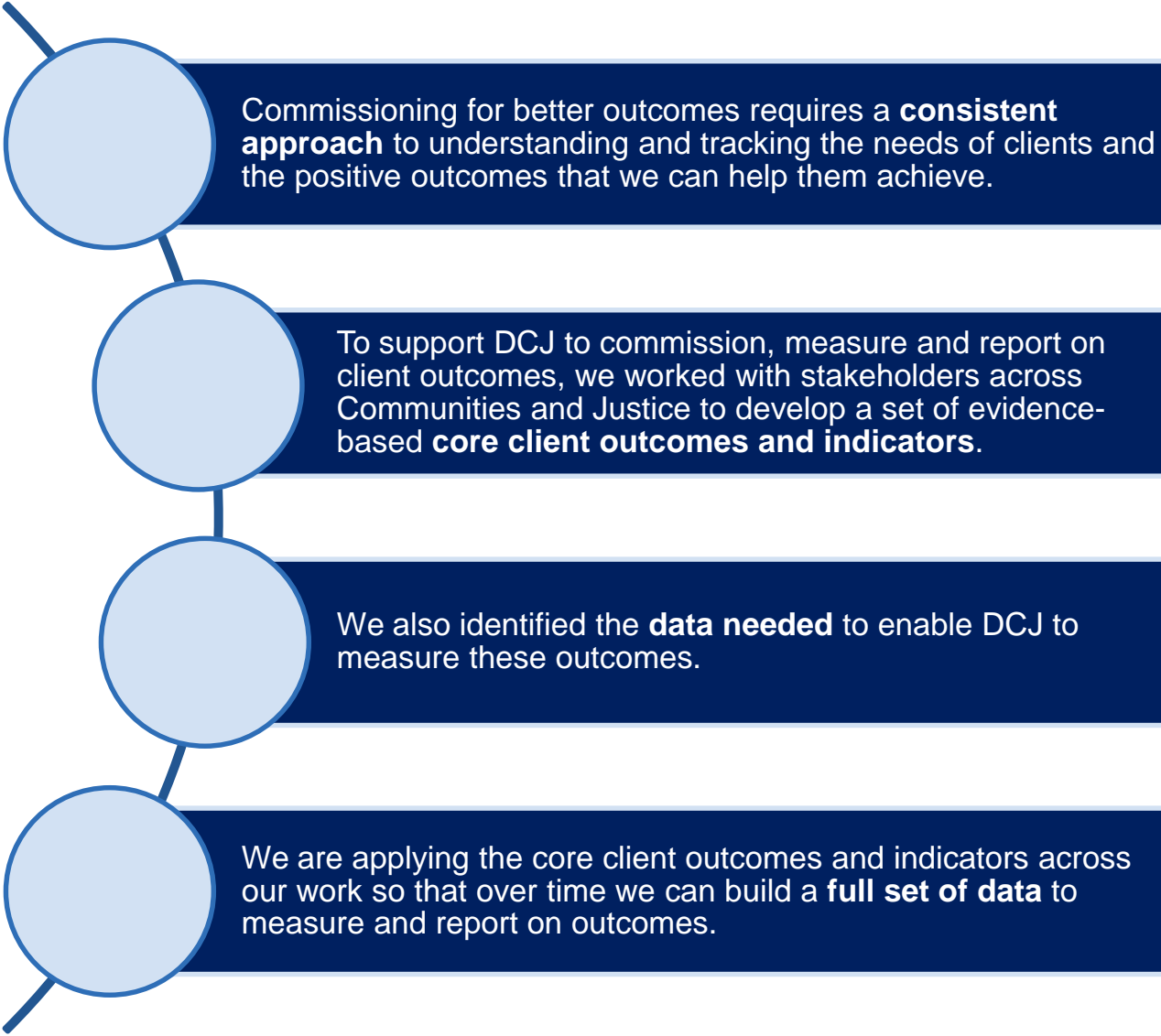# Developing Core Client Outcomes and Indicators for Communities and Justice

Family and Community Services Insights Analysis and Research (FACSIAR)

December 2020

We have developed a set of core client outcomes and indicators to support Communities and Justice to improve client outcomes

Commissioning for better outcomes requires a **consistent approach** to understanding and tracking the needs of clients and the positive outcomes that we can help them achieve.

To support DCJ to commission, measure and report on client outcomes, we worked with stakeholders across Communities and Justice to develop a set of evidence-based **core client outcomes and indicators**.

We also identified the **data needed** to enable DCJ to measure these outcomes.

We are applying the core client outcomes and indicators across our work so that over time we can build a **full set of data** to measure and report on outcomes.

The set helps answer the questions:

'What outcomes matter most to our clients?'

'How do we know if we are improving client outcomes?'

'What data do we need to measure client outcomes?'

The outcomes set and accompanying indicators are co-designed and evidence-based

The core client outcomes have been co-designed with partners across DCJ and are built on a review of high quality evidence and international indicator sets and data sources.

'Core client outcomes' are outcomes that are crucial to the wellbeing of our clients. This includes outcomes where DCJ has primary accountability as well as outcomes that require a cross cluster response.
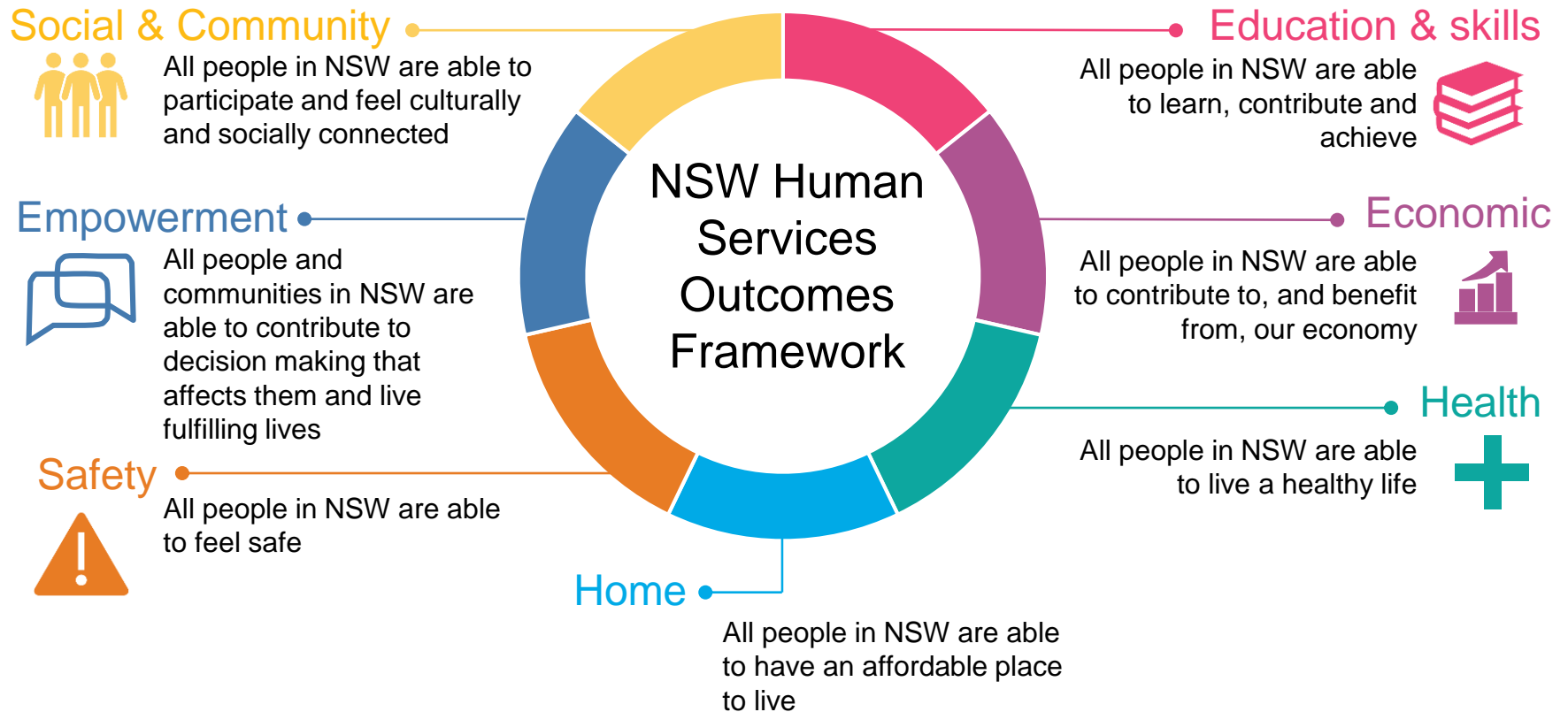
The core set of client outcomes and indicators are intended to support DCJ, and our partners, to:

> ➢ have a common understanding of the outcomes that are priorities across our work

> ➢ work together effectively to deliver benefits for clients and the community

> ➢ measure outcomes consistently, so we can compare outcomes across programs and services.

The core client outcomes are part of how we are applying the NSW Human Services Outcomes Framework to drive better outcomes.
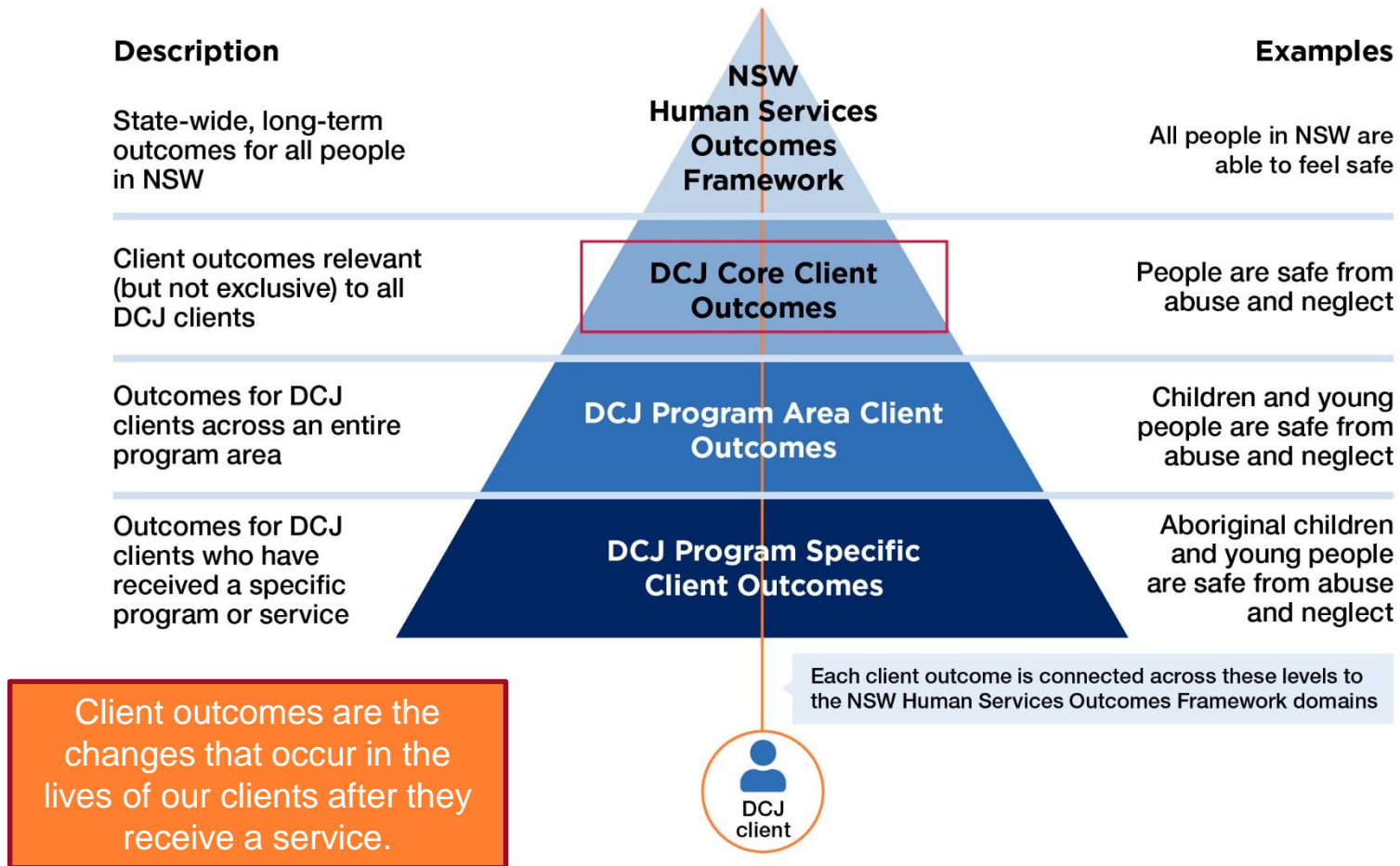
The set contains 37 core client outcomes and 116 indicators that are mapped to the 7 domains of the NSW Human Services Outcomes Framework*
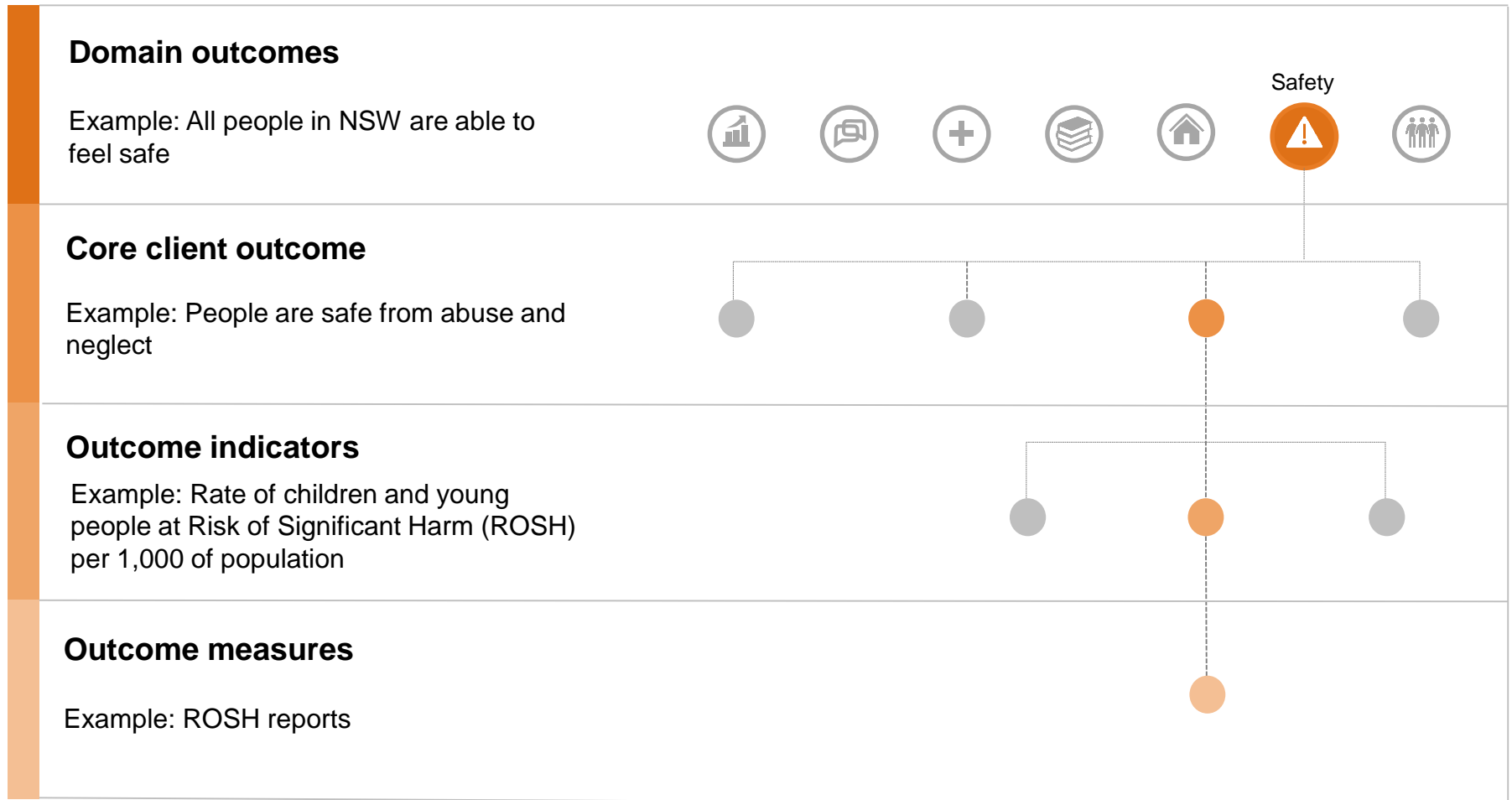
Social & Community
All people in NSW are able to participate and feel culturally and socially connected

Empowerment
All people and communities in NSW are able to contribute to decision making that affects them and live fulfilling lives

Safety
All people in NSW are able to feel safe

NSW Human Services Outcomes Framework

Education & skills
All people in NSW are able to learn, contribute and achieve

Economic
All people in NSW are able to contribute to, and benefit from, our economy

Health
All people in NSW are able to live a healthy life

Home
All people in NSW are able to have an affordable place to live

* To find out more about the NSW Human Services Outcomes framework visit
https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/human-services-outcomes-framework

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Client outcomes can be measured at different levels - 'core client outcomes' are outcomes important to all users of our services

The 'core client outcomes' are short-, medium- and long-term outcomes that are important (but not exclusive to) all users of our services.

Description

State-wide, long-term outcomes for all people in NSW

Client outcomes relevant (but not exclusive) to all DCJ clients

Outcomes for DCJ clients across an entire program area

Outcomes for DCJ clients who have received a specific program or service

NSW Human Services Outcomes Framework

DCJ Core Client Outcomes

DCJ Program Area Client Outcomes

DCJ Program Specific Client Outcomes

Examples

All people in NSW are able to feel safe

People are safe from abuse and neglect

Children and young people are safe from abuse and neglect

Aboriginal children and young people are safe from abuse and neglect

Each client outcome is connected across these levels to the NSW Human Services Outcomes Framework domains

DCJ client

Client outcomes are the changes that occur in the lives of our clients after they receive a service.

Indicators, measures and data have been identified to track each core client outcome

Domain outcomes	Safety
Example: All people in NSW are able to feel safe	

Core client outcome

Example: People are safe from abuse and neglect

Outcome indicators

Example: Rate of children and young people at Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) per 1,000 of population

Outcome measures

Example: ROSH reports

We took a principles approach in developing the full core client outcome and indicator set

Principle	Description	Key question
Always keep the client at the centre	All outcomes, needs, risk and protective factors are viewed and considered from the client's perspective.	What is meaningful and important to the client?
Always begin from a position of strength rather that deficit*	Outcomes and indicators should reflect a client's capabilities rather than highlighting deficits or weaknesses	What strengths and capabilities do clients need in order to achieve the things that matter most to them, their families and communities?
Ensure clear and consistent understanding of key terms	Clear definitions of outcomes and indicators should be consistently applied, as derived from the NSW Human Services Outcomes Framework and DCJ Strategic Priorities	Is this outcome important for the client, rather than the organisation? Does this indicator allow DCJ to adequately track progress for a client?
Consider outcomes for the client in the context of their whole life course	Client needs can be identified by considering their life course and evidence based risk and protective factors at different stages in their life	What does wellbeing look like for clients and how does this change at different stages of their lives, across the life course?
Ensure all outcomes and indicators are relevant to Aboriginal people, are culturally appropriate and are applied in a culturally competent way	Integrate the understanding that cultural safety is integral to all outcomes for Aboriginal people	Is this outcome/indicator relevant to and culturally acceptable for Aboriginal clients and does it respect Aboriginal culture?

* Note: Some indicators do not yet meet this principle, but were still included because they aligned with how these indicators are commonly reported on by other agencies (e.g. AIHW)

Communities and Justice

A full set of data is required to understand client outcomes and how those outcomes were achieved

Demographics, risk factors, protective factors

Input and cost data

Activities and output data

Client experience data

Home

Empowerment

Health

Social and Community

Safety

Education

Economic

Client-centred data, analysis and evaluation

Standardised client outcome data

Demonstrates that programs commissioned by DCJ are:

Appropriate

Effective

Efficient

Evidence informed

Data sources: DCJ' core data set; linkage to external data

We have identified the information and data needed to measure and monitor the agreed core client outcomes into the future

We identified where information and data is currently available to DCJ, where additional data can be obtained via data linkage, what additional data needs to be collected.

25 of the indicators (22%) **have data available within DCJ** for at least one client group.

Four of the 25 indicators mentioned above have known data quality or coverage issues. The severity of these issues ranges from high (making the indicator unusable in its current form) to low (meaning that the indicator can be used with caveats).

16 further indicators (14%) **have data available from other agencies through data linkage.**

75 indicators (65%) **have no existing data source identified and new data are required.**

Three indicators have proxy indicators identified that are useable for certain client groups in the short term while further data are collected.

There are some, limited opportunities to use emerging data collection for core client outcomes, namely the Future Directions for Social Housing Survey.

39 of the new indicators have no available data but measures have been identified or defined to support their implementation.

33 of the new indicators have no available data and for which no measures have been identified or have been able to be defined and require additional evidence development by FACSIAR.

The core client outcomes and indicator set can be used in a range of ways

The core client outcomes and indicators set will better enable DCJ to identify, measure and commission for client outcomes.

	Identify long-term client outcomes	The set can be used to identify long-term client outcomes that a program or service is trying to achieve. Policy and program staff can use the set as a base to develop 'program area' and 'program specific' client outcomes.
	Develop program logics	The outcomes set can be used in program logics. It will help staff to articulate what outcomes they expect to achieve and to ensure their programs are outcomes-focused and client-centred. It will also help program areas and service providers to align their long-term outcomes with others.
	Commission for outcomes	The outcomes set can be used to commission for outcomes. Where appropriate, program area or program specific outcomes can be used in contracts with service providers. Using the core set to develop these outcomes will ensure our partners have a shared understanding of the outcomes they are trying to achieve, and are measuring those outcomes.
	Measure Outcomes	The set can be used to identify indicators to measure the impact of a service or program on client outcomes. Each outcome in the core set has at least one indicator that can be used to measure it. Using the core set of indicators to measure outcomes will ensure our program areas and partners are consistently collecting client data.

FACSIAR and DCJ are working on filling identified data gaps and embedding the set across our work

In the short-medium term we are:

- Supporting DCJ staff and partners to use the set

- Embedding the outcomes and indicators across evaluations and program logics

- Developing data to track core client outcomes and improving data capture

- Undertaking research and evidence development to create appropriate measures for new outcome indicators

- Investigating how the set applies to Justice clients

- Making refinements to the set as we develop and apply the outcomes and indicators

- Identifying useful ways to report on client outcomes, including at a district or local level

The Core Client Outcomes and Indicators

There are 37 core client outcomes

Safety ⚠

People are safe from abuse and neglect

Parents, carers, and kin have the skills and capacity to keep children and young people safe at home

Children and young people grow up in families and communities that are stable and supportive with strong relationships

People feel that the importance of their family and culture is recognised, respected and understood

People are safe from domestic and family violence

People are physically and emotionally safe in their communities

Social and Community 👥

Aboriginal people know who their families are and are able to feel a connection to them

People live in communities with good conditions and with good access to local facilities and services

People are connected to supportive relationships

People feel a sense of connection and belonging to their communities

People feel a sense of connection and belonging to their culture and identities

Home 🏠

People have stability in their home

Housing is appropriate to occupants' needs

People live in housing with good condition and with good access to local facilities and services

Housing is affordable for people

People are able to live independent from housing support

Aboriginal people are able to live on Country or in a community of belonging

Health ➕

People have a healthy lifestyle and avoid risk taking behaviours that negatively impact their health

Mothers have healthy pregnancies and babies have good birth outcomes

Aboriginal people heal from inter-generational trauma and loss

People have good physical health

People have good mental health and social and emotional wellbeing

Empowerment 💬

Aboriginal people have a voice in community decision-making

People are in charge of their own lives and feel a sense of choice and control (self-determination)

People have a belief in self

People have hope for the future

People have capacity to tackle major life challenges

People have cultural empowerment

Education and Skills 📚

Children and young people participate in education or skills training

People are engaged in their learning and strive for excellence in their education

People are ready at each point of educational transition (e.g. have education and skills required to be work or school ready)

People achieve their educational aspirations

Economic 🏢

Adults and young people are able to participate in education, training or the labour force

People have financial literacy and financial management skills

Adults and young people who are able to work are employed

Adults and young people who are able to work are in continuous employment

People have financial security and autonomy

Outcomes and Indicators for the Home domain

People have stability in their home

Proportion (%) of children and young people in Out-of-Home-Care who have had 2 or fewer placement changes in the last 12 months

Proportion (%) of homeless people who move from Specialist Homelessness Services to stable accommodation

Proportion (%) of people who are homeless

Proportion (%) of people who report being secure in their accommodation

Proportion (%) of people with frequent housing changes

Proportion (%) of the people in Transitional Housing

Proportion of clients experiencing homelessness who had repeat periods of homelessness

People are able to live independent from housing support

Number of people that negatively exit out of the social housing system

Number of people that neutrally transition out of the social housing system

Number of people that positively transition out of the social housing system

People live in housing with good condition and with good access to local facilities and services

Proportion (%) of people living in homes of acceptable standard

Proportion (%) of people living in homes that meet safety standards

Proportion (%) of people satisfied with the home they live in

Aboriginal people are able to live on Country or in a community of belonging

Proportion (%) of Aboriginal people who have family living in their neighbourhood

Proportion (%) of Aboriginal people who make a choice to return to live on Country

Housing is appropriate to occupants' needs

Proportion (%) of Aboriginal people who report that their home meets their cultural needs

Proportion (%) of people who have amenities that meet their needs

Proportion (%) of people who live in dwellings considered overcrowded

Housing is affordable for people

Proportion (%) of people in the bottom 40 per cent of the income distribution whose housing costs exceed 30 per cent of income

Department of Communities and Justice

Outcomes and Indicators for the Safety domain

People are safe from abuse and neglect

Rate of children and young people at Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) per 1,000 of population

Proportion (%) of children and young people assessed at high- or very-high risk

Proportion (%) of children and young people re-reported at ROSH

Proportion (%) of children and young people in Out-of-Home-Care reported at ROSH post restoration

Rate of children and young people entering care per 1,000 of population

Proportion (%) of people who report feeling safe at home

All people are safe from domestic and family violence

Proportion (%) of domestic and family violence perpetrators re-offending within 12 months

Proportion (%) of domestic and family violence victims that are re-victimised

Proportion (%) of people who have been a victim of a reported instance of domestic and family violence

Proportion (%) of people who report experiencing domestic and family violence in the last 12 months

People are physically and emotionally safe in their communities

Proportion (%) of people who experience discrimination or racism

Proportion (%) of people who report being bullied

Proportion (%) of people who report being a victim of personal crime (i.e. physical assault, threatened assault, robbery or sexual assault) in the last 12 months

Proportion (%) of people who report feeling safe in their neighbourhood

Rate of crimes against the person per 1,000

People feel that the importance of their family and culture is recognised, respected and understood

Proportion (%) of Aboriginal people who report having trust in provider of Government services

Proportion (%) of Aboriginal people who report a service was respectful of their culture

Proportion (%) of Aboriginal children and young people in Out-of-Home-Care managed by accredited Aboriginal community-controlled organisations

Proportion (%) of Aboriginal children and young people in Out-of-Home-Care with an age appropriate cultural plan

Proportion (%) of CALD people who report having trust in providers of Government services

Proportion (%) of CALD people who report a service was respectful of their culture

Parents, carers, and kin have the skills and capacity to keep children and young people safe at home

Proportion (%) of parents engaged in positive parenting techniques

Proportion (%) of parents who have not engaged in risky and high-risk drinking patterns in the last 12 months

Proportion (%) of parents who have not used an illicit substance in the last 12 months

Children and young people grow up in families and communities that are stable and supportive with strong relationships

Proportion (%) of children and young people who report high levels of emotional and social support

Proportion (%) of children and young people who report the presence of relationships that facilitate disclosure of safety and wellbeing concerns

Outcomes and Indicators for the Social and Community domain

Aboriginal people know who their families are and are able to feel a connection to them

Proportion (%) of Aboriginal people who know who their family is

People live in communities with good conditions and with good access to local facilities and services

Proportion (%) of people satisfied with access to services and facilities

Proportion (%) of people satisfied with the quality of their neighbourhood

People are connected to supportive relationships

Proportion (%) of people who report good social ties in their neighbourhood

Proportion (%) of people who report having a person(s) to lean on in times of trouble

Proportion (%) of people who report having supportive relationships

People feel a sense of connection and belonging to their culture and identities

Proportion (%) of Aboriginal people who feel a connection to Country

Proportion (%) of Aboriginal people who report having opportunities to practice their language

Proportion (%) of people who feel a connection to their culture

Proportion (%) of people who have knowledge of their culture

Proportion (%) of people who have knowledge of their language

People feel a sense of connection and belonging to their communities

Proportion (%) of children and young people who report feeling a sense of belonging at school and peer acceptance

Proportion (%) of people who report feeling a sense of belonging in the place and community where they live

Outcomes and Indicators for the Empowerment domain

People are in charge of their own lives and feel a sense of choice and control (self-determination)
Proportion (%) of people who feel that they are able to control and influence their life outcomes
Proportion (%) of people who report having choice and control over the services they receive
Proportion (%) of people who report having involvement in decision-making

Aboriginal people have a voice in community decision-making
Proportion (%) of Aboriginal people engaged in local decision-making forums
Proportion (%) of Aboriginal people who report feeling heard in their community
Proportion (%) of Aboriginal people who report feeling they have influence in community decision-making

People have a belief in self
Proportion (%) of people who have high self-efficacy

People have hope for the future
Proportion (%) of people who report having hope for their future

People are resilient and are able to tackle major life challenges
Proportion (%) of people who feel able to cope with life events

People have cultural empowerment
Proportion (%) of people who feel culturally confident

Outcomes and Indicators for the Health domain

Mothers have healthy pregnancies and babies have good birth outcomes

Proportion (%) of infants exclusively breastfed at 4 months of age

Proportion (%) of live-born infants below a healthy weight at birth

Proportion (%) of mothers who experience high levels of maternal stress

Proportion (%) of mothers who smoke during pregnancy

Proportion (%) of women who present for antenatal care programs

Proportion (%) of women who report substance misuse during pregnancy

People have good physical health

Proportion (%) of children who are free from tooth decay

Proportion (%) of children and young people with up-to-date immunisation record

Proportion (%) of people who are overweight or obese

Proportion (%) of people who report having excellent/very good/good/fair/poor health

Aboriginal people heal from inter-generational trauma and loss

Proportion (%) of Aboriginal people who report that they know when and where to seek culturally appropriate support to prevent escalation to crisis

Proportion (%) of children and young people in Out-of-Home-Care who have a parent who was also in Out-of-Home-Care

People have a healthy lifestyle and avoid risk taking behaviours that negatively impact their health

Age-specific birth rate for 15 to 19 year old women per 1,000 females

Proportion (%) of adults currently consuming alcohol at levels posing long-term risk to health

Proportion (%) of people who currently smoke tobacco

Proportion (%) of people who had used an illicit substance within the last 12 months

Proportion (%) of people who report levels of physical activity below nationally recommended levels

People have good mental health and social and emotional wellbeing

Proportion (%) of children aged 0-5 years with developmental delays

Proportion (%) of children with good social and emotional functioning

Proportion (%) of people who report having high levels of psychological distress

Proportion (%) of people who report often feeling lonely

Suicide rate per 100,000 population by age

Note: An indicator on healing from inter-generational trauma is needed. However, this is complex and there needs to be further research to develop an appropriate indicator and method of measurement.

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Outcomes and Indicators for the Education and Skills domain

Children and young people participate in education or skills training

Proportion (%) of students who attended school 90 per cent or more of the time

People are engaged in their learning and strive for excellence in their education

Proportion (%) of children and young people who experienced an unplanned school move in the last 12 months

Proportion (%) of children and young people who report feeling motivated to pursue education or attend school

Proportion (%) of people who are recorded as having low literacy levels

Proportion (%) of students at or above the national minimum standard for literacy and numeracy (NAPLAN)

Proportion (%) of students who achieve an ATAR of 50.0 or above

Proportion (%) of students who participate in NAPLAN assessments

People achieve their educational aspirations

Proportion (%) of people who complete Year 12 or equivalent

Proportion (%) of people with a vocational or higher education qualification

Proportion (%) of children and young people who are at or above minimum standards who either improve or maintain their performance

Proportion (%) of children and young people who are below minimum standards who improve their performance to above minimum standards

People are ready at each point of educational transition (e.g. have education and skills required to be work or school ready)

Proportion (%) of children attending early childhood education programs for 600 hours or more in the year prior to starting kindergarten

Proportion (%) of children developmentally vulnerable on two or more Australian Early Development Census domains

Proportion (%) of children that are school ready according to Best Start

Proportion (%) of people who receive job skills training and employment support

Outcomes and Indicators for the Economic domain

Adults and young people are able to participate in education, training or the labour force

Proportion (%) of people aged 16-64 currently employed or seeking employment

Proportion (%) of people who are unemployed and currently enrolled in some form of education or training

People have financial security and autonomy

Proportion (%) of children living in families with secure parental employment

Proportion (%) of people who could not pay electricity, gas or telephone bills on time

Proportion (%) of people who could not raise $2,000 within a week

Proportion (%) of people who have experienced a shortage of money and subsequently could not pay mortgage or rent

Proportion (%) of people who report that their household spends more money than it gets

People have financial literacy and financial management skills

Proportion (%) of people who report having the financial skills to manage their finances

Adults and young people who are able to work are employed

Proportion (%) of people who are unemployed

Proportion (%) of people who report underemployment

Adults and young people who are able to work are in continuous employment

Proportion (%) of people who were employed continuously in past 12 months

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Where to find out more?

We have developed a range of resources to help staff and stakeholders access the core client outcome and indicator set.

Visit our webpage at https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/human-services-outcomes-framework.

The DCJ Client Outcome and Indicator Bank

The Client Outcome and Indicator Bank is an excel spreadsheet that catalogues the core set of outcomes and indicators. Please contact FACSIAR for more information.

More Information

To find out more about the core client outcome and indicator set, and how you can use it in your work, please contact FACSIAR: facsiar@facs.nsw.gov.au