



STRENGTHS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR KEY METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Law enforcement agencies can collect data in a variety of ways. The following methods can be used to gather baseline and follow-up information. Although many agencies may feel comfortable with independent data collection, including a research partner can be beneficial.

METHOD	STRENGTHS	CONSIDERATIONS
Law enforcement agency —Existing records and documents (policies and procedures, community demographics, crime data)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Low or no cost to assemble ▶ Wide range of information available ▶ May help identify outcomes or metrics for further evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Might not include all needed information ▶ Might not be current
Community partner agencies —Existing records and documents (policies and procedures, demographics of populations served, service data)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Low or no cost to assemble ▶ Wide range of information available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Might not include all needed information ▶ Might not be current ▶ May have to repeat at multiple agencies to obtain comprehensive data ▶ May be unable to release certain data due to legal or policy restrictions
Surveys (internal personnel, community partner agencies, community members, crime victims)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Anonymity of respondents may increase openness ▶ May be conducted in different ways (online, by mail, by phone) ▶ May be more efficient and cost-effective, especially online and app-based surveys ▶ Feasible to conduct on a continuing basis ▶ May provide information not usually available to law enforcement agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ May benefit from researcher assistance to develop questions ▶ May have a low response rate ▶ May involve costs (e.g., printing, mailing, researcher fees) ▶ Requires expertise to design, implement, and analyze data ▶ Responses may be unrepresentative of the target population ▶ May provide only aggregate or regional data
SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ May elicit detailed feedback from a large group of stakeholders at one time ▶ May help strengthen partnerships and identify collaboration opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Requires a neutral, skilled facilitator ▶ May be time-consuming