

CURV Programme Evaluation

March 2024

End of year report



Suggested changes to the theory of change

Theme	Identified issue	Suggested resolution
A targeted approach to violence reduction	The current KPIs for the long term outcome (that the response is strategically targeting the right people and places) only measure an overall aim of the CURV (the reduction in SV) and not the actual outcome.	Addition of a KPI that measures the strategic targeting, not the ultimate aim of that targeting - that CURV has a strategic overview of all interventions and how they align to a comprehensive view of target cohorts or places -identifying and addressing any gaps and duplication of effort.
Evidence based interventions	Given the restructured governance framework and practicalities of how interventions are funded the outcome “SDG to support selection of which interventions to fund based on analysis and evidence” does not match up with implementation	The outcome should be changed to “The relevant governance groups are provided with analysis and evidence to inform intervention selection, support, and funding.”
Evidence based interventions	The medium-term outcome “Interventions are strategically commissioned and evidence based” is currently measured through targeting KPIs rather than evidence-based KPIs. It also overlaps heavily with the long-term outcome “CURV commission and deliver evidence-based interventions” which is measured by volumes (number of interventions commissioned) rather than quality (evidence-based interventions) and heavily implies CURV should be directly/fully funding interventions without room for other means of support.	<p>Restructure the medium and long term outcomes and their KPIs. The medium term outcome should become "CURV funding is used to support interventions that add to the evidence base of what works". This should be measured by KPIs that focus on matching target groups with appropriate interventions (as it currently does) and evidence the intervention will be effective (either from previous evidence of what works or a sound theoretical model that can be evaluated to add to the evidence base).</p> <p>The long-term outcome should then be “CURV have a commissioning and evaluation cycle in place that allows learning from commissioned interventions to inform future targeting and support for evidence-based interventions” which focusses more on the CURV process than the number of interventions directly commissioned.</p>

Suggested changes to the theory of change

Theme	Identified issue	Suggested resolution
A sustainable approach	The short term outcome “Interventions that align with CURV ToC run without reliance on CURV funding” is not feasible for CURV to robustly measure - it puts an undue burden on CURV to gain information from interventions that, by definition, are not being supported by CURV.	Remove the outcome - other areas of the ToC already cover what this is intended to achieve - a joined up approach to SV that is not dependent on CURV
A sustainable approach	The short term outcome “Responses/ actions/ outreach/ data collection/ and dissemination activities to communities are coordinated to harmonise provisions.” is overly complicated and too vague as it does not mention whose activities.	Reword to “All partner activities that relate to communities and the response to SV should be coordinated across the partnership to harmonise provision and engagement.” This better aligns with the actual KPI which is sharing of partner activities to ensure they are aligned and avoid duplication across the partnership.
Perceptions of safety	The KPI “The barriers to taking a trauma-informed approach are identified and addressed through the SDG” should be reworded given the changes to the governance structure.	Reword to “Barriers within partner organisations to taking a trauma-informed approach are identified and addressed through the response to serious violence governance structures”.
Perceptions of safety	The short term outcome “Communities receive information about CURV activities and their outcomes” KPIs are too dependent on community response to CURV activity when they should be focussed on measuring the CURV activity	Remove the current KPIs that relate to proactive engagement from community members. More appropriate KPIs would be: “CURV has a clear media and communications strategy which details what information is being communicated, through which media channels, and to which target audiences.” CURV should clearly identify which groups it should be communicating with (the public, VSOs, academics, intervention leads, partners etc.); what sort of dialog should exist with each (pure information dissemination, 2-way dialog, collaborative working, etc.) and how best to communicate with them (newsletters, social media, in-person events etc.)

This report covers the first year since the design of the Theory of Change (ToC) for the Cleveland Unit for the Reduction of Violence (CURV)

As Research and Evaluation partner to CURV, Crest Advisory was tasked to support the **inception and development** of CURV’s **research, evaluation and monitoring processes** to effectively measure **implementation, delivery, and impact** at **programme and project level**.

Programme-level evaluation

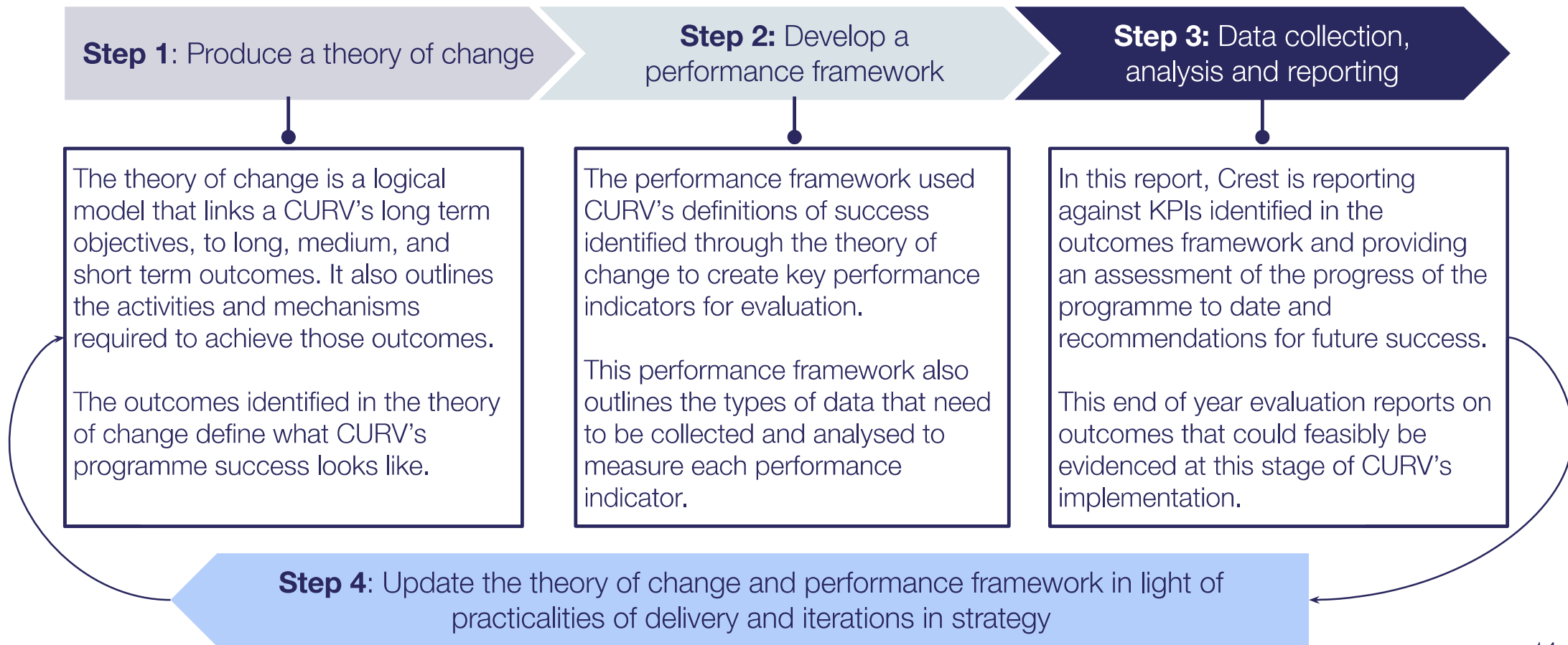
Crest is conducting a programme-level evaluation of CURV, producing **mid-year and annual reports** for FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25. The aim of the programme-level evaluation is to **assess the overall effectiveness** and **impact** of CURV activities in achieving the intended outcomes and to provide a **comprehensive understanding of CURV's strengths and weaknesses** to identify opportunities for improvement. The first mid-year report was delivered in October 2023. This is the first end of year report.

Project-level evaluation

Crest is also conducting **project-level evaluations** of interventions chosen by CURV. The aim is to **assess the effectiveness and impact of specific interventions** commissioned or otherwise supported by CURV in achieving their **intended outcomes** to **contribute to the overall programme-level outcomes**. The scope of each evaluation has now been agreed as:

- An impact evaluation of Trauma Informed Training for police officers
- A process and impact evaluation of the Custody Navigators intervention

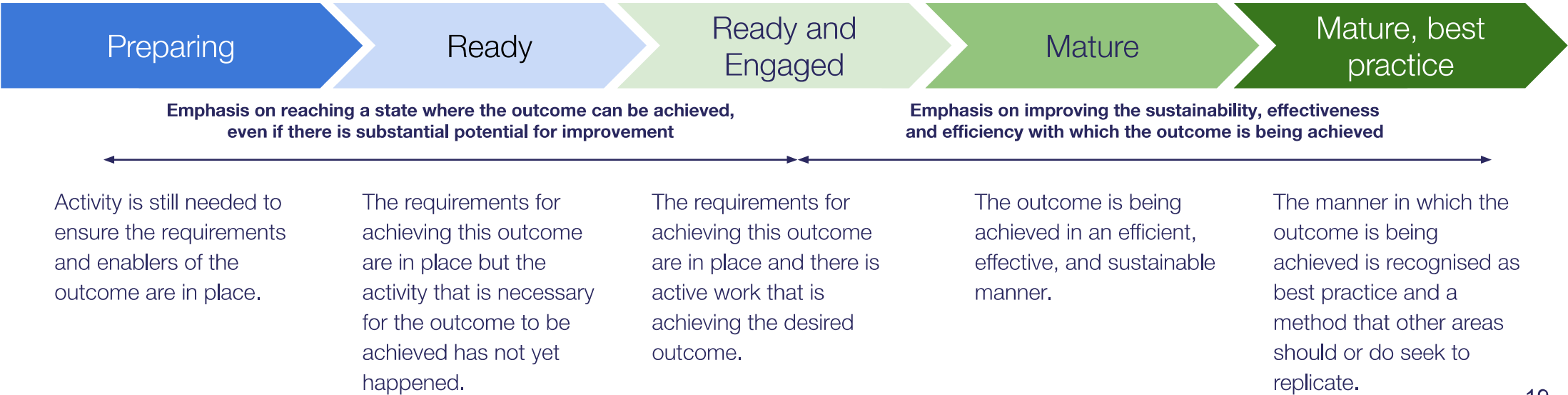
The aim of the ToC and performance framework is to establish the CURV's objectives at a programme level, and how to measure these. This should be reviewed annually to ensure it matches the reality of how CURV operates.



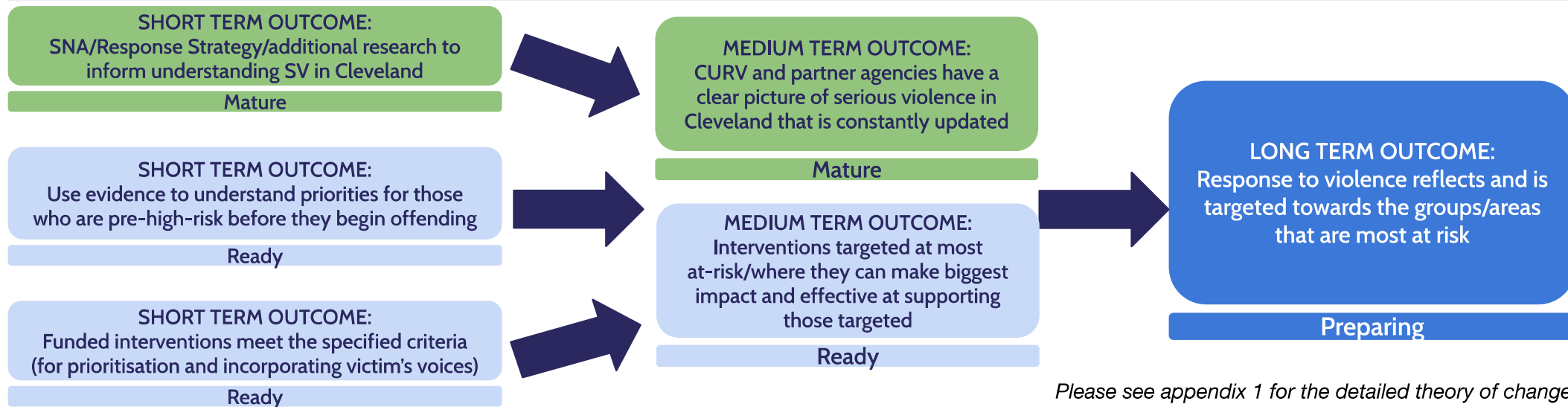
The KPIs are designed to measure CURV’s success against the short, medium and long-term outcomes identified in the Theory of Change

We have aligned our assessment of progress in achieving the desired outcomes to the scale used earlier this year in the Joint Readiness Assessments (JRAs). This is in recognition that to be successful in achieving these outcomes:

- is a continuous process that may require substantial time and effort before outcomes are realised
- requires sustained effort on the part of multiple stakeholders to maintain the desired outcomes
- there are different levels of efficiency, effectiveness, and maturity at which the outcomes can be achieved



Targeted Approach - overview of progress



Progress

Since the mid year review, CURV has started to document how current interventions align to CURV's commissioning priorities and strategic aims, with the justification template. Moving forwards, using this format will allow CURV to use the current and evolving evidence-base to target commissioning and interventions to at-risk groups, locations, or priority areas.

CURV has used evidence to identity hotspots that allow for interventions to be targeted, but there is still a need for more granular data sharing to allow for support to target individuals and their needs rather than locations.

Recommendations

- To ensure interventions and support are effectively targeted, two key factors need to be improved:
 - A partnership-wide, comprehensive picture of interventions and support so that duplication of effort is minimised and opportunities for efficient collaboration and gaps in support are identified. This includes the need for a clear picture of each partner's commissioning priorities, which should be aligned.
 - More granular data sharing so that commissioning can be effectively targeted to at-risk cohorts as well as at-risk places.
- At a later point it will be important to incorporate the scale of the impact that is being achieved by different interventions/support into commissioning so that a clearer picture of the expected impact on reducing violence can be achieved.

Centre of Excellence - overview of progress



Progress

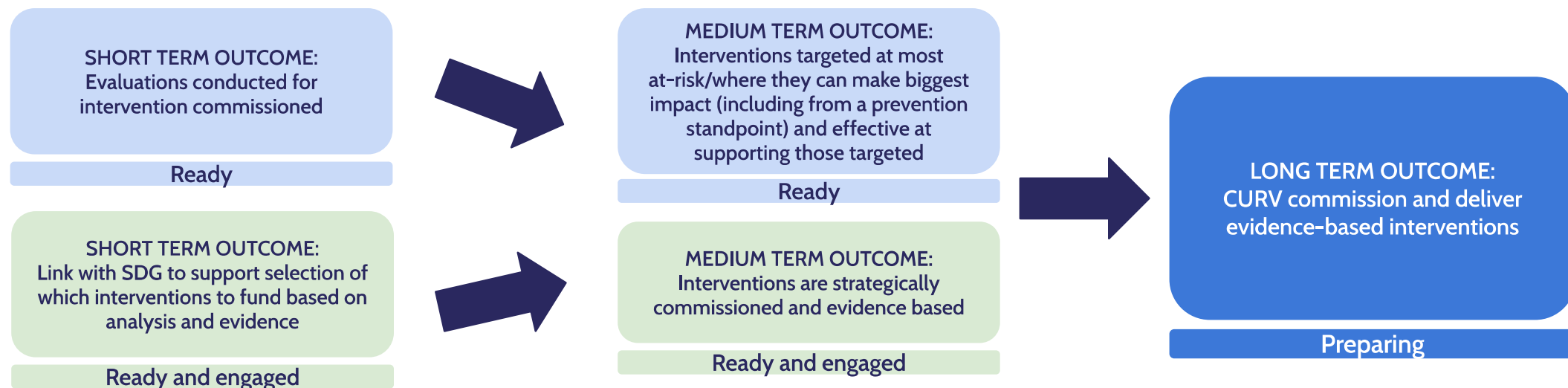
Since the mid year review, CURV has established a website and have been scoping innovative ways to build a library of information to inform commissioning, through building relationships with education partners. CURV has also made progress in developing the data dashboard that will be shared with partners and will be a useful tool for partners in accessing a multi-agency quantitative understand of serious violence in Cleveland.

CURV has also built a strong and respected reputation in the field of serious violence. This reputation is reflected by CURV's dedication to building an evidence-based approach to serious violence and considering innovative methods for sustainability.

Recommendations

- CURV could consider further expanding their stakeholder relationships to frontline staff in partner organisations. CURV has built a strong reputation with strategic partners. However some interviewees felt this visibility was missing and would help with building awareness of and buy-in to CURV's activities with those who would be directly involved in implementation.
- CURV's commitment to using and sharing evidence is well recognised but greater focus on launching the intended evidence-library would allow partners to find and use this information reducing the need to demands on CURV staff, saving time in the long-term. CURV could begin to design the structure of how the information will be collected, curated, and searchable. This might involve discussions with partners about how they would want to search the library and what structures would enable it to be a useful and well-used resource.

Evidence-based interventions - overview of progress



Please see appendix 1 for the detailed theory of change

Progress

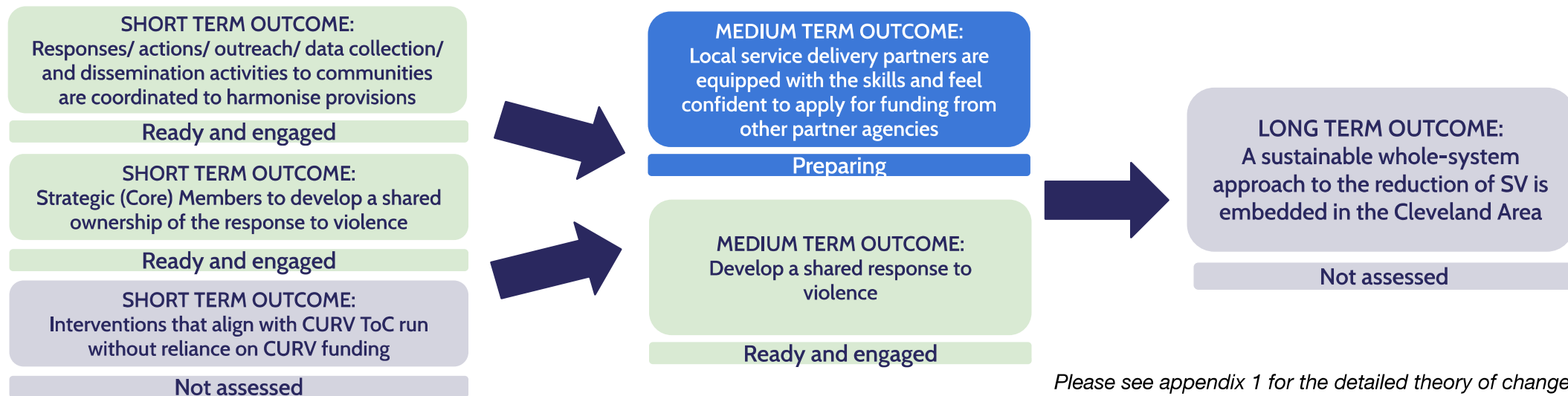
CURV uses insights from its analytical products, as well as evidence of best practice to inform how it commissions interventions. Interventions for Year 2 have only recently been commissioned, and CURV is currently in the process of putting together performance frameworks to measure the outcomes and success of these interventions.

Whilst CURV has not conducted any evaluations since the last report, it has progressed its plans for upcoming evaluations - specifically in relation to trauma informed training and the custody navigators.

Recommendations

- CURV should ensure that there is a clear and consistent process for commissioning interventions that builds in objectives, monitoring, and evaluation requirements from the start. Building on the 'Intervention Justification' documents produced for the community-led funds, CURV should ensure all commissioned interventions have:
 - Clear justification documents that outline why that intervention was commissioned.
 - A monitoring and evaluation plan from the beginning so that needs are designed into delivery and not met ad-hoc
 - Clear milestones for reporting to inform future commissioning.
- There should be a clear feedback loop to ensure evidence is gathered and synthesized at the right time to inform decision making.

Sustainable approach - overview of progress



Progress

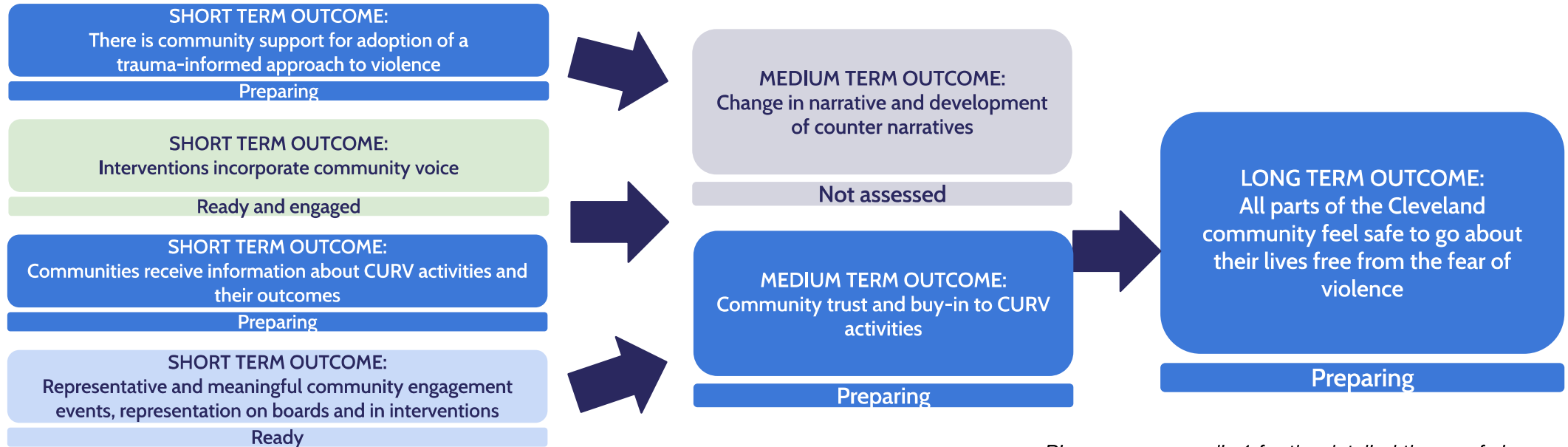
CURV has sustainability at the forefront of their work. It is a key theme that stakeholders are aware of and it runs throughout their processes and delivery.

CURV is aware of many barriers and risks to the sustainable response to serious violence and is thinking innovatively about how to move forwards sustainably; for example, pitching interventions to partners through a cost-benefit analysis. They have put effort into improving the commissioning process and building a collaborative partnership.

Recommendations

- CURV should review the process of commissioning routes, using feedback from local service delivery partners to understand current barriers to effective applications. This should specifically draw on feedback from smaller projects/organisations. CURV should then use these insights to develop comprehensive guidance to funding applications.
- CURV is not yet in a position to measure this complex and expansive long term outcome. Further consideration needs to be given to how this can be measured - it may require a more systematic approach to monitoring interventions across all partners, recording how all partners are embedding violence reduction in their BAU processes, and how evaluation and learning is used across partners to adapt and improve the response to SV

Perception of safety – overview of progress

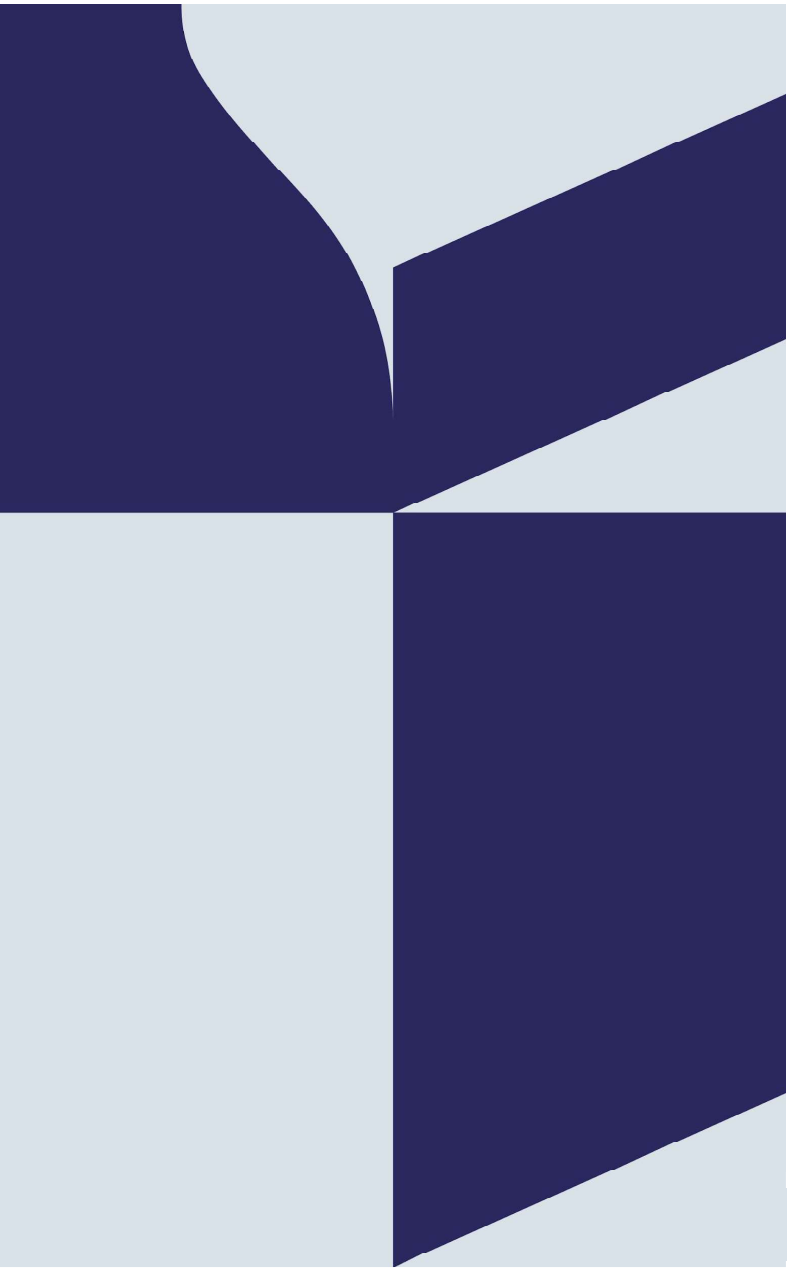


Please see appendix 1 for the detailed theory of change

Progress

Since the last report, CURV has held a number of community engagement events including NTE workshops, an NTE summit and a HOPAC with children and young people. These events have given community groups an opportunity to share their views, and inform how CURV plans and implements interventions. However work around community engagement is still in its infancy. CURV has not yet been able to develop a community engagement and communications strategy to frame which groups they engage, how they engage with these groups, and how they might record feedback.

Stakeholders suggested that it was too early to see if there have been any changes in medium and long-term outcomes relating to changes in narratives, counter-narratives, and community perceptions of safety. However, consideration does need to be given to how these perceptions will be measured (see recommendations on the following slide).



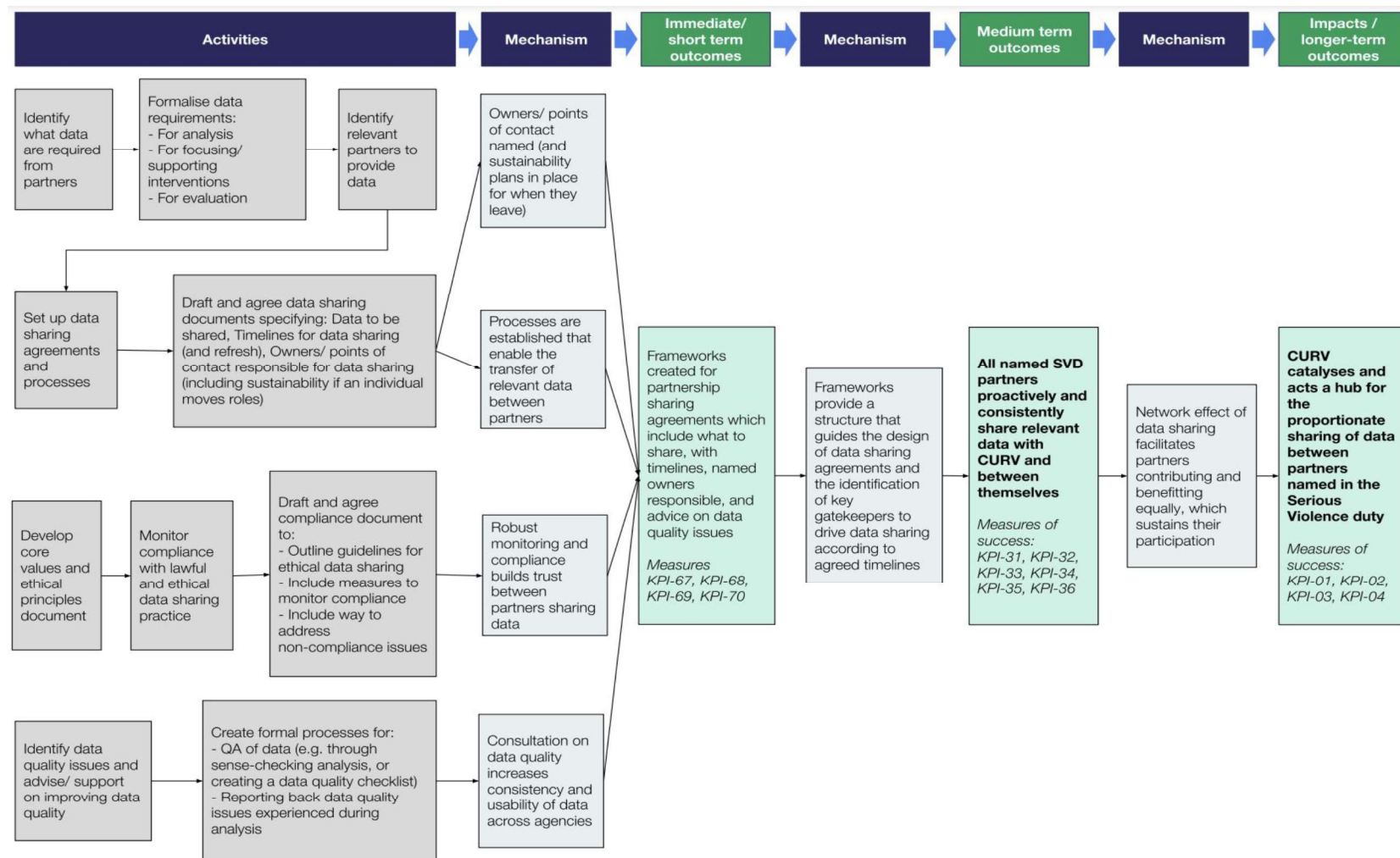
Appendix 1

Detailed theory of change

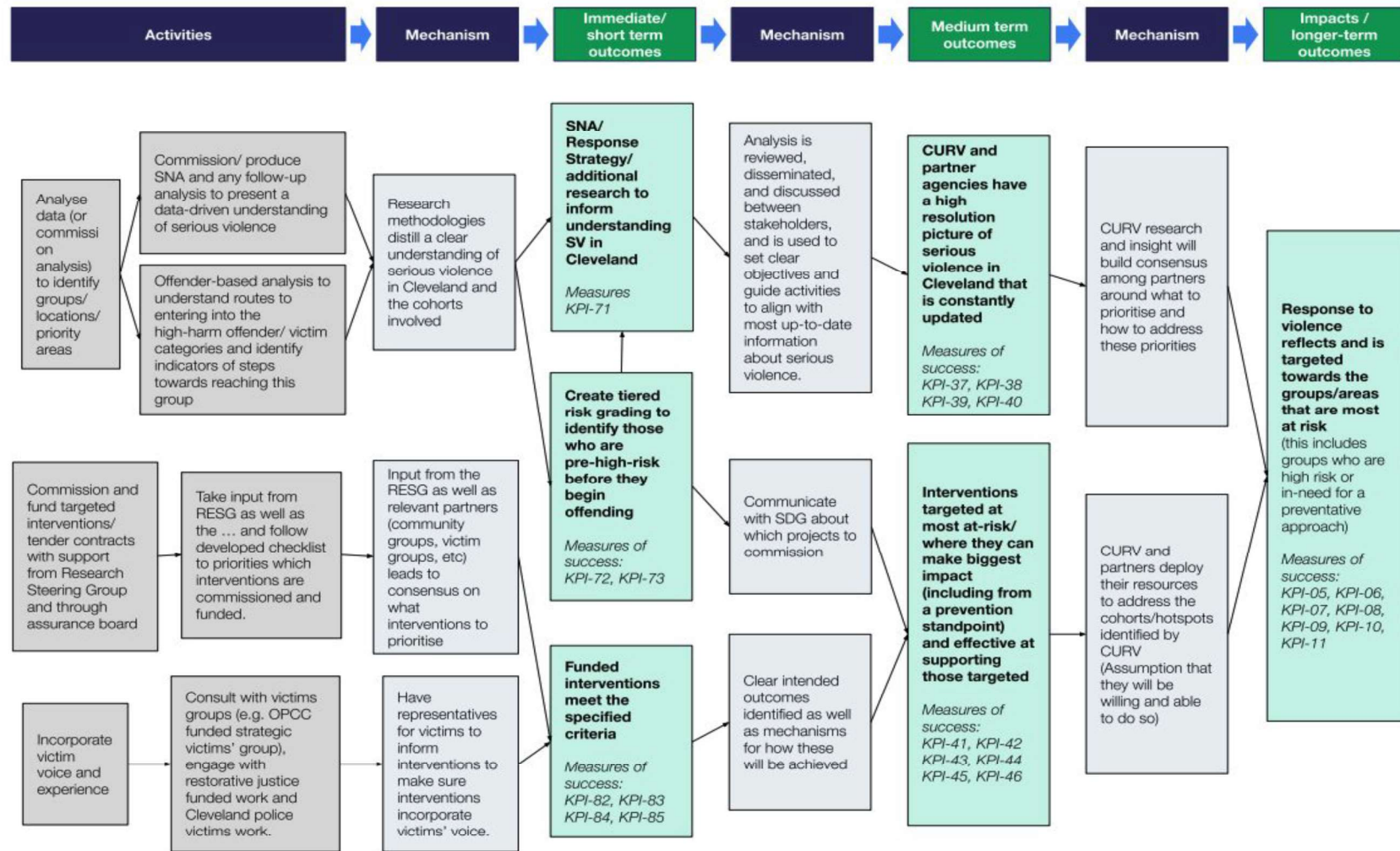
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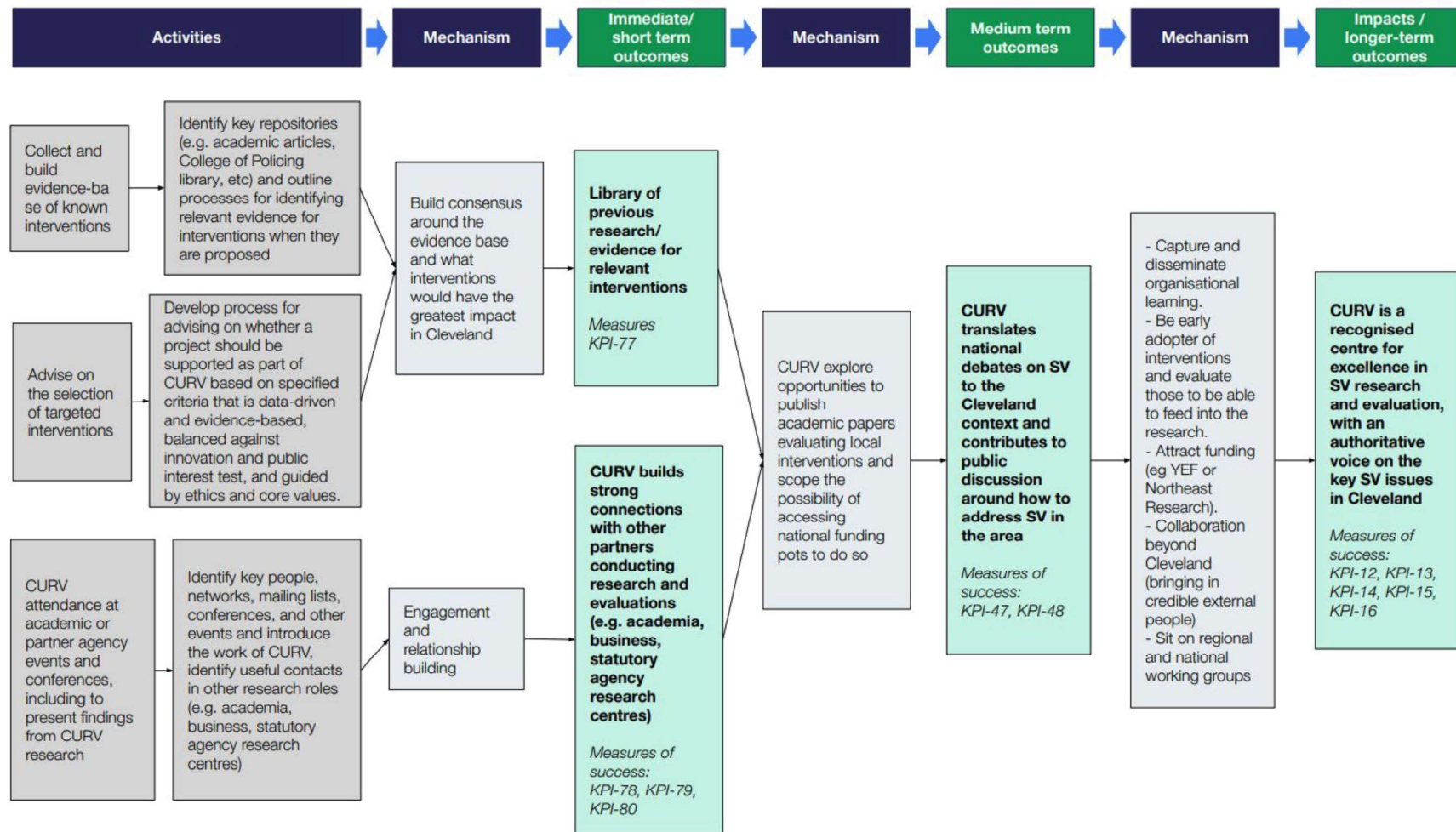
The first long term outcome centres on supporting partners to efficiently and effectively share data across the region



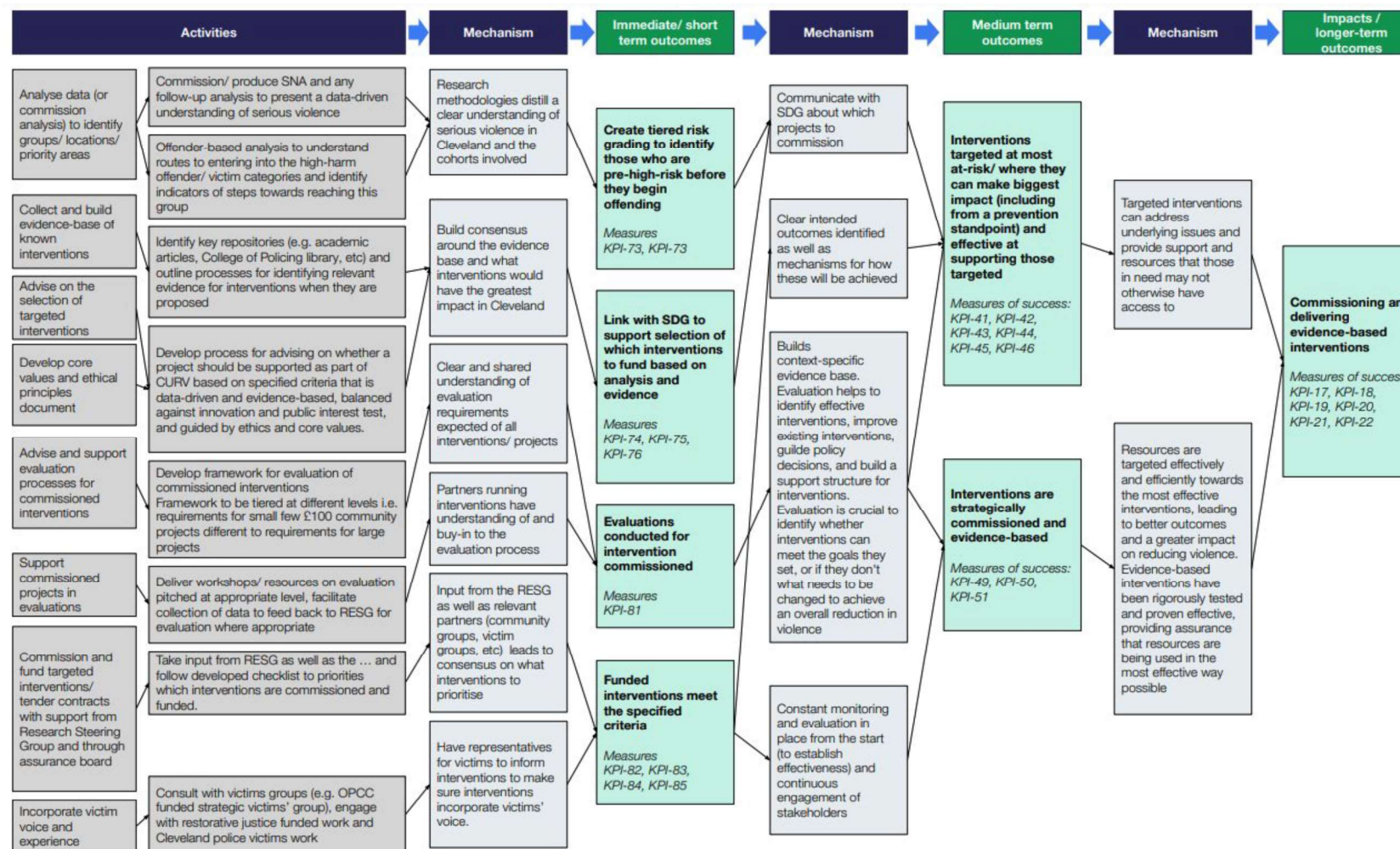
This long-term outcome is focussed on ensuring resources are targeted to the most appropriate risk groups



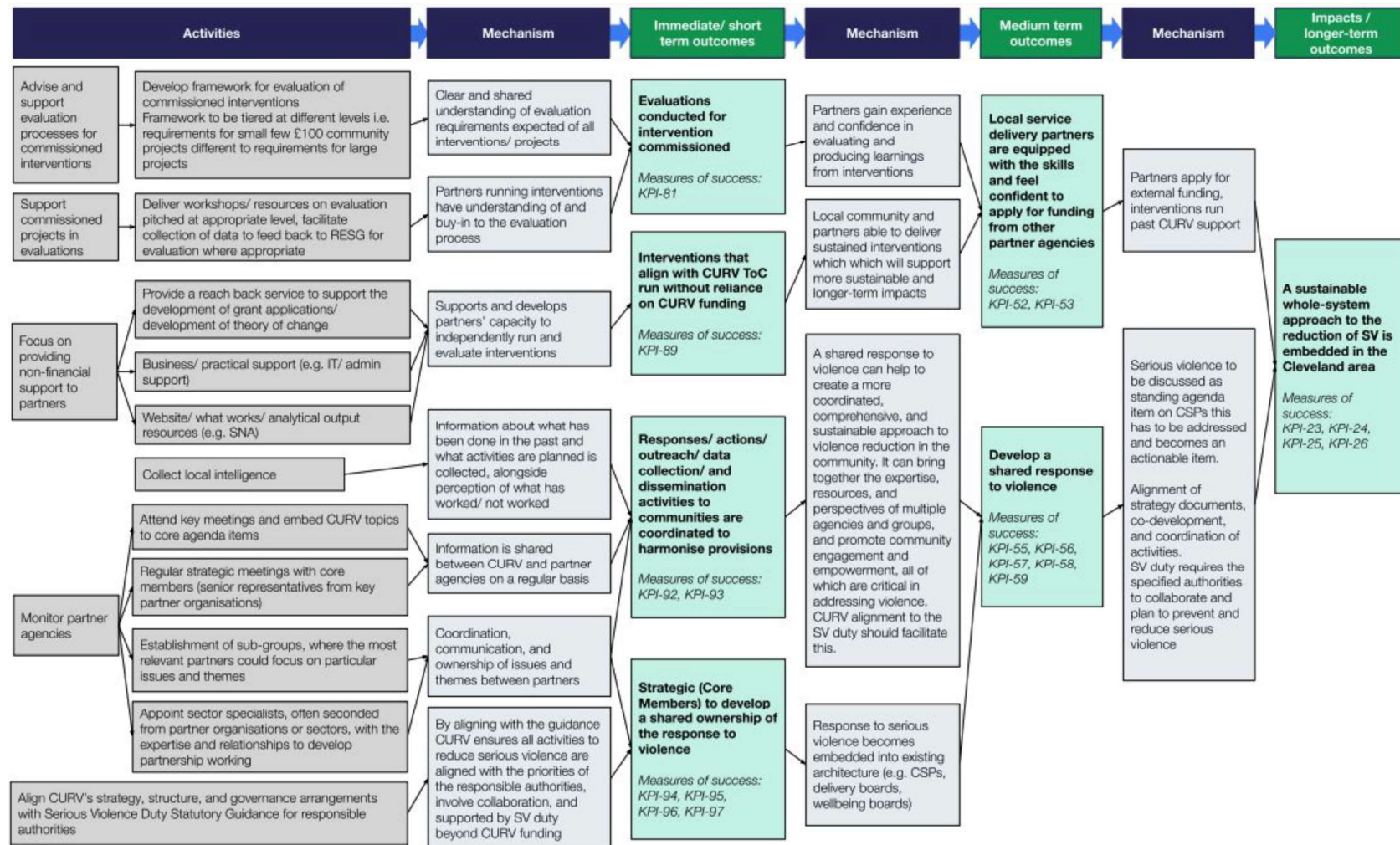
The third long term outcome is focused on CURV's ambition to contribute to the national approach to tackling serious violence



The fourth long-term outcome is focused on the ability of CURV to utilise data and evidence when commissioning or delivering interventions



The fifth long-term outcome is focussed on ensuring the sustainability of the approach to tackling serious violence



The sixth long-term outcome is focused on ensuring that the wider community feel safe

