jdi | **Jane Doe Inc.**
The Massachusetts Coalition
Against Sexual Assault and
Domestic Violence

Meeting the Needs of Survivors and Communities Through Organizational Development:

A Review of Capacity Building Resources and Opportunities for Sexual and Domestic Violence Programs in Massachusetts

Revised June 2019

A Report for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health

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Executive Summary

Jane Doe Inc., the Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence (JDI), provides this report to inform and support the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) in a process to re-envision capacity building and technical assistance (CB/TA) services for community based sexual and domestic violence (SDV) programs throughout the Commonwealth.

The primary goal of this document is to elevate key elements of a capacity-building program to strengthen the Massachusetts SDV network of organizations providing direct and prevention services for survivors and communities and to facilitate alignment with the principles laid out in the 2016-17 procurement process for SDV state funding.

The data and recommendations gathered through the procurement design process are rich and well documented, and have been a primary source to inform this project. As part of this process, we also needed to look outward, toward a broader, nationally focused group of advisors and thought leaders to ensure that we were approaching these tasks in ways that are adherent to best practice and current practice wisdom. We sought to identify effective models and key elements of best national best practices and delivery methods, taking into consideration different services models available through state and federal SDV funding.

The recommendations contained within this report are based on an examination of topics:
1. Governmental and nongovernmental organizations in partnership,
2. A methodology including literature review, interviews and surveys of national leaders and statewide stakeholders,
3. A description of capacity building and tools available for implementing a comprehensive Technical Assistance and Capacity Building initiative.
4. An emphasis on intersectionality as a key lens through which all capacity building is strengthened.
5. A snapshot of the Massachusetts Network of programs and organizations doing sexual and domestic violence work.

The report concludes with several recommendations:

Capacity Building: Develop a strategic, multi-year plan for technical assistance that is developed cooperatively by DPH, JDI and program representation.

Guiding Principles: Uphold the guiding principles embedded through an ongoing and iterative process including theoretical frameworks, skills building, and management support.

Survivor Engagement and Leadership: Establish a sustainable initiative, supported by sufficient funding to elevate the experiences and wisdom of survivors and provide leadership toward a survivor centered and engaged movement.

Whole Network: Develop a comprehensive strong capacity-building program that builds upon common network history and successes, and the desire to strengthen individual programs while fortifying the SDV network across the Commonwealth.

Accountability: Establish a plan for evaluation and accountability that is data-driven and supportive of overall contract requirements.

We provide this report at this exciting and challenging juncture of our work. Our shared experiences and historical successful have launched a mature and pervasive movement. In Massachusetts, we stand on the shoulders of early leaders while we look to successes and approaches in related social change movements. This is a time of hope and growth, of action and resistance. Together, we have an opportunity to create a well-crafted and intentional approach to moving the work forward.

Introduction

Jane Doe Inc., the Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence (JDI), provides this report to inform and support the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) in a process to re-envision capacity building and technical assistance (CB/TA) services for community based sexual and domestic violence (SDV) programs throughout the Commonwealth. Focusing on capacity building is especially timely due to three factors: (1) movement of domestic violence funding from the Department of Children and Families to the Department of Public Health (DPH), thereby consolidating funding for rape crisis centers and domestic violence programs under one government agency; (2) the establishment of the Division of Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention and Services and new leadership within DPH; and (3) the recent re-procurement of nearly $35 million in state and federal funding.

The primary goal of this document is to elevate key elements of a capacity-building program to strengthen the Massachusetts SDV network of organizations providing direct and prevention services for survivors and communities and to facilitate alignment with the principles laid out in the 2016-17 procurement process for SDV state funding.

Informing this document is a scan of literature related to non-profit capacity-building and technical assistance provision; an online survey of statewide SDV coalitions from across the U.S.; interviews with national technical assistance providers and organizational development professionals with subject matter expertise; and perspectives from key informants from Massachusetts service providers and state funders. Additionally, much attention was given to significant research generated prior to the writing of the request for response to procure the service dollars mentioned above.

Massachusetts Re-Procurement

For the first time in 10 years, community based programs (9 service models including rape crisis, community based services, emergency shelter, transitional housing, DV, substance misuse, and trauma shelter services, intimate partner abuse education, supervised visitation, children exposed to DV, and communities facing inequities) recently responded to a unified procurement that is anchored in a social justice framework and prioritizes addressing disparities and gaps in access and cultural competency for marginalized communities.

In preparation of this procurement, a significant planning process tapped a broad range of survivors, providers and other stakeholders to inform the framing of the application. Now that the programs have responded and the funding decisions have been made, we have the opportunity and obligation to ensure that an accessible, responsive and well planned capacity building program that includes focused technical assistance is available to support and address systemic needs of the community based programs that have been funded.

The data and recommendations gathered through the procurement design process are rich and well documented, and have been a primary source to inform this project. As part of this process, we also needed to look outward, toward a broader, nationally focused group of advisors and thought leaders to ensure that we were approaching these tasks in ways that are adherent to best practice and current practice wisdom. We sought to identify effective models and key elements of best national best practices and delivery methods, taking into consideration different services models available through state and federal SDV funding.

Government and Non-Governmental Organizations in Partnership

This report is being written during the time when many of the organizations working on sexual and domestic violence in Massachusetts are noting their 40 - 45 year anniversaries. Sexual assault and domestic violence community-based programs have evolved over these past 45 years. Through the dedicated efforts of survivors, activists, academic and government partners, and other supporters, a variety of governmental funding streams have been established. Varying levels of interest and involvement of leaders of each of the three branches of government over the years, coupled with the steady persistence of advocates has helped build a broad network of services. And together we face the reality of the need for additional investment. These organizations are consistently challenged to meet the ever increasing and broadening goals and demands of the work with survivors and communities.

In the late 1970's-early 1980's, community-based SDV service groups across the U.S. joined together to create statewide coalitions to speak with a unified voice to more effectively advocate for critical legal and social policy changes and to champion funding streams to support the varied needs of survivors. These coalitions later became recognized and designated as the federally recognized coalitions in their respective states.

Much has been learned about the needs and desires of survivors over the decades since sexual assault and domestic violence were first elevated in the public as significant issues. The sexual and domestic violence movements have broadened their reach, better meeting the needs of many victims. At the same time, the movement has identified significant accessibility and service gaps and demonstrated the need for a holistic and individualized approach for survivors.

As funding has become available in Massachusetts and nationally, there has been a commitment to addressing gaps and improving survivor services by assisting community-based providers build their capacity, with some amount of coordinated training, technical assistance and network building. Coalitions' access to local and national resources and promising practices has increased their own effectiveness to support capacity building to SDV organizations. Due to their role as facilitators of movement building work, focus on social justice, and subject matter access, statewide coalitions are well positioned to provide leadership and expertise for these services. Government partners, especially DPH, are also well positioned to support capacity building with technical assistance and training. A well-functioning and coordinated partnership is essential.

Methodology

This report describes key elements possible for a capacity building program to strengthen the Massachusetts sexual assault and domestic violence network of prevention and services, and support an organizational framework that prioritizes inclusiveness, survivor and community engagement and increased leadership opportunities for individuals from marginalized communities. The rich data gathered throughout the procurement design process have been used as a primary source to inform this document. Additionally, a group of national SDV technical assistance providers and organizational development thought leaders were consulted. A survey of SDV state coalition leaders was conducted to expand the scope beyond Massachusetts and learn about best practices throughout the country.

The broad areas of inquiry included:

1. A review of literature related to capacity building practices and tools.
2. Promising practices identified by other state coalitions and national technical assistance providers to assess and prioritize organizational needs, as well as their interest and readiness in working toward organizational change.

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3. Differentiation of roles of federal, state and private funders and coalitions in the provision and delivery of capacity building efforts.
4. Identification of broad areas of need that might be addressed through a well-structured capacity building program.

An initial review or scan of literature was conducted to gauge the nature of capacity building and technical assistance practices being offered generally for non-profits and specifically in the sexual and domestic violence movement(s).

Key informant interviews were conducted with six (6) national Technical Assistance providers who are funded through OVW and FVPSA and two (2) organizational development consultants deeply familiar with SDV organizations and who also work nationally. Information on the Massachusetts landscape was gathered through interviews with six executive directors of local programs, Jane Doe Inc. staff, staff of the Division of Injury Prevention and Intervention at the MA Department of Public Health, and two former administrators of the prior round of funding for the community based domestic violence programs through the Department of Children and Families.

A 25-question online survey was distributed to the statewide sexual and domestic violence coalitions, more than 80 nationally. Twenty-seven coalition leaders responded; half from Domestic Violence Coalitions, five were from Sexual Assault Coalitions and the remainder were from dual coalitions, reflecting on their work with both sexual assault and domestic violence programs.

Additionally, prior to the writing of the 2016-2017 Request for Response significant preparatory work was undertaken by the Massachusetts Departments of Children and Families and Public Health. Three separate reports produced in the spring of 2016 outline feedback from a broad array of stakeholders including survivors who had accessed services through the specifically funded SDV programs and other survivors who had not accessed those services. Each of these documents highlights a variety of recommendations that inform aspects of this report.

Capacity Building

A review of organizational development literature highlights an evolution in thought and practice with regard to building the capacity of community-based organizations. Prior focus on strengthening individual organizations and individual leaders, one organization at a time has moved toward a networked approach that emphasizes community engagement and peer-to-peer engagement, anchored in practices that support progressive social change.

> *"Capacity building is whatever is needed to bring a nonprofit to the next level of operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational maturity, so it may more effectively and efficiently advance its mission into the future. Capacity building is not a one-time effort to improve short-term effectiveness, but a continuous improvement strategy toward the creation of a sustainable organization."* (Chandler, National Council of Non-Profits)

The terms, "training" "technical assistance" and "capacity building" are often used interchangeably throughout much of the sexual and domestic violence literature and in the field. However, it should be noted that there are subtle differences between these terms. In this report, we use the term "capacity building" to apply to the progress that each organization is engaged in toward pursuing their mission. Training and technical assistance refer to specific tools that apply toward these overall goals. The federally funded national technical assistance project for sexual assault coalitions, The Resource Sharing Project, describes the role of state coalitions in supporting capacity building:

> *"Capacity Building reflects strategic attention to increasing efficacy and sustainability for a group of organizations, attending to broad vision/ideas, and strengthening organizations' ability to fulfill mission and positively impact individuals and communities. Based in these broad foci, specific activities that are essential for S/DV organizations include attention on members, funders and the broader sector, focusing on survivor leadership, intersectionality, becoming culturally informed and responsive, building trauma informed organizations, and building infrastructure through strategic planning and stability of systems, financial strength, and space and technology needs."*

Capacity Building Needs and Opportunities

Sexual and Domestic Violence organizations started with a vision focused the work of supporting survivors. Whether the founding was based in survivors coming together, a community response to a highly publicized incident, or the emergence of activism in response to injustices, most organized efforts to address sexual and domestic violence were inspired by passion for the cause. This proud tradition is honored and carried forward in current efforts to deepen the social justice understandings of the work and to promote the values and leadership of those who are marginalized. Time, practice knowledge, additional resources, and outreach resulted in organizations that support ongoing efforts to address the impact of these issues, and the need for supportive infrastructure to support the legal, financial, development, governance, space, technology, and human resource needs of organizations. Capacity building efforts that are based in a combined approach that incorporates the content of the work and the infrastructure needs are essential. This can help assure that organizations have healthy infrastructures that also incorporate social justice practices and principles throughout the organization.

Capacity-building literature over the past few decades has focused on how to facilitate processes that promote and develop effective governance and skilled leadership. Much of the emphasis in recent literature aims to inspire progressive social change through a networks approach, with the goal to move entire community-based networks with shared goals of inclusion and constituent involvement. While this

direction is laudable, many leaders of community-based organizations continue to need more help with learning and teaching the basics of staff and nonprofit management and to apply a social justice lens to management and leadership. This dual reality calls for a combined approach with opportunities for network based work and individualized technical assistance.

In their 2012 study, *Vision for Change: A New Wave of Social Justice Leadership*, Kim and Kunreuther (Kim) examined the needs of younger executive directors working in social change organizations. Across the board, this group reported that managing the infrastructure of the organization, while accomplishing the larger, exciting vision of social change was difficult. The executive directors felt largely underprepared. Staff management issues--supervision, finding the right candidates and being perpetually understaffed--represent the most time and energy consuming effort they deal with in their roles.

In Massachusetts, a similar sentiment was articulated many times over in interviews with current leadership and through the pre-RFR research. Even when individual leaders felt that they had figured it out, one way or another, nonprofit management skills came up as what is needed to develop new leadership. However, finding a way to teach these skills to potential new leaders in the "pipeline" without completely depleting the staff development line item is a significant challenge.

Leaders noted that organizational infrastructure is an ongoing trouble spot. Managing the operations side of the nonprofit management such as HR/supervision, finance/ payroll, and other benefits like health care and retirement options is a challenge. Often, direct service and prevention staff do not necessarily support the expansion of infrastructure related staff because they are primarily impacted by the gaps in direct service resources. Leaders also noted that an approach to capacity building that integrates operations with programs through shared philosophical approach would be essential.

Informants note the need for hands-on skill building opportunities for the work that programs are called upon to deal with everyday, such as substance misuse; mental health; children's issues; and trauma. The need is for practical information and skill development for advocates dealing with these issues in the programs, as opposed to technical educational presentations that have few practical applications by lay people. Utilizing and leveraging expertise within the network was urged.

Massachusetts-based informants especially discussed the need for deeper knowledge on policy and systems advocacy and change. They expressed interest in a plan moving forward that includes grassroots organizing to empower community-based organizations to in turn mobilize their own communities to move toward social justice.

Key informants interviewed for this report reflected on the circumstances of the programs founding which weigh heavy at times and have contributed to some of the history of organizational vulnerability for the community-based programs. This work exists at the intersections of trauma, direct services, advocacy and social change. Chronic underfunding coupled with secondary trauma caused by the intensity of providing of crisis-based direct service takes a toll on advocates. The dedication and sense of urgency within organizations to "do whatever it takes" to help every single person in need has been a contributing factor in burnout and organizational turnover. Adding the reality of low wages for front line staff has also led to a certain degree of workforce instability.

Informants discussed the need to understand the organizational impact of sexual and domestic violence work, how it is unique and how and why it impacts both the organization and individual employees. Programs that have experienced instability of leadership, funding or both, can be traumatizing to employees.

National TA providers, local providers and organizational development professionals interviewed spoke about the need for SDV programs to proactively address the crisis and trauma that program staff may experience through their work with survivors. The Sexual Assault Demonstration Project, a joint project of the Resource Sharing Project, Office on Violence Against Women and the National Sexual Violence Resource Center conducted a multi-year capacity building project involving six multi-service organizations. Many lessons were learned and documented that may be helpful to consider in Massachusetts. The Sexual Assault Demonstration Project, in its *Key Lessons Overview* document sums it up:

> *"Programs must attend to the well being of their staff and of the organization as a whole. Trauma work is rewarding and fulfilling while at the same time demanding and draining. Even when there is no secondary or vicarious trauma evidenced, staff are doing difficult jobs, usually without full compensation or social rewards. It is the responsibility of leaders to create structures and an environment that supports their staff. The extent to which programs support their own staff was seen as directly influencing the quality of services that could be provided to survivors." (Townsend, p. 3)*

The same report documents the need for focus on management and leadership skills and support for ongoing organizational and leadership development:

> *"The lack of these (management) skills across many sites speaks to the need for intensive and ongoing training of those people who are in leadership positions in dual/multi-service programs…To be most effective this professional development should be aimed not only at new executive leaders, but also at rising leaders within organizations and ongoing leadership development. While this field does pose specific needs and challenges, it is likely that many of these management skills can be developed through accessing or partnering with resources in nonprofit management outside of the field of sexual and domestic violence services, while still maintaining a deep organizational grounding in advocacy" (Townsend, p. 81)*

Intersectionality as Essential to Organizational Development and Vision

A universal theme in the literature, the RFR preparatory work, and key informant interviews for this report is a call for deep assistance with leadership development, including recruitment strategies and structural models. There is significant alignment of the data sources that leadership of the sexual and domestic violence programs should reflect the communities they serve, but largely do not.

There is a dearth of people of color and people from other marginalized communities in leadership positions throughout the nonprofit world. The gap is evident in the sexual and domestic violence arena in Massachusetts. A new resource, *The Race to Lead: Confronting the Nonprofit Leadership Gap* by Sean Thomas-Breitfeld and Frances Kunreuther is an essential read about leadership development. It urges deep systems change work, suggesting that affecting policy, practice and culture is the only way to ensure diversity and inclusion. Truly supporting leadership of people of color demands that centers of power such as boards and funders require consciousness raising and education.

> *"There needs to be a swift and deep commitment—from funders to trade associations, from large organizations to grassroots groups—to address and correct the racialized organizational and systemic barriers facing people of color as leaders and in the sector overall."* (Thomas-Breitfeld, *Race to Lead*)

The report continues to explain the needs with regard to the intersections between program and infrastructure and the needs for infrastructure oriented around social justice principles that promote equity and empowerment.

> *The barriers are based on structures within organizations and the sector as a whole. Investments made in developing leaders of color may offer needed support, but they must be accompanied by work that addresses assumptions and implicit biases deeply embedded in nonprofit policies, practices, and structures. In other words, training and preparation should be required for people in positions of power in order to raise awareness of the barriers facing aspiring leaders of color. This consciousness would need to continue once leaders of color land the job so they are not marginalized by boards and funders. Finally, none of this can be done alone. The sector itself must change its culture and norms, facing its own biases about who is qualified to lead and why. (Thomas-Breitfeld, Race to Lead)*

Tools and Modalities for Capacity Building

Capacity building takes many forms and requires a variety of tools. This section provides an overview of tools that can be employed in a successful and comprehensive capacity building initiative.

Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance pertains to programmatic improvements to single entities; this could include administrative and organizational related, service related, funder related, or programmatic needs.

Technical assistance is most promising when intentionally structured to increase knowledge and advance the work. In an interview with Debra Robbin, Executive Director of Jane Doe Inc., an approach to TA is identified:

> *"Through this intentional lens, TA is described as a vehicle for the exchange of knowledge, information, and skills, where everyone benefits and grows. Effective TA often is more about asking questions and listening, rather than delivering knowledge. This results in new insights, which are then used and disseminated to build and strengthen the network. Through this dynamic relationship, we can become better aware of trends, similarities of experiences, and divergent experiences. We can continue to learn how marginalized communities, rural areas, different age groups, etc. might experience an issue differently, and might have creative and culturally specific solutions develop. Technical Assistance, is a service, with providers as the clients or customer base who are presenting a real need. The TA provider often serves as a bridge or connector. TA providers may not need to hold all of the expertise, but can bring people together around shared interests and needs and encourage ongoing communication. When learning has occurred, an effective TA initiative then finds ways to add to the knowledge of the field for all, along with outstanding questions and challenge for deeper exchange."*

Training Adult Learners

Training is a set of skill building activities for individuals at the point of startup and ongoing so that they can do their job better. Training activities should be developed in ways that engage and motivate adult learners in improving their skills and effectiveness. For guidance in curriculum development and planning of experiential training, it is helpful to look to adult learning theory.

Adult Learning Theory is based in the foundational work of Malcolm Shepherd Knowles (1913 – 1997), an American educator well known for the use of the term Andragogy as synonymous to adult education. According to Malcolm Knowles, andragogy is the art and science of [adult learning](#), thus andragogy refers to any form of adult learning. (Kearsley, 2010). The theory is based on five assumptions of adult learners:

1. **Self-Concept**: As a person matures his/her self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality toward one of being a self-directed human being.
2. **Experience:** Previous experiences accumulate a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning.
3. **Readiness to Learn**: As a person matures his/her readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his/her social roles.
4. **Orientation to Learning**: As a person matures his/her time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application. As a result his/her orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject- centeredness to one of problem centeredness.
5. **Motivation to Learn**: As a person matures the motivation to learn is internal.

Based on these assumptions, a well-constructed adult learning experience is based on applications of these principles:
- Adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction.
- Experience (including mistakes) provides the basis for the learning activities.
- Adults are most interested in learning subjects that have immediate relevance and impact to their job or personal life.
- Adult learning is problem-centered rather than content-oriented. (Kearsley, 2010)

Applying these assumptions and principles to the work of SDV programs and organizations is essential, especially as we layer a commitment to social justice oriented principles and intersectionality. While these theories provide a starting place, they do not specifically orient us to learning within a social justice framework. When developed through this lens, we realize that learning experiences need to be developed in ways that amplify the experiences and wisdom of members of marginalized communities. In each experience, therefore, principles of intersectionality need to be evident in the planning, delivery, evaluation, and application of learning experiences.

Best Practice Model – Building Practice Wisdom

Practice wisdom: Practice Wisdom is the knowledge and expertise that social workers, therapists, and other care providers draw upon to make professional decisions. Practice wisdom develops through on-the-job training and experience but may also be influenced by theory, research, and life experience (alleydog.com). The work to address the needs of survivors was largely developed through practice wisdom. This was foundational in the development of hotlines, shelters, training programs, advocacy, and cultural competency. Understanding and appreciating this historical and current reality is essential to the success of these efforts.

Capacity building works best within an organizational culture that embraces the value of continual learning. It is a process of identifying and building on the strengths of individuals and organizations. Using adult learning principles, capacity building is accomplished through a variety of multi-layered activities. It requires an investment in organizational self-assessments and professional self-reflection. Surveys and evaluation from staff and program participants help to identify priority areas and set realistic benchmarks for growth and accountability. Equally important to identifying desired outcomes is the process of gaining new skills and advancing organizational development. Multiple processes have been

shown to be effective, such as structured learning communities to engage in peer-to-peer learning on specific topics or areas of practice, training sessions to increase knowledge and skills, and networking groups and conference calls to create regular opportunities for sharing resources and exchanging ideas. Additionally, access to information about current and emerging issues and national trends in the field enhances organizations.

Praxis - Applied Research

Praxis is defined as the process of using a theory or something that you have learned in a practical way. A goal within effective capacity building efforts should be to promote best practice as informed and guided by research, experience, survivors' voices, while building practices that incorporate emerging knowledge and legal requirements. It is critical that research goes beyond those sources that maintain the status quo but rather put an emphasis on our collective learning edge. This can be accomplished when supported by structures that reward trying new things, seeking deeper insight, and disseminating lessons learned.

Systems Change

Local organizations maintain a role as the "hub" for local systems change across a wide range of institutions and systems. Most common examples include the criminal justice, health care, and education systems. While these may be emphasized in much of the work, a social justice perspective naturally leads to an understanding that system change applies to a much broader range of institutions, especially those that have the potential to create barriers for members of marginalized communities. Local programs need to be supported in actively taking the role of change agent, and name and advocate around the way that white and class privilege are at the root of institutional barriers. When local programs take this role, they must be supported with resources, mentoring, problem solving, based in deep understanding of the historical and cultural roots of oppression. This work is foundational to social change.

Peer to Peer Leadership Development and Mentoring

A comprehensive TA initiative must attend to the development and support of leaders. Especially in the work of S/DV programs, many of the leaders of organizations draw on motivations from personal experience and then become leaders. This process can be best supported through peer to peer relationships that help people maintain perspective, draw on their strengths, help to clarify goals and paths toward achieving their goals, and break isolation. In order to be successful, efforts to support leadership development need to draw on the experiences of survivors and especially survivors who face inequities and barriers. Historically, many S/DV organizations have storied and complicated relationships to leadership. While leadership may be seen as an essential element to moving the work forward locally and statewide, leaders may often feel isolated and even attacked for their views and ideas. Supporting the development of leadership, within a culture built on white supremacy and class privilege is perhaps one of the foundational challenges and growth areas of our work.

Learning Communities

Issues that are emerging can be supported through the development of intentional learning communities. This definition, adapted from the Center for the Developing Child at Harvard University, describes Learning Communities as efforts that provide a space and a structure for people to align around a shared goal. They connect people, organizations, and systems that are eager to learn and work across boundaries, all the while holding members accountable to a common agenda, metrics, and outcomes.

These communities enable participants to share results and learn from each other, thereby improving their ability to achieve rapid yet significant progress.

There are large, well-researched bodies of knowledge about learning communities, communities of practice and purpose, and collective impact. Learning communities can be critical components for building distributed leadership and scaling promising practices by connecting organizations, agencies, and philanthropies who both share the community's goal and have the capability to operate at scale. The features of learning communities most relevant to our work are described below. Benefits of learning communities and how they can contribute to lasting social change:

Connecting people. Learning communities convene change agents across sectors, disciplines, and geographies to connect, share ideas and results, and learn from each other. Communities may work together in-person and virtually.

Setting goals and measure collective progress. These communities align participants around common goals, metrics (ways of measuring achievement), theories of change, and areas of practice.

Enabling shared learning. Communities share learning from both successful and unsuccessful experiences to deepen collective knowledge.

Supporting distributed leadership. The scope of a learning community allows it to offer a wide range of leadership roles and skill-building opportunities.

Accelerating progress toward impact at scale. These communities facilitate fast-cycle learning, measure results to understand what works for whom, and bring together the key stakeholders who can achieve systems-level change. (Adapted from material published by the *Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University.*)

Culturally Specific Program Development

Culturally specific program development must be based in foundational information about oppression, privilege, culture, and marginalized communities and a working knowledge and application of intersectionality. Based on this approach, we can continue to learn from and support culturally specific work and in turn could advance the knowledge and capacity across the state of access for marginalized communities.

Role Specific Affinity Groups

Many staff of local organizations express a desire to meet with and know others in similar roles across the state. Since most organizations and programs are relatively small, it is more likely than not that staff members may be the only or one of very few people with their role. A TA program would benefit from support in gathering people together with these shared roles. This could be done using a learning community model or through one time networking and training experiences. Some groups that would benefit from this work include people with similar roles such as counselor/advocates, shelter directors, legal advocates, preventionists, children's advocates, medical advocates, and other outreach workers. Other groups who would benefit from this approach include people at various levels of responsibility and leadership including managers, program directors, people responsible for fundraising and finance, physical space, technology, and human resources.

Promising Practices

The movement to address sexual and domestic violence is dynamic and rapidly changing. Research developments and skill-based practice have been brought together through state and national partnerships, with the support of government and private funding. By engaging in the habit of asking key questions, trying practices, documenting learnings, and sharing knowledge, we continuously move closer to the goal of culturally relevant and survivor centered direct services and prevention. This section describes some of the ways that these practices have been adopted and adapted throughout the movement.

Getting to a Baseline Understanding

Proactive, direct communication is essential in leading organizational change. However, as advocates and providers of empowering, trauma informed services, some sexual and domestic violence organizational leaders may be apprehensive about laying out specific goals or directives. Explicitly directing standards or actions may be seen as antithetical to a survivor-centered empowerment approach, which is at the core of how providers have learned to do their job. Counselors and advocates are being trained and supported in individualized and holistic approaches, (i.e. "there is no 'right' answer, just what is right for you"; "I can't tell you what to do, these are some options as I see them, what do YOU want to do?" etc.). Often administrators are tasked with setting policy, protocols, and are responsible for adherence to ethical and/or legal standards of practice. For SDV organizations, unity more than uniformity should often be the desired outcome of organizational change.

The Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative (SADI) project describes the hard truths they faced and learned from as they embarked on multi-year, multi-organization, multi-million- dollar capacity building project with dual SDV and multi-service centers:

> "Programs must bravely engage in an honest and critical self-assessment that includes reflection on whether, as an organization, they are ready to say, "We don't know what we don't know" and to accept feedback in all areas, including those where they thought they were doing well. It requires openness to more radical change than mere minor tweaks to existing programs. Some of the key factors to make this shift include:
> • Openness to learning and change
> • Empowering leadership
> • Direct and ethical communication practices
> • Stability of leadership
> • Attention to vicarious and organizational trauma
> • Incorporating anti-racism/anti-oppression work
> • Critical self-reflection and honest self-assessment"
> > *Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative: Summary of Key Lessons*, (Townsend, p. 4)

Further, among national thought leaders who provide technical assistance, capacity building and organizational development support to community-based programs, there was significant alignment about inevitable challenges that often arise when engaging in true organizational change work. Engaging in meaningful organizational change of any kind always takes much longer than anticipated. The many layers of change and growth further complicate this statewide work. Change is constantly happening internally as well as externally. With more than 100 local organizations, some providing leadership statewide, we are imagining a statewide multi-pronged movement development process. Defining terms, processes, and historical context is essential. Every piece of work undertaken should be tethered to principles, mission or vision that has been developed by and agreed upon by the participants.

National TA and the Sexual and Domestic Violence Movement

Interviews of national technical assistance providers, Massachusetts SDV leaders, and organizational development professionals familiar with the SDV movement revealed a number of often-repeated qualities they believe are critical in developing a Massachusetts plan. Many of the qualities immediately below echo the content of the RFR Guiding Principles and the research that informed that process. According to our key informants, comprehensive capacity-building plan for sexual and domestic violence programs should be:

Guided by survivors and ensure they are represented throughout;
Grounded in social justice perspectives that reflect:
- a whole community/whole person approach;
- the intersectionality of oppression(s);
- a deep understanding of racial disparities; and
- a priority for leadership development of marginalized groups; issues of power/privilege, institutional/structural racism, and cultural respect/humility throughout the entirety;

A multi-pronged plan that is anchored by:
- a community-based, networked approach;
- a peer-to-peer component; and
- a meaningful mentoring plan;

A well-planned and flexible endeavor that:
- is proactive, not crisis-driven;
- has clear goals and measurable benchmarks;
- employs a "strategic thinking" and/or "learning loop" method of continuous planning and evaluation; and
- involves no "one and done" trainings;

Multi-layered:
- able to determine readiness for change through organizational assessments;
- provide work and learning opportunities for all levels of the organization, including board members;
- attend to organizational learning and individual adult learning styles; and
- involve movement and field building, identifying opportunities for programs to move forward together, developing critical mass to "move the movement."

National respondents highlighted the effectiveness of assisting local programs with community mapping and baseline assessment strategies that have demonstrated success in a variety of communities. Mapping tools and other community assessments are available online. Examples cited included http://www.healthycity.org/ and https://www.nsvrc.org/publications/nsvrc-publications-toolkits/listening-our-communities-assessment-toolkit.

Planning and Managing a Capacity Building Program

Relationships between the separate entities funded by the Division of Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention and Services to provide capacity building and technical assistance will require significant project management and ongoing facilitation among Division staff, Jane Doe Inc., and any other capacity building or technical assistance contractors. It is incumbent upon all partners to ensure that the community based programs experience a seamless CB/TA program.

This will require a full understanding of the plans of all capacity building and technical assistance providers, including provider meetings and any technical assistance that Division staff will deliver. These efforts need to be managed with a clear alignment among TA providers on philosophy, process, referrals

and communication vehicles and expectations. The goals of TA and the expectations for organizations and providers to communicate and/or maintain confidentiality need to be articulated. This is essential for organizations that will need to examine and assess their areas in need of improvement in the context of a TA program organized and administered through the entity that serves as their main source of funding. A well-managed event calendar, an understanding of teaching methods and adult learning styles, synergistic teaching and facilitation styles will be just a few requirements going forward. Sexual and Domestic Violence community based programs are engaged in intensive work in their communities and with individual survivors. Their time and concentration on the core work must be recognized and balanced with the volume of technical assistance, training and capacity building requirements by the Division and the Jane Doe Inc.

While the process for developing this guidance document was not designed as a formal needs assessment, several themes related to capacity building were often repeated in interviews conducted with key informants for this report. They include the need for partnerships and shared vision.

To maximize the effects of any investment in capacity-building funding, a strong and flexible relationship should continue to be actively nurtured between Jane Doe Inc., and the DPH staff. Key informant interviews have described the need for ongoing communication and collaboration in order to clarify roles and ensure alignment across organizations with regard to technical assistance, capacity building and program development.

Just as shared vision, shared goals and defined roles are a necessity for a successful networked capacity-building plan; they are also imperative among those charged with creation and delivery of the plan. Building relationships and good will must come before embarking on a new initiative. It is also critical that there is agreement about the roles and expectations between the funder, the coalition and programs.

Capacity Building Across Networks and Movements

After a two-year planning process in 2015-2016, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) completed the process of procuring more than $34M in contracts annually to 68 nonprofits for services to survivors of sexual and domestic violence. For the first time in 10 years, community based organizations and programs had the opportunity to bid on a unified procurement that included nine separate service models including comprehensive rape crisis centers, community based domestic violence services, emergency shelter, housing stabilization, children exposed to violence, intimate partner abuse education, supervised visitation, DV, substance misuse, and trauma shelter services, and services for communities experiencing inequities. The Request for Response (RFR) was anchored in a social justice framework and prioritized addressing disparities and gaps in accessibility for the most marginalized communities. New contracts commenced on July 1, 2017.

The procurement planning process was significant, tapping a diverse range of survivors, providers and other stakeholders to inform the framing of the procurement application. Now that programs funding decisions are made, the opportunity exists to ensure that an accessible, responsive and well-planned capacity-building program is available to support and address the systemic needs of the community-based organizations that will be providing these essential services to survivors.

Snapshot: The Massachusetts Network

The Massachusetts network of community-based sexual and domestic violence services providers is complex. Though there are similarities among them, the independent nonprofits providing services to survivors of sexual and domestic violence are diverse. Funded programs include organizations with annual budgets ranging from several hundred thousand dollars to many tens of millions.

The network consists of a broad range of 501(c) 3 nonprofits ranging from independent rape crisis centers and domestic violence programs to multi-service organizations such as the YWCA's and **community multi-service organizations**. In addition to organizations whose primary purpose is sexual and/or domestic violence programming, there are also several other funded models of community based services such as those located in hospital and healthcare settings, campuses and those doing prevention work. Over time, many programs have received funding from state agencies; in MA, the current funders include the MA Department of Public Health (DPH), the MA Office of Victim Assistance (MOVA) and the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS). Most direct service programs are funded by one or more of these sources. The majority, but *not* all are JDI members. There are also programs and organizations that are part of the Massachusetts SDV movement that do not receive DPH funding. These programs are often culturally specific or organized from a related field such as healthcare or faith communities. Together, these programs and organizations form an elaborate and integrated network. It will be important for a CB/TA initiative to tap into the field and culturally specific expertise available through the wide variety of organizations coming forward to participate in this work.

New Funding, New Approaches

With the establishment of the Division of Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention and Services at DPH, the corresponding change in staffing structure and reconfigured funding structure comes with new opportunities for the much of the funded sexual and domestic violence network. Roles must be specifically redefined in a transparent way so organizations know what to expect. This is true of all state funders and the disparate and distinct funding mechanisms and contractual oversight can be overwhelming for funded programs.

Questions raised through interviews with program directors included:
- What are the roles of funder and TA providers?
- What is the balance between these distinct roles?
- What are the qualities of TA providers that are most suited to the array of funded programs?

These questions are not unique to Massachusetts. The survey of coalition leaders reveals that clarity of roles between coalition staff and the state funders is often challenging. Two comments from the survey describe familiar scenarios. One coalition survey respondent wrote:

> "We (are) meeting regularly to coordinate our efforts, and it is part of our contract with one of our state funders to provide intensive assistance upon request. Nevertheless, there is more overlap/duplication/confusion than I would like to see!! This has become more of an issue as people "from the field" have become staff at state agencies--they have vast experience that they bring to the job and want to use and they jump in and take on both TA and capacity building that historically was done by the coalition." - Survey of State Coalitions, 2017

Another respondent spoke to coalition and funder role confusion:

> "Our funder does this primarily through training attached to STOP Funds (these are usually mandatory for STOP recipients). Occasionally they offer some other sort of training, usually randomly, i.e. they got some funding or they found a trainer they like. They seek our input on all of this. There have been times when the funder's capacity building has impacted ours or when they are actually doing the work of the coalition." - Survey of State Coalitions, 2017

There is a difference in status and position that must be acknowledged and addressed. This theme comes through strongly via the national informants, as well as from local leaders. Funding agency staff (DPH in MA) see themselves as and act as champions of the programs and many have worked on the provider side in the past, so they deeply understand both "sides"; yet, it is also incumbent upon any funding agency staff to understand how their role as funder is perceived.

In Massachusetts, many community-based sexual and domestic violence programs are already networked through JDI membership, suggesting that the coalition is well suited to engage in a networked approach to capacity building. Research for this document identified several areas of broad needs for capacity building that align with areas that JDI is already addressing with its members and other partners:

1. Accessibility (in many forms);
2. Meaningful survivor inclusion;
3. Leadership development, especially for people of color and people from historically marginalized communities;
4. The many impacts of trauma on the workforce;
5. Learning communities for SDV programs to deepen relationships and share resources.

Conclusion

We provide this report at this exciting and challenging juncture of our work. Our shared experiences and historical successful have launched a mature and pervasive movement. Conversations are happening within the public discourse that founders and leaders of the early movement might never have imagined. In Massachusetts, we stand on the shoulders of early leaders while we look to successes and approaches in related social change movement. This is a time of hope and growth, of action and resistance. Together, we have an opportunity to create a well-crafted and intentional approach to moving the work forward. While we can look back and see the many accomplishments and successes, we also know that survivors continue to need and desire more. And, it is based on our commitment to the wellbeing of survivors, their families, and their communities that we accept these challenges.

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