MEASURING OUTCOMES IN RESPONSE TO VICTIMS OF CRIME

Webinar: December 8, 2021
Introductions

What Constitutes Success? Evaluating Legal Services for Victims of Crime - A Formative Evaluation
Kris Lugo-Graulich, Meg Garvin, Karen Souza

Measuring the Impact of Victim Services: Developing the Victim Outcome and Satisfaction Survey (VOSS)
Lynn Langton, Stacey Cutbush, Susan Howley, Bailey Maryfield

Measuring Success in the Criminal Justice System’s Response to Domestic/Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking: A Pilot Project
Sarah Goan, Elisabeth Snell, Kris Lugo-Graulich, Susan Howley, Bailey Maryfield
What Constitutes Success? Evaluating Legal Services for Victims of Crime - A Formative Evaluation

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Project Relevance

OFFICE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME VISION 21
- Prioritized crime victims
- Emphasis on victims’ rights enforcement

LACK OF SYSTEMATIC EVALUATION
- What works in victim legal services
- Rights on paper vs. rights in practice
- Costs and benefits

LACK OF DEFINITIONS FOR SUCCESS
- Roadmap for practitioners
- Best practices
- Standardized procedures

LACK OF PROGRAM EVALUATION
- Whether services are working
- How victims define a successful outcome
Stage 1: Developing the Conceptual Model
Lawyers/legal service providers and researchers are two sets of experts.
How do you build a conceptual model?

Developing the Conceptual Model

Questions Guiding Jrsa, Ncvli, & Advisory Committee Conversations
Model Considerations

Outcomes are achievable for individuals

This conceptual model is limited to legal services

Objectives are ideals to strive for

Providers can customize the model
Project Methodology

1. Interviews with Subject Matter Experts
2. Draft Conceptual Model
3. Survey to Subject Matter Experts
4. Revise Conceptual Model
5. Pilot Tests
6. Develop Research Framework
7. Site Visits
8. Finalize Conceptual Model
9. Roundtable with Subject Matter Experts
Stage 2: Formative Work with 3 Victims’ Rights Legal Clinics

Oregon Crime Victims’ Law Center (OCVLC)

Maryland Crime Victims’ Resource Center (MCVRC)

Arizona Voice for Crime Victims (AVCV)
Formative Evaluation Process After Model Development

- Site visits and interviews to learn about programs
- Create program-specific logic models, process flows
- Identify measures to collect outcome data
- Create data collection tools and reporting mechanisms
  - Client satisfaction survey
  - Activity and Organizational data (Case Mgmt. Systems)
- Test data collection and reporting over 6-month period
- Evaluate data quality, completeness, utility, and reliability
- Determine readiness for formal evaluation.
Lawyers/legal service providers and researchers should have ongoing conversations.
Incorporating the Unexpected
Lawyers/legal service providers may assess services in relation to the conceptual model to determine if the service or model needs adjustments during the evaluation process.
How did we measure success? The Conceptual Model

**Program Activities**

- **Criminal/Juvenile Legal Systems:**
  - Formal legal representation such as entry of appearance and mediation practice to protect rights
  - Non-legal companionship & emotional support in court

- **Civil Legal Systems:**
  - Seek relief, damages, and/or protections for victims

- **Administrative Legal Systems:**
  - Seek expungement
  - Assist with victim compensation, Title IX, immigration, etc.

- **All Legal Systems:**
  - Intake/needs assessment
  - Keep victim informed
  - Refer victims to appropriate social or health services
  - Seek financial recoupment
  - Advance case law
  - Public outreach

**Short-Term Outcomes**

- **Victim/Survivor**
  - Victims’ rights were advocated for and enforced
  - Victim services delivered met victims’ needs

- **Community**
  - Communities are educated on victims’ rights/services
  - Communities know where and how to seek help

- **System**
  - **Courts:** Precedents on victims’ rights set
  - **Attorneys:** Uphold victims’ rights
  - **Law Enforcement:** Trained on victim response
  - Networks between all legal sectors established

**Long-Term Objectives**

- **Victim/Survivor**
  - Empowerment/self-efficacy
  - Trust legal system to treat them fairly
  - Functionally reintegrated into a community
  - Financial Stability

- **Community**
  - Trust in legal system
  - Support allocating resources to victims

- **System**
  - Responsive to victims’ needs
  - Stronger process/outcomes because all views are heard
Key Questions: Are these program ready?

Requirements for the effective conduct and use of evaluation:

1. Agreement on realistic program goals given its design, resources, and activities;
2. Agreement on criteria for measuring program performance;
3. Availability of data and information to measure program performance;
4. Ability and willingness to use evaluation results and agreement on how they should be used.

• Quasi-experimental designs using:
  • Propensity Score Matching or
  • Matched Comparison Groups
• Interrupted Time Series Design
  • Perhaps of COVID changes to services?
• Pre-test, post-test
... but what about the unexpected?

Did the model still work even while the COVID-19 pandemic changed the established service delivery processes AND the criminal justice system???
Yes – *The model and theory of change held constant even during cataclysmic changes.*

Victims seeking to conserve what resources they have after victimization (material, emotional, mental, social)…

… may be assisted in doing so via trauma-informed legal services, with an attorney advocating on their behalf (underlying mechanism)…

… to achieve some measure of procedural justice (objective), even if the case outcome is not as the victim might hope (e.g., conviction).
Lesson Learned: Evaluation Process

Evaluation is an iterative process that requires time to reassess the agency’s services and mission, and the conceptual model, to see where the agency fits and whether the model fits the agency—especially during times of cataclysmic change.
For More Information

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Poll Question #1
Measuring the Impact of Victim Services: Developing the Victim Outcome and Satisfaction Survey (VOSS)

Presented by:
RTI International
Lynn Langton, Stacey Cutbush
Justice Research and Statistics Association
Susan Howley, Bailey Maryfield

December 8, 2021

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**Goal:** Help drive the victim service field from a focus on effort to a focus on results and effectiveness

**Activities:**

1. Build on the efforts of GA and other victim service providers (VSPs) nationwide to develop a *Victim Outcome and Satisfaction Survey (VOSS) instrument* and *standardized methodology for administration and data analysis*

2. Customize an intuitive, freely available *software application* for VSPs to use for administering the VOSS to victims/survivors and securely collecting, viewing, and exporting data in an easily accessible format

3. Engage in *rigorous testing* of VOSS instrument and platform

4. Develop a *toolkit with step-by-step guidance* for VSPs on using the VOSS platform, and information on the utility of outcome data.
VOSS Overview

DOJ Agencies

NIJ | National Institute of Justice
STRENGTHEN SCIENCE. ADVANCE JUSTICE.

With funding from:
Office for Victims of Crime
Office on Violence Against Women

Project Team

RTI INTERNATIONAL
JRSA
Justice Research and Statistics Association

Consultants

Doug Bailey
Heather Warnken
### Working with the Victim Services Field

#### Expert Panel
- 14 thought leaders w/ diverse perspectives and experience in outcome measurement across the victim service field
- Help to identify and account for potential provider concerns w/ VOSS
- Provide input on VOSS content
- Aid with recruitment for testing activities
- Assist with VOSS dissemination/buy-in

#### Project Input Committee
- ~30 members
- Ensures that various field representatives are aware of this project and have an opportunity to offer input or reactions.
- Regular project updates
- Aid with recruitment for testing activities
- Assist with VOSS dissemination/buy-in

#### Underserved-Focused VSPs
- ~15 experts
- Provide feedback on how the VOSS can be more inclusive of providers who serve underserved populations through unique service strategies
Building on Prior Efforts and Learning from the Field

1. Compiled, reviewed and classified ~1,000 existing outcome and service quality measures + logic models from across the field

2. Compiled methodological documentation and interviewed states/coalitions currently engaged in outcome measurement

3. Conducted interviews to obtain victim/survivor perspectives

4. Conducted provider focus groups in GA

5. Identified key outcome and quality constructs the VOSS should measure

6. Worked with DOJ/Expert Panel to develop VOSS questions
Activity 1: Development of VOSS instrument / methodology

Outcomes - extent to which the victims’/survivors’ physical, emotional, psychological, social, economic, and legal needs were met through the services they received

Quality of service delivery – victim/survivor satisfaction with or perceptions of quality of services

- whether the provider identified and helped to address any needs beyond the presenting issue for which the victim/survivor was initially receiving services (quality of assessment)
- type and utility of referrals for other services provided to the victim/survivor (quality of referrals)
Activity 1: Development of VOSS instrument / methodology

Key Considerations

Need for standardized measures
- To understand impact of programs at aggregate levels (state, nation), as well as at program level

Ensuring relevance and customizability
- Some outcomes may only be relevant for certain providers
  - E.g. Legal service module would not include questions about housing stability – not an intended outcome of services
  - Some providers may want to ask about additional measures beyond the core set of outcomes

Protecting respondent confidentiality
- To ensure truthful and accurate responses

Response rates
- Keep the questions simple and low burden
- Focused on short-term measures/progress at substantial completion of services
Tangerine is:

• Open-source electronic data collection software developed by RTI
• Used traditionally for administering educational assessments and teacher observations
• Open-source
• Flexible in delivery of instrument to survivors
  • Survey administered onsite or via email
  • Downloadable on any internet ready device
• Usable on- or off-line
• Multilingual
Activity 3: Rigorous Testing

- Expert panel
- Existing measures used by GA CJCC and the field

VOSS Instrument Development
- Victim satisfaction with services
- Outcome of services
  - Outcome modules are specific to program objectives
  - Provision and utility of referrals
  - Other victim needs addressed and treated

Cognitive Testing
for Validation of VOSS Measures
- ~50 victims recruited from ~15
  GA VSPs with diverse service types and objectives

VOSS Platform Development
- Tangerine open-source application
- Easy to use online or offline
- Downloadable on a range of devices
- Programmed to allow selection of appropriate outcome modules based on program objectives

Usability Testing
of Platform and Programmed VOSS
- Small scale (~9 VSPs)

Pilot Testing
of Platform Functionality
- ~100 VSPs nationwide
- Fielded for ~3 months to collect data from all eligible victims

Development of VOSS Toolkit
and Other Deliverables
- Describes how to determine appropriate outcome modules to use
- Describes how to download and use the Tangerine app for survey administration
Activity 3: Rigorous Testing

Cognitive Interviews (June-Oct 2021)
(43 interviews; about 1hr each)

- Important tool for assessing respondent understanding of and ability to accurately answer survey questions
- Interviewer administers question to potential respondent and probes respondent to understand:
  - Interpretation of question
  - Understanding of question wording
  - Sensitivity of question
  - Difficulty in answering
  - Thought process for responding
- Conducted with survivors who recently received services
  - Aiming for diversity in types of survivors and types of services received
- Small stipend provided to VSPs for recruitment and survivors for participation
- Conducted via videoconferencing platform
Victim/survivor Interviews

Winter 2021

June 2021

Cognitive Testing Activities*

October 2021

March 2022

Usability Testing Activities

May 2022

July 2022

Pilot Testing Activities

December 2022

Toolkit Development

*Includes testing with translated versions of VOSS
Value of Outcome Measurement/ VOSS Data

- Improve service delivery by identifying strengths and challenges.
- Boost staff/team morale by demonstrating areas of excellence.
- Redirect unsuccessful work practices by identifying areas for improvement and training.
- Give clients voice in services and how they are delivered.
- Demonstrate responsible stewardship of public and private financial support.
- Prove that funds are making a difference for victims/survivors with empirical data.
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Poll Question #2
Measuring Success in the Criminal Justice System’s Response to Domestic/Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking
A Pilot Project

December 8, 2021

This project was supported by Grant No. 2019-SI-AX-K001 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.
Office on Violence Against Women

Provide federal leadership in developing national capacity to reduce violence against women and administer justice for and strengthen services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking

VAWA Measuring Effectiveness Initiative:
Established in 2001
Document and measure the work of OVW grantees nationwide
Measuring Criminal Justice Success: Getting to Outcomes

Project Goals

- Develop and pilot test a set of indicators for gauging success in the criminal justice system’s response to the VAWA crimes.

- Produce outcome measures that law enforcement grantees can use to track their progress.

- Inform improvements to data collected on progress reporting forms.
Project Overview

- **Phase 1:** Develop a conceptual framework for law enforcement grantees based on research and field experience [Done!]

- **Phase 2:** Develop and pilot test a set of indicators for gauging success in the criminal justice system's response to the VAWA crimes [Done!]

- **Phase 3:** Recommend outcome measures that law enforcement grantees can use to track their progress
Measuring Criminal Justice Success: Phase 1

- Explore & inventory existing datasets for potential outcome data
- Conduct literature review (focus on how success is measured)
- Develop a conceptual framework
- Convene advisory group of experts (research and practitioners)
- Make recommendations for outcome measures to pilot test
Strategic Initiatives → Short-term outcomes → Mid-term outcomes → Ultimate Result

Outcomes for victims:
- Procedural justice
- Adequate services
- Increased safety
- Reduced re-victimization

Law Enforcement Agencies understand and work to support the rights and interests of victims

Outcomes for offenders:
- Access to interventions
- Increased accountability
- Reduced recidivism

Externalities: LEO turnover and attrition, agency resources (staff, time, finances), local service array, federal/state/local laws, unintended consequences.
Measuring Criminal Justice Success: Phase 2

Goal: Pilot a data collection tool with select grantees to assess the availability and feasibility of collecting data on metrics identified in Phase 1

- 12 pilot sites (Improving Criminal Justice Response Program, Rural Program, Tribal Governments)
- Online data collection tool + follow-up interviews
# Data Collection Tool

## 1. Agency Policy and Practice

## 2. Administrative Data & Case Records
- Investigations
- Prosecution
- Exploratory - Information on offenders

## 3. Perspectives of Law Enforcement Officers & Victims
- Exploratory - Law enforcement officer knowledge, skills, and perceptions
- Exploratory - Victim perceptions of law enforcement

In the first column, please provide a response for each of the following metrics for the **July to December 2020** time period. If you do not have data for a metric, please indicate that in the second column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Total Count</th>
<th>Cannot provide/Not available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of trauma-informed policies/procedures in place at LEA</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please select the appropriate response for each metric.

- Yes, I can provide data on this metric now
- I cannot provide data on this metric now, but I could in the future
- I could never provide data on this metric

### # of calls for service for VAWA crimes
- Yes, I can provide data on this metric now: ☐
- I cannot provide data on this metric now, but I could in the future: ☐
- I could never provide data on this metric: ☐

### # of calls where the victim has called before for assistance for VAWA crimes (post 12 months)
- Yes, I can provide data on this metric now: ☐
- I cannot provide data on this metric now, but I could in the future: ☐
- I could never provide data on this metric: ☐
Recommended:
Majority of sites could collect data now or in the future with planning and resources

Example: Cross-agency information sharing
- # of multidisciplinary cross-trainings held
- # of attendees by subgroup

Example: Respectful & transparent communication
- # of times staff communicate with each victim

Example: Investigations & case progression
- Total # VAWA cases cleared
- # VAWA cases cleared by victimization and offense
- # VAWA cases cleared by exceptional means
Big Takeaways
Metrics

In consideration:
Fewer sites could collect it, they needed more clarification, or said the metric was of limited use.

Example: Trauma-informed system response to victims
- # of trauma-informed policies/procedures in place at LEA

Example: Resource coordination for victims
- # of referrals made to service provider partners, by type

Example: Procedural Justice
- victims felt treated with respect by LEO
- victims perceived police as helpful
Not Recommended: Most sites said they could not report on the data now or ever

Example: Resource coordination
- Victim rate of utilizing referrals, by type

Example: Procedural justice for victims
- # of VAWA cases received and accepted by prosecution, by victimization type

Example: Access to interventions for offenders
- # of VAWA offender referrals to treatment/intervention programs
Big Takeaways
Concepts

1. Tool inspired pilot sites to think about data differently

“It was very interesting to participate in it. Some of the things you asked I thought, ‘Well, why don’t we do that?’ They were thought provoking.”

“A lot of these questions prompted me to think this wouldn’t actually be hard to track if we just started doing it!”

2. Sites need data capacity building and TA before being asked to collect more/different data
3. Dedicate funding for evaluation and/or systems to support data reporting. Without dedicated funding, grantees will put the money toward services for victims

“I can tell you that if the grant doesn’t support a position, it’s going to make it much more difficult to get the data.”

“We would definitely need funding support to make those database changes.”

“They have enough issues here trying to be funded to do the work. They’re very underpaid and understaffed in most of the rural areas here, and so to think that they could spend the time necessary to do this piece [additional data collection], they just didn’t see how they could justify that with the staff that they have now and with the funding they are allowed.”
Next Steps

➢ Finalize **Concept Model** and supporting literature

➢ **Submit** final considerations and recommendations

➢ Create and disseminate support materials and products for practitioners, evaluators and researchers

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**Strategic Initiatives**

- Engage in coordinated community response
- Develop, revise or implement policy and procedures
- Enhance data systems and infrastructure
- Provide training for law enforcement personnel
- Develop and implement specialized units

**Short-term outcomes**

- Law Enforcement Agencies
  - Increase trauma-informed system response to victims
  - Improve resource coordination for victims and offenders
  - Enhance cross-agency information sharing
  - Improve cultural competence
  - Prioritize capacity-building for responding to or preventing VAWA crimes
  - Agency culture holds itself accountable to VAWA crime victim

- Law Enforcement Officers
  - Increase knowledge of VAWA crimes & best practices
  - Improve perceptions of VAWA crimes
  - Engage in clear and transparent communication with victims and offer all options
  - Increase prompt victim and offender referrals to needed supports
  - Improve investigations (taking victim reports, collecting evidence)

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**Mid-term outcomes**

- Law Enforcement Agencies understand and work to support the rights and interests of victims

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**Ultimate Result**

- Victims experience enhanced well-being

- Outcomes for victims
  - Procedural justice
  - Adequate services
  - Increased safety
  - Reduced re-victimization

- Outcomes for offenders
  - Access to interventions
  - Increased accountability
  - Reduced recidivism

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Externalities: LEO turnover and attrition, agency resources (staff, time, finances), local service array, federal/state/local laws, unintended consequences.
Measuring Criminal Justice Success: Getting to Outcomes

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Thank you!

For more information:
- Visit www.jrsa.org/projects/legal-services.html
- Read and download additional resources
- Continue the conversation! Join us for an online discussion about victim services outcome measurement at https://jrsa.memberclicks.net/community-forums
### Legal Services Providers

**Criminal/Juvenile legal systems**
- Provide legal representation
  - Promote victims’ interests & desires
  - Protect/seek enforcement of victims’ legal rights
- Provide accompaniment & support in court

**Civil legal systems**
- Seek relief, damages, &/or protections for victims
  - Examples: protective orders, family law, housing & benefits advocacy, employer advocacy, collecting restitution, securing civil damages, defense against countersuits or misuse of legal system against victim by the defendant

**Administrative legal systems**
- Seek expungement & vacatur of records
- Assist with victim compensation applications & appeals
- Assist with Title IX enforcement/campus proceedings
- Assist with immigration legal needs
- Public benefits assistance
- Re-entry assistance for victims who were incarcerated

**All Legal Systems**
- Conduct comprehensive victim intake/needs assessments
- Keep victim informed throughout the case
- Refer victims to appropriate social or health/mental health services, to internal personnel or other providers.
- Maintain active networks with complementary legal providers & other victim service providers
- File appeals, amicus briefs
- Conduct public outreach & education on victims’ rights/remedies
- Document issues with implementation of victims’ rights
- Trainings for victim-involved stakeholders

### Program Activities

- All services are trauma-informed and culturally competent. Barriers are removed that would prevent access based on race/ethnicity, gender, disability, age, or English-speaking ability.

### Program Outcomes (Short-Term)

**Victim/Survivor Outcomes**
- Victim reports understanding their rights
- Victim reports having/understanding available legal options
- Victim reports being informed about status of case
- Victim reports being given clear expectations about processes & possible outcomes
- Victim reports feeling their views were represented
- Victim receives services tailored to their expressed needs
- Victim has financial & resource losses minimized
- Victim reports feeling protected from additional trauma due to legal participation
- Victim receives outcomes they perceive as just

**Community Outcomes**
- Communities are educated about victims’ rights
- Communities are educated about victim options to seek legal & social services assistance
- Communities understand harms of crime

**System Outcomes**
- Courts
  - Case law developed
  - Courts are informed about victim rights
  - Victim rights enforced & victim rights violations reduced
- Attorneys
  - Legal actors in all sectors informed about victims’ rights
  - Legal actors accountable for upholding victims’ rights
  - Policy/practice in place for victim support referrals
- Law Enforcement
  - Law enforcement is informed about victims’ rights
  - Law enforcement violations of victims’ rights are reduced
- Networks established/MOUs in place between legal sectors
- Education and outreach materials readily available

### Long-Term Objectives: Wellbeing for Victims/Survivors

**Victim/Survivor Objectives**
- Empowerment & self-efficacy
- Increased trust in legal system to operate fairly
- Survivors & families integrated into a supportive community
- Improved/restored financial stability
- Improved health and mental health
- Reduced vulnerability to crime

**Community Objectives**
- Communities believe that the justice system recognizes and enforces victims’ rights
- More community members believe they will be treated well & fairly if they report crime
- Communities support use of resources/tax dollars to help victims & prevent crime

**System Objectives**
- Legal systems more responsive to victims’ needs, providing a holistic approach to service provision
  - Strong, multidisciplinary collaborations & victim response procedures exist between all relevant legal & social services providers
  - All systems more trauma informed & responsive
  - Legal systems stronger overall - all views (victim, defendant, state, and public) are represented & heard

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*Legal system in which each activity occurs can vary by state.*

Approach is victim-led. Victim decides what they want from available options at every step while expectations are managed.