



CHAN-BOF for Peace Collaborative

Building a community where youth, women, Queer and Trans folks and their families are healthy, free from violence, and thrive from generation to generation.

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LEAD AGENCY

CHAN-BOF is a program of the [Alliance for Community Transformations](#)

ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERS

[CHAN-BOF](#)

[Hmong Culture Camp](#)

[Hmong Innovating Politics](#)

[Hmong Youth and Parents United](#)

[Hmong Nurses Association](#)

[ManForward](#)

[Valley Crisis Center](#)

[My Sister's House](#)

[Asian American Liberation Network](#)

DV PREVENTION APPROACH

CHAN-BOF's mission is to build a movement to end gender-based violence by shifting cultural norms in the Hmong and underserved communities.

CHAN-BOF's strategic priorities related to the goal of preventing gender-based violence are focused on changing the hearts and minds of people through:

1. Grassroots organizing of Hmong youth, women, LGBTQIA folks in counties with large Hmong populations starting in Sacramento, Merced, and Fresno;
2. Coordinating educational workshops and holding community conversations on promoting awareness to prevent domestic violence, sharing key findings from community-based participatory research, and recognizing the impact of patriarchy;
3. Providing space to learn about gender-based violence and resources; and,
4. Establishing cultural change strategies in our communities to shift norms and practices.

CHAN-BOF's theory of change is founded on their collective wisdom and acknowledgement that gender-based violence happens disproportionately to Hmong women, children, and LGBTQIA folks in the community where they receive little to no support within the Hmong community, as well as from mainstream institutions. One of the root causes of this issue is patriarchy within and outside of the Hmong community, as well as embedded in the many systems of American society. Through increased understanding on the intersections of the root causes that create systematic oppression impacting those most affected by violence, community members can shift the norms and practices and develop the necessary capacities to support survivors in the U.S. as well as those emigrating from abroad.

GEOGRAPHIC AREA

Sacramento, Merced, and Fresno counties

COMMUNITY OF FOCUS

Counties with large Hmong populations. Working with community members, advocates, and community leaders.

COLLABORATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS & BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Development of the collaborative and building collaborative capacity

- **Formation of the collaborative.** Formed in 2013 (and co-founded by a former CHAN-BOF for Peace Program Specialist), California Hmong Advocates Network (CHAN) is dedicated to supporting Hmong advocates' leadership in community while forging bold vision and facilitating discussions on gender-based violence to shift the narrative around providing support. CHAN's purpose is to connect, empower and strategize with each other to become leaders in their own organizations in hopes to improve advocacy services for Hmong victims and survivors by providing cultural responsiveness, survivor-centered trainings for mainstream DV agencies. In 2019, CHAN partnered with Building Our Future, a community engagement and mobilization campaign initially formed to address abusive international marriages, to create California Hmong Advocates Network—Building Our Future for Peace Collaborative (CHAN-BOF).
- The collaborative has invested a great deal of effort to developing a **formal onboarding process** for new members including advocates from DV organizations, survivors, other community members and leaders. The goal is for all partners to have a common understanding of the collaborative's goals and values as well as their role and expectations for participation. One component was the development of a **domestic violence and prevention glossary** so they may have Hmong-to-English and English-to-Hmong terminology. The shared language allows all members of the collaborative to be on the same page when speaking about DV issues. Additionally, if someone can put a name to something then the collaborative can have deeper discussions about the intentionality and usage of the term, and its definition and meaning. Because language is complex and constantly changing, the glossary is considered a living document.
- CHAN-BOF focused on **diversifying their funding streams** and received additional grants to support their work including from The California Endowment Foundation to support AAPI Power-Building initiatives, the Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence to build DV Advocacy capacity, California Partnership to End Domestic Violence's GVRO (gun violence restraining orders) and DV Fatality Project, as well as one-time microgrants from the Women's Catalytic Fund of the East Bay Community Foundation, Women's California Foundation and Kaiser Permanente-Fresno.

Community engagement and power building

- **Increasing participation in the collaborative.** In 2019, CHAN-BOF established and reached the goal of fostering new relationships and deepening trust with individuals and organizations in Sacramento, Merced, and Fresno counties. At the beginning of the year, they started with only a handful of organizers and advocates who were already in the movement to end gender-based violence. Within a year's time, CHAN-BOF successfully tripled the number of actively engaged individuals to 26. Current organizational and individual community members now numbers 33. Through strategic outreach and intentional relationship building, collaborative members met, recruited, and trained community members with diverse backgrounds—some who have never been involved in the movement to end gender-based violence—to join in the work. The professional backgrounds of the collaborative partners are those in K–12 or higher education, mental health providers, healthcare, and other nonprofit community-based organizations. This organizing tactic not only increased the size of the collaborative, but widened the collective knowledge of culturally responsive prevention and systems change work to end gender-based violence. CHAN-BOF formally collaborated and collectively organized through regional meetings, quarterly all-region gatherings, one national gathering, and one retreat.
- CHAN-BOF completed two **community based participatory research** projects in response to the lack of Hmong specific data available from secondary sources as well as the denial that domestic violence existed in the community: 1) seven in-depth interviews with survivors to learn about the cultural and community barriers to support, and 2) two community-based focus groups: four Hmong men who are or have been family clan leaders, and a survivor focus group of five Hmong women who have experienced domestic violence and interfaced with the traditional Hmong clan mediation process. The evidence-based research surfaced key findings that confirm specific cultural norms within the Hmong community that makes it unsafe for Hmong women to seek help when faced with domestic violence in the patriarchal structures of the Hmong family clan system. One takeaway was that survivors are told to “be patient” when they’re in abusive relationships and women are not taken seriously until their third incidence of extreme violence. A survey revealed the community’s discomfort talking about issues of domestic violence. Now that CHAN-BOF has research from survivors’ experiences as well as knowledge and insight of the cultural mediation

process from Hmong men clan leaders, they can envision and strategize how these findings inform the way they engage, build, and move the community to align more with values of survivor-centeredness, gender equity-dismantle patriarchy, collective leadership and Queer and Trans Justice. They can develop evidence-based content to raise awareness, educate and start deep conversations on how patriarchal norms and practices impact Hmong women, children, and LGBTQIA folks.

- **CHAN-BOF conducts trainings with collaborative partners and the community** to increase their confidence and safety to engage in conversation about gender-based violence. CHAN-BOF also conducts trainings with partner agencies (e.g., Hmong Nurses Association, Hmong Innovating Politics, Asian American Liberation Network). One of their strategies for addressing mental models around domestic violence prevention in the Hmong community is for collaborative members to hold conversations about gender-based violence with those around them. Between October 2021 and September 2022, CHAN-BOF members held a total of 1,367 conversations with family members, friends, colleagues, and other community members.
- The collaborative also **engages men in conversation** and allyship through the work of their partner, ManForward. They hold healing sessions on male norms of power and privilege in the Hmong community and how that may affect relationships with women and queer folks. The goal is to prepare men to be in spaces with women and to also engage with other men on issues of equity and reducing domestic violence.

Policy and funding shifts

Changing systems to support survivors. The Hmong community has refugee and immigrant experiences and intergenerational trauma exacerbated by forces of acculturation; education, social, economic inequities; and language access barriers. CHAN-BOF's work to end gender-based violence includes an analysis of racial equity to ensure that Hmong survivors' needs are met in a country where being non-white means living as a perpetual foreigner. Mainstream domestic violence organizations often receive funding to provide services to Hmong survivors, yet they lack the cultural awareness and capacity and only provide the bare minimum of services. This common practice fails to address the intersectionality of diversity and inclusion among staffing as well as the language and cultural considerations in program

delivery that can truly lead to a more holistic and equitable approach to survivor-centered services. “When we work to change systems within our community to ensure the well-being of survivors, we address not only how Hmong patriarchal values impact our community’s responses to gender-based violence, but also how the mainstream values and institutions of white supremacy impact that response, as well.” Examples of this are when mainstream organizations like Empower Yolo and Valley Crisis Center invite CHAN-BOF to do a training presentation for their staff to learn more about the context of the Hmong community and cultural traditions that Hmong survivors often must consider and endure in navigating systems when seeking support and safety. This provides opportunities for their staff to get to know about CHAN-BOF’s work and reach out to further brainstorm with CHAN-BOF’s staff or collaborative partners to explore and learn how to better support their Hmong clients. CHAN-BOF training presentations for these mainstream organizations often emphasizes the importance of providing language justice services to all clients, reminding them to utilize the language line if needed. They also encourage the agencies to invest in building and strengthening partnerships with community groups or organizations to increase access and improve services to be more culturally responsive to different communities.