Key elements of an effective police accountability system:

- Legislation (in line with international human rights law) specifying the functions and powers of the police;
- Practical instructions based on the legislation;
- Opportunities for the public to voice their concerns;
- Policies that set priorities on how to deploy police capacity;
- Adequate police training, adequate equipment;
- Adequate supervision and proper reporting procedures;
- A working culture that promotes transparency and evaluation;
- Monitoring of police actions and operations by both police leadership and external organs;
Key elements of an effective police accountability system:

- Complaints procedures, both for making complaints to the police and to independent bodies
- Effective procedures and policies on how to deal with misconduct, including disciplinary and criminal codes, adequate investigative capacity, procedures for sanctions and appeal procedures
- Independent body to oversee such procedures
- Evaluation and complaints procedures that contribute to the development of new policies, procedures and instructions
- Reliable statistics on police performance, related both to effectiveness in dealing with crime, and to integrity and public confidence.
While the Handbook emphasizes that key players in enhancing police accountability are police officers themselves, it describes an integrated approach to establishing an effective police accountability system including both preventive and corrective measures, and explains the roles and functions of the different actors in this system including:

- Government representatives
- Parliament
- Judiciary
- Civil society actors
- Independent Oversight bodies such national human rights institutions