

INTERSECTIONS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

National Organizational Advocacy Roundtable

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Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence. (2016). *Intersections of Human Trafficking, Domestic Violence, and Sexual Assault*. Oakland, CA: Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence.

INTRODUCTION | FRAMING

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Program (FVPSA) convened a national Roundtable on the *Intersections of Human Trafficking, Domestic Violence, and Sexual Assault* designed to inform the advocacy community, the FVPSA Program and federal partner agencies - the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and the Office on Victims of Crime (OVC) about the needs, challenges, and intersectionality of trafficking and domestic and sexual violence.¹

The Roundtable's goals, aligned to those of the [Federal Strategic Action Plan on Services for Victims of Human Trafficking in the United States, 2013-2017](#) set out to (a) identify the challenges and success of models and strategies to deliver survivor-centered, trauma-informed services; (b) articulate policies that sustain coordination without causing unintended consequences; and (c) build capacity across federal, state, national, and local agencies and systems. The Federal Strategic Action Plan contains approximately 250 action items across federal agencies to build collaboration, coordination and capacity across federal, state, national, and local agencies and organizations. A core value of the Federal Strategic Action Plan is that services be survivor-driven – so victims and survivors of trafficking play a key role in elevating understanding and awareness of the problem, improving service delivery; and informing policy.

William Bentley, former Associate Commissioner of Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB); Katherine Chon, Director, Office on Trafficking In Persons (OTIP) Administration for Children & Families; and Marylouise Kelley, Division Director of the FVPSA Program offered compelling opening remarks. They all spoke of the growing need for building and sustaining coordinated systems of service provision; integrating anti-trafficking responses across systems; providing training and technical assistance; increasing the capacity of domestic violence programs to serve trafficked victims; and highlighting their expertise and knowledge to inform survivor-centered practices and policies.

The Roundtable's purpose was to discuss the work of advocates, lessons learned and to uplift the conceptual and philosophical underpinnings of domestic violence programs and how their approaches support trafficking survivors. To that end, advocates representing Native programs, direct service providers, and domestic and sexual violence state coalitions were invited to share their expertise and discuss lessons learned from three decades in the movement to end violence against women to inform the anti-trafficking movement. Survivors of domestic trafficking, whose expertise offers rich insights and guidance to the field were also central to the discussions.

In three distinct listening sessions, advocates discussed strategies for addressing the needs of trafficking survivors given the scope of the problem, resources, needs, challenges, and the contexts their programs work within. How can guiding principles, such as survivor-centered advocacy, and the intersecting conceptual frameworks that the field has developed in working with domestic violence, sexual assault and trafficking victims be integrated? And in doing so, how can collaboration, training and technical assistance increase the capacity of domestic and sexual violence programs to serve victims of human trafficking? The discussions and recommendations raised by these questions are summarized in this report which we hope serves as a primer for moving forward.²

¹ The Roundtable was held in Washington D.C., September 22-23, 2014.

² Amber Bissell, note-taker, and Chic Dabby, facilitator, co-authored this report. It reflects the recommendations, analysis and ideas that emerged in the discussions amongst advocates, survivors and federal partners.

ROUNDTABLE & REPORT STRUCTURE³

The guiding question for the Roundtable was: How do we integrate the needs of trafficked persons who suffer a wide range of victimization and navigate a landscape of multiple abusers, given the capacity and frameworks of domestic violence shelters, outreach efforts and non-residential service programs?

The Roundtable was organized as three separate listening sessions with 4-7 advocates on each panel, presenting and discussing issues amongst themselves and with the entire audience to ensure that:

- Advocates elevate the strengths and concerns of the communities they represent and bring them to the attention of federal representatives;
- Federal officials hear from the domestic violence field about the cultural contexts, policies, and practice recommendations to address trafficking;
- Federal representatives convey the issues advocates raise to various governmental agencies;
- Federal representatives bring other federal agencies to the table to strategize on meeting the needs of grantee programs through funding, training and technical assistance; and
- Inter-agency coordination and FYSB's Strategic Action Plan are implemented.

Twenty-five advocates representing 23 Tribal, local, state and national organizations and twenty federal agency representatives from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Justice attended.

This report's structure mirrors the convening: the topics, questions, discussions and recommendations that emerged in each of the three listening sessions are captured separately and faithfully – the report does not expand upon them. The final section of the report identifies and organizes themes common to all three listening sessions and the large-group discussions they stimulated.

³ The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence and the Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence (formerly, Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence) worked in collaboration with the FVPSA Office to identify participants and organize the Roundtable's structure. Chic Dabby, Asian Pacific Institute, facilitated the listening sessions and discussions.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF TRAFFICKING⁴

Though human trafficking can affect individuals from all walks of life – regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or citizenship status – traffickers prey on individuals who are trapped by poverty, economic hardship or deprivation, are fleeing violent social or familial environments, suffer discrimination, or lack stable social or familial support.

Victims of domestic and international trafficking include U.S. citizens, legal permanent resident; foreign nationals who may be documented or undocumented immigrants; refugees; asylees; LBGTQ individuals; Native Americans; adults, minors, including unaccompanied minors; and other women and men.

Trafficking Defined

Trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, provision, receipt, transportation and/or obtaining of individuals by using force or threats, coercion, fraud and/or using systems of indebtedness or debt bondage for purposes of sexual or other forms of economic exploitation.

International Trafficking

- **Purposes** of international trafficking include forced labor, fraudulent adoption, prostitution, pornography, commercial sexual exploitation, organ removal/harvesting, involuntary servitude, servile marriages, and transporting drugs, where trafficked individuals serve as drug mules. The purpose of trafficking can change, e.g., a young girl may age out of sex trafficking, and then be used for organ harvesting.
- **International traffickers** include organized crime syndicates, independently owned businesses, third-party labor recruiters, and/or community and family members. However, depending on the economy or political climate of a particular area, this can change; e.g., crime syndicates initially trafficking drugs take over sex trafficking in an area and push out pimp-controlled sex trafficking.

⁴ Presented by Chic Dabby, Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence

Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Defined

Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST), also referred to as Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC), has gained national focus as survivors speak out and offer expertise, and as systems and communities organize to develop intervention and prevention models to address DMST/CSEC.

DMST is defined as the commercial sexual abuse and exploitation of minors through buying, trading or selling their sexual services. A commercial sex act refers to anything of value – money, drugs, food, shelter, rent, higher status in a gang – exchanged for sex.

CSEC refers to a range of crimes including:

- Recruiting enticing, harboring, transporting, providing, obtaining, and/or maintaining (all acts that constitute trafficking) a minor for the purpose of sexual exploitation;
 - Exploiting a minor through prostitution;
 - Exploiting a minor through survival sex;
 - Using a minor in pornography;
 - Exploiting a minor through sex tourism, mail order bride trade, and early marriage; and
 - Exploiting a minor by having her/him perform in sexual venues.
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- **Purposes** include street prostitution, escort services, internet-aided prostitution, strip clubs, massage parlors, peep shows; and/or pornography where a minor is sold/rented/provided something of value to perform sex acts on camera.
 - **Traffickers** are pimps, family members, gangs, and crime syndicates, and individuals can be victims of pimp-controlled, transgender-controlled, family-controlled, gang-controlled and/or crime syndicate-controlled trafficking.

LISTENING SESSION 1: COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Panelists are advocates and survivors addressing domestic violence, sexual assault and trafficking in a range of communities and have content-area expertise on topics such as understanding the dynamics between trafficker and trafficked person; the complexity of trauma recovery; collaboration on victim identification and services; and prevention and intervention strategies.

- Robin Bronen, Executive Director, Alaska Immigration Justice Project
- Florrie Burke, Independent Consultant, FB Consulting
- Elisabeth Corey, Founder, Beating Trauma, LLC
- Maria Jose Fletcher, Co-Director, VIDA Legal Assistance, Inc.
- Tina Frundt, Founder and Executive Director, Courtney's House
- Michael Pollenberg, Vice President, Government Affairs, Safe Horizons, Inc.
- Hediana Utarti, Community Projects Coordinator, Asian Women's Shelter

1. Contexts: Who Is Exploited?

Panelists unanimously described victims as marginalized, often poor, and vulnerable individuals citing examples of international trafficking victims such as domestic workers for UN diplomats in New York City, individuals with limited English proficiency from all over the world, transgender youth attempting to transition, domestic caregivers, and isolated animal herders, amongst others.

Vulnerability: Generally, victims are or have been subject to multiple sources of harm, often originating from their own families, trusted individuals in schools and religious or civic institutions, intimate partners, or failed systems like foster care. Panelists were split whether poverty was a defining characteristic in domestic trafficking of non-Native victims; given that the demographic of poverty was not one that traffickers primarily targeted. In DMST, traffickers appear to rely more on manipulative relationships that include grooming to recruit and entice vulnerable youth. Vulnerability increases with histories of prior physical or sexual abuse, undocumented immigration status, poverty, and drug use. Victims also face threats and actual instances of violence, coercion, deportation, death, etc.

CSEC victims, particularly those who have experienced childhood sexual abuse may be socialized into believing that having sex with, or purchasing sex from minors is acceptable, even normal. Hence, difficulties in establishing and maintaining boundaries from a young age can be one of multiple developmental traumas that increase vulnerability.

Coercion & Oppression: Traffickers may exert control on a trafficked person by making them complicit in their own oppression – forcing trafficked persons into criminal behavior, or coercing them into recruiting others. For example, residents in Runaway Homeless Youth (RHY) facilities or girls in gangs forced to recruit in order to gain prestige in their pimp's 'stable' or their boyfriend's gang. By making the victim feel at fault or active in illegal or exploitative behavior, a victim's mindset is affected – she feels defeated “this is what my life is about”; or entitled and justified “I'm not doing anything wrong”. Thus, many factors contribute to victims acting in ways that may seem oppressive.

Self-Blame: Panelists indicated that, “no one comes in [to service programs] even identifying as being abused, let alone trafficked.” Rather victims “take the crime on as their own, feeling that they are at fault for what has happened to them.” There was a distinction made between victims of labor trafficking and

sex trafficking. Victims of forced labor may feel they are not at fault; however, they may downplay the severity of their situation, e.g., rationalizing non-payment of wages or wage-theft as their supervisors being lazy, rather than exploitative.

RECOMMENDATIONS: (1) Address the full context of victimization in intervention and prevention which, given the above dynamics, include understanding (i) the relationship between trafficker and trafficked person, (ii) that victim coercion can include oppressing/abusing others, and (iii) survivors may blame themselves. (2) Trauma-informed and even trauma-specific care must address the vulnerability and harm caused by poly-victimization.

2. Services

Trained Advocates: All panelists insisted on the importance of having trained advocates provide services given the intersections of trafficking, domestic violence and sexual assault, and the complexity of trauma-informed systems collaboration and culturally-specific survivor-centered strategies. Community members and institutions are important as the eyes and ears that notice and identify trafficking in their neighborhood or workplace, but without training, well-intentioned rescues can jeopardize victim safety. This can also apply to professionals untrained on trafficking; e.g., pro bono attorneys who “come forward with a good heart,” but without understanding trauma-informed approaches or safety planning.

The experience and expertise of trained advocates in the following areas (not an exhaustive list) were enumerated as important skills for survivor-centered care:

- Bilingual or multilingual advocacy and language access for individuals with limited English proficiency
- Communicating with sensitivity with sexual assault victims about options, procedures; about healthy sexuality; and restoring bodily integrity
- Safety planning
- Identifying levels of endangerment for survivors and advocates
- Assessing lethality risk
- Evaluating if connection to family and community will be helpful or harmful
- Applying harm-reduction models
- Cross-system collaboration
- Knowledge of, and relationships with, local resources/CBOs
- Knowledge of legal remedies that apply to trafficked victims
- Understanding how trauma is linked to historic and cultural contexts
- Providing trauma-informed care

Revolving Door Model: Because of the complex and often fragile positions victims find themselves in, they may not be emotionally, physically, or financially capable of leaving their abuser or trafficker at the moment services are offered. In fact, a victim may leave and return months later to continue the process. While this strains organizational capacity, it is critical to serve victims when they are ready. Furthermore, because limited English proficiency can act as a barrier to services, language access plans are critical to any service model.

RECOMMENDATIONS: (1) Design service organizations prepared to have a ‘revolving door’ model, understanding that a harm-reduction approach will empower survivors to exit and enter safely, and build survivor autonomy. (2) Services must be provided by trained advocates with identified skill sets. (3) Integrate trauma-informed care into all aspects of services and organizations. (4) Language access and multi-lingual advocacy must be available to all U.S. or foreign-born victims with limited English proficiency.

3. Collaboration between Advocates and Law Enforcement

All panelists confirmed that building a strong collaboration with law enforcement was critical so they treat trafficked individuals as victims, not criminals; refrain from victim-blaming; and work in partnership with community-based-organizations. Law enforcement officers can view service providers as “helpers” who offer ancillary options and fill service gaps, rather than partners. Even in instances of strong collaborative relationships, law enforcement sometimes fails to realize that the main concerns of trafficked youth and adults are finding work, shelter, food, etc., rather than participating in the apprehension or prosecution of abusers.

In rural areas, there are practical difficulties accessing law enforcement protection because trafficked workers are isolated from contact with law enforcement officers. In addition, the lack of public safety and over-stretched resources in rural and remote areas – particularly in vast states like Alaska or on reservations, law enforcement agencies struggle to cover sexual assault and domestic violence cases, and human trafficking cases are proving even more challenging.

RECOMMENDATIONS: (1) Establish collaborative relationships articulating well-defined roles for advocates and law enforcement. (2) Train law enforcement in identifying victims and their needs.

4. Emergency Housing | Shelter

The issue of housing came up repeatedly, focusing on the role of domestic violence shelters and the assumption that they address all the needs of trafficked women in their shelter. Law enforcement officials often ask domestic violence shelters to “keep” or house individuals for a range of reasons critical to investigation and prosecution. However, most shelters are not equipped to house survivors indefinitely, find it ethically questionable to require a survivor to stay to comply with system demands, and often cannot accommodate a group of victims. Standards of practice foundational to domestic violence programs, such as voluntary stay, confidentiality, etc., are conflicting with expectations of collaborative partners and other organizations serving trafficked individuals.

Panelists iterated that it is not reasonable for systems personnel to assume that domestic violence shelter staff can take on the entire set of advocacy needs of a trafficking survivor; but they should work in concert with domestic violence programs to strategize about what sub-set of services can be offered to trafficking survivors.

Panelists critiqued some legislative efforts to combat trafficking, stating that while increasing penalties for human trafficking is an important step, funding services such as additional beds for homeless youth shelters has a more direct impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS: (1) Establish how standards of practice in domestic violence and RHY shelters apply to or can be adapted to housing trafficking victims. (2) Include these organizational expectations and standards in collaborative agreements with agencies like law enforcement, local or federal prosecutor’s office, etc.

5. Referral & Outreach

In urban areas, many clients were self-referred. One advocate estimated that victims referred by law enforcement agencies seemed to utilize services roughly fifty percent of the time. However, the frequency of referrals from law enforcement was welcome because it signaled their good intentions to address trafficking and get services for victims.

At an urban program serving trafficked youth, about 40% of youth referrals came from parents, some of whom were struggling with their own housing needs. This indicated the need to partner with housing organizations and assist parents who were struggling with housing and/or employment. Such measures could provide an access point for early intervention.

Healthcare providers were noted as an under-utilized referral source. A training curriculum from the Office on Women's Health aims to increase victim identification and raise awareness of the problem. In addition, medical professionals need to be educated about the intersections of domestic violence, sexual abuse and human trafficking in order to provide adequate recovery services for trauma.

LISTENING SESSION 2: TRIBAL COMMUNITIES AND PROGRAMS

All panel participants work specifically with Native women and address domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault and/or trafficking. Despite sometimes feeling new to serving trafficked victims, all advocates offered a powerful analysis about how the history of violence against Native communities was intertwined with trafficking.

- Rebecca Balog, Grants Compliance Manager, National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center
- Guadalupe Lopez, Technical Assistance Training Coordinator, Minnesota Indian Women’s Sexual Assault Coalition
- Carmen O’Leary, Director, Native Women’s Society of the Great Plains
- Sadie Youngbird, Executive Director, Fort Berthold Coalition Against Violence

1. Contexts: Colonization & Exploitation

The history of colonization and exploitation of Native communities have directly contributed to the rise of gender-based violence. Oppressive governmental policies such as forced dislocation; the removal of children and placement in boarding schools designed to strip them of their familial and tribal lineage; environmental exploitation and degradation of Native lands; labor exploitation from the Gold Rush to the present-day oil boom in the Bakken region; and widespread rape of Native women are some of the specifics in a long history of oppression and institutional racism.

The complexity of lateral oppression and inter-generational violence coupled with the complicated history of tribal peoples within the United States need further recognition from federal agencies and local and regional government offices, and their support to redress these historic wrongs.

2. Where is trafficking happening?

Sex trafficking of Native women is occurring at man-camps⁵ in the oil boom area, at casinos and in casino parking lots, truck stops, strip clubs, on board ships, and at large organized events e.g., for hunters, or the Sturgis Rally.

Catalysts for trafficking have included increased substance use and abuse (including meth) on the reservations, as well as the drug trafficking trail from Mexico to Canada. Youth become involved through promises of money and /or threats of violence, increasing their vulnerability to trafficking. Panelists also described the risk to Native children moved into the foster care system, frequently without any grounds, where they can then be abused and exploited. The lack of follow-up and accountability of foster parents increases the vulnerability of Native children.

Human traffickers include but are not limited to drug users, drug traffickers, pimps, family members, and casino workers.

⁵ Temporary housing settlements for oilfield workers

3. Challenges

Native advocates described an array of system-based and community-based obstacles and challenges in their capacity to address trafficking.

There is a lack of recognition by tribal leaders of the types of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, sexual assault, child sexual assault, and trafficking that Native women and girls face. Whilst tribal codes address prostitution, they do not address trafficking; pointing to a need for codification.

Jurisdictional issues for sexual assault and domestic violence cases illuminate loopholes in the system where perpetrators commit violent crimes without fear of legal retribution and cases of murdered and disappeared women remain unsolved because law enforcement agencies fail to follow-up. Currently, Native tribes cannot prosecute non-Indians. Even with the newly enacted special tribal jurisdiction provision in the Violence Against Women Act of 2013, prosecution of a non-Indian offender for the commission of crimes of sexual violence on tribal land is very limited, because VAWA itself only recognizes tribal jurisdiction over crimes of domestic and dating violence committed by a non-Indian offender with significant ties to the tribe. Additionally, because the U.S. Department of Justice has only implemented the new law in a handful of tribal jurisdictions, even crimes of intimate partner violence are not yet being prosecuted consistently across the country.

Lack of resources as well as the difficulty in forging trust within the community makes evidence gathering regarding gender-based violence incredibly difficult. The limited number of programs addressing sexual assault for the tribes and the lengths to which victims and advocates must go to secure services such as a sexual assault rape kit allow sex-based crimes to continue unchecked and remain unpunished.

The prevalence of substance use and abuse and the current foster care system (which is very non-responsive to family reunification) increase the vulnerability of children to trafficking, as does child sexual assault. Increased poverty and limited access to educational opportunities increase youth vulnerability. Housing on reservations often approximates “third world conditions”; affecting family health, cohesion and safety.

Finally, the lack of representation of Native interests within federal and state agencies and coalitions render Native communities invisible and marginalize their access to policy discussions and funding options.

4. Recommendations

Programs for Native survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence and human trafficking are still minimal because of limited resources and insufficient acknowledgement of the prevalence of these problems.

1. Immediately increase national representation of tribal advocates at federal tables for discussions on current and future funding opportunities, program needs, and jurisdictional issues.
2. Promote knowledge exchange and support between tribal programs (e.g., through advocate exchange programs) and tribal state coalitions and non-tribal state coalitions and community based organizations.
3. Ensure that trauma-informed service provision for Native women is provided by Native advocates who are better positioned to create mutual respect and trust in service agencies, given the complex history of Native oppression.
4. Design services to address multiple forms of victimization instead of compartmentalizing violence against women into different sectors.
5. Build economic security, especially through housing, considering context-driven approaches such

as the provision of individual housing units instead of domestic violence shelters.

6. Educate funders on the obstacles service providers face (sometimes as simple as transportation barriers in delivering a rape kit), the impacts of geographic isolation and limited funding opportunities, and the contexts and needs of Native communities in order to mitigate these barriers.

LISTENING SESSION 3: STATE COALITIONS

All participants are members of state coalitions with member programs ranging from 20 to 85 domestic violence and/or sexual assault service organizations. Most member programs are open to and/or officially address human trafficking. Advocates elaborated on state trends, strategies and opportunities for collaboration.

- Sulan Chang, Assistant Program Director, Multicultural Family Violence and Human Trafficking, representing the Texas Family Violence Council
- Jan Christiansen, Executive Director, Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Katie Kramer, Program Manager, Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women
- Janelle Moos, Executive Director, North Dakota Council on Abused Women's Services
- Christina Sambor, Force to End Human Sexual Exploitation (statewide anti-trafficking coalition in North Dakota)

1. State Trends

North Dakota

Trends: The oil boom has drastically impacted the types of trafficking occurring within the state. The shift from agriculture to oil and gas extraction has led to an influx of temporary male workers moving into man-camps; and a marked increase in sex trafficking and prostitution/sex work. Drug trafficking, violent crime and sexual assault have increased. Trafficking occurs routinely at truck stops along major freeway corridors like I-94, in hotels, and is advertised on Backpage.com. An estimated 80-90% of trafficking is pimp-controlled. The failing infrastructure of the state to handle the population increase has resulted in a lack of services.

Georgia

Trends: In rural areas, trafficking of migrant workers is increasing. The Atlanta airport is one of the largest entry points for trafficked individuals in the U.S. There are significant increases in event-related trafficking; where the majority of the trafficking is gang-controlled. Most victims are being arrested and their traffickers are paying the bond for their release.

Due to decreased funding, there are fewer shelters in the state and they are small (6-15 beds) and cannot house individuals for a long period of time. Other issues affecting shelters are low capacity, lack of sustainability, lack of training, high turnover of staff dealing with high stress and low pay. More resources need to be put toward training staff, paying staff better, and identifying shelters throughout the state that will house victims of trafficking. The coalition's member programs assist trafficked persons within metro areas, especially Atlanta, and in rural areas. Although trafficked women are not coming in large numbers to domestic violence organizations yet, most programs do not have the capacity to serve this group of survivors. There are geographic gaps in services; where because of funding issues, there are no programs at all (e.g., one shelter serves 18 counties).

Texas

Trends: Due to the huge geographical area of Texas, there are extremely varied types of trafficking. For instance, in Dallas/Fort Worth, there's pimp-controlled trafficking whereas El Paso sees gang-controlled trafficking. Overall, Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) is high and law enforcement is focusing on it more, and less on international trafficking. The increase in arrivals of unaccompanied minors from Central America and difficulties and delays in processing them has made them vulnerable to traffickers. The lack of human trafficking service organizations leaves less-equipped domestic violence organizations to cope with a new and complex population.

Minnesota

Trends: The international border with Canada, the international port of Duluth, and multiple sporting and other big events throughout the year make Minnesota a target for traffickers. There has recently been a shift from international trafficking to sex trafficking of minors by pimps, family members, and gangs, advertised on the ubiquitous Backpage.com.

2. Considerations About Serving Minors

The 2011 Safe Harbor law eliminated criminal penalties for minors arrested for commercial sex work, but did not address the issue of confidentiality. Minors cannot give consent for medical evaluations, hindering the investigative process and service provision for victims. There are also more complicated issues in housing youth, difficulties in securing medical services, concerns about education and even custody issues. Generally, community members or parents will refer minors to social services, rather than law enforcement. However, in some cases, the community itself may be the perpetrating actor and placing minors with another family within the community after release may only continue the cycle of abuse and exploitation.

3. Male Victims

Panelists noted a lack of services for men and even when they were available, a lack of utilization.

Within North Dakota, reports of assaults against men have doubled, even when taking into consideration that these assaults might be underreported. Two major concerns are capacity building to better serve male victims as well as the public health crisis occurring within the region, due to the population boom. (It is more frequent for men to report to clinics for STI testing, than seek help from law enforcement and report an assault.) It is likely that the drug trafficking pipeline in the region facilitates the increase in human trafficking cases.

In Georgia, violence against men is mostly anecdotal, because of underreporting.

There are similar issues in Texas, where male victims are underserved in an area where they are over-represented in the labor trafficking victim statistics.

4. Language Access

Language access remains one of the most prevalent concerns for panelists. Within metro Atlanta, the shelter is equipped to serve non-English speakers. However, other shelters within the state are not, leading to a gap in service provision. Bilingual advocates are not enough, as victims have other contact

points, i.e. courts, police officers, investigators, health care providers, where language access is still an issue.

Training for advocates, volunteers, and interpreters is a necessity as victims are at high risk for re-traumatization, mistrust, and miscommunication. In addition, for some victims, their language may be sufficiently rare that their interpreter may be a member of their immediate community. Thus, a victim may show reluctance in discussing private issues or may face retribution within their community when they open up about these issues.

In the state of Alaska, for instance, there is no emergency number (i.e. 911) for non-English speakers. Even when service organizations attempt to include language access programming, they are not able to institute as much progress with the previously discussed issues of running gender-based violence prevention programming. Institutional organizations must understand the language access issues and the need to incorporate language access into every day processes.

Interpretation requires bilingual fluency, trained skills in consecutive and simultaneous modes of interpretation, observing the code of ethics applicable to interpreters, and cultural and gender sensitivity. Advocates told stories of an interpreter who started laughing during a victim's graphic retelling of the abuse she suffered, or where police officers have asked children to interpret their mother's discussion of sexual abuse – causing an "extension of misery" for victims.

5. Challenges for Domestic Violence Service Programs

Organizations are facing increased domestic violence caseloads and new trafficking cases while under-resourced and without the adequate infrastructure to ensure long-term, tailored assistance for survivors. Difficulties for service programs include:

- Limited resources to house victims as well as confusion within government agencies regarding the domestic violence service provider's role.
- Criminal legal systems ill-equipped to deal with the number of trafficking victims, and especially minor victims.
- Law enforcement agencies are treating trafficked women and girls as victims and not criminals and are bringing them to domestic violence programs because "[we] don't know what to do with them and we know you do."
- Expectations that shelters can house victims who are material witnesses for on-going investigations by FBI and other agencies; thus creating conflict with shelter principles of voluntary stay.
- Housing victims of trafficking with battered women and their children brings its own tensions and risks; one of which is that trafficked victims might recruit in the shelter for their pimps.
- Danger to advocates from violent traffickers (some advocates are carrying weapons for self-protection).
- Confidentiality for survivors participating in a federal or state investigation is hard to maintain when domestic violence agencies are expected to collaborate with investigative agencies.
- Few agencies can provide housing, and this especially affects the vulnerability and safety of trafficked minors.
- Child Protective Service agencies often do not have trafficking on their radar as an issue, and those who do, do not accept Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST) victims for services.

6. Recommendations

The following recommendations about building the capacity of domestic violence organizations were made:

1. Maximize the field's knowledge base with hotlines, open source tools and resources, trainings and technical assistance across organizations.
2. Implement and conduct training programs designed for minor and adult victims of domestic and international trafficking that address trauma-informed, survivor-centered, culturally and linguistically specific interventions at various points of contact.
3. Create multidisciplinary teams for rural communities (not just domestic violence/sexual assault), and bring in allies outside these areas, including law enforcement.
4. Establish advocate exchange programs, where organizations experienced in addressing human trafficking send an advocate to assist a domestic violence or sexual assault services agency to create a program for human trafficking survivors.

COMMON THEMES

As one advocate put it: “We are all part of the community and we are continually called upon to be agents of change”.

Overall, the intersections of domestic violence, sexual assault and trafficking are obvious and compelling. Whilst the willingness of domestic violence organizations and coalitions to serve survivors of trafficking is tempered by the cautions raised in the three sets of discussions, there is a palpable determination to apply the movement’s expertise of survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally and linguistically specific services to advocate for victims of trafficking.

Survivors

- Uniqueness and range of human trafficking victimization is becoming better understood as survivors speak out and educate providers
- Long term, post-crisis services are needed for trafficking survivors
- Cases can go on for years because traffickers are caught over time
- Isolation of survivors within rural communities

Danger | Safety

- Provide technical assistance on advocate safety and trafficking cases
- When prosecutor collects evidence to prosecute, but then decides not to prosecute, it can increase danger for advocates and victims
- For DMST victims, danger is not episodic but constant, it never goes away
- Indoctrination and not feeling safe throughout one’s childhood often stays in adulthood, “30-40 years out, life can still feel scary”
- Youth in foster care who disappear are not looked for or tracked

Issues Domestic Violence Programs Face

- Should domestic violence organizations serve as the frontline response or a partner to anti-trafficking service organizations? Should human trafficking be integrated into domestic violence service provisions? What is the role and best combination of anti-trafficking versus domestic violence focused organizations?
- Balancing principles of survivor driven choices vs. criminal justice system interventions
- Hard to serve men and boys who are victims of labor trafficking
- Programs may already be seeing trafficking victims, but Board and/or staff may not want the agency to serve them, or integrate anti-trafficking work into organization’s mission

Data Collection

- Data is needed to apply for funding – this is hard to do. Many organizations do not have the capacity to collect the data needed to apply for the additional resources they need.
- How do we document what we are doing about trafficking?
- How do we engage in coordinated, non-intrusive data collection to justify funding for programs?
- Capturing data is hard, e.g., in Alaska, even when the FBI is telling us trafficking is a problem, how do we collect data from 229 tribes?
- When there are different types of agencies collecting data, e.g., youth service programs - they may not even be able to identify trafficking victims; so data would be skewed.
- Programs that are not trained to identify domestic violence or sexual assault – e.g., some refugee service programs – are not going to be able to identify trafficking victims for data collection.
- Resources such as the National Domestic Violence Hotline and Polaris Project have databases for agencies that serve trafficked victims/survivors
- Care should be taken that collecting data for grants does not mean that service provision should be driven by or designed to cater to the numbers; but instead to underline the importance of long-term care.
- Documenting the work that is being done will inform evaluation methods, improvement and collaboration.

Systems

- Systems that do not adequately recognize or implement procedures to address trafficking need training and political will
- All systems actors should identify and analyze the unintended consequences of their interventions.
- Criminalization of Native, racial and ethnic communities is a problem.
- Victim-blaming of individuals trafficked for sexual exploitation is prevalent.
- Coordination for equipping and mobilizing response teams is critical.
- A media spokesperson, who is not a direct services provider, can strengthen community relationships and inform victims of opportunities for aid.

Criminal Justice System

- Criminalizing victims as a means of scaring them into turning on their pimp does not seem to work.
- There is a tendency to stigmatize and criminalize trafficked persons, whether there is actual prosecution for a crime, or even by requiring shelters to “keep” victims until they testify.
- There is conditional acceptance of and assistance for trafficked persons based on their compliance with law enforcement agents. In addition, once victims have testified, follow-up care is inadequate.

- Arrest can serve as an intervention, as a first step to safety, or a gateway to services.

Tribal

- Jurisdictional issues in Tribal communities interfere with survivors getting help and justice.

Child Welfare System

- Increased training needed in child welfare service to identify trafficking victims.
- Foster families and educators need to be trained about increased vulnerability of system-involved youth.

Standards of Service

Standards of service need to be established to ensure consistency and quality and reflect a philosophy that the “the door is always open”. These include:

- Emergency and long-term shelter/housing that differentiates between the needs of adult and minor trafficked victims; domestic, Native, and foreign national victims; and male and female victims of trafficking.
- Programs that focus on educating the public rather than service provision or with different philosophical approaches, such as faith based organizations, still need to have service standards and training so they develop adequate safety planning responses.
- Language access for victims with limited English proficiency, including Native victims.
- Training advocates and service providers on standards of survivor-centered, trauma-informed care to prevent re-traumatization.
- Training should be repeated given staff turnover, emergence of new information/trends, and on-going professional development.
- Evaluating foster homes to ensure they are not a breeding ground for trafficking and/or recruitment.

Funding Issues

- Lack of federal funding opportunities for Tribal communities.
- Underfunding for community-based organizations (CBOs) happens often because there isn't reliable data yet on prevalence rates, but the onus cannot be on CBOs to collect data.
- Capturing federal funding is extremely difficult.
- Funders need to be educated on goals, data and project limitations. If funders do not understand or are inflexible with program objectives, then this limits service provision.

In conclusion, there were so many deep contributions at the Roundtable that cogently established and even expanded upon the intersections of trafficking, domestic violence and sexual assault. Advocates from Native, local, state and national organizations addressing domestic violence and sexual assault have accumulated extensive experience and expertise in serving trafficked youth and adults and are well positioned to provide guidance and recommendations to the field about building the capacity for collaborative, trauma-informed, culturally and linguistically specific services. As is always the case, survivors inform advocacy: and at this Roundtable they surfaced the nexus of colonization and the historical trafficking of Native women; and articulated the trends and harms of domestic minor sex trafficking. Taken together, the integration of analysis, insight and participant expertise can serve as a primer for program design for adult, young adult and youth victims of trafficking; forge collaborations; expand the field’s knowledge of trauma connected to early victimization; and inform safety, healing, empowerment and justice.



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