

Listening Session at the 2009 Discretionary Grantee Meeting

Summary of Comments and OVC's Response

INTRODUCTION & GUIDANCE

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) facilitated a Listening Session at the Discretionary Grantee Meeting held in March 2009. In preparation for the November 2010 Discretionary Grantee Meeting, we summarized the comments we received from the grantees and explain what OVC has done to respond.

While OVC was meeting the challenges of implementing the initiatives of a new Administration and awarding the additional \$100 million made available to OVC via the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), we have truly grappled with the feedback we received. The comments helped further our goals of supporting enhanced services and training and technical assistance to grantees while providing support in managing federal awards. OVC has delved into the thoughtful material the grantees provided to determine how best to address those concerns as we enhance our programs and refine the office procedures we use to work with our grantees.

We organized the comments into general categories in order to respond effectively and avoid too much repetition. OVC staff met with Acting Director Joye Frost, who encouraged us to analyze each comment/concern. To provide the grantees the most up-to-date information, we gathered input from OVC's Resource Center, OVC's Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC), as well as the Lockheed Martin team that revamped OVC's Web site.

In this document, we address the comments we received and provide existing and new information and resources. The comments are divided into six sections—Getting Started, Underserved/Unserved/Inadequately Served Populations, Technology Issues, Resources, Collaboration, and Strategy. Each section begins with a sampling of comments regarding the section's material and is followed by OVC's response. The comments are denoted by italics.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to reach out to Kathleen Gless, Victim Justice Program Specialist of OVC's National Training and Program Development Division (NTPDD). You can reach her by telephone at 202-307-6049 or by e-mail Kathleen.Gless@usdoj.gov.

GETTING STARTED

Many grantees are concerned about the process of getting a grant and getting to work on that project once it is awarded. We heard very clearly that there are a number of challenges in working with OVC, other offices within the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), and the internal processes we rely on to manage the grant operations.

*The grant application process itself could be streamlined. Using a concept paper submission process would narrow the pool of those who write full applications. An application can take 2–3 weeks, full-time, and that time could better be spent serving victims. There are a few systems in place to assist in this effort. OJP Grants 101 (www.ojp.gov/grants101) is a comprehensive, step-by-step tutorial that walks users through the entire grant writing and submission process. It is available on the OJP Web site (www.ojp.usdoj.gov/index.htm), under OJP Action Center. Another resource is the Toolkit for Federal Staff Who Work With Comprehensive Community Initiatives, also known as CCiTools (www.ccitoolsforfeds.org/). This is not just for federal staff, but a wonderful resource for any agency developing a comprehensive community initiative. It is important to note that all U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)/OJP grants and cooperative agreements are required to be peer reviewed and awarded competitively. OVC awards specific funding to projects with strategies that demonstrate a clear and concise project proposal. Concept papers do not have the specificity that applications provide. For programs such as Services to Victims of Human Trafficking, since Fiscal Year (FY) 2004, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and OVC have worked collaboratively to utilize funds appropriated through the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) to implement a multidisciplinary anti-human trafficking task force model designed to combat human trafficking. A concept paper would not fully address a complex project that supports the multidisciplinary model; however, OVC has solicited concept papers from the field (2005) through the National Field-Generated Solicitation for National Scope Training, Technical Assistance, and Demonstration Projects. In the same spirit—recognizing that the field has its fingers on the pulse of glaring gaps, common barriers, and creative results in promising practices—grantees have the opportunity during the OVC 2010 Discretionary Grantee Meeting to speak to these gaps, barriers, and promising practices during the Wednesday morning *Listening Session: Obtaining Input on Two New OVC Projects – HOPE III (Helping Organizations and Programs Expand)* and *Standards for Victim Service Programs and Providers* Through HOPE III, OVC looks to the field to reach consensus on how to move forward as we enter the next decades of the 21st century.*

The grantees suggested that OVC gather more input from the field to develop a strategic goal for a Request for Proposal (RFP) before the RFP is written. Through the HOPE III (Helping Organizations and Program Expand) project, OVC is doing this on a very broad scale. Through five projects under HOPE III, OVC is undertaking an effort designed to expand the vision and impact of the crime victim services field—helping to lay the foundation for the future. The organizations funded under this project in FY 2010 will work together to undertake a collective, comprehensive analysis of the current state of the crime victims’ field in the U.S. Each participant will conduct a critical portion of the analysis that will involve obtaining input from a wide range of stakeholders. Ultimately, what will emerge is a consensus document that provides a philosophical and strategic framework for defining the role of the field in the country’s

response to crime and moving the field forward in the future. The consensus document will include a blueprint for a demonstration project (or multiple projects) to implement the recommendations. Grants under HOPE III were awarded in September and the project periods began October 1.

It was agreed across the board that more needs to be done to make more people and organizations aware of the grant opportunities that are available.

The grantees suggested creating an orientation program to establish roles and expectations, timelines, and introduce mentors or other grantees working in the same arena. The orientation could also include guidance for using the forms, online resources, and the financial reporting requirements that are often a stumbling block for new grantees. The orientation could be in the form of a webinar or some other format that would be accessible to all grantees. OVC and OJP are both enhancing efforts to provide more guidance on the application and federal grant requirements. For example, through the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation, OJP program offices set up conference calls and provided direct technical assistance to applicants that helped orient the applicants and awardees to the process. OVC's trafficking team has established a similar approach with the FY 2010 Continuation Solicitations and the FY 2010 Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking program that were awarded in September 2010. OVC held conference calls to assist grantees in the development of their applications. OVC will hold in-person meetings with the Enhanced Model grantees to provide an orientation, similar to what was done for the OVC FY 2009 Services to Domestic Minor Victims of Human Trafficking grants awarded in September 2009.

*Grantees asked for more guidance regarding the use of Institutional Review Boards (IRB), both in the RFP and implementation stages. Knowing what elements to include, a guide suggesting which IRB to consider, and timeline requirements; a DOJ IRB available for those without their own connections; or someone with experience regarding utilization and criminal justice research would be helpful. In consultation with the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), OVC will include more information about the requirements for use of IRBs on its Web site, including a guide for IRB, timeline requirements, and a sample IRB request. In addition, OVC TTAC presented a webinar, the *Guide To Protecting Human Subjects*, which addresses the IRB application and review process that is accessible online at <https://www.ovcttac.gov/taResources/OVCTAGuides/ProtectingHumanSubjects/welcome.html>.*

Grantees noted the need for more technical assistance on evaluation, including how to work with evaluators, developing evaluation plans, and a list of vetted evaluators. OVC developed the Portal Page, which includes guides on Performance Measurement and Program Evaluation; Conducting a Needs Assessment; Hiring a Local Evaluator; and Protecting Human Subjects. These guides are accessible on the OVC TTAC Web site <https://www.ovcttac.gov/views/resources/dspResources.cfm>. OVC, in consultation with NIJ, will provide additional guidance for discretionary grantees on working with evaluators and how to develop viable evaluation plans early in the grant process. In addition, OVC will offer a breakout session at the grantees' meeting on reviewing evaluation methods and using performance measurements to enhance sustainability.

UNDERSERVED/UNSERVED/INADEQUATELY SERVED POPULATIONS

Underserved, unserved, and inadequately served populations of crime victims include those victims who, for cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, accessibility, or other reasons are underutilizing the benefits or services that are available.

The grantees asked that OVC continue its emphasis on vulnerable populations—elderly, individuals with disabilities, LGBTQ, non-English speaking, immigrants. Even more populations are at greater risk given the current economic climate. These communities are not on the radar. It takes a specialized form of outreach to reach these populations. Ensure the programs are adopting best practice approaches and focus on direct services. OVC continues its efforts to address underserved populations. One area where we are trying to make major inroads is in Indian Country. Right now, we have a level of support in this area that is almost unprecedented. There is an administrative priority to address many of the barriers identified through legislation, high-level coordination, and the provision of resources. OVC hosted a focus group on Human Trafficking of American Indian and Alaska Native Women and Children. A diverse group of experts participated in this meeting to discuss how human trafficking is affecting American Indian and Alaska Native women and children, which will help to inform DOJ's response to human trafficking in Indian Country. An OVC team is working on a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner/Sexual Assault Response Team American Indian and Alaska Native initiative to enhance existing services to victims of sexual assault and to develop new culturally appropriate, multidisciplinary programs that meet the needs of victims in tribal communities.

OVC funded Washburn University of Topeka's Joint Center on Violence and Victim Studies and the National Center for Victims of Crime to work throughout 2008–2009 on the National Professional Training Conference on Responding to Crime Victims With Disabilities. The conference was held in the fall of 2009 in Denver, Colorado, and was designed to enhance practitioner responses to victims with disabilities. The Disabled Persons Protection Commission in Quincy, Massachusetts, and SafePlace in Austin, Texas, both participated in the conference. These two organizations each have three subgrantee replication sites. The six sites were chosen to adapt and replicate the innovative multidisciplinary response model to crime victims with disabilities found in the Massachusetts and Texas programs. These projects are continuing to develop replication guides and training materials to increase reporting of victimization and ensure that crime victims with disabilities receive comprehensive, quality services and are afforded fundamental rights. FY 2010 funds were awarded to the National Center for Victims of Crime to partner again with Washburn University of Topeka's Joint Center on Violence and Victim Studies to develop a second National Professional Training Conference on Responding to Crime Victims With Disabilities, which is tentatively scheduled for November 2011.

Under the OVC FY 2009 ARRA – National Field-Generated Training, Technical Assistance, and Demonstration Projects solicitation, OVC awarded funding to FORGE, Inc., to begin remedying the problem of transgender sexual assault survivors who refuse mainstream sexual assault services by developing and providing training, technical assistance, and demonstration sites that improve the capacity of victim service providers and allied professionals to respectfully and appropriately provide services to and advance the rights of these victims.

With this award, FORGE will develop the following curriculum-related products: five publications; three webinars; three DVDs; establish a Multidisciplinary Advisory Council (MAC); provide on-demand technical assistance via e-mail and telephone through a “warm line”; four profession-specific self-assessment tools; select three or four diverse communities as sites for pilot testing materials and developing a transgender community/sexual assault provider partnership/coalition; and create a *Guide to Systems Change: Servicing Transgender SV Survivors*. These training and technical assistance products will include curricula-related materials and will be developed for victim service providers and allied practitioners. Additionally, FORGE established a MAC with six professionals across the disciplines who work with victims of sexual assault and will meet once a month through the life of the project. The MAC members assist FORGE with on-demand technical assistance via e-mail to professionals serving transgender sexual assault survivors and provide feedback on each of the products.

OVC released *In Their Own Words: Domestic Abuse in Later Life* in October 2010. This two-disk DVD package and training guide is aimed at a range of victim service providers and other professionals who work with older victims of domestic abuse. The new multimedia training package includes segments with victims, family members, victim service providers, and allied professionals; a montage of victim and advocate voices designed for use by policymakers; an interactive role play scenario to help recognize justifications for elder mistreatment; and a trainer’s guide with background information about the victims and discussion questions.

Another challenge for the victim services field is ensuring that service providers and leadership in the field reflect the demographic diversity of the crime victim population. OVC has convened a Diversity Working Group to address this issue, beginning with the TTAC consultant pool. The 20 members of the Diversity Working Group produced a summary report from the first meeting that has been circulated internally to each participant. A subcommittee of members with diverse areas of expertise and experience working with diverse populations met with the task of identifying the best ways to enhance the diversity of OVC’s consultant network. In addition, OJP has a Diversity Working Group. Its goal is to increase the diversity of the staff throughout OJP.

Also noted was the benefit of increasing access to linguistically appropriate, culturally sensitive services to victims of crime. The grantees asked for a commitment to provide translators to those who serve survivors (police, advocates, etc.); and that those translators be equipped to deal with crisis intervention. Translating and intervening in trauma can be difficult for someone who is not trauma informed, and untrained translators frequently suffer vicarious trauma. There is a program for interpreter services training from the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) technical services, but it needs standards and regional plans because a large number of clients need interpreter services. OVC funds and supports OVC Services to Foreign National Victims of Human Trafficking grantees that are enhancing the linguistic and culturally appropriate services provided to pre-certified victims of human trafficking. Part of the funding ensures that victim service providers are committed to providing interpretation and translation services and are equipped to deal with crisis intervention. Coupled with the interpretation services, OVC funds the Project Reach Trauma Center at the Justice Resource Institute to provide brief specialized mental health and crisis intervention services to pre-certified victims of human trafficking identified anywhere in the United States. The Trauma Center provides training and technical assistance on trauma and mental health issues to service providers, law

enforcement agencies, and other responders throughout the United States. Additionally, the OVC trafficking team and OVC TTAC held a conference call in September 2010 that highlighted best practices for working with trafficking victims from Latino communities.

Arte Sana's *Existe Ayuda (Help Exists)* toolkit is an amalgamation of replicable Spanish-language outreach tools and training resources to help improve the cultural competence of service providers and improve the accessibility of services for Spanish-speaking victims of sexual violence. Arte Sana has collaborated with Latina victim service providers, immigrant rights advocate groups, and community-based social service professionals across the Nation to develop and pilot test the outreach tools and training materials. More than 36 agencies, including state sexual assault coalitions, rape crisis centers, and shelters for homeless immigrants, have been involved in the Existe Ayuda project. As a result, Arte Sana has developed fact sheets, palm cards, answering machine scripts in Spanish for use by state coalitions and rape crisis centers, a *promotora* or community health worker training presentation, public service announcements, and a glossary of sexual assault and human trafficking terms. OVC anticipates that the toolkit will be released in the winter of 2011/2012 on the OVC Web site.

Grantees asked for opportunities for cross-training for underserved populations, such as advocates training each other and mainstream agencies. OVC TTAC's training schedule includes a new workshop, Working With Victims With Disabilities. For training of trainers, grantees can try the Ultimate Trainer. Providing Culturally Competent Services to Victims of Crime is another OVC TTAC training relevant to reaching underserved populations.

The OVC Resource Center (OVCRC) coordinates, on behalf of OVC, the HELP for Victim Service Providers Web Forum. The Web Forum allows victim service providers and allied professionals to share best practices. Multiple sessions have been held to address best practices for assisting underserved populations, such as crime victims with disabilities and LGBTQ survivors of violence, victims of sex trafficking, adult survivors of child abuse, and victims' rights in tribal courts.

TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

Improving the technological compatibility between grantees and the Federal Government.

The grantees expressed concern about the lack of computer compatibility between their computers and the Grants Management System (GMS). The categorical pdf form on GMS is not compatible with grantees' Adobe Reader 9. Also, the "validation" of the report will not upload if certain fields are not filled in. This is a problem when a grantee has a new grant and no data to report yet. There are no OVC pdf forms containing "validation." The only office that uses pdf forms containing validation, required to upload to GMS, is OVW. If a grantee is trying to use an OVW form, it is correct that the forms are currently only compatible with Adobe Reader 8 and not Reader 9. OJP is undertaking a redesign and fix for the forms to work with Reader 9. This change is due out by the end of the 2010 calendar year. In the meantime, the grantee must downgrade Adobe Reader to version 8 to use the forms. If you would like the instructions to

downgrade, please contact Kathleen Gless (Kathleen.Gless@usdoj.gov), and she will send you the electronic instructions.

Grants.gov is not user-friendly; it is confusing. It is difficult to ensure that the desired documents are pulled down for the correct grant. It would be helpful if Grants.gov maintenance personnel review what is uploaded before it is activated. It is important to note that DOJ/OJP and OVC do not manage Grants.gov; however, there have been improvements to Grants.gov to better assist potential applicants. For example, the iPortal, where users can access live chat, is available 7:00 a.m. through 9:00 p.m. eastern time. There is also a Help tab on Grants.gov that provides general FAQs, troubleshooting tips, Public Law 106-107 FAQs, glossary, stakeholder webcast(s), and related links. Additionally, Grants.gov has a Contact Us link where potential applicants can access the iPortal and the Grants.gov Contact Center, via phone or e-mail, which operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Online resources could be more streamlined and accessible to grantees. Between the OVC, OVC TTAC, and OVCRC Web sites there are a lot of resources to sift through, and often the grantees don't know what is available. A guide to resources or mandatory training upon receipt of funding would make the resources more accessible and easier to navigate. Both OVC and OVC TTAC just launched new Web sites, and both are much easier to use. One focus for the design of the new Web sites was to make OVC's resources more streamlined and accessible to grantees. Grantees' comments and concerns are encouraged. There will be an opportunity to provide feedback to OVC TTAC at the OVC Discretionary Grantee Meeting.

Providing technical support to the grantees with software, conference calling, webinars, database systems, guides, how-to availability, best practices, statistical gathering, and surveys would increase their ability to collaborate, communicate, and better serve clients. That would also allow them to keep up with technology as it moves forward. The OVC program specialists have access to the DOJ Conference Call System and can assist grantees in accessing this tool to set up conference call meetings. This tool requires coordinating with the program specialist. Currently, the OVC Resource Center develops monthly Web Forum Guest Host Sessions that address a wide range of victim-related topics. Additionally, OVC is always looking for ideas regarding webinars and encourages grantees to share any innovative technical support ideas.

As part of OJP's Evidence Integration Initiative (E2I), OJP is developing the *Crime Solutions Resource Center*—kind of a “what works clearinghouse”—a searchable, online database of evidence-based programs and practices encompassing a broad range of criminal justice, juvenile justice, and victims' topics. The database will include programs and practices that were evaluated with a rigorous research design and published from 1980 to 2010, addresses one of the topics mentioned above, and documents program implementation. The database will also include programs for which there is rigorous evidence that the program does NOT work.

Specific to OVC Human Trafficking Service Provider grantees, the OVC trafficking team has developed and continues to enhance the Tracking Information Management System (TIMS), a downloadable database tool that assists OVC human trafficking grantees to manage case and client information while simultaneously tracking data to meet OVC's semi-annual performance measures. OVC TTAC provides (1) technical assistance and going training on the use of TIMS,

(2) one-on-one technical support to enter data, create reports, and submit data to OVC and OVC TTAC, and (3) periodic information to OVC grantees about human trafficking trend data after conducting an aggregate analysis of all grantee data for OVC. OVC is now in the process of developing TIMS Online to simplify and strengthen the data entry and reporting process for OVC grantees. It is anticipated that TIMS Online will become live in late 2010 or early 2011. Additionally, the OVC trafficking team and OVC TTAC hold monthly training and technical assistance conference calls for human trafficking grantees to address a broad range of topics. These topics are specific to requests, concerns, and gaps in the human trafficking victim service field.

RESOURCES, TRAINING, AND SUSTAINABILITY

This section covers all aspects of funding and training resources.

All resources required for the project should be funded (budget scrutiny); however, hiring outside evaluators and requiring attendance at expensive conferences seems unjust and unnecessary when victims' needs are so significant. For example, if expanding services to reach groups that require interpretation services, ensure that budget shows a line item to compensate the organization or consultant providing that service. Specific to OVC Services to Victims of Human Trafficking and OVC Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking, the awarded grantees submitted budgets with a budget line item that set aside funding for each of the victim services under the comprehensive victim service model, including, but not limited to, interpretation and translation services.

Domestic trafficking victims are not covered in trafficking funding and victim assistance grants. OVC expanded the scope of its human trafficking initiative in 2009 by competitively awarding funding to three victim service organizations to develop comprehensive victim service models for U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents under the age of 18 who are identified as victims of sex and/or labor trafficking. The three awarded programs were Safe Horizon (New York, New York); Salvation Army Metropolitan Division (Chicago, Illinois); and Standing Against Global Exploitation (SAGE) Project, Inc. (San Francisco, California).

Additionally, with funding from OVC, NIJ competitively awarded a 3-year grant to the Research Triangle Institute (Research Triangle Park, North Carolina) to conduct a participatory process evaluation of the three demonstration projects. In 2010, OVC and BJA collaborated on a joint solicitation. This program seeks to overcome challenges of restrictions limiting task force activities according to victim population by funding up to three task force sites that will take a comprehensive approach to combating all forms of trafficking—sex trafficking and labor trafficking of foreign nationals and U.S. citizens (male/female, adults and minors).

To address the question of evidence-based versus ideologically based practices, OJP developed the Evidence Integration Initiative (E2I). The goals of E2I include: improving the quantity and quality of evidence that OJP generates through its research, evaluation, and statistical functions; integrating evidence and research into program and policy decisions; and

improving the translation of evidence into practice in the field. OVC will include a presentation on E2I at the November meeting.

Grantees suggested that OVC create a central information bank on OVC TTAC discussing current findings, best practices, and public information in order to avoid re-inventing the wheel. As part of this effort, OJP is developing a Crime Solutions Resource Center—a Web-enabled database intended to provide practitioners and policymakers with a single, credible source for evidence-based information on what works and what is promising in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victimization policy and practice. OVC’s information clearinghouse, the OVC Resource Center, is managed by the National Criminal Justice Reference Service. Information and resources are available by telephone (1–800–851–3420), e-mail, and through the Web site at www.ncjrs.gov.

As part of the President’s Open Government Plan, OVC posted samples of successful discretionary grant applications that were awarded. These samples can be found on the OVC Web site under Grants and Funding. In addition, OVC plans to include a list of all current OVC-funded discretionary grantee programs on its Web site.

OVC has spearheaded the development of an online resource e-Guide for both established and newly formed trafficking task forces. This e-Guide is compiled largely from the experiences of professionals in victim service organizations and law enforcement officials at local, state, and federal levels. It will serve as a useful tool that has been carefully screened and evaluated by anti-human trafficking professionals from throughout the U. S. and at all levels of the effort.

OVC has maintained the Human Trafficking Grantee Learning Community. The Learning Community is used to share important documents and resources, including relevant policies, new strategies and changes to federal regulations, new resources and tools developed by the field, and important updates from OVC, the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and other federal partners.

There is concern that if a grant ends and another grantee is awarded the funding, with no previous collaboration, efforts are repeated and time is lost. It is the policy of OJP, through the Office of the Assistant Attorney General, that all discretionary grants are offered competitively. Any deviation from this policy requires signature approval from the Assistant Attorney General for OJP. Federal grants have an end date. All grantees should look at sustainability from the beginning.

By applying a regional approach to education and cross-training, OVC TTAC will consider supporting related technical assistance sessions and training workshops simultaneously or consecutively. OVCRC coordinates, on behalf of OVC, the HELP for Victim Service Providers Web Forum. The Web Forum allows victim service providers and allied professionals to share best practices. Each month, OVC convenes a technical assistance conference call to support OVC grantees to address common challenges, increase communication, provide updates on important information and activities pertaining to their work, and provide grantees with an opportunity to present their work or discuss emerging trends and issues with their peers.

It was suggested that practitioner-driven conferences might be effective in addition to federal employee presentations, and that participant sharing be formalized. Include non-OVC grantees in presentations where relevant (particularly valid in trafficking services). Conferences could be recorded because frequently there are multiple sessions that grantees could benefit from, but there are time conflicts onsite. Grantees suggested more advanced trainings through OVC TTAC and more online trainings to reduce costs.

Sensitivity training for law enforcement officers can help them understand that sometimes a person who has engaged in behavior that looks criminal is a victim. OVC has a grant through the International Association of Chiefs of Police that seeks to change the culture of law enforcement to recognize there is always a victim in the equation of everything they do. OVCRC, on OVC's behalf, coordinated a Guest Host Session with Tim Woods from the National Sheriffs' Association on Responding to Victims of Crime, and coordinated three more Web Forum Guest Host Sessions during 2010 that were marketed to law enforcement.

Direct services staff are typically grant-funded, administrative staff rely on general funds, and donations are down. It is not cost-effective to create programs that work, develop expertise, and then have programs die when some should be expanded, replicated, or continued. Grantees could use more training and resources on sustainability planning. OVC discretionary grants are used to fund national-scope demonstration projects and training and technical assistance delivery to enhance the professional expertise of victim service providers. The discretionary guidelines do allow some funding to support hiring of victim assistance and administrative project staff whose positions are clearly linked to the awarded project strategy. OVC has two direct service programs—Tribal and Services to Human Trafficking Grantees—that support direct service providers and supports administrative staff whose positions are clearly linked to the project strategy. Victims of Crime Act of 2000 (VOCA) formula funds can be used to support services to victims.

OVC is aware that sustainability is a major issue for the victims' field. Since 2002, OVC has systematically emphasized sustainability in all solicitations, encouraging grantees to focus on sustainability from the beginning. The new OVC Web site has suggestions, strategies, and trainings to assist grantees with staffing and sustainability concerns. In addition, HOPE III will include a comprehensive analysis of the current state of the victims' field, the overarching needs of victim service organizations, and the resources available. The analysis would involve, at a minimum, assessment of the needs of both fledgling and established organizations; the challenges and obstacles that exist for victim service organizations; and existing resources that may highlight sustainability planning for the field.

Grantees should continue to explore all funding avenues, such as OVW, BJA, HHS, Department of State, and foundations. Additionally, OVC TTAC offers an online resource—the Strategic Planning Toolkit. Materials on sustainability are included in the Strategic Planning training, as well as in the new training on grant writing and other funding strategies.

COLLABORATION

Grantees working together and with federal agencies.

Grantees are looking for increased intergovernmental collaboration and coordination with other agencies, including DOJ, and the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, and Commerce. Perhaps a federal mandate for coordination across agencies to ensure DOJ agencies utilize OJP/OVC discretionary grantees, services, and programs in their efforts, and that they respect, communicate with, and coordinate with OVC. Include special conditions for formula grantees (VOCA administrators) to communicate and coordinate with discretionary grantees and a special condition could include that services be provided by discretionary grantees in formula grants (e.g., use legal services to do immigration visa work, and use attorneys for crime victim compensation work and victims' rights work). Better coordination and collaboration among DOJ, federal agencies, discretionary grantees, and VOCA formula grantees is a goal for OVC. OVC is hosting a series of quarterly VOCA administrator meetings to ensure coordination of programs and services. In addition, OVC is updating the VOCA Guidelines and understands the need to address emerging issues such as legal services for victims of crime. In addition, OVC will share a list of all discretionary grants by state with state VOCA administrators on the new OVC Website. One focus for the design of the new Web sites was to make OVC's resources more streamlined and accessible to grantees so they can further collaborate and coordinate direct services at the local level. There will be an opportunity to provide feedback to OVC TTAC at the OVC Discretionary Grantee Meeting.

OVC and BJA co-hosted the first Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force Regional Training Forum in December 2009 and another in January 2011. The Forums attracted BJA-funded law enforcement task force grantees; OVC-funded victim service providers; and independently or state-funded task forces to share promising practices, promote coordination, and enhance their existing skill sets. OVC will be hosting two more Forums before September 2011.

OVC supported the efforts of DOJ in planning and executing the 2010 National Conference on Human Trafficking. The conference was designed to show best methods and practices for investigating and prosecuting human trafficking and assisting victims. The audience included federal, state, and local law enforcement representatives and victim service providers. Additional participants included representatives from other relevant nongovernmental organizations and federal and state agencies engaged in combating human trafficking, including the Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, State, Homeland Security, and Defense.

Grantees are asked to work collaboratively, but reporting guidelines do not reflect those efforts, and can place the grantee in competition with their collaborative partners over the numbers. More guidance for human trafficking task forces or multi-agency projects would help communication in regard to different priorities, legal/organizational restrictions (confidentiality) and different terminology ("certification"). One proposed solution is to consider housing programs together both for pre-proposal communications and once projects are underway.

Trafficking grantees suggested that facilitators with no vested interest and without an affiliation organize, mediate, and facilitate the different components of interdisciplinary trafficking projects.

Improved communication among DOJ agencies will help manage the overlap of funding. Some grantees have grants from OVC and BJA or NIJ, and they are interested in guidance on issues such as a comingling of funds. OJP issued a global funding proposal in FY 2010 for the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation. This coordinated solicitation combines most of DOJ's available tribal government-specific competitive grant programs into one solicitation. That means a tribe will only have to submit one application for all of the programs.

The grantees would like more communication from OVC, more calls from the grant monitor, and more guidance on the Cooperative Agreement. They suggested sending regular electronic communication from OVC on success stories or other outstanding achievements, awards, or events. OVC program specialists, also known as grant monitors, are available to grantees during office hours. OVC continues to encourage grantees to reach out over the phone or by e-mail with any questions or concerns. Grantees can also request to schedule a phone conference call with their partners and OVC to discuss deadlines, reporting requirements, or managing a federal award. OVC shares success stories and outstanding achievements, awards, or events with OVC, OJP, and DOJ leadership. For example, many success stories that grantees share in their bi-annual progress reports are included in the AG Annual Report, the OJP Accomplishments report, and the AG Human Trafficking Report to the White House.

Grantees requested more linkages between one another. Some of the suggested forums included online discussion boards, grantee webinars, and targeted sessions at grantee conferences and regional meetings. OVC TTAC offers education and cross-training, more opportunities to share knowledge, practices, and processes among grantees, across states and regions, and ways to connect them by managing conference calls, webinars, learning communities, and other online venues. With OVC's approval, Lockheed Martin will reach out to discretionary grantees to determine Web Forum Guest Host Session topics for 2011 that might best address their needs, such as Collaboration Between Victim Service Providers and Law Enforcement. OVCRC, on OVC's behalf, manages the OVC National Calendar of Crime Victim-Assistance Related Events, which can be used to locate conferences/events/workshops that might be duplicative of an event a grantee is planning. This might encourage a grantee to reach out to the conference coordinator of a planned event and pool resources to host one event.

STRATEGY

Suggestions for short- and long-term strategic planning.

A relatively small number of staff at OVC means that when there is turnover, it has a big impact. Grantees are encouraged to have transition plans in place for turnover and would like to see something similar at OVC. Any turnover at OVC creates a need for improved transition protocols. The goal is to reduce the amount of disruption to the grantee caused by the transfer. Mandatory grant transfer meetings between the two OVC employees and the grantee should help

reduce the inherent problems. Technical assistance for organizational turnover could include a review of work plans, documentation, OVC resources, and database needs to address changes in staff knowledge. By request, OVC TTAC can provide succession planning training, but as part of a larger, more comprehensive session on continuity of operations planning.

The grantees asked about efforts to support prevention. Without any statutory obligation to support prevention, OVC collaborates with many federal agencies (such as the Federal Trade Commission, whose core mission includes consumer protection and prevention messaging) to ensure direct victim assistance referral protocols are in place to assist victims. OVC also works with BJA through its Justice Assistance Grant program to allow funding for victim assistance. These funds may be used for crime prevention efforts as well as direct victim assistance.

The grantees recommend that OJP clearly communicate its overarching vision, goals, and strategic plan for DOJ, OJP, and OVC to ensure we are all working to serve those goals. The strategic planning process ensures alignment among the Department's strategic direction, OJP's policy priorities, and OJP's bureaus and offices. The OJP Strategic Plan for FYs 2007 through 2012 describes the underlying issues and situations facing the United States' criminal and justice systems at the state, local, and tribal levels and how OJP is responding to them. It emphasizes the importance of partnerships between OJP and state, local, and tribal governments. Most importantly, the plan communicates the challenges that OJP faces in prioritizing increasing demands for resources and how it will address these challenges. The OJP Strategic Plan provides a framework to focus funding in order to optimize the return on investment of taxpayer dollars. In addition, OVC looks to the field to reach consensus on how to move forward as we enter the next decades of the 21st century through the HOPE III initiative. HOPE III will lay a strong foundation for OVC's future program planning, and communicating our overarching vision, goals, and strategic plan.