Chapter One

Introduction

The aims of this chapter are to

- Explain what is meant by the term "serious crimes" and discuss the effects of serious crimes on postconflict societies
- Describe the genesis and evolution of this handbook
- Discuss the purpose of this handbook and its intended audience
- Set out some guiding principles for approaching serious crimes in postconflict societies

Serious Crimes and Their Effects on Postconflict Societies

The Concept of Serious Crimes

Postconflict societies are often marred by a breakdown of law and order, resulting in the proliferation of many and varied forms of criminal activity. Such activity is almost always "serious" in terms of its impact either on an individual or on society at large. A murder, for example, is of course serious for the victim's family. However, a murder may not fall within this book's definition of a serious crime unless certain features are present. In this volume, the term "serious crime" (or "serious crimes") has a distinct meaning that relates to the extent of a crime's ramifications within the society in which it is perpetrated. A serious crime, for the purposes of this book, is a criminal act or acts that can have a profoundly destabilizing impact on a postconflict society. Specifically, the crime's commission endangers the general security of the population and the establishment of postconflict peace and order; jeopardizes economic, legal, and political reform efforts; and threatens to undermine public trust in nascent criminal justice institutions.

Because serious crimes are defined by the impact they have, it is not possible to enumerate a definitive list of serious crimes to be found in every postconflict state. Each state is unique and thus the impact of a particular kind of criminal activity in a state is also likely to be unique.

Factors to consider when determining if a criminal act qualifies as a serious crime include the nature of the criminal act, its societal impact, the alleged perpetrator of the crime, the victim of the crime, and the context in which the act is committed. Depending upon the situation in a given state, serious crimes could include financial, economic, and corruption-related offenses (e.g., bribery, money laundering, abuse of office, embezzling public funds, and customs and tax evasion); trafficking and smuggling of goods (e.g., drugs, weapons, gasoline, and cigarettes); and crimes against persons or property (e.g., murder, human trafficking, kidnapping, terrorist acts, arson, and vehicle theft). Furthermore, the nature of the serious crimes may evolve over time. In some situations, use of violence for political aims may be particularly destabilizing in the immediate aftermath of conflict. Over time, however, financial crime and deep-seated state

Definitions of Key Terms Used in This Book

For the purposes of this book, these four terms are used in the following ways:

- ***Serious crimes*** are criminal acts that can have a profoundly destabilizing impact on a postconflict society. (See main text for a fuller definition.)
- ***Postconflict*** refers to situations in which violent conflict has formally ceased. Such situations are commonly marked by a peace agreement and/or intervention by a third party under a UN or other internationally recognized mandate. Using the term "postconflict" does not mean that all violent conflict has ended, however. Although conflict may have *officially* ceased, some level of violent conflict may well persist.
- ***State*** encompasses locations, including territories, protectorates, and provinces or other geographical subdivisions, that are not necessarily states as defined by public international law. The one exception to this rule is when the term "state" is used (as in chapter 3) in relation to the signing or ratification of international treaties. In this case, "state" refers to an internationally recognized entity with a legal personality, as defined by public international law, that has the power to enter into, sign, and ratify treaties.
- ***Peace operation*** refers to situations where third-party actors, including international military forces, civilian police, international and regional organizations, and foreign assistance or aid providers, operate in a postconflict environment. The term "peace operation" is synonymous with terms such as "peace support operation," "peace and stability operation," "peacebuilding mission," "peacekeeping," and "stabilization and reconstruction operation" that are commonly used by organizations and assistance providers in postconflict environments.

corruption may emerge as the greatest threat to the peace. In all cases, serious crimes have to be defined on a context- and time-specific basis.

This handbook focuses on criminal activity that occurs during the *post*conflict period, not on crimes (including war crimes and other atrocities) committed during the conflict. Nonetheless, some of the mechanisms discussed in this handbook—notably, witness protection measures, security for judicial actors, use of a specialized tribunal or case assignment system, and recruitment of international actors to handle cases—may well be relevant to addressing crimes committed both during and after a conflict.

The Origins of and Factors Facilitating Serious Crimes

Serious crimes may be rooted in the tensions or objectives that drove the conflict itself (e.g., nationalism; ethnic or religious tensions; aspirations for power, control, or resources) and may continue despite the signing of a peace agreement or the establishment of a peace operation. Alternatively or additionally, serious crimes may have their origins in conflict-related activities (e.g. profiteering, trafficking, and smuggling) that were perpetrated during the armed conflict to help fund it or to derive profit from it. Such activities do not automatically cease when the conflict ends. Moreover, those who benefited from the conflict and made money by engaging in criminal activity during the conflict often benefit from the instability caused by serious crimes in the postconflict period.

These activities are more likely to be freely perpetrated where a power and public security vacuum exists. In the absence of effective institutions to deter criminality and hold perpetrators accountable, criminal networks are likely to flourish and, in some instances, to fill the void by establishing parallel power

Paramilitary Groups and Organized Crime in Northern Ireland

The implementation of the 1998 Northern Ireland Good Friday Agreement has been difficult for a number of reasons, not least the lack of mutual trust among the parties, which has been exacerbated by breaches of commitments by paramilitary groups on both sides of the conflict. The Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC) was established in 2004 by the Irish and British governments to assess the commitment of the paramilitaries to respect the democratic process and to end violence and other illegal activity. The IMC has developed benchmarks for compliance and issues regular progress reports.

In a January 2006 report, the IMC stated that the paramilitary groups are engaged in illegal activity to varying levels. Some Republicans are heavily involved in organized crime, including smuggling of goods, money laundering, and robbery. Some Loyalists have been involved in organized criminal activity, including drug dealing, extortion, production and sale of counterfeit goods, money laundering, and robbery. "Whatever the process of transition may involve for individual groups or communities," the IMC report concludes, "there can be no dilution of the principle that the rule of law must prevail."

Ethnic Violence in Kosovo

In May 2000, three Kosovo Serbs, including a four-year-old boy, were shot and killed outside a grocery store in the village of Cernica in southeastern Kosovo. The killings followed a series of attacks on Kosovo Serbs in the preceding days that included hand grenades and Molotov cocktails being thrown into Serb homes. These attacks were believed to be part of a coordinated effort by Kosovo Albanians to kill or intimidate the Serbian population and drive them out of Kosovo, as well as to frighten refugees and deter them from returning.

Violent crimes such as murder are not inherently destabilizing. However, when they occur—as in this case—within a postconflict state wracked by ethnic tensions and are intended to inflame those tensions, they are almost certain to fall into the category of serious crimes.

structures, such as protection rackets or militias. Even where governmental power structures do exist, government officials and actors may lack the political will to effectively address serious crimes, or may themselves be part of the criminal network or under its influence.

The Effects of Serious Crimes

Serious crimes represent a threat to the establishment of postconflict peace, order, and the general security of the population and greatly hinder economic, legal, and political reform efforts. Serious crimes may also spark major public unrest, exacerbating societal division and even provoking a resurgence of open conflict. This is especially likely in cases of crimes committed by members of one ethnic or political group against those of another.

Nepal in Transition

Following the success of Nepal's pro-democracy movement in April 2006 in checking the power of the country's autocratic king, and the ensuing cease-fire between the new government and the Maoist insurgency, the Himalayan nation may be edging toward inclusive democracy. Yet some formidable obstacles remain in its way, not the least of which is the task of preventing criminals from exploiting the transitional period. As the new government moves to bring the Maoist insurgents into the government and society as a whole and to impose civilian control on the Royal Nepalese Army, a security vacuum may be created. The danger of criminals flourishing in this vacuum is accentuated by the fact that the civilian police force, which has spent ten years fighting an insurgency, lacks the material resources and training to handle serious crimes cases.

Many of the criminal gangs that operate in Nepal engage in arms, drug, and human trafficking. In addition, Maoist elements have used extortion widely during the ten-year insurgency. The hope is that as the Maoists give up arms and join the government and society through the peace process, such activities will stop. However, police and observers have expressed concern that some Maoist elements, as well as the criminal gangs, will continue to traffic and extort, thereby destabilizing the country and impeding the peace process.

Lawlessness in Haiti

Despite the arrival of international forces in Haiti in February 2004, the country's security situation has remained precarious: armed gangs and drug lords operate with impunity; a number of ports are controlled by criminal elements; some areas of the country are outside government control; kidnappings for ransom are common; the Haitian police force often seems to contribute to the problem of lawlessness rather than to combat it; the judicial system barely functions.

The United Nations has played an active role in efforts to combat serious crimes and restore security in Haiti. In April 2004, Security Council Resolution 1542 established the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, which took over from the Multinational Interim Force authorized by the Security Council two months earlier. René Preval, elected as president in February 2006, enjoys UN support as he faces the daunting task of eradicating the criminality and the fear that have paralyzed the country.

The committing of serious crimes without political or legal accountability results in a loss of trust in public institutions, including the police and justice system. If the police and justice system and/or other public institutions are seen as protecting or ineffectively confronting perpetrators of serious crimes, the government's credibility with the population can be greatly impaired. This potential credibility gap also applies to international administrations and actors involved in combating serious crimes. Disillusionment with the governing authority's ability to thwart these crimes may result in the population relying on parallel power structures such as militias, which may be seen as able to protect people from the effects of serious crimes (even though the militias themselves are involved in serious crimes).

Diversion of government revenue by serious crimes, such as smuggling or wide-scale corruption, poses a direct threat to a government's ability to provide public services to the community and may indirectly fuel popular disenchantment with the government. Serious crimes may also discourage both local and foreign actors from investing or

Trafficking in Liberia

During the course of Liberia's long-running civil war, combatants loyal to former president Charles Taylor and rebels aligned with the Guinea-backed Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy and the Ivorian-backed Movement for Democracy in Liberia engaged in extensive criminal activity. Trafficking in weapons, persons, drugs, and natural resources, as well as looting, use of child soldiers, and forced labor, were all organized features of the fighting. Many of these activities continue today, as former combatants have transformed themselves into organized crime rings and exploit the weakened country for their international criminal operations. In March 2003, the UN-supported Special Court for Sierra Leone indicted Charles Taylor for war crimes and other conflict-related crimes and alleged that he and his forces raped, dismembered, and killed tens of thousands of innocents in their bid to control the country's vast diamond resources.

Drug Trafficking and Afghan Warlords

Following the fall of the Taliban regime in late 2001, the level of poppy cultivation in Afghanistan rose dramatically. In 2004 it increased 64 percent over the previous year. The United Nations estimates that Afghanistan produces almost 90 percent of the world's opium, most of which ends up as heroin on the streets of Europe and Russia. The opium trade has become an increasingly integral part of Afghanistan's political economy, sparking UN warnings that Afghanistan is on the brink of becoming a "narco-state" controlled by traffickers. Drug trafficking is a major source of funding for Afghan warlords and their private militias, who continue to engage in violent activities throughout the country. It also is believed to fund terrorist groups. Those attempting to combat trafficking claim that corrupt officials, from police officers to provincial governors, are involved with the traffickers and that the list of those involved in the drug trade reaches high into the Afghan government.

establishing businesses in a country, further complicating reconstruction efforts.

Given the number of pressing needs in postconflict societies and the lack of capacity to confront serious crimes of the sort described above, there has been an inclination in some cases to defer dealing with this problem. Policymakers are at times concerned that confronting serious crimes in the short term will add to instability, particularly where links exist between serious crimes and various powerful actors whose support is needed if the peace process is to proceed. However, serious crime in postconflict societies becomes more difficult to eradicate with the passage of time. Waiting a year or two after the signing of a peace agreement or the establishment of a peace operation to confront serious crimes gives organized criminal syndicates or terrorist groups the opportunity to embed themselves more deeply into the government and economy of the country. If provided such time and space to become more deeply entrenched, serious crimes will often come to threaten not only the postconflict host state but other states as well.

Corruption in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Since the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement in December 1995, postwar Bosnia and Herzegovina has provided fertile ground for corruption. Nationalist parties have exploited public utility companies in particular, embezzling large amounts of cash from them. In March 2003, an international audit of public electricity companies in Bosnia revealed that one electricity provider was losing nearly half a million convertible marka (upwards of U.S.$300,000) a day because of mismanagement, conflicts of interest, theft, and neglect. As a result, the people of Bosnia have suffered from poor and expensive services, while diverted funds are believed to have supported indicted fugitive war criminal Radovan Karadzic.

The Genesis and Evolution of This Book

In 2002, the United States Institute of Peace assembled a small team of practitioners who were directly involved in attempts to tackle serious crimes in the Balkans. Drawing lessons from that experience, the team examined the methods and resources needed to address serious crimes in a postconflict environment in a strategic and systematic way and began to develop a handbook that would inform policymakers and practitioners confronting these issues in future cases.

The group started its work by focusing on Kosovo, where various members of the team had been involved in initiating and implementing measures to combat serious crimes. As Bosnia adopted an increasingly comprehensive serious crimes strategy, drawing from the Kosovo model, the group sought to incorporate this experience too. The group also looked at other postconflict environments and states in an effort to make this handbook useful as a reference tool in a wide variety of situations. Accordingly, the book integrates lessons and examples not only from Bosnia and Kosovo but also from Afghanistan, Burundi, Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Iraq, Kosovo, Liberia, Nepal, Northern Ireland, Serbia, Sierra Leone, and the Solomon Islands. It also takes account of a number of variables, including the type and extent of serious crimes, the nature and extent of international mandates and authority, and the capacity and willingness of the host government and of the international community to tackle serious crimes.

In a series of drafting and vetting meetings and consultations over the course of three years, more than forty practitioners with experience combating serious crimes in postconflict environments and/or states with serious crimes problems have contributed to the development of this handbook. These experts include judges, prosecutors, defense lawyers, police officers, intelligence experts, prison and security personnel, military personnel, policy advisers, human rights advocates, and representatives of relevant international and regional organizations. This inclusive process was an integral aspect of the handbook's drafting. Developing and implementing postconflict serious crimes programs on the ground is a challenging endeavor: one must develop a pragmatic approach within an environment characterized by intense power politics between individuals and organizations, a complex mixture of personalities and interests, a delicate security situation, and insufficient resources to implement programs effectively. Given practitioners' in-depth and firsthand knowledge of the challenges of addressing serious crimes in such situations, the authors went to great lengths to draw from their wealth of experience. The authors also mined scholarly research and literature that exhibits both analytical insight and a sober pragmatism. In doing so, the authors sought to overcome the lack of communication and coordination between

scholars and practitioners—and between different kinds of criminal justice practitioners—and to create a book that brings together the wisdom of many different disciplines.

The Purpose of This Book

This book is intended to be a reference tool for policymakers and practitioners charged with designing strategies for tackling serious crimes in postconflict environments. It introduces and synopsizes the key issues in appraising and addressing serious crimes, provides an overview of tools and methods likely to be useful in that endeavor, discusses the pros and cons of various approaches, offers a host of practical examples, and provides references to additional material. It should be of use to both domestic and foreign actors assessing a postconflict society and determining what political, legal, and economic reforms and strategies, and what human and material resources, are needed to combat serious crimes. More particularly, the book should be of interest to officials from the parliament or legislative body of a postconflict society, from its ministry of justice or ministry of interior, and from international or regional organizations, as well as personnel from foreign assistance providers, third-party ministries of foreign affairs, and aid or development offices working with postconflict societies to address serious crimes problems. Although this handbook is geared toward use in a postconflict environment, many aspects of it may prove useful in situations where a peace agreement has not been reached or not yet implemented and where international intervention has yet to occur. This is particularly true of chapter 2, which discusses the importance and use of assessments. The first assessments should be conducted while a conflict is still ongoing so that a strategy to combat serious crimes can be devised and readily implemented upon cessation of formal hostilities.

Because this book is specifically designed to address serious criminal activity, it does not discuss the panoply of programs and approaches that may be required to establish broader rule of law in a postconflict environment. Nonetheless, many of the tools and methods described in the following chapters might well be useful in addressing other, more routine, crime problems and might also be useful in conceptualizing general rule of law strategies. Other dimensions of tackling serious crimes that are not addressed in this book

Recognizing the Importance of Serious Crimes: The United Nations and Haiti

The UN Security Council recognized early on the threat that serious crimes pose to Haiti. Security Council Resolution 867 of 1993, which formed part of the impetus for the establishment of the United Nations Mission in Haiti that operated until 1996, explicitly noted concern "about the escalation of politically motivated violence . . . at [a] time of critical political transition."

are components that look beyond the criminal justice system to civil law, regulatory reforms, and anticorruption programs. While these should be fundamental components of any integrative strategy for addressing serious crimes, they lie beyond the scope of this book, which focuses on the criminal justice system and its response to serious crimes. Readers interested in exploring broader rule of law issues are encouraged to turn to the "Further Reading and Resources" section at the end of this book.

However, while this book keeps its focus on serious crimes, it takes a holistic approach to that subject. Much of the literature in this field addresses only one or two components of the fight against serious crimes; in contrast, this volume connects together the various elements of the criminal justice system. Having said this, the book does not pretend to offer a comprehensive treatise on measures to combat serious crimes, nor to be an exhaustive operational and tactical manual for law enforcement personnel investigating serious crimes. One could write volumes on each of the topics addressed in this handbook. The authors have sought to provide enough detail to make the handbook useful but not so much detail that it would become a more encyclopedic and less accessible work.

The authors fully recognize that it is not wise, and in most situations not possible, to be prescriptive and proffer detailed guidelines on each aspect of combating serious crimes. Given that each situation is different, those charged with developing a strategy for a particular environment should regard this book as no more than a starting point. Once they have reviewed it, then, in consultation with relevant experts and practitioners, readers should undertake further investigation and analysis before devising and implementing a serious crimes strategy. The real-life examples provided in this book may help readers determine the extent to which the situation they face is, or is not, amenable to strategies adopted in other cases.

All involved with the development of this handbook understand that few states have the resources and capacity to robustly address all the competing priorities in postconflict areas. Even well-resourced countries find it challenging to implement many of the approaches set forth in this handbook. The rationale for discussing the full range of potential tools and reforms is not to suggest to policymakers that action can be taken on all fronts simultaneously—that is always impossible—but to encourage policymakers to keep the bigger picture in mind. Equipped with that wider perspective, policymakers will find it much easier to draw up a road map that shows them how to reach their overall goals.

The next chapter, chapter 2, focuses on what should always be the first step in developing an effective anti–serious crimes strategy: understanding the nature of the problem and evaluating the potential for dealing with it. Chapter 2 provides guidance on the scope and methodology of such an assessment. Chapter 3 discusses the legal framework,

including procedural measures or laws that are particularly valuable in tackling serious crimes. It also addresses the resource implications of implementing such laws. Chapter 4 sets forth institutional reforms for fairly and effectively investigating, prosecuting, and adjudicating serious crimes cases. Institutional reforms covered include those related to police, prosecution, judges and courts, defense counsel, and prisons. It also discusses close protection and witness protection programs. Chapter 5 looks at a variety of strategies intended to enhance the investigation and prosecution of serious crimes. Consideration is given to criminal intelligence gathering, targeting of serious crimes perpetrators, public awareness campaigns, and the role of international military forces in confronting serious crimes. Chapter 6 examines the use of foreign assistance in tackling serious crimes in a postconflict society. Specifically, it discusses different types of assistance; guidance on selection, training, and use and accountability of international personnel; and issues related to working with national actors, including developing sustainable domestic capacity. The book concludes with an annotated list of a wide variety of materials—from books and articles to official documents, treaties, and websites—that will help readers explore an equally wide variety of subjects related, directly or indirectly, to the challenge of combating serious crimes.

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles should always be taken into account when creating strategies for combating serious crimes in postconflict societies. These principles, derived from the practical experience of the practitioners and policymakers consulted during the development of this book, will be elaborated upon throughout the handbook. The order in which they appear here does not indicate their relative importance; rather, the order simply mirrors the typical progress of an operation from planning to implementation.

Be Realistic in Setting Goals

It is important to recognize that serious crimes may never be completely eradicated in a postconflict society—or, indeed, in any society. Even stable and well-resourced countries grapple with serious crimes problems, including organized crime and terrorism. Within a postconflict society, the goal should be to manage the serious crimes problem so that its destabilizing impact is diminished. On the programmatic level, too, realism should prevail; and, instead of seeking perfect solutions, practitioners and policymakers should identify what is achievable with the available resources and within the allotted time frame.

Combating Organized Crime: A Long-Term Challenge

While the fight against organized crime is often complicated by the legacy of conflict, it is certainly not limited to postconflict societies. Indeed, countries such as the United States and Italy have long struggled with the problem of organized crime. In Italy the government continues to confront Mafia organizations and activities, which in recent years have entered into an increasingly international network (particularly with the rise of Albanian Mafia bosses operating inside the country) of drug, weapon, and cigarette smuggling. In the early 1980s, Italy introduced the crime of "Mafia association" in an attempt to crack down on criminal organizations, but prosecutions remained difficult to secure because of insufficient coordination between investigating bodies. Only with the introduction in 1992 of an Anti-Mafia Prosecution Office has Italy begun to develop a more sophisticated strategy, permitting more expansive criminal investigation methods, linking the National Prosecutor's Office with local investigation efforts, and building the Italian witness protection system. While its efforts at combating crime have been notable, Italy's experience with the proliferation of Mafia activity underscores the degree to which efforts to combat serious crimes are always a challenge, no matter how well or poorly resourced a country may be.

Recognize You Are In It for the Long Haul

Short-term, quick-fix programs are ineffective. A long-term vision and approach, integrated with the overall postconflict strategy, are vital. One should be skeptical of those programs and solutions that are ad hoc, propose temporary measures, or are not tailored to the specific circumstances of the postconflict society.

Make Sure You Have Adequate Resources

Programs addressing serious crimes are costly and require highly skilled technical experts. Police, prosecutors, judges, and prison personnel must all be identified, vetted, and trained. A capable cadre of defense lawyers must be developed. Moreover, it often takes several years to investigate and prosecute serious crimes cases, making it yet more important to have sufficient resources, including adequate numbers of trained personnel and sufficient funds.

Recognize the Broader Social, Economic, and Political Aspects of Serious Crimes

Serious crimes are not just a criminal justice problem. In considering strategies to tackle serious crimes, it is important not only to address the legal aspects of these problems but also to look at their underlying social, economic, and political causes and at the factors that exacerbate them. A program that addresses serious crimes problems purely as a criminal justice issue will be unsuccessful at best; at worst, it may have

unintended negative and counterproductive consequences. For example, drug trafficking is also a development issue and cannot be addressed by criminal justice means alone. In Afghanistan, the agricultural sector relies on the cultivation of poppy; Afghan farmers will not abandon this mainstay of the economy unless they have alternative ways of making a livelihood.

Ensure Adequate Accountability Mechanisms Are in Place

Adequate accountability and oversight of the institutions responsible for the investigation, prosecution, and trial of persons accused of perpetrating serious crimes should be set in place before implementing any serious crimes strategies. Accountability means that procedures exist for receiving complaints and allegations of misconduct or abuse of office and that mechanisms exist for the prompt and fair investigation and adjudication of these complaints. Accountability mechanisms serve the same purpose as fair trial and due process guarantees: to ensure that the system of investigation and prosecution of serious crimes is just and that adequate checks on power are in place. Accountability is particularly important in postconflict societies that previously suffered from widespread abuses of power and of rights.

Design and Implement an Approach to Serious Crimes in the Context of a Broader Rule of Law Strategy

Even when a situation demands specialized personnel and tools to confront serious crimes, their efforts will be strengthened or undercut by the character and condition of the existing justice system. Furthermore, given the limited human and financial resources typically available in a postconflict environment, efforts to tackle serious crimes and initiatives to foster rule of law in a broader sense are likely to compete for the same staff and funds. Consequently, an approach to tackling serious crimes should be integrated into a larger rule of law strategy that addresses the country's justice system as a whole, including the judiciary, prosecution, defense, prisons, police, legal reform, and relevant regulatory structures, including financial controls. The strategy should include establishment of organizational structures that are coherent and well conceived from the outset.

Respect and Protect Fair Trial and Due Process Rights

This handbook discusses a number of tools and methods that give extensive powers to actors in the justice system and that are often applied very broadly in combating serious crimes. It is imperative to ensure that criminal legislation and the criminal justice actors who implement that legislation adequately protect the fair trial and due process rights of suspects and accused persons. Without adequate protections, the integrity and

fairness of the procedures may be called into question, and potential avenues for abuse of rights will be left open.

Build Sustainable Capacity

The goal of serious crimes programs must be to build long-term sustainable capacity. While serious crimes are particularly threatening to stabilization, reconstruction, and democratization efforts in a postconflict society, the need to confront serious crimes will remain long after the society has transitioned from the conflict and after foreign assistance providers have departed. It is therefore vital to build capacity on both the institutional and the human levels. Ad hoc and imported approaches that are not tailored to local circumstances rarely have lasting impact. Capacity building requires adequate investment in skills development and empowerment of the personnel who will be implementing the serious crimes program.