based on a person's gender, is prevalent worldwide, sexual gender-based violence (SGBV) and intimate partner violence by men against women and girls are particularly high and under-reported in South Africa. LGBTQ+, working-class and disabled women and girls experience even greater risks of SGBV: lesbian women living in townships have been especially targeted by male perpetrators of "corrective rape" – despite the progressive South African constitution establishing equality, regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Research has also found that foreign nationality and job precarity can put women at greater risk of experiencing physical and/or sexual abuse by their employers.

Despite high rates of victimisation, typically only knowledge of high-profile cases against women and girls ever reaches the public. Most cases of GBV are never reported and never reach the public. GBV is so widespread, yet so hidden, because it is embedded in patriarchal cultures, traditions and institutions. Like other forms of violence, it cannot only be prevented through effective policing and security measures. Preventing GBV in South Africa requires dismantling local, legal and socio-cultural norms which make it feel inevitable and which give men (and others who are systematically privileged by racism, heterosexual and cisgender norms, and the economy) power to commit such crimes.

## PREVENTING VIOLENCE

Violence prevention work addresses the risk factors contributing to violence, towards a society where securitised approaches, such as more policing, are less heavily relied upon. Clamping down on violence and crime affects only their symptoms; focusing on security alone fails to address the causes of violence. A change of emphasis from security to safety is needed. Security is protection against a known or perceived threat, while safety is living without that threat or fear. Violence prevention seeks to increase the presence of protective factors – such as a caring family, a safe and nurturing school environment, a sense of belonging and access to adequate social services – which promote resilience to risk factors.

The four programmes that participated in the knowledge management project work on the following three types of violence prevention to increase protective factors:



### SITUATIONAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Altering the environment using principles of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED)



### SOCIAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Early interventions, including early childhood development, opportunities for youth and building the social capital of communities



### INSTITUTIONAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Embedding violence prevention in governance and urban management and building the capacities of community structures

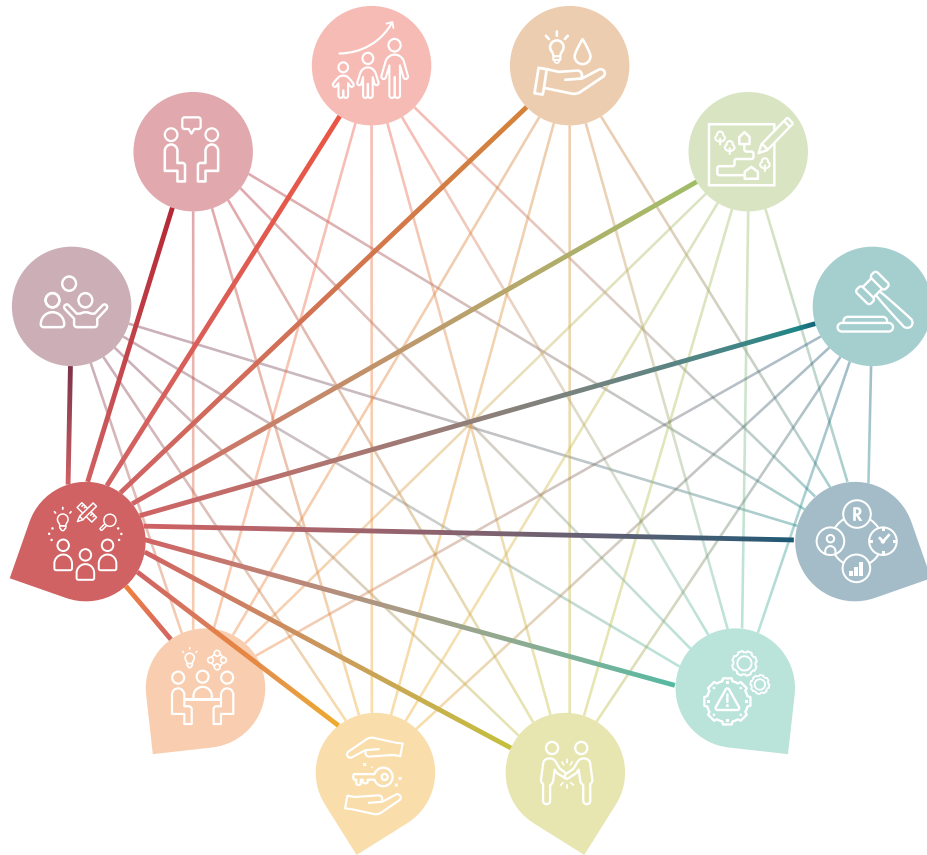
## DEFINING AREA-BASED APPROACHES

Efforts to prevent violence are by nature complex. An **area-based approach (ABA)** takes on a specific geographic area within which to achieve this complexity, by merging social, spatial and institutional approaches over a foundation of robust community participation and effective knowledge management. In ABA, all departments and spheres of government and all sectors may come together to focus on lived realities and place-making in a defined spatial context.

ABA is particularly appropriate to areas with a high concentration of needs. It is most effective when embedded in local plans and policies, such as Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). Research has shown that area-based initiatives are more sustainable when anchored in strong local networks. Therefore, a key part of violence prevention in ABA involves promoting social capital. Hence, embracing ABA, implementation should start with the collaborative development of context-specific plans, through meaningful engagement with residents, businesses and public sector actors.

ABA is increasingly being embraced as part of a "Whole-of-Government" and "Whole-of-Society" approach to creating safer and more sustainable communities throughout South Africa. Additionally, the District Development Model (DDM), commonly known as "Khawuleza", launched by the Presidency in 2019 emphasises the integration of service delivery as part of ABA, at district level. This relates directly to the various strategies for preventing crime and violence listed above. This approach at the district level should percolate down to the smaller scale, where most of the case studies within this knowledge management project are situated.

# 1 INTRODUCTION TO SHARING KNOWLEDGE



Violence prevention actors throughout the South African-German development cooperation agreed that sharing knowledge is key to the success of their own work and to violence prevention as a whole across South Africa. They agreed that it allows everyone involved in violence prevention to learn from inspiring and evidence-based practices and get new ideas. They also saw knowledge-sharing as a key to unlock integration, allowing roleplayers to identify appropriate partners and to be more transparent - thereby increasing trust. Lastly, these actors emphasised that the knowledge and transparency gained through monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) are key to the sustainability of violence prevention.

This booklet shares how violence prevention actors in the South African-German development cooperation currently conduct MEL, the challenges they have encountered in doing so, and their responses to those challenges. It also shares how these practitioners and policymakers envision MEL as an enabling factor in overcoming challenges in other aspects of their work. The graphic below describes the relationship between the three components of MEL.

Participants in the cooperation recognised that M&E alone cannot lead to all of the benefits of knowledge-sharing. The information collected must be reflected upon and heard beyond internal meetings and reports for funders. In other words, it must be a catalyst for learning both among the staff of a project and further, among project partners from various sectors, including local communities themselves.

The practitioners and policymakers involved in the exchanges throughout the knowledge management project made one thing clear: we need to shift from M&E to MEL. M&E is often framed as a vehicle for compliance, ticking a box as required by funders. Shifting to MEL means asking ourselves: *What did we learn? How do we improve our practices? What needs to be changed?*

A shift towards MEL is also a shift towards the inclusion of all integrated team members in knowledge-sharing and inclusively defining and analysing key lessons learned from a project.

## MONITORING

Checking if interventions are on track as planned; ongoing collection of information

## EVALUATION

Systematically collecting and analyzing data and engaging with it to know the quality and impacts of interventions



## LEARNING

Reflecting on data collected for improvement, adaptation and change

Rather than allowing lessons to percolate within individual organisations or departments, a shift towards learning requires barriers between silos and groups to be dismantled.

In particular, it requires the democratisation of data and knowledge, so that information is ultimately co-owned by communities, government and other key actors.

Both quantitative and qualitative data collection can be the foundations of an effective M&E strategy; a range of evidence provides a more complete picture of an intervention and the lessons learned from it. For example, people's experiences and learned best practices, while subjective and not always quantifiable, are extremely valuable. When data is referred to in this booklet, it is considered to encapsulate both quantitative and qualitative types.

This booklet shares how violence prevention actors in the South African-German development cooperation currently conduct MEL and share what they learn, the challenges they have encountered in doing so, and their responses to those challenges. It explores ways to foster meaningful community ownership over knowledge, data, sharing and learning. It also shares how practitioners and policymakers envision MEL as an enabling tool for overcoming challenges in other aspects of their work.

## 2 CHALLENGES AND ENABLING FACTORS IN MEL

As a whole, stakeholders in the knowledge management project could easily share the kinds of data they collected in the co-design or planning phase of an intervention, such as baseline surveys and stakeholder mapping. They could also quickly name the types of data collected during implementation.

### KINDS OF BASELINE INFORMATION USED

- 🔑 Baseline surveys
- 🔑 Stakeholder mapping & consultations
- 🔑 Hotspot data
- 🔑 Cost-benefit analyses
- 🔑 Status quo assessments
- 🔑 Storytelling by local community members
- 🔑 Personal experiences
- 🔑 Socioeconomic and spatial analyses
- 🔑 Co-design sessions
- 🔑 Background information about partners
- 🔑 Media and public perceptions analysis

### KINDS OF DATA USED AND COLLECTED DURING IMPLEMENTATION

- 🔑 Small group discussions & focus groups
- 🔑 Attendance registers
- 🔑 Debriefing, reflection & personal experiences
- 🔑 Impact assessments
- 🔑 Storytelling by local community members
- 🔑 Participatory observations
- 🔑 Quantitative data collected via ICT tools (Open Data Kit and others) for M&E

Yet, when it came to how participants learn from and share knowledge, they wished to do more than they already do.

The challenges and enabling factors pinpointed within participants' MEL strategies and processes were: planning to learn; measuring success; and learning and sharing. Paradoxically, these three elements pose challenges to both knowledge-sharing and enabling factors for other aspects of integration and area-based approaches.

### WAYS KNOWLEDGE IS ALREADY SHARED

- 🔑 Training
- 🔑 Reporting to funders and stakeholders
- 🔑 Debriefing
- 🔑 Newsletters
- 🔑 Social media
- 🔑 Publications
- 🔑 Yearly conference
- 🔑 Community profile workshops
- 🔑 Videos & Photos

## 2.1 PLANNING TO LEARN

Monitoring, evaluation and learning processes are hindered by constraints of budget and time. This state of affairs reflects the current practice of prioritising delivery over deliberation. Without sufficient budget and under tight project timelines, it is challenging for violence prevention actors to find the capacity – whether in the form of expert guidance or regular spaces for reflection – to follow through with knowledge processes beyond reporting requirements. Despite the fact that everyone recognised the importance of making space to take M&E a step further, the reality is that these activities just are not feasible if they aren't prioritised and planned for ahead of time.

Therefore, participants emphasised the need to include time and space for learning processes in project plans. Crucially, this is about permission: integrated teams must develop a culture which expects and values mistakes and demands enquiry before judgement. Participants have learned that making "room for learning and unlearning,"<sup>4</sup> reflecting at every phase of a project, and providing safe and cohesive learning spaces for everyone involved from the beginning is crucial to the success of violence prevention interventions. Of course, these MEL plans must be complemented by strong knowledge management systems that allow for outputs, outcomes and situational changes to be tracked.

## HELENVALE, NELSON MANDELA BAY

MBDA regularly engages with statistics collected from service providers and their own longitudinal, quantitative data to responsively plan for the Safety and Peace through Upgrading (SPUU) programme in Helenvale.



Gelvandale High learners at Career Expo at the Helenvale Resource Centre

## 2.2 MEASURING SUCCESS

Participants vocalised the following considerations for measuring success:



### SUSTAINABILITY

Financial viability, local ownership, local capacitation, replication of programmes and institutionalisation of integration



### PROGRESS

Achievement of outputs within a given timeline



### EFFECTIVENESS

Achievement of outcomes within the expected budget



### IMPACT

Achievement of longer-term and broader goals

These interdependent factors of success may be easy to identify in projects where planning is completely defined ahead of time and implementation occurs in stable and controllable conditions. However, organic community-driven processes in contexts where violence, changes in management, and other risks threaten project progress, are not as easy as that. These situations require highly adaptive responses that often necessitate changing timelines, adjustable priorities or compromises with other team members and social structures. They are too complex to be guided by simple recipes or even complicated formulae. Complexity requires an acceptance of unpredictability. Measurement practices should then respond to this complexity.

Considerations should also be given to the rigor and longevity of measurement. Long-term measurement typically provides a more complete picture of returns on investment in violence prevention. Additionally, more rigorous studies – for example, with control groups – may show the clearest comparisons with which to measure impact. However, these options take up more resources. Research partnerships with academia and other interested, qualified stakeholders may provide some solutions to these challenges. More rigorous measurement also requires an openness to learning, making mistakes and course-correcting.

## But how do we monitor and evaluate organic, adaptive processes?

MEL processes must be flexible, incorporate reflection, and effectively use qualitative data to get the full story of an intervention's impact. This has implications for funding and suggests that flexible approaches, such as prototype testing or “failing fast” to make changes, should be considered.

## OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Some interventions may only see impact years after their start, and even their ending. Others, like the Park Activation Committee in End Street North Park, the Social Development Fund in Lotus Park, and the Women's Dialogues in Helenvale, lead to impact that is more quickly tracked. Participants reflected on moments where their project targets had been achieved, but it was unclear whether they had made a significant impact.

At the outset of an intervention, during the co-design or planning phase, ensure that the targets of a project have been aligned to its objectives, and that indicators strongly focus on intended outcomes. In other words, plan MEL around your impact goals. Participants in the knowledge management project recommended that MEL strategies for integrated interventions take collaboration into account, including Annual Performance Plans of participating departments, and vice versa.

During implementation, keep a database to track data collected over time, so that changes in a community can be more easily traced and analysed. Periodically interrogate which data is collected and why; for example, ask “Why do we track attendance? How can we continue to use this data?” If something doesn't seem right, act sooner rather than later to remedy the situation.

When sharing data, use qualitative information and exploratory analysis effectively, especially in instances where quantitative data tracks outputs more than outcomes. Disclose gaps in information about outcomes honestly, with consideration for future improvements to knowledge management structures.

Lastly, keep in mind that impact may only be measurable in the long-term. For example, some information about the impact of an ECD programme on participating children may be available early on; but other information about their lives as older children, teens and adults will not be available for several years.

## MEASURING IN PARTNERSHIP

Interventions involving collaboration or integration are confronted with the reality of data with different geographical boundaries and scales. This means that services in unintegrated areas are often planned according to different data sets. Currently, it is usually the task of an integrated team to plan integrated services using these puzzling data sets. Additionally, various departments have different reporting structures, timelines, and even different targets or intended outcomes.

Working to report on various targets in this reality is already challenging, before the idea of learning from the data even arises. In order for collaborators from various, “silo-ed” sectors, departments and levels of government to reach a common understanding of MEL within a given intervention, consistency across the board is key. Actors in integrated interventions must agree to common baselines and aligned objectives and indicators from the start. These common means of accountability should be reflected in departments’ Annual Performance Plans, which should also include objectives around effective integrated work. The District Development Model supports such an integrated monitoring framework. When common baselines and aligned objectives are agreed upon, IGR systems will become stronger.

Additionally, in contexts where politics can heavily impede violence prevention interventions, it is important to create spaces for learning from the data collected through MEL. Both horizontal and vertical knowledge exchange, in non-competitive learning spaces, should be encouraged. This is especially crucial in municipalities that still require further capacitation to develop more robust knowledge management mechanisms.

## CITY OF CAPE TOWN

VPUU NPC monitors regular attendance at its early childhood development (ECD) programmes, as part of their impact evaluation, which is based on Early Learning Outcome measures. The programme’s curriculum is aligned to national norms and standards and has been approved by the Department of Social Development. Data about the outcomes of the curriculum is collected efficiently using an ICT tool. This method of measuring impact is useful for funders, and the data is shared at ECD roundtables and roadshows. At these events, VPUU NPC uses its data to show that a population approach to ECD can contribute to a child rights funding model, which provides the foundation for a funding policy that reaches all children. In particular, VPUU NPC shares its ECD data with the Department of Social Development. The impact of this is to reduce the risk of further ECD policies that perpetuate funding inequities in vulnerable communities.



Children in the ECD4ALL programme in Monwabisi Park

## DATA COLLECTION

Whether it is a baseline survey or an endline impact assessment, community-wide data collection also comes with many challenges. Participants identified the issues of survey fatigue, lack of safety and insufficient capacity in data collection.

Participants expressed the competing desires behind, on the one hand, preventing data collection fatigue on the part of local residents and, on the other hand, collecting sufficient data to capture the full picture of the community. Efficient, multipurpose data collection, along with periodic interrogation of the utility of the data being collected, can reduce the labour that must be done on the part of a residents to respond to data-gathering efforts. Additionally, explicit and meaningful community ownership of data can offset some of this burden. Of course, one prerequisite of “meaningful ownership of data” is capacity on the part of community leaders or members to analyse and refer to the information as they see fit.

Moreover, data collection, capturing and management for MEL presents unique challenges to data collectors’ safety in communities with high levels of crime. For example, if data collection is done using a smart device in order to increase efficiency and accuracy, it may also place fieldworkers at greater risk of theft or robbery. Violent gang activity could place them in even greater danger.

Lastly, participants mentioned that under-resourcing sometimes led to insufficient capacity to manage data collection and capturing.



## 2.3 LEARNING AND SHARING

When it came to learning and sharing, the violence prevention stakeholders problematised how to effectively use both quantitative and qualitative data to enhance violence prevention efforts.

For many of us, sharing what we have learned is the most difficult part of MEL. Participants asked themselves:

**What do we do when learning is happening, but the project still fails to meet its targets? How do we implement what we have learned?**

Participants from various experiences emphasised four things when it comes to learning from mistakes and experiences:



### REFLEXIVE PRACTICES

Use storytelling to effectively debrief and hone in on key issues



### MEL STRATEGY

Align goals, indicators and targets across all collaborators. Include reflection with these collaborators in your strategy.



### SHARED KNOWLEDGE REPOSITORY

The online platform SaferSpaces<sup>5</sup> is one such space. Use privacy protection for sensitive data.



### COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

Connect with other organisations and spheres of government to learn across programmes and areas.

When it comes to reflexive practices and storytelling, exchanges and networks like those fostered in the knowledge management project are valuable spaces to share experience. These spaces can feel extremely positive because attendees make a compact to listen with acceptance and non-judgment. However, integrated teams should also create similar spaces within their own meetings when debriefing, reflecting and problem-solving based on what they have learned. Regardless of the space in which lessons are shared, be mindful of anonymising personal information and of the limitations for sharing SAPS information when it could compromise crime prevention work.

## 3 THE PROMISE OF MEL

As discussed above, MEL presents its own challenges, but it also presents solutions to other challenges that we have in violence prevention. Such challenges include: internally using monitoring and evaluative data; troubleshooting issues in citizen and partner participation; helping with integration; costing and replicating model interventions; and marketing our successes further afield.

**“Let’s uphold our programmes as city-wide learning points.”**

### 3.1 INTERNAL USE OF DATA

Stakeholders within the South African-German development cooperation frequently use data from MEL processes to understand the contexts of the communities in which they work, adapt in response to challenges, and build institutional memory.

When it comes to understanding the context of an area, it is common knowledge that

implementers must know what sets a community apart, and plan to choose and adapt their approaches appropriately. Using contextual evidence, such as asset mapping, stakeholder analyses, storytelling by communities, etc. can ensure that interventions are informed by the community’s needs.

MEL processes can also facilitate effective responses to failure, mistakes and threats to the success of an intervention. Ongoing, collaborative review of data can make an impact on how implementers choose to respond (see box to the right about MBDA).

**“Do not come with preconceived ideas, use evidence.”**

Carving out collaborative space and time to work with all relevant team members to reflect on the information available, and to use it to improve, is truly an investment in the impact of an intervention. This is in line with David Kolb’s<sup>6</sup> learning cycle, which provides a framework for using reflective learning.

#### CONCRETE EXPERIENCE

- Act to gain experiences and data
- Try out new action plan

#### ACTIVE EXPERIMENTATION

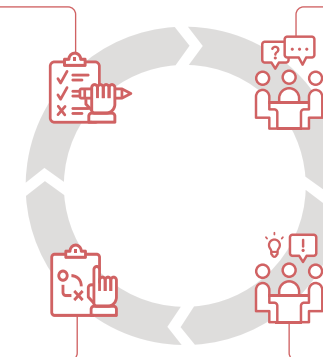
- Develop a clear action plan to adapt according to lessons learned

#### REFLECTIVE OBSERVATION

- Review findings
- Identify mistakes/risks/successes/unexpected outcomes
- Ask “why?”

#### ABSTRACT CONCEPTUALISATION

- Draw conclusions/lessons from the reflection, focusing on the team’s shared vision



MEL is also invaluable to building institutional memory, training programmes, assessments, knowledge hubs, “solution banks,” memos and best practice systems. It should be used to support the development of robust knowledge management mechanisms for government stakeholders.

#### HELENVALE, NELSON MANDELA BAY

SPUU MBDA holds monthly data exchanges with service providers on the ground in Helenvale. The programme’s flexible planning is consistently updated based on longitudinal qualitative data.



Community meeting in Helenvale

## LESSONS FROM OUR COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

In gathering as a community of practice, the participants from the South African-German development cooperation have learned about successfully exchanging knowledge between various actors in integrated violence prevention. These lessons may be useful to various safety and security clusters, NGOs, CBOs, actors facilitating IGR, and anyone else seeking to share knowledge among and between integrated teams:

- Identifying what everyone wants to learn and share from the beginning can clarify the vision of a community of practice.
- The sustainability of the community and follow-through on lessons learned, especially among government team members, is increased when participants include decision-makers or people who can move things forward.
- Allowing participants to formulate questions and allowing themes to organically emerge based on what is needed can maximise learning opportunities. Encourage problem statements and deep conversations.
- Icebreakers help to build trust and frame the tone of a learning event.



Icebreaker in the first Knowledge Management Workshop.

- Participants are more receptive to applying new concepts through interactive experiences - such as simulation activities, gamification and site visits - than through passive ones - such as listening to presentations. When paired with reflection, these interactive opportunities can lead to valuable insights and re-framed perspectives.
- Storytelling is an empowering way to communicate victories, challenges and lessons learned.
- Even at large learning events, people prefer to tell their stories in small groups; this allows for in-depth, organic discussions, greater freedom to share, and relationship-building.
- Capture and distribute what has been learned in shareable, accessible and innovative documents. The use of co-design practices to produce these documents can help to refine the most important lessons learned.
- Develop a strategy that is responsive to lessons learned; and be open to a strategy emerging as the outcomes take shape.

## 3.2 COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP OF INFORMATION

Community participation is further explored in the **Fostering Active Citizenry** booklet. MEL can be an enabling solution to challenges of local ownership, public education, lack of trust and communication around expectations.

In most violence prevention interventions where a baseline or feasibility study is conducted ahead of planning or co-design, data is one of the first valuable resources that a community shares. Violence prevention stakeholders within the cooperation agreed that data collected from communities belongs to them; and that community participation in knowledge management requires deeper interrogation by all role players.

Participants recognised communities’ rights to access, interpret and use data about themselves.

The following strategies can be used to democratise data-sharing and knowledge management, as a means of fostering community ownership:



### DATA SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Capacitate communities to understand and meaningfully use information about themselves.



### COMMUNITY DELIVERY OF SERVICES

Hire local residents as data collection fieldworkers



### PARTICIPATORY MAPPING

Work together to collect spatial data about safety, violence and other information



### OPEN ACCESS

Improve public access to data, and awareness about the existence of the data, from programmes



### STORYTELLING

Listen to and provide space to share stories and experiences

## WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE

VPUU NPC starts with baseline data collection by capacitated local fieldworkers. The data is shared with local residents in a workshop and informs the participatory development of a community action plan (CAP).

Democratising data and knowledge is important because MEL findings are a real-time source for public education and mobilization messaging. Popular education techniques, such as those developed by Paulo Freire<sup>7</sup>, can be helpful in this democratisation process. Integrated teams should rethink MEL tools and the packaging of findings with this aim in mind. It may lead to improvements in awareness-raising activities and key stakeholder briefings.

Some stakeholders within the South African-German development cooperation have found that some communities lack trust in public information. MEL can enable programmes to share accurate, citable data – such as the findings of baseline surveys – to deepen communities’ knowledge and levels of trust<sup>8</sup>.

#### HELENVALE, NELSON MANDELA BAY

As part of the SPUU programme in Helenvale, MBDA holds Youth and Women’s Dialogues to improve information-sharing within the community. Weekly meetings provide a space to clarify what is going on with the project and share other important information.



Members of the Helenvale Women’s Dialogues group

#### NELSON MANDELA BAY MUNICIPALITY

Youth in Masifunde’s Youth for Safer Communities (YSC) programme starts with participatory research about why young people get involved in crime and violence. School safety workshops are organised for about 40 learners to map and analyse school and community safety and to nominate peer representatives to bring solutions to address challenges. These young “Local Heroes of Safety” use the information collected to spearhead safety promotion programming in their schools. This has resulted in a variety of public education media, including an inspirational song, youth magazines, a Facebook page, a film about young role models, theatrical plays that focus on safety and more!



Youth Leader panel discussion

Lastly, participants in the knowledge management project were challenged by misunderstanding about their project’s actual scope and communities’ expectations. Materials developed using baseline data, improved public access to data, and improved awareness-raising and communication, all listed above as enabled by MEL, can help to address this challenge.

### 3.3 SILOS VS. INTEGRATION

When working on integrated interventions, violence prevention collaborators have found their work hindered by miscommunications and misunderstandings between silos or levels of government, due to the different practices and levels of commitment to integration within each. MEL findings and practices provide space and resources to break down habitual ways of working in silos. MEL is an opportunity to unlearn and reflect across departments and sectors and ask one another, “Who has information that can help me? What information can I share to help you?”.

### 3.4 TIPS & TRICKS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMES

The aim of knowledge management in violence prevention is, ultimately, to improve the reliability and validity of what we claim to know and, through that, make a greater impact in the future. Whether we want to replicate “model” programmes or avoid typical pitfalls in the next phase of a project, MEL can help us to develop a common language, materials and ideas. A strong MEL system can also bring us evidence for costing interventions; for example, with a cost-benefit analysis component.

Sharing our stories beyond reporting deadlines and internal meetings is key to expanding and institutionalising effective violence prevention practices. MEL findings should be used to improve the promotion of success stories, lessons learned and challenges. Uphold programmes and city- and country-wide points of learning in violence prevention, and take advantage of all the opportunities MEL offers. Together we can share knowledge that makes an impact beyond our individual interventions.

#### EASTERN CAPE AND GAUTENG

The Youth Crime Prevention Desk programme’s YouthActs app is a mobile digital platform to support and showcase safety promotion activities of youth across the country.



YouthActs App<sup>10</sup> test with SAPS



## LINKS TO OTHER STRATEGIES

There are many benefits that a paradigm shift from M&E to monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) presents to the field of violence prevention within the South African-German development cooperation. The table below demonstrates how such a shift would be interwoven with the other layers of integrated violence prevention explored in this series.



### CO-DESIGNING INTEGRATION

Actors in integrated interventions must agree to common baselines and aligned objectives and indicators from the start.

MEL strategies for integrated interventions should be incorporated into the Annual Performance Plans of government departments.



### FOSTERING ACTIVE CITIZENRY

Data collected from communities belongs to the communities themselves.

Violence prevention interventions must incorporate practices that democratize data-sharing and knowledge management, as a means of fostering community ownership.



### INTEGRATING BUDGETS

It cannot be stressed enough: time and space for MEL, including meaningful and collaborative learning, must be included in project budgets.



### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Utilise a shared repository for knowledge gained at any phase of an intervention; it can come in handy if miscommunication issues arise.

Engage in reflexive practices and storytelling across partnerships to strengthen our understanding of one another and of our work.



### MANAGING EXTERNAL RISKS

Reflecting on MEL data and planning accordingly can facilitate effective responses to mistakes and risks.

In interventions with organic processes and high levels of risk, MEL processes must be flexible, incorporate reflection, and effectively use qualitative data to get (and share) the full story of an intervention's impact.

## FROM LEARNING TO PRACTICE

After reading this booklet, what three things should you change about how you share knowledge in your own work?

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Which of these three things is most feasible to do in the next 100 days? How will you do it?

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## ENDNOTES

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- 1 See **Case Study Booklet**.

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- 2 Maluleke, Risenga (2018) Victims of Crime Survey 2017/18. Stats SA. [Accessed on 13 March 2019 at <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0341/presentation.pdf> .
- 3 SaferSpaces (2020) What is violence? <https://www.saferspaces.org.za/understand/entry/what-is-violence> .

Page 21

- 4 *Unlearning* is the process of changing, re-orienting or re-framing our understanding about something which we thought we understood. For example, *unlearning* siloed responses to violence prevention requires re-framing our understanding of violence prevention as an integrated and holistic undertaking.

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- 5 <https://www.saferspaces.org.za/>

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- 6 To learn more about David Kolb, educational theorist, visit: <https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/doctorscollege/training/eresources/teaching/theories/kolb>

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- 7 For more information about Paulo Freire, advocate for critical pedagogy, visit: <https://www.freire.org/paulo-freire/concepts-used-by-paulo-freire>
- 8 More information about trustbuilding can be found in the booklet on **Building Relationships**.

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- 9 See booklet **Co-Designing Integration**.
- 10 <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=net.youthacts.southafrica&gl=ZA>

## USEFUL RESOURCES

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