

## **IMPROVING ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY OF FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY-BASED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICE PROVIDERS**

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In 2006, members of a small church in rural southwest Idaho decided to go door-to-door to speak with area residents, most of whom were Spanish-speaking immigrants, to reach out and invite the mostly migrant workers to visit their church. Unexpectedly, they encountered numerous women who disclosed in the course of conversation that they had been victimized by domestic violence and were unable to connect with others in the community because of language barriers and a lack of transportation. The church pastor, himself a recent immigrant with poor English skills, reached out to Catholic Charities.

Around the same time, a small domestic violence service and advocacy organization in a nearby county received a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) to be an intermediary organization in a pilot program designed to make connections between domestic violence services and the faith community in rural areas. As an intermediary, this organization would assist OVW in attracting grant applicants, oversee the work of the funded applicants, and provide technical assistance (TA). Representatives of the newly designated intermediary organization also contacted Catholic Charities to ask if they knew of any churches that were working with victims of domestic violence. The church in southwest Idaho and the intermediary began working together, although this was complicated by the fact that neither the church nor its pastor had e-mail or Internet access. The overall goal of this collaboration was to help the church develop an outreach program for Spanish-speaking migrant women. It took a significant amount of time to build a trusting relationship between the two entities. Once that relationship was established, it took additional time to help the church apply for a small OVW grant to fund these efforts.

Although recommended by the intermediary organization for funding, ultimately the project was not funded by OVW. Nonetheless, the process and project highlight some of the possibilities and challenges of Charitable Choice, the provision included in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, a welfare reform law that clarified that faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs) could compete for federal funding on the same basis as other groups. Charitable Choice came to represent a key element of President Bush's Faith-based and Community Initiatives (FBCI). (For more information on the history and debate surrounding

Charitable Choice and the FBCI, see, for example, Ackerman & Burke, 2001; Black, Koopman, & Ryden, 2004; Carlson-Thies, 2003; Formicola, Segers, & Weber, 2002.)

This paper focuses on the organizational capacity issues that arose during the evaluation of the Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program Special Initiative: Faith-based and Community Organization Pilot Program—also known as the Rural Pilot Program (RPP)—funded by OVW. Four main questions are addressed: (1) What were the capacity needs of the pilot organizations participating in this program? (2) What were the differences between the faith-based and community-based pilot organizations? (3) To what extent does an intermediary model improve the capacity of faith-based versus community-based organizations? and (4) Do different forms of intermediary technical assistance delivery impact organizational capacity differently?

First, the paper presents the background on the RPP initiative, the needs in rural areas that gave rise to this program, and the importance of organizational capacity. This is followed by a detailed description of the evaluation, the data, the analyses, and the findings. Finally, the implications of the findings for policy, research, and practice are discussed.

## **BACKGROUND**

The RPP was designed to fill a gap in the provision of social services in rural areas. Most rural areas suffer from a lack of resources, low levels of economic growth, and limited service provision. Further, victims of domestic violence in rural areas experience an increased incidence of sexism and racism (Websdale, 1998). Service providers that do exist in rural areas often operate on shoestring budgets, with volunteers providing significant amounts of work despite limited availability of training and a reliance on personal rather than organizational resources.

To try to address these needs, the RPP provides small grants (\$10,000–\$100,000) to faith-based and community-based organizations in rural areas to provide domestic violence services through an intermediary model over a one-year period.<sup>1</sup> OVW intended this grant program to enable small grassroots organizations in rural areas to “create new avenues of partnership and collaboration between small faith-based and community organizations and law enforcement officers, prosecutors, victims’ advocacy groups, and other related parties” (OVW, 2005).

OVW selected an intermediary model to implement the RPP. This type of model is one in which a federal agency selects one or more organizations to fund, and these organizations in turn issue their own Request for Proposals (RFPs), receive and review funding applications, oversee subawardee work, provide TA, coordinate reporting, and receive and respond to reimbursement

requests. As federal functions are devolved to the state and local levels, intermediary organizations are seen as providing important support to FBCOs. Providing TA under this model to subaward FBCOs has been limited because of geography and funding levels (Hall, 2004; Klein & Wilson, 2005; Miller, 2004).

Three intermediary organizations were selected for the RPP. They were limited to the use of 20% of their overall budget for project administration and TA provision. One intermediary, Advocates Against Family Violence, provided subawards initially only in southwest Idaho; this organization is referred to as the regional intermediary. A second intermediary, the Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, provided subawards throughout Wyoming; this organization is referred to as the state intermediary. A third intermediary, the Faith and Community Technical Support Program, sponsored by Baylor University and the Montana Office for Victims, provided subgrants to rural communities across the nation; this organization is referred to as the national intermediary.<sup>2</sup> Each of the intermediaries provided different forms of TA and capacity support to their subgrantees. Only one organization, the state intermediary, required formal partnerships between both faith-based and community-based organizations to qualify for the grant.

Overall, the three intermediaries funded 54 subgrantees out of 176 applicants.<sup>3</sup> (For a list of the funded organizations, see Appendix A.) Of the applicants, two thirds were community-based organizations and one third was faith-based organizations. Only 31% of the applicants were funded. These organizations are spread around the country, but all are in rural jurisdictions.

### **Understanding Capacity Issues of FBCOs**

From the inception of this program, OVW expected that many of the FBCO applicants would have limited capacity and would require TA in many areas, from effective domestic violence programming to organization operations to organizational aspirations and strategy (OVW RPP Request for Proposals, 2005). Further, it was anticipated that faith-based organizations in particular would need assistance, a view that stemmed from the heterogeneity of these groups (Chaves, 1993); that is, the fact that religious organizations have varying types and levels of formalized organization that react differently to outside influences (Benson & Dorsett, 1971; De Vita & Wilson, 2001; Harris, 1998) as well as a reluctance among some faith traditions to acknowledge or support victims of domestic abuse (Lasco, 2001) because of the perception that to do so works against the goal of keeping marriages and families together.

Organizational capacity refers to a myriad of areas, including both functional capacity and the capacity to provide services. Typically, capacity comprises the following components:

management and operations, board of directors and governance, key allies, resources, program planning and implementation, and evaluation. A key question that drives an interest in organizational capacity is to determine what is the best way to ensure the sustainability of programs and organizations after federal funding ceases.

Six key factors have been found to be important to sustainability across different types of community-based organizations:

- the ability to develop a vision or legacy (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2001; Cutler, 2002; Hayes & Bryant, 2002; Kaufman, 2002; Wolff, n.d.);
- appropriate planning, evaluation, and commitment of key allies (Cutler, 2002; Hayes & Bryant, 2002; Kaufman, 2002; Kubisch et al., 2002; Schorr, Sylvester, & Dunkle, 1999; Wolff, n.d.);
- the capacity to create and strengthen collaborations and partnerships (Kubisch et al., 2002; Wolff, n.d.);
- sufficient funding and other forms of resources (Hayes & Bryant 2002; Schorr et al., 1999; Staggenborg, 1988);
- the ability to influence policy and change norms (Hayes & Bryant, 2002; Schorr et al., 1999; Staggenborg, 1988); and
- the ability to adapt to changing contextual factors (Hayes & Bryant, 2002; Imig, 1992; Minkoff, 1999; Schorr et al., 1999).

However, many challenges to sustainability have also been identified, including geography (Wolpert & Reiner, 1984); low levels of community social capital (Gomez & Santore, 2001); organizational size, age, and transitions (Minkoff, 1993); and tensions in collaborations around funding and planning (Banaszak-Holl, Allen, Mor, & Schott, 1998).

The evaluation team anticipated that these factors applied equally to faith-based organizations and secular community-based organizations, and that if the RPP intermediaries were successful in their service delivery, at a minimum by the end of the grant period the subawardees should be able to

- obtain funds, beyond the Pilot Program grants, that they most likely would not have otherwise obtained;
- make new connections to sources of volunteers and sources of in-kind support;
- access relevant TA that would not otherwise be obtained;
- improve their social marketing skills in order to increase exposure to grassroots groups, the public media, and endorsements;

- improve their organizational, administrative, and fiscal controls with such changes as approval as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation; and
- develop regular intensive and extensive organizational mentoring and coaching relationships with the intermediary (Wilson et al., 2005).

## **DATA AND METHODS**

The evaluation of the RPP includes a process evaluation, outcome evaluation, study of the value-added of a faith component, and a capacity study. The evaluation of capacity-building in this pilot program, which is the focus of this paper, was conducted using multiple approaches (also called a mixed-method design) in order to increase confidence in the findings. Capacity components were examined in six areas: management and operations, board of directors and governance, key allies, resources, program planning and implementation, and evaluation (see Appendix B). These areas comprise the most frequently talked about and used aspects of organizational capacity in capacity studies and were developed in part through an adaptation of the McKinsey and Company (2001) capacity assessment report and tool, as well as through the experiences of the Institute for Community Peace (ICP), a national violence prevention organization begun in 1994 as a public-private partnership, in working with grassroots community-based organizations to prevent an array of forms of violence. The questionnaire, focus group protocols, site visit protocols, and monthly telephone interview protocols discussed below were all developed around each of these areas.

To assess the effectiveness of the capacity-building portion of the RPP, a triangulated approach was used that included case studies of a subset of funded pilot sites (four from the national intermediary, two from the state intermediary, and two from the regional intermediary); precapacity and postcapacity assessments of all applicants, whether funded or not, which were delivered on-line (or on paper for those organizations unable to fill out an on-line survey); and focus groups conducted with all of the funded organizations. In addition, the intermediary organizations were interviewed monthly for 18 months and an OVW representative was interviewed once. All respondents were assured confidentiality.

### **Case Study Sites**

Case study sites were chosen to profile the different issues faced by faith-based as opposed to community-based grantees and newer as opposed to established organizations. Only organizations that received funding were included in the case studies. During the course of the grant, six of the eight case study sites were visited (two of the sites twice), and monthly telephone calls were held with each site.<sup>4</sup> The one- to two-day site visits were used to assess the organization's strengths and needs as well as their capacity to provide domestic violence

services. For each organization, the project director and other organization staff were interviewed. The site visits were also used for document collection. The monthly calls covered the activities of the organizations, the different capacity-building supports that the subawardees received, and their successes and challenges.

### **On-line Assessment**

An on-line, self-administered capacity assessment was sent to each of the applicants, whether funded or not, at the start and at the end of the subgrant year. Organizations that could not fill out the on-line survey because of technical limitations were given the option of filling out and returning a paper version or being “interviewed” via telephone with an ICP staff member who then filled out the on-line survey for the respondent. The response rate was 90.2% for preassessment funded organizations, 48.8% for preassessment nonfunded organizations,<sup>5</sup> 98% for postassessment funded organizations, and 28.8% for postassessment nonfunded organizations. Although the lower response rates from the nonfunded organizations are disappointing, they are not atypical of survey response rates in general. Nonetheless, the possibility exists that this lower response rate introduces some bias into the data, raising the possibility that the findings about the nonfunded organizations are not necessarily representative.

Each organization that filled out the assessment was entered into a raffle for a \$35 gift certificate, and five winners were selected for each of the pre- and postassessments. To analyze these data, a combination of descriptive statistics was used as well as measures of change by type of subawardee (funded versus unfunded, intermediary type, and faith-based versus community-based) between the start and end of the study. The analyses reported in the findings section include cross-tabulations, correlations, and difference of means and difference of proportions tests.

### **Focus Groups and Interviews**

The evaluation team convened a national meeting in Denver, CO, in September 2006, at which focus groups were held with the subawardees to discuss their capacity to carry out their work, areas of strengths and needs, the utility of the capacity support provided, and suggestions for program improvements. These data were used to augment findings from the case studies and capacity reports.

In-depth conversations with the intermediaries were held at the start of the grant period, as well as monthly telephone conversations throughout the grant period. The first conversation focused on capacity-building plans, whereas the actual services provided and the intermediaries’ perspectives on what did and not work well were discussed during the monthly conference calls.

In addition, each of the subawardee organizations was surveyed about their experiences with the intermediaries, particularly around the areas in which they received support and the value-added of the support received. The response rate for this survey was 88%. Finally, on-site visits to the offices of two of the intermediaries at the start of their grant were used to discuss their programs; for the third intermediary, this process and the information presented were observed at one of their regional TA meetings.

## **FINDINGS**

Among the organizations that responded to the capacity assessment, organizational age ranged from new at the start of the grant to 56 years, with a median starting year of 1997; suggesting that many, if not most, of the organizations were relatively young. There was no statistically significant relationship between organizational age and whether or not an organization was funded, contrary to the general belief that organizational age is a predictor of success in competing for grants.

These organizations were all located in rural jurisdictions around the country, although more were located in southwest Idaho and Wyoming because of the regional and state intermediaries in those areas. A third of the applicant organizations were faith-based. The primary programs and activities of the applicants included victim and legal advocacy, case management, and provision of shelters and counseling services, although there was a wide range of activities beyond these, including outreach to churches and the development of training programs to address faith-based approaches to providing domestic violence services. There was no statistically significant difference in the services provided between the successful and unsuccessful applicants.

### **Capacity Needs of the Organizations**

All of the organizations that applied for funding were in need of TA and support. However, the types of assistance needed differed from that anticipated by the original RFP. OVW expected that many of the subgrantees would need assistance with very basic operational functions, such as obtaining 501(c)(3) status. However, the application process screened out all but one of the 13 organizations that did not have 501(c)(3) status; in other words, 12 of the 13 organizations without nonprofit status at the time of the application were unsuccessful in securing funding.<sup>6,7</sup>

The areas in which the organizations needed the least assistance (as determined by self-report) included (1) identifying benchmarks for evaluation (4.9% reported that they needed help in this area), (2) acquiring in-kind resources (4.7%), (3) developing a vision/mission statement (2.3%), (4) volunteer management (2.3%). and (5) obtaining 501(c)(3) status (2.3%). All of these, except

one, corresponded with observations from site visits. All of the organizations visited had a nonprofit status and had previously identified mission and/or vision statements. Also, they were all skilled at managing volunteers and acquiring in-kind resources—a reflection of the limited resources with which they operated in isolated areas, requiring that they be creative in attracting “free” resources.

The only disconnect in these findings that emerged from the case studies concerned identifying benchmarks for evaluation. In large part, the organizations, other than counting the number of people served, were unfamiliar with evaluation strategies<sup>8</sup> and techniques, making this an area in which they all needed assistance, but only a handful recognized this need. The intermediaries did no better in identifying or responding to this. The one intermediary that had an in-house evaluation capacity had decided to provide primarily substantive as opposed to organizational assistance, whereas the other two would have needed to hire outside experts to assist in this had they seen it as a priority, which they did not.

### **Areas of Greatest Need**

The areas of greatest need, as reported by the subawardees, are more telling and include the following: (1) reporting to OVW (59.1%), (2) sustainability planning (38.1%), (3) budgeting (32.6%), (4) developing or changing operating policies (31.8%), and (5) staff training and development (27.9%). Universally, the subaward case study sites and the intermediaries conveyed reporting problems to OVW. The program was designed to make funding more accessible to small, resource-poor organizations with no prior experience applying for federal funding. As a continuation of this logic, the subawardees were not required to use the standard OVW reporting procedures; thus, new procedures were developed. The problem with this strategy was that the reporting requirement decisions were not made prior to the award decisions, and when made, the requirements were not uniform across the intermediaries. Related to reporting, approximately one third of the responding subawardees indicated that they needed assistance with budgeting; this was primarily related to questions and concerns about reclassifying costs and changing amounts within budget categories. All of these problems were satisfactorily resolved through consultation with the intermediary organizations.

Over one third of the organizations reported needing support in developing sustainability plans. Each of the intermediary organizations took a different approach to addressing this need. One intermediary used a listserv to distribute grant announcements to the subawardees as the announcements came in, although they did not provide assistance in writing or reviewing grant applications because of conflict of interest concerns. Another intermediary took a similar



approach but did assist with reviewing grant applications. The third intermediary collaborated with subawardees in putting together an application for a large federal grant program that was funded. However, after the award was made, decisions about how the monies were to be used and distributed produced disagreements among the intermediary and subawardees that ultimately resulted in arbitration.

Finally, approximately 28% of the subawardees reported needing assistance with staff training and development, which extended to volunteers as well. From observations and conversations with the case study sites and the intermediaries, this need was a consequence of operating in rural areas with limited resources. In rural areas where programs are operated by one or two staff members and a handful of volunteers, an individual taking a day away from work requires finding someone else to cover that person's position in the office or court, and money for travel and training fees, all of which are scarce. One of the intermediaries responded by providing telephone assistance, and sometimes bringing in expert consultants, to handle issues on a case-by-case basis. Another intermediary sent staff to the subaward sites and provided new staff and volunteer training, saving the organization staff time and resources. However, only a portion of the need that was expressed by the subaward organizations was met.

### **Differences Between Faith-Based and Community-Based Organizations**

Few differences were found between the faith-based and community-based organizations in the assessments, case studies, and focus groups. Where there were differences, they appeared in three areas: governance, funding streams, and volunteerism. Faith-based organizations were less likely than community-based organizations to have a board of directors overseeing their operations.<sup>9</sup> Of those organizations that do have such boards, there were some important differences between the groups concerning board membership. The faith-based organizational boards have fewer domestic violence experts,<sup>10</sup> but more clergy, ministers, and staff.<sup>11</sup> Although not unexpected, these differences have implications for each type of organization. For example, faith-based organizations have less expertise in domestic violence, whereas community-based organizations have fewer connections to the faith community.

With respect to funding streams, the faith-based organizations were less likely to have received government funding prior to applying for this grant.<sup>12</sup> While this was true for the faith-based applicants that received funding from this program, the relationship was stronger for organizations whose applications were not approved.<sup>13</sup> This finding highlights two key points. First, to the extent that one of the goals of the RPP was to reach faith-based organizations outside of mainstream government funding, the program, at least in this iteration, has been successful.

Second, these organizations were nonetheless not as competitive as the community-based organizations, suggesting that more might be done to support novice, particularly faith-based, organizations approaching this type of funding stream.

In regard to volunteerism, while faith-based organizations were, naturally, more able to recruit from churches,<sup>14</sup> the community-based organizations were much more likely to recruit through newspapers, radio, and television advertisements.<sup>15</sup> This translates into a real difference between the two types of organizations in the number of volunteers they were able to recruit. The median number of volunteers for faith-based organizations at the start of the program was 29; the number for the community-based organizations was 15.<sup>16</sup> Thus, despite the costly measures some of the community-based organizations use to recruit volunteers, the faith-based organizations attracted significantly greater numbers of volunteers, possibly because they have an engaged volunteer pool at their immediate disposal.

### **Improving the Capacity of FBCOs Using the Intermediary Model**

OVW required that 80% of the funds awarded to each intermediary organization be passed to the subawardees, such that only 20% could be retained by the intermediary organization for program administration and TA costs. Nonetheless, the intermediary organizations were able to provide a great deal of support to the subawardees, and the majority of subawardees reported that the TA they received met or exceeded their needs. Most of the subawardees perceived the evaluation meeting in Denver to be TA and were satisfied with the content of that TA as well. Because of the rural nature of the work of these organizations, simply connecting with others doing similar work served as assistance and support.

Positive changes in organizational capacity occurred within many of the funded organizations as compared with organizations that were not funded, although these changes were small. This finding was understandable given the short timeframe of the grant period. With 6 to 12 months to implement new or expanded programs, while at the same time working to increase organizational capacity to provide services and bolster organizational strength and sustainability, the subawardees were unlikely to display much difference, despite the good works and best efforts of the intermediary organizations.

### **Preassessment and Postassessment Changes**

Examining preassessment and postassessment changes by whether an organization was funded or not, there were changes in only a few areas. Appendix C displays the results only for those items that were statistically significant and not for those for which there was no change between the pre- and postassessments. Most of the positive changes were in the areas of management and

operations, boards of directors, and governance. The more interesting issue, however, is to what extent these changes came from the receipt of the grant itself versus assistance provided by the intermediary organizations.

The organizations that were not funded experienced few changes, but where there were changes, they were primarily negative. These organizations saw decreases in representatives from various sectors on boards of directors, including community members, community leaders, field experts, and clergy and ministers. They recruited volunteers from fewer outlets over the period, and some organizations that had previously relied on a volunteer base lost those as well. At the same time, however, they realized some gains. Nonfunded organizations increased managerial infrastructure during the period by developing human resource policies and management information systems. More importantly, there was an increase during the study period in the number of these organizations that received government funding. It makes sense that there might be such an increase for the organizations that were funded, but it does not necessarily follow that those that did not receive funding would also experience such increases. While it is not possible to know for certain given the current data, it may be that there was something about the process of applying for this grant program that either encouraged applicants, even unsuccessful ones, to pursue other government funding, or helped them to develop important local contacts to facilitate the process. Given the available data, other explanations cannot be ruled out, but this may potentially be a positive and unintended consequence of the program that deserves greater scrutiny in the future with similarly constructed programs.<sup>17</sup>

There were many more positive changes among the funded organizations over the grant period. First, subawardees increased their information technology capacity, with greater availability of e-mail (for organization employees) and the development of Web sites. Second, staff size increased among these organizations. This was the case for both the faith-based and community-based organizations. Both of these types of increases are directly attributable to the grant itself and not to the TA these organizations received—the increased funding allowed the organizations to pay for e-mail accounts, pay for someone to develop Web sites, and fund staff. To the extent that the case study sites are representative of the other funded organizations, much of the grant funds were used to hire paid staff among the individuals who had previously worked as volunteers. These organizations also realized increases in different segments represented in their boards of directors over the study period, notably community members and field experts. Rather inexplicably, the number of lawyers serving on boards decreased at the same time.<sup>18</sup>

Despite these capacity increases for the funded organizations, there were also areas in which the funded organizations appeared to experience a decrease in certain capacities. Each of these areas

reflected the more sophisticated components of organizational capacity, such as having a theory of change, strategic plan, fundraising plan, or having conducted asset mapping. In discussions with the case study sites, these organizations revealed that they did not fully understand some of the questions in the preassessment survey. Through exposure to materials in these areas given by the intermediaries, the evaluation meeting, and in interactions with the evaluation team, the organizations increased their knowledge (but not practice) and did not actually revert on these items through the course of the grant period. In short, they answered more accurately in the postassessment than in the preassessment survey.

### **Differential Impact of Intermediary Technical Assistance Delivery on Organizational Capacity**

Each of the three intermediaries provided TA in different ways and focused on different issues. The regional model implemented monthly meetings, which grantees were required to attend, that covered a range of substantive topics led by experts and also provided telephone or in-person TA on request, primarily about operational issues. The statewide model hired a full-time TA provider who regularly traveled to the different programs around the state and responded to telephone requests concerning substantive and operational issues. The national model divided the country into regions and held monthly conference calls with each region as well as one regional meeting, and in addition frequently provided resources to the subawardees via a listserv. The materials provided primarily concerned substantive issues.

Each of these delivery models possesses strengths and limitations. The national intermediary brought greater experience, contacts with national experts and funding, and the ability to leverage these resources to craft a TA program that included frequent information exchange via listserv and conference calls as well as the ability to respond to individual problems through their consultant network. The limitation of this model was that the national intermediary had fewer personal contacts with its subawardees, restricted to the meeting in Denver, its regional meetings, and visits to approximately one third of the subaward sites.

The statewide intermediary hosted a training meeting at the start of the award period that was open both to the programs that were funded and those that were not. Following that meeting, all other TA was provided through telephone calls and regular visits to the program sites by a staff member whose time was dedicated to providing assistance. While the subaward programs received more face-to-face time with the state TA provider, the content of that TA was less sophisticated than that provided by the national model.

Finally, the regional program, with the regular, mandatory contacts appeared to be the most promising of the models based on the amount and quality of contact and feedback from the subawardees. This system, however, faced significant challenges toward the end of the grant period because of a conflict between the subaward organizations and the intermediary. The intermediary organization partnered with the subaward organizations to cooperatively apply for federal funding through a different grant program and succeeded in obtaining that funding. However, when the new project was implemented, the subaward organizations felt they had been verbally promised resources that the intermediary organization did not deliver. The subaward organizations later lost this challenge in arbitration, but the conflict was avoidable. While the responsibility for the conflict resided with the subaward organizations for failing to read the fine print before signing on to the grant, the power imbalance between the organizations is such that forbidding intermediaries and their subawardees to enter into such arrangements during the course of a project such as this might be advisable, although such a rule could have far-reaching implications for many federal programs, and might not be welcomed by many subawardees.

A key question is whether one or another of these intermediary approaches translated into greater improvements for subawardees. Based on the current findings, the answer is not promising. None of the pre-post assessment differences could be tracked back to the different intermediary models. The only differences among the intermediaries came from the subaward assessments of the utility of the support they received from the intermediaries. Among over 30 capacity areas they were asked to rate, differences among the intermediaries came up in four areas: budgeting,<sup>19</sup> technology,<sup>20</sup> volunteer recruitment,<sup>21</sup> and data collection and management.<sup>22</sup> For each of these areas, the national intermediary received higher scores for helpfulness than the state or regional intermediaries.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY, RESEARCH, AND PRACTICE**

The evaluation of the RPP adds to a growing body of knowledge about the effects of regulatory reform and the FBCI, and the findings point to several ways to approach the RPP program in the future to enhance its reach and effectiveness. Despite some flaws, this demonstration has increased the capacity of many organizations in rural areas around the country to assist rural victims of domestic violence. The findings presented here also suggest that this pilot *may* have even helped those organizations that applied but were not successful in securing funding, perhaps by increasing their interest in applying for grant support.

FBCI is an example of the positive effects of policy innovation and diffusion. While it is difficult to make specific policy recommendations about working with faith-based and community-based organizations—as not all such organizations are the same nor do they have the same needs—some broad recommendations can be developed from this study. First, to the extent that improving organizational capacity and sustainability is a priority, federal granting agencies should consider committing to longer term funding if they intend for the programs they support to realize improvements in these areas. Second, agencies could improve the intermediary model by providing greater training and resources to intermediaries before the start of the programs, and setting guidelines to avoid conflicts of interest seen in the RPP.

These findings also suggest some lessons for program partnerships in leveraging limited resources. Domestic violence programs have heretofore been organized primarily by community-based practitioners who have historically not worked with the faith community and vice versa. But the RPP has demonstrated that these two sectors are not necessarily incompatible, and when they find common ground, they can extend the reach of their resources, particularly in resource-poor rural communities, and can provide more services to more women given increases in their capacity to do so.

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### **NOTES**

1. The period of the grant program spanned 2005–2007, but the grants themselves were only for one year. One of the three intermediaries experienced a significant delay in their funding approval and so their subawardees implemented their activities at approximately the same time as the subawardees of the intermediaries were approaching the end of their grant periods.
2. The only exception to this was for those areas covered by the Idaho and Wyoming intermediaries.
3. The discussion that follows pertains only to those 82 organizations that responded to both the precapacity and postcapacity assessments.
4. Other case studies were conducted for the outcome portion of the study but are not included here.

5. At the time the pretests were administered, applicants did not yet know whether or not their grant applications had been successful.
6. From chi-square test,  $p < .05$
7. It is not known if applicants were screened out intentionally due to their lack of 501(c)(3) status or on some other basis.
8. However, there was no unified approach to counting people that used services. To illustrate, Organization A counted an individual woman and all the services that person used as a “1” on their monthly activity report, while Organization B counted each specific service and interaction they had per client, resulting in a “12” on their monthly activity report. Despite that, the actual number of interactions were exactly the same between the two organizations.
9. From chi-square test,  $p < .10$
10. From chi-square test,  $p < .10$
11. From chi-square test,  $p < .01$  for both
12. From chi-square test,  $p < .000$
13. From chi-square test,  $p < .05$  and  $p < .01$ , respectively
14. From chi-square test,  $p < .05$
15. From chi-square test,  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .10$ , respectively
16. Difference of means significant at  $p < .10$  with means of 76.2 and 41.3, respectively. Controlling for organization size with staff as a proxy using regression analysis, the coefficient for the faith-based organizations is positive and significant at  $p < .10$ .
17. While it is possible that public funding was just generally more available during this period and all organizations reaped the benefits, looking at changes of available funds from OVW during this time, there are only negligible increases.
18. This change was seen primarily in the community-based groups, and there was no statistically significant change in lawyers on boards of directors among the faith-based groups.
19. From chi-square test,  $p < .05$
20. From chi-square test,  $p < .10$
21. From chi-square test,  $p < .05$
22. From chi-square test,  $p < .05$
23. The evaluation team made several requests to OVW for an interview about several issues, including communication with the intermediary organizations. While these requests were not granted, there was a 30-minute conversation with an OVW representative at the Denver meeting. This issue had not yet been brought to light and therefore was not discussed at that meeting.

**APPENDIX A:  
ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVING RURAL PILOT PROGRAM SUBAWARDS**

Advocacy & Resource Center	Sheridan, WY
Amherst County Against Domestic Violence	Amherst, VA
Archuleta County Victim Assistance Program, Inc.	Pagosa Springs, CO
Blount County CASA	Oneonta, AL
Boundary County Youth Crisis & Domestic Violence Hotline	Bonnars Ferry, ID
Break the Chain Against Domestic Violence (BTC)	Gun Barrel City, TX
Carbon County COVE	Rawlins, WY
CASA Womens Shelter	Pine Bluff, AR
City Life, Inc	Emmett, ID
Comite Civico Del Valle, Inc.	Brawley, CA
Crisis Intervention Services, Inc.	Cody, WY
Deaf Smith County Crisis Center	Hereford, TX
Desert Rose Foundation, Inc.	Martinsville, IN
Douglas Ecumenical Ministries, Inc.	Douglas, WY
Elijah Haven Crisis Intervention Center, Inc.	LaGrange, IN
Esther's Haven House, Inc.	New Orleans, LA
Evergreen Heights Mennonite Church-Advocacy	Caldwell, ID
First Christian Church–Cheyenne	Cheyenne, WY
Goshen Co. Task Force on Family Violence & Sexual Assault	Torrington, WY
Hawaii Family Law Clinic dba Ala Kuola	Mililani, HI
Hill Country Community Needs Council	Fredericksburg, TX
Holy Family Catholic Church	Booneville, KY
Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Johnson City	Johnson City, TN
Iva's Place, Inc.	Lenoir City, TN
Jennings County Council on Domestic Violence	Vernon, IN
Let's Talk, Inc.	Chesapeake, VA
Macoupin Community Health Centers, Inc.	Gillespie, IL
Mary's House (Ministry Alliance for Regaining Your Safety)	Pickens, SC
Mercy Ministries Shelter for Battered Women and Children	Cheraw, SC
Monroe County Community Health Access Committee	Madisonville, TN
Newton County D.A.W.N.	Jonesboro, AR
North Kingstown United Methodist Church	North Kingstown, RI
Options, Inc.	Monticello, AR
Ozer Ministries	East Palestine, OH
Park County Crisis Center, Inc.	Bailey, CO
Rock of Ages	Caldwell, ID
Rose Advocates, Inc.	Weiser, ID
Rural Enrichment and Counseling Headquarters, Inc. (REACH)	Hawley, MN
Safe Haven of Person County, Inc.	Roxboro, NC
Safe Passage, Inc.	Melbourne, AR
Safe Place Ministries	Boise, ID
Safeline, Inc.	Chelsea, VT
San Luis Valley Immigrant Resource Center	Alamosa, CO
Southwest Arkansas Domestic Violence Center	De Queen, AR
United Way of Colleton County	Walterboro, SC
Western Racine County Family Violence Community Coalition	Burlington, WI
Women's Crisis Center of Northeast Arkansas, Inc.	Jonesboro, AR



Women's Mountain Passages  
Women's Shelter of Hope, Inc.  
Wyoming Association of Churches  
YWCA of Oak Ridge  
Zoe Institute

Quincy, CA  
Hialeah, FL  
Cody, WY  
Oak Ridge, TN  
Tahlequah, OK

**APPENDIX B:  
CAPACITY EVALUATION COMPONENTS  
OF THE RURAL PILOT PROGRAM**

**Management and Operations**

- Accounting policies
- Accounting structures
- Human resource policies
- Operating policies
- Operating oversight
- Management information system
- Non-profit status
- Reporting
- Work within budget
- Managing transitions
- Physical infrastructure
- Technology
- Staff recruitment
- Staff training/development
- Plan for sustainability

**Board of Directors and Governance**

- Composition
- Leadership
- Clear role
- Board involvement/support
- Accountability

**Key Allies**

- Volunteer recruitment
- Volunteer training
- Volunteer management
- Institutional partners
- Community partners
- Governmental partners
- Faith partners (within)
- Faith partners (outside)

## **Resources**

- Diversified base
- Fundraising plan
- Grant writing
- Grants management
- In-kind resources

## **Program Planning**

- Mission/vision
- Strategic plan
- Program match/goals
- Needs assessment
- Asset map
- Long-term focus
- Reflection
- Practice theory development
- Community education
- Prevention
- Responsive/effective services
- Evidence-based practice
- Substantive expertise
- Training/qualifications

## **Evaluation**

- Theory of change
- Program reflects TOC
- Outcomes identified
- Benchmarks identified
- Data collection and management
- Mid-course corrections
- Process evaluation
- Output evaluation
- Outcome evaluation

**APPENDIX C:  
SUMMARY OF PREASSESSMENT AND POSTASSESSMENT CHANGES  
OF THE RURAL PILOT PROGRAM  
(DIFFERENCE OF PROPORTIONS AND MEANS TESTS)**

Component	Area	Funded	Not Funded
Management and Operations	■ HR Policies		+ (p<.05)
	■ MIS		+ (p<.05)
	■ E-mail	+ (p<.05)	
	■ Web site	+ (p<.05)	
	■ Staff size	+ (p<.01)	
Board/ Governance	■ Require board financial support	+ (p<.05)	
	■ Rep: Community member	+ (p<.10)	- (p<.10)
	■ Rep: Community leader		- (p<.05)
	■ Rep: Field experts	+ (p<.05)	- (p<.10)
	■ Rep: Lawyers	- (p<.05)	
	■ Rep: Clergy, ministers		- (p<.05)
Key Allies	■ No volunteers		+ (p<.05)
	■ Recruitment methods		
	■ Word of mouth		- (p<.05)
	■ Church/faith		- (p<.01)
	■ News		- (p<.05)
	■ Radio		- (p<.01)
	■ Internet	- (p<.01)	- (p<.10)
Resources	■ Fundraising plan	- (p<.05)	- (p<.05)
	■ Government funding	+(p<.001)	+ (p<.10)
Program Planning	■ Strategic Plan	- (p<.05)	
	■ Asset map	- (p<.05)	
Evaluation	■ Theory of change	- (p<.05)	

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