

# Evaluation of the Culturally Responsive Domestic Violence Network (CRDVN)

## Final Report



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Submitted to:

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## I. Introduction

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*“The Foundation’s mission when we started this work [was], and continues to be, focusing on the health and safety of all Californians. At the time that we launched the grantmaking program for [the] culturally responsive domestic violence field...we were reflecting on that mission and thinking about, ‘What does it mean to reach all Californians? Is the DV field reaching all Californians? Who is not being reached?’”*

*—Lucia Corral Peña, Senior Program Officer,  
Blue Shield of California Foundation*

In 2014, Blue Shield of California Foundation (BSCF), in partnership with the domestic violence field, launched the Culturally Responsive Domestic Violence Network (CRDVN, or “the Network”), a group of leaders throughout California who are teaming up to share best practices and strategies to better reach domestic violence (DV) survivors from immigrant communities and communities of color. CRDVN is a unique community-driven approach to building the overall capacity of the DV field to prevent and address domestic violence among all Californians.

Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) was selected by BSCF to serve as the evaluation and learning partner for CRDVN. This final report highlights key findings of SPR’s evaluation related to culturally responsive approaches and outcomes, as well as to network formation and effectiveness. The report concludes with a discussion of lessons learned for the foundation and community partners, and implications for CRDVN moving forward.

### Overview of the Culturally Responsive Domestic Violence Network

CRDVN builds on a 2012 project supported by Blue Shield Against Violence (BSAV) called “Strengthening Cultural Competency in California’s Domestic Violence Field for High-Need, Underserved Populations” (BSAV CC). BSAV CC included 17 mainstream DV and culturally specific organizations focused on building the capacity of the DV field to better reach new immigrant, African American, and Native American populations. The following key lessons from SPR’s evaluation of BSAV CC helped to shape the development of CRDVN:

- **Culturally specific organizations are uniquely suited to play a leadership role in domestic violence work.** Culturally specific organizations participating in BSAV CC already had trusting relationships within priority communities and committed staff and volunteers with vital linguistic and cultural skills. Empowering culturally specific organizations to provide DV services, therefore, emerged as a central next step to expanding the capacity of the DV field to reach priority populations. This finding informed BSCF’s decision to support the development of a network of culturally specific organizations working on DV across the state.

- **Cultural competency is an ongoing commitment, rather than a discrete set of practices.** Although formal policies at BSAV CC community partners were an important sign of institutional values, it proved more vital that organizations and leaders had a reflective and long-term learning orientation to how they engaged with diverse communities. This finding led to a shift away from the “inert and static” language of *competency* towards *responsiveness*, to signify the continuous, iterative, and process-oriented nature of this work.

### Lessons from Phase 1: BSAV Cultural Competency Project

- Culturally specific organizations are uniquely suited to provide a leadership role in domestic violence work.
- Cultural competency is an ongoing process and commitment rather than a discrete set of practices.
- Engaging influential leaders and organizations from priority communities, such as clergy and churches, is a powerful step towards shifting community norms around domestic violence.
- Engagement of new and diverse stakeholders—such as men, youth, and other community members—in dialogues about healthy relationships is essential for the reduction and eventual elimination of domestic violence.
- Cultural competency work and staff who have unique linguistic or cultural skills should not be put into silos within domestic violence organizations.
- When seeking to reach out to new populations, it is important to resist essentialism by taking into account individuals’ multiple identities, including dimensions of race, ethnicity, immigrant status, language, and sexual orientation.
- Reliable assessment tools can be valuable for helping domestic violence organizations assess and set goals for enhancing cultural competence.
- Domestic violence organizations need to prioritize recruitment and retention of staff with language access skills and connections to the communities served.

In 2014, building on BSAV CC lessons, BSCF provided grants to 13 community partners to participate in CRDVN.<sup>1</sup>

The objectives of these grants were to support:

- innovation and outcomes in culturally responsive services;
- the sustainability of culturally responsive practices;
- the capacity of alternative DV providers; and
- CRDVN network formation and effectiveness.

(See Appendix A for the CRDVN logic model.)

Seven of the 13 CRDVN grantees were culturally specific organizations that had been previously engaged in BSAV CC (Phase 1). The other six organizations had not been engaged in Phase 1, but all were culturally specific organizations—each with a unique population or approach to culturally responsive outreach or capacity building. Community partners received two-year grants to support their work with communities and their engagement in the network. These organizations are highlighted in Exhibit I-1, along with the populations and regions they serve and their key innovations or approaches for strengthening culturally responsive practice.

**Exhibit I-1:  
Members of the Culturally Responsive Domestic Violence Network (CRDVN)**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Phase 1 grantee?</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Innovation</b>
Asian Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence (APIIDV)	Y	Recent API immigrants	Statewide	Leadership and community engagement model
Asian Women’s Shelter (AWS)	Y	Recent API immigrants	Bay Area	Share best practices in language access and service provision with regional and state partners
A Safe Place	N	African Americans	Bay Area	Engagement of faith leaders
Center for Pacific Asian Family (CPAF)	N	Recent API immigrants	Los Angeles	Network of API organizations working to build safer community
East LA Women’s Center (ELAWC)	Y	Recent Latina immigrants	Los Angeles	Partnership and technical assistance using promotora model
Inter-Tribal Council of California (ITCC)	Y	Tribal communities	Central Valley	Sustained cultural competency training
Korean American Family Service Center (KFAM)	Y	Recent Korean immigrants	Los Angeles	Engagement of Korean immigrant faith leaders

<sup>1</sup> There were originally 14 community partners, but one withdrew from participation.

Organization	Phase 1 grantee?	Population	Region	Innovation
Maitri	N	Immigrants from South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka)	Bay Area	Expansion of agencies bringing DV services to South Asian community
Mixteco/Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP)	N	Mixtec and indigenous immigrants	Ventura County	Language advocacy
My Sister's House (MSH)	Y	Recent API immigrants	Central Valley	Sustained cultural competency training program
Mujeres Unidas Y Activas (MUA)	Y	Recent Latina immigrants	Bay Area	DV partnership using peer advocate model
Safe Alternatives to Violent Environments (SAVE)	N	South Asian and Latina immigrants	Bay Area	DV partnership focused on language access and community-based approaches
Social Action Partners	N	Low income communities of color	Los Angeles /Statewide	Learning community focused on social network and community-based responses to DV

BSCF funded Jemmott Rollins Group (JRG) to coordinate peer learning and convenings to foster meaningful exchanges across the community partners participating in CRDVN grants. Over the course of the CRDVN project, JRG coordinated four regional convenings, three grantee convenings, and a final peer-led Network Institute held in November 2016. BSAV also engaged JRG to launch and coordinate the Peer Learning Exchanges (PLEs) for CRDVN since community partners rated PLEs as one the most impactful activities of the BSAV CC initiative. Each of these activities is described in more depth within the network section of the report.

## Overview of Evaluation

SPR's evaluation focused on capturing information on innovation and outcomes, sustainability of practices, capacity of alternative DV providers, and network formation and effectiveness. Our data sources included: (1) a comprehensive review of community partner reports and documents, (2) PLE reports, (3) in-depth interviews with community partners, BSCF, and JRG, and (4) a networking and outcomes survey completed by 10 of the 13 community partners. This report also draws on video interviews conducted with eight community partner leaders during the peer-led Network Institute. See Appendix B for a full list of data sources.



## Overview of the Report

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- **Section II: Culturally Responsive Approaches and Outcomes** delves into the work of community partners, with a focus on innovation and outcomes, the sustainability of practices, and a discussion of the capacity and reach of alternative DV providers.
- **Section III: Network Formation and Effectiveness** describes the effectiveness of each of the network activities (regional and grantee convenings, peer-led Institute, PLEs), network outcomes, and looking ahead to the network's future.
- **Section IV: Lessons Learned** highlights key takeaways from CRDVN to date and recommendations for the DV field to continue broadening access to services for diverse populations moving.

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## II. Culturally Responsive Approaches and Outcomes

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*"Strengthening social networks represents an innovative and alternative..approach to the domestic violence field. [It] represents a very significant field-wide policy shift towards culturally responsive, community-based..interventions to domestic violence rejected by dominant domestic violence advocates over the past forty years."*

—CRDVN Community Partner

Community partners were overwhelmingly positive in discussing their relationship with BSCF and the Network's impact on the DV field. Respondents consistently noted that CRDVN represents a tipping point in that it has the potential to generate paradigm-shifting breakthroughs in policies and practices that shape the DV field in coming years. Speaking at the organizational level, community partners were also positive about the impact of CRDVN participation.

This section delves into three specific objectives of CRDVN:

- (1) Nurture innovations and outcomes;
- (2) Promote the sustainability of practices that contribute to a paradigm shift in the conceptualization of responses to DV and sexual assault; and
- (3) Expand the capacity and reach of alternative DV providers.

### Objective 1: Nurture Innovations and Outcomes

Objective 1 is concerned with community partners testing innovative approaches<sup>2</sup> in the field, achieving culturally responsive outcomes, and demonstrating that culturally responsive practices are effective. To these ends, community partners used three primary approaches during CRDVN, further discussed below:

- Partner with communities/margins-to-center approach;
- Promote survivor and community leadership; and
- Engage faith-based leaders.

#### *Partner with Communities/Margins-to-Center Approach*

*"[CRDVN] represented a new theory and practice of 'promoting cultural competency,' one that places those of us traditionally relegated to the margins of the movement—that is, immigrant and refugee advocates, those of us working at the intersection of*

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<sup>2</sup> Innovation in this context refers to DV services that: expand and diversify points of entry for DV services; strengthen cultural competence in DV service provision; promote collaboration between health providers and DV services; or are potential "game changers" for DV prevention.

*multiple, interconnected issues and problems—at the very center of our analysis and intervention.”*

—Network Partner

CDVRN was designed to bring individuals and organizations most impacted by DV and those on the margins to the center of the movement as leading voices in culturally responsive frameworks, policies, and practices. As described in Section 1, a key lesson of BSAV CC was that centering and empowering culturally specific organizations to provide DV services is critical in expanding the capacity of the DV field to reach priority populations.

According to the networking and outcomes survey, all community partners felt that culturally specific organizations have become more central to California’s DV field as a result of participating in CRDVN. Key strategies within the margins-to-center approach included:

- **Broadening the social network** to include the strengths and resources of family, friends, and community members. Outreach within circles of families and friends has increased awareness of DV and its impacts on the broader community. Family members and friends are now more actively engaged in prevention efforts and act as first responders to DV.
- **Nurturing work over the “long haul”** to maximize the chances of widespread and sustained implementation. One of the key lessons reinforced in Phase 1 was that cultural competency is an ongoing process and commitment, rather than a discrete set of practices. As one Network partner explained, the work of shifting culturally specific organizations to the center of the movement requires nurturing the work “over the long haul” and includes an ongoing commitment evidenced by sustained participation and leadership over time.
- **Leveraging strengths, skills, and resources** of social justice and DV provider networks. Rather than working in silos, DV organizations are working in partnership with, and within a continuum of service providers to transform strategies and funding streams.

While all Network partners are actively engaged in elevating culturally specific approaches to the center of the movement, two in particular—API-GBV and Social Action Partners—articulated specific outcomes related to these strategies.

**API-GBV** hosted digital storytelling workshops for API immigrant and refugee survivors and advocates from across California. These workshops were held to “foster a broadening circle of beloved community among grassroots anti-violence advocates and activists, and to offer a generative, nourishing space for them to create stories that could perhaps begin to show what it means to address gender violence at the intersections of our communities and the mainstream DV field.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> API-GBV Final Report

API-GBV found that these intense personal stories evolved into powerful, community-catalyzing tools and served as important reminders of the lives around which policymakers and practitioners need to center decision making.

**Social Action Partners** conducted capacity building TA and developed a co-learning community of DV and sexual assault organizations using a curriculum centered on community accountability and transformative justice.

- Organizations received training on strategies that primarily rely on family and friends in the community as first responders. These strategies address and provide alternatives to current concerns regarding the over-reliance on law enforcement and direct service-only responses to DV and sexual violence.
- The co-learning community provided an opportunity for organizations in the same region to network, learn from each other, and develop partnerships.
- Because of this innovative initiative, new regional partnerships have been developed and are utilizing alternative strategies in response to gender violence throughout California.

### ***Promote Survivor and Community Leadership***

*“I used to be a person that did not value life. I had low self-esteem and was experiencing domestic violence when I learned about this program and I identified myself with it and decided to join the group. Now I feel great pride in our program. I am a leader in my community; I am a bridge to information for others. I have confidence in myself and I have acquired new skills. I am learning about radio broadcasting.”*

—DV Survivor, MICOP

Five CRDVN-funded organizations (CPAF, MICOP, MUA, ELAWC, and AWS) have made the promotion of survivor leadership the primary focus of their grant work through TA as well as direct leadership and training opportunities. Three additional organizations (Social Action Partners, API-GBV, and A Safe Place) are engaged in survivor and community leadership as a key part of their practices. Below we describe a few organizations that are deeply rooted in promoting survivor leadership and demonstrate this commitment to building cultural competency in communities over the “long haul.”

While **MICOP** has a history of training community leaders to be educators, CRDVN provided an opportunity for them to train survivors as educators for the first time. This investment in leadership development has transformed the organization and has led to new partnerships with service providers to offer indigenous immigrant clients language accessibility.

- Promotoras reported significant life changes because of participation in the Voz de La Mujer Indígena leadership development program, including increased self-esteem and improved relationships with their partners and children.

- MICOP reported that the Voz de La Mujer Indígena program had begun to dismantle the stigma and taboo that surrounds DV within the indigenous Mexican immigrant community.

**MUA** adopted a community-based, peer-oriented service model that has allowed them to provide services—including support group meetings and opportunities for leadership—to hundreds of immigrant women. As MUA described their approach:

*"We don't just refer them to services, we assign somebody that escorts them to the courthouse the first time, or couple of times, or to meet with lawyers, or to the hospital or to the police department to make a report, while we teach them. And this is done with the understanding that in the future they will teach somebody else—'You will support somebody else; you will have to go with another woman when you are in a position to do it and somebody needs you.'"*

Through this model, MUA also helps members mitigate language-related and other barriers to obtaining U-Visas for victims of violence. This process requires a letter of support from a mental health professional, which typically costs \$400 or more. MUA helps members navigate this complicated process at no cost.

- Staff members reported that many participants in the support group meetings and leadership program use the skills they have gained to provide facilitation and counseling for others.
- Staff members believe that this model has helped to reduce the strong cultural stigma and fear associated with mental health services throughout the community.

**ELAWC** launched the Promotora Institute and TA program to increase DV organizations' knowledge of the promotora model as a trauma-informed, culturally responsive approach to linking Latina survivors to support services. Training topics cover community trauma-informed services, relational-cultural theory, mobilization and community accountability, a review of the promotora model, and an assessment of organizational readiness and cultural capacity. A new website was created to share resources such as a tool kit for organizations utilizing the promotora model. ELAWC also shares stories of promotoras to highlight the potential of the model to the community. For example, one promotora featured on ELAWC's website is quoted as saying, "Because of ELAWC, I've had so many experiences that changed me. I'm a whole new person. Whatever I plan or whatever my goals, there are no limits. I know I will reach them."

- ELAWC's multiple TA initiatives have supported strategies to replicate and strengthen promotora programs throughout California.

### ***Engage Faith-Based Leaders***

The earlier BSAV CC project found that engaging influential leaders and organizations from priority communities, such as clergy and churches, is a powerful step towards shifting community norms around domestic violence. CRDVN partners built upon this principle by utilizing three key strategies:

- **Creating new partnerships** to sustain first responder roles as congregational leadership changes;
- **Adopting a humble approach** to build trust within faith-based communities; and
- **Developing alliances across different faith communities** to better understand commonalities and origins of violence.

Three CRDVN partners focused on engagement of faith-based leaders. **A Safe Place** has focused on creating more partnerships within the African American faith-based community by working with religious leaders to conduct trainings and community engagement sessions. Female faith leaders have facilitated dialogue and shared personal stories about their experiences as DV survivors. A Safe Place reflected on their accomplishments: “I believe what we’re doing now is truly creating a coordinated response to domestic violence among faith leaders and DV shelters that did not exist.” Given the leadership turnover in congregations, A Safe Place noted that it is critical to develop new relationships to sustain the faith community’s commitment to act as DV first responders.

**KFAM** focused on building long-term relationships and trust with the Korean Christian community. The organization has adopted a humble approach to be welcomed by faith leaders and acknowledged as advocates who share the same value systems. Faith leaders attended a two-day retreat, self-organized and advocated for a 40-hour training, and co-facilitated and recruited almost all the members for an additional two-day retreat.

*"Our Korean churches, there's this belief that domestic violence advocates, or that the field is very feminist, and some people perceive that as anti-men. They feel that it's too liberal, that they don't respect the family. In fact, some people feel like you send somebody to a domestic violence agency, you are breaking up the family. So people are very reluctant in the churches where they feel their role is to keep the family together."*  
—KFAM

- A group of religious leaders now serve on the faith advisory council. Its members are deeply committed to furthering the project’s goals in partnership with KFAM.

**ITCC** participated in a peer exchange with African American faith-based leaders in Southern California. Dissonance often exists between the anti-violence movement and faith leaders, who often see the DV movement a threat to families. Sharing stories and strategies has helped both sides move toward an understanding that violence doesn’t stem just from misogyny. In some communities, such as the Native American and African American communities, its roots lie in the effects of colonization. Leaders from each community shared the understanding that violence against women is not “traditional.”

- Though this peer exchange, ITCC and African American faith-based organizations are now able to better understand all that they have in common—particularly the devastation that colonization has had on their communities and the role of faith in bringing about healing.

## Objective 2: Promote Sustainability of Practices

Sustainable practices developed through CRDVN are those that contribute to a paradigm shift in the conceptualization of responses to DV and sexual assault. By centering innovative approaches around those most affected by DV, CRDVN has begun to transform the landscape. Culturally specific organizations have taken leadership roles in a network of providers that are placing the needs of those at the margins—immigrants, refugees, and other underserved populations—first, creating space for their leadership.

Through the engagement of faith-based leaders and community members acting as first responders, CRDVN has increased community awareness and accountability in ways that inherently impact cultural norms, stigmas, and understanding of violence in a sustainable way. These impacts, however, can be difficult to measure and may become apparent over time.

Additional organizational and leadership capacity is one way to sustain culturally responsive practices; these outcomes are described more in Objective 3. In addition, community partners have demonstrated that the work of CRDVN can be sustained through new policies and practices, and through the expansion of access to alternative funding streams.

### *Systems Change Through Policy Making*

Network partners reflected on CRDVN and BSCF's role in transforming the policy landscape. Four partners (ITCC, My Sister's House, MICOP, and MUA) have discussed engagement in advocacy at the state and federal levels in some capacity. **ITCC** has directly contributed to an improvement in cultural responsiveness at the federal level through policy development.

- ITCC's framework for understanding gender-based violence in Native American communities is rooted in an analysis of historical trauma and how that has impacted Native American families. ITCC developed recommendations for the Tribal Child Care Standards for Sovereign Nations that include cultural competency, cultural responsiveness, and trauma-informed services. They also provide a safety net for children and families experiencing domestic violence. In response, Indian Health Services will be adapting a national monitoring tool to reflect incorporate standards.

### *Expanded Access to Alternative Funding Streams*

Although many Network partners have expressed concerns about diminishing funds for DV services in light of a new federal administration, there is a sense that BSCF initiatives have begun to change the funding landscape by demonstrating the value of collaboration and investment in alternative approaches to DV. As one community partner reflected:

*"I think that there is definitely an interest to figure out how the folks in the margin can be brought to the center to get mainstream funding, to get them to be more sustaining....How do we make funding also think about the margins instead of trying to get the margins to fit into the mainstream model? I think [BSCF] really changed the culture..."*



**CPAF** and **KFAM** reported increased funding opportunities as a result of participation in CRDVN.

- CPAF advocated for funding for non-shelter-based API organizations. In response, Los Angeles County has dedicated \$300,000 for this purpose. CPAF has also dedicated \$225,000 of new funding from the City of Los Angeles towards language access plans, training on cultural responsiveness, and increased access to shared bilingual volunteers for interpretation/translation.
- KFAM has received new funding to provide culturally responsive services from other faith-based organizations and mainstream DV agencies.

### **Objective 3: Expand Capacity and Reach of Alternative Domestic Violence Providers**

In the networking and outcomes survey, community partners unanimously agreed that participation in CRDVN has increased the capacity to prevent and address DV for diverse cultural groups. This measure of capacity spans both “alternative” and “traditional” DV providers. Alternative DV providers are different from traditional ones in a few key ways.

**Traditional DV providers** primarily include shelters and direct supportive service providers whose main goal is to provide a safe space from abusive partners. These organizations have developed and continue to operate *in response* to DV. They have historically worked in collaboration with the criminal justice system and receive mainstream funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Department of Justice.

SAVE explicitly identifies as a traditional DV provider. My Sister’s House may also be considered a traditional DV provider, as it meets the criteria mentioned above. Although A Safe Place could also be considered a traditional DV provider, the organization utilizes the alternative approach of empowering faith leaders as first responders to DV. Finally, ITCC meets the criteria of a traditional DV provider, but staff from the organization disagreed with this definition of traditional.

**Alternative DV providers** include organizations such as Social Action Partners, CPAF, MICOP, AWS, MUA, ELAWC, API-GBV, and KFAM. These organizations, whose services are aligned with expanding DV prevention and utilizing survivors and community members as leaders and first responders, may be considered as alternative providers or as moving in that direction. These approaches typically receive less funding support from federal and state agencies.

All 13 community partners have demonstrated increased capacity to address DV because of CRDVN funding. Some have increased their capacity to utilize alternative approaches, as described below.

**CPAF** has invested in leadership capacity building and promoted staff to managerial positions while hiring additional staff to expand their reach. Throughout the grant period, they have deepened community engagement and focused on moving beyond traditional DV services to alternative interventions. The organization opened a stand-alone community center in the

heart of Koreatown, increasing its visibility and reach by providing non-residential services and offering free space to partners and community members for meetings, trainings, and other events. This has resulted in:

- a 20% increase in DV hotline calls since 2014;
- a 100% increase in counseling and other supportive services to non-residential clients; and
- increased survivor leadership through new events and volunteer opportunities.

In addition, CPAF has partnered with Thai CDC to expand its reach to underserved API populations in the community.

**MICOP** has trained 12 indigenous immigrant DV survivors through the Voz de La Mujer Indígena leadership development program. Themes covered by the program included self-esteem, public speaking, and goal setting. These newly trained leaders have reached 1,763 people, including 721 men and 1,042 women who work in low-wage seasonal agriculture jobs, and are either monolingual Mixteco or Zapoteco speaking, or are bilingual (Mixteco/Spanish or Mixteco/Zapoteco). Many community members reached have low literacy levels, and often have not completed their education beyond grade school.

- MICOP staff reported that the program has resulted in a greater understanding that the problem of DV does not only affect women and children. This increased recognition of DV as a *community* problem has led to what MICOP perceives as an increase in individuals reporting DV and seeking services.
- MICOP's collaboration with MUA has resulted in leadership capacity development. Promotora leaders reported that they had greater motivation and enthusiasm for the importance of their work across cultures.

**MUA's** culturally responsive service model reflects an understanding that many Latina immigrant women do not wish to leave abusive relationships. They seek instead to transform the power dynamic and protect themselves and their children from violence while keeping their families intact.

- This finding has led to increased organizational capacity. MUA now provides services including support group meetings and opportunities for leadership for hundreds of immigrant women. MUA has also developed the capacity of similar organizations serving immigrant women.
- Through CRDVN support, MUA has also been able to increase the organization's reach to previously underserved areas including Hayward, Fremont, and, to a smaller extent, Sacramento and Oxnard.

**My Sister's House** has invested in leadership capacity-building activities and has promoted Asian American staff and board members. The organization has also expanded its reach to serve Indian American clients with limited English proficiency by hiring a staff person who speaks Punjabi and Hindi.

**SAVE** has partnered with MUA and Maitri to build the capacity of staff to provide more culturally responsive services. SAVE intends to hire additional bilingual/bicultural staff and volunteers to continue to build this internal capacity.

*"Though Maitri has always served clients in Fremont, we never had a physical presence. The onsite advocate at SAVE was very effective way of connecting with clients with limited mobility due to long commute and or financial considerations. Through SAVE outreach efforts, Maitri is also able to reach out to a larger South Asian community than was possible before the collaboration." – Maitri staff person*

**AWS** has developed a multilingual language access model and created phrase books for culturally specific terminology in the medical context. Further, the organization has hired Arabic language interpreters, expanding the reach of its residential and nonresidential Arab women's services program.

## Looking Ahead

CRDVN has begun to transform the landscape of DV prevention and response. Community partners have broadened social networks and leveraged resources from allies to bring the "margins to the center." Network partners are engaging faith-based leaders and other community members to be first responders to DV.

Ultimately, the work of CRDVN will be sustained at both the individual level, by changing the mindsets of community members and DV providers who adopt culturally responsive approaches to DV, and at a broader level through investment in building the capacity of organizations, through implementation of culturally responsive policies and practices, and through advancement of funding mechanisms to support sustained commitments to the work.

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### III. Network Formation and Effectiveness

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*“This project has significantly strengthened our relationships with other agencies, including domestic violence shelters [and] service agencies. We have engaged in learning exchanges which have strengthened our own capacity, and we have been able to share our model with other organizations.”*

—CRDVN Community Partner

As part of earlier evaluation work on the BSAV CC project, SPR made recommendations to inform BSCF on continued investments in cultural competency work. One of these recommendations was to strengthen the collaborative networks of service providers inside and outside the DV field to offer culturally competent services. More specifically, SPR advocated for in-person convenings and peer exchanges to support leaders and build networks capable of promoting learning and sharing best practices on culturally competent service delivery.

As a result, while building on the BSAV CC project, CRDVN placed greater emphasis on forming peer networks in California’s DV field and increasing their effectiveness, making it one of the Network’s four core objectives. CRDVN designated JRG as the cultural responsiveness peer learning network facilitator, with goals related to creating space for sharing and learning. Major vehicles for CRDVN’s network formation and activities goals were:

- **Regional Convenings.** Over the course of 2015–2016, JRG coordinated four regional convenings and three grantee convenings, all designed to foster meaningful exchanges across the partners participating in CRDVN.
- **A Peer-Led Institute.** In November 2016, CRDVN partners came together with other invited leaders and allies at a peer-led institute, Communities Empowered for Systems Change. Participant objectives were to learn about successes and promising culturally responsive practices and approaches; promote cross-learning; engage in multi-ethnic, multi-issue networking; and craft an agenda for CRDVN moving forward.
- **Peer Learning Exchanges.** Community partners rated PLEs as one of the most impactful activities of the earlier BSAV CC project. With that in mind, CRDVN community partners were invited to participate in opportunities for in-depth, peer-based learning, exploration, and adoption of culturally responsive approaches.

SPR's assessment of the network formation and effectiveness objective was based on one primary research question: How effectively is the CRDVN Network coordinating, collaborating, and forming?<sup>4</sup>

To answer this question, SPR examined the effectiveness, outputs and larger outcomes of the main networking vehicles described above, as well as the results of a social network analysis (SNA) that drew on the networking and outcomes survey administered to CRDVN partners in 2017.

## Effectiveness of Regional and Grantee Convenings

JRG coordinated seven convenings (listed below) aimed at providing community partners with opportunities to gather, build trust and connections with peer organizations, and facilitate sharing of innovative, promising, culturally responsive practices in the DV field. Moreover, the regional convenings focused on building the capacity of community partners and enhancing their ability to describe and communicate the culturally responsive aspects of their service delivery models.

### CRDVN Regional and Grantee Convenings

- June 23, 2015, CRDVN Grantee Convening, Los Angeles
- September 22, 2015, Northern California Regional Convening, Oakland
- October 13, 2015, Southern California Regional Convening, Los Angeles
- November 12, 2015, CRDVN Grantee Convening, Berkeley
- April 21, 2016, CRDVN Grantee Convening, Los Angeles
- June 22, 2016, Northern California Regional Convening, Oakland
- June 28, 2016, Southern California Regional Convening, Los Angeles

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<sup>4</sup> The CRDVN logic model includes the following expected outcome: "Strengthened networks of DV and non-DV providers to collaborate to offer and expand the availability of culturally-responsive services." This outcome has four sub-outcomes: (a) increased use and sharing of culturally responsive tools, practices, and resources; (b) more effective leaders and networks to promote peer learning, share best practices, and expand and advocate for culturally responsive service delivery; (c) increased engagement and coordination with mainstream DV organizations and other stakeholders to ensure DV survivors have equal access to services; and (d) increased dialogue across different systems of care and allied sectors. Please see Appendix A for the CRDVN logic model.

- **Attendees agreed that the goals of the convenings were met.** These goals were generally concerned with sharing work and deepening peer connections; developing the vision for CRDVN; and planning for the peer-led institute. Agreement levels typically ranged from agree to strongly agree (3.0 to 4.0 on a 4-point scale). In fact, across all seven convenings, only two of the 24 goals received an average rating of less than 3.0 (agree). Both were from the April 21, 2016, grantee convening.<sup>5</sup>
- **Attendees felt the convenings were useful, relevant, and well-facilitated.** Average levels of agreement ranged from 3.2 to 3.8 on statements that described overall convening content as useful and relevant and that described facilitators as responsive to participant questions and feedback.
- **Peer networking continued to be singled out as valuable.** An earlier SPR memo described how networking time—including *scheduled* networking time—was one of the most useful aspects of the convenings.<sup>6</sup> Feedback from the three convenings in 2016 continued this trend, with several respondents highlighting connecting, engaging, and networking with peers as some of the most valuable aspects.
- **Attendees also highlighted planning for the peer-led institute as valuable.** Respondents to the 2016 convening evaluation forms emphasized the value of opportunities to plan for the 2016 peer-led institute. This helped attendees better understand the purpose of the Network and their individual organizations’ specific places within it. This finding aligns with earlier SPR recommendations (described in the convening memo) to collaborate with community partners on shaping future convenings and to provide community partners with additional opportunities to take ownership of carrying the work of CRDVN forward.

## Effectiveness of the Peer-Led Institute

On November 17–18, 2016, CRDVN supported a convening in Berkeley entitled “Communities Empowered for Systems Change, a Peer-Led Institute.” The two-day institute included concurrent workshop sessions on topics such as empowering immigrant survivors and non-traditional partnerships, and breakout group strategy sessions for sustaining the Network, among other elements.

CRDVN members played key planning roles, serving as Design Team members and facilitators. As JRG described it: “While JRG still played a strong intermediary and coordinating role, the CRDVN members provided the lead thinking and implementation of the design and content of the institute—and this was reflected in the facilitation of the Institute.”

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<sup>5</sup> The two goals were “identifying Network leader contributions towards sustaining the CRDVN,” and “developing a framework for the CRDVN 2016 Institute.” The average agreement ratings for these goals were 2.9 and 2.8, respectively.

<sup>6</sup> See *BSAV CRDVN Convening Evaluation Summary*, February 24, 2016.

Another JRG staff member described the institute planning and execution experience for CRDVN members as “leadership development.” A network partner concurred, noting that the Network “made it possible to take the lead in a couple of areas [of the institute],” including planning and facilitation of workshops.

The highest-rated components of the institute were the opening breakfast/plenary on Day 2 (which included the oft-cited Elaine Whitefeather’s remarks) and the opening lunch/plenary on Day 1. These elements were rated as extremely useful by 77% and 70%, respectively.<sup>7</sup>

Overall, 96% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the content of the institute was useful and relevant. Just as many (97%) agreed or strongly agreed that the speakers and facilitators were responsive to participants’ questions and feedback. Nearly as many (93%) agreed or strongly agreed that the institute was conducive to peer networking—a priority articulated in earlier convening feedback.

However, the purpose of the institute was not clear to 21% of participants *before* arriving in Berkeley. In addition, three Design Team members remarked on this in their post-institute reflection forms, with one simply noting, “Participants were unclear at the start what this was all about.”

Nevertheless, participants overwhelmingly agreed or strongly agreed that the institute’s four objectives had been met. The objectives for CRDVN leaders and other invitees (with percentages agreeing or strongly agreeing that this had been accomplished) were to:

1. Learn about successes and promising practices for replicating culturally responsive approaches to prevent and end domestic violence (95%);
2. Promote cross-learning and generate new knowledge for expanding the availability of culturally responsive domestic violence services (96%);
3. Engage in multi-ethnic, multi-issue coalition networking focused on building a broader audience to advocate for innovative, culturally responsive, survivor-centered systems of care (92%); and
4. Craft an agenda for moving the CRDVN forward (82%).

Although the majority still agreed that the objective had been met, it is notable that “crafting an action agenda for the CRDVN” received the lowest level of agreement. In fact, 10% *disagreed* that they took part in forming an agenda. Some participants’ open-ended feedback suggests that progress on this front was challenged by the relatively short amount of time dedicated to breakout groups for detailed planning (as opposed to just generating and sharing ideas). In addition, some feedback from the Design Team suggested that, while consensus existed on the prioritization of an action agenda, the format for crafting it could have been more effective. For example, CRDVN members alone could have developed an action agenda, since other participants (allies, partners) were still learning about the CRDVN.

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<sup>7</sup> Please see Appendix C for full institute survey results.



In describing the most unique and/or exciting aspects of the institute, respondents spoke about the opportunities to connect with and learn from people from different agencies, as well as to network informally (e.g., during Day 1 dinner and over Day 2 lunch, which 55% rated as extremely useful and 24% rated as useful). This theme is consistent with earlier convening feedback reported by SPR.

Institute respondents highlighted the value of storytelling, both from the speakers and with each other, and of a space where diverse voices and conversations that are “different from the norm” could take place. In describing the success and stand-out accomplishments of the institute, Design Team members reflected on the level of energy, motivation, and camaraderie that resulted from participants meeting and sharing with one another. As one Design Team member observed, “The way [the institute] emotionally charged people was the highlight....They were happy with new networks they formed and seeing so many other culturally-specific organizations doing similar types of work.”

A continuing theme from earlier convening feedback related to interpretation support. Specifically, feedback on the 2015 regional and grantee convenings suggested the need for improved interpretation services and translated materials. For the institute, two Design Team members cited translation issues as an area of ongoing learning. For example, they pointed to the need to better integrate monolingual Spanish speakers and translation headsets throughout the day, and to the importance of securing interpretation team feedback on the agenda ahead of time.

## Effectiveness of Peer-Learning Exchanges

Like the grantee and regional convenings, the six PLEs aimed to provide community partners with opportunities for in-depth learning, exploration, and adoption of innovative, promising, culturally responsive approaches and service delivery models in California’s DV field that benefit high-need, underserved populations. The four primary objectives of the PLEs were to:

1. Foster a community of practice;
2. Generate new knowledge for providing culturally responsive services;
3. Expand implementation of best practices; and
4. Deepen expertise within the Network.

The PLEs allowed for community partners to cultivate a shared vision for continued peer learning and collaboration, including joint funding and advocacy efforts. The community partners all expressed excitement about the rare opportunity to travel to other partners to learn firsthand about their programs and services.

Ultimately nine community partners took advantage of this opportunity and self-organized to create six PLEs between March and June of 2016, with the level of funded support ranging from \$3,000 to \$6,000. Six of the community partners participated in multiple PLEs. SPR’s PLE

memo (August 2016)<sup>8</sup> provided an overview of the PLEs, as well as key outcomes and takeaways. (See Appendix D for an overview table of the PLEs.)

While all the PLEs shared the same overarching goals, each also had its own unique set of learning objectives. For example, three were designed so that the community partners could learn how to engage new stakeholders or better serve particular populations as a way of broadening their services (e.g., how to engage faith leaders as DV partners, or how to serve a growing Latina clientele). Four PLEs explored how certain approaches, such as a workforce development model, could be adapted and integrated into their existing service delivery models.

### **PLE Formats**

The PLEs were offered in various formats to maximize learning and to satisfy community partners' preferences. Two were Cross-Site Culturally Responsive Tours, for which a cohort of Network partners collectively decided on a topic of interest (e.g., the promotora model) and identified an expert within CRDVN or the DV field to provide training on this chosen topic.

Two PLEs were Host-Led, whereby a community partner provided training and technical assistance on a strategy or service delivery model that had been successfully implemented at their organization.

For the remaining PLEs, the community partners opted for "Design Your Own," which provided them ample flexibility to shape the PLEs into what best suited their organizational needs (e.g., a combination of staff visits and leadership exchange between organizations).

### **PLE Outcomes**

All Network partners agreed or strongly agreed that, because of PLE activities, their organizations:

- had established or further developed partnerships with system partners to refer or offer culturally-responsive services to high-need groups, and
- felt strongly connected to a network of providers working together to expand the availability of culturally-responsive DV services.

Regarding the second of these outcomes, a subgroup of API organizations collaborated specifically for a PLE. They capitalized on their strengthened partnership very soon afterwards to pursue a state-level request for proposals on improving culturally responsive DV service delivery throughout the state. As one of these community partners observed, "I think the peer learning exchanges were very helpful...for the API domestic violence organizations to start working more closely together. This network gave us an opportunity to really connect."

Other key PLE outcomes reported by community partners were:

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<sup>8</sup> BSAV CRDVN Peer Learning Exchanges, August 19, 2016

- **Recognition of commonalities across different approaches in working with diverse populations.** PLE experiences allowed community partners to learn across different cultural groups, recognize commonalities despite distinct target populations, and see ways for applying strategies to other communities.
- **A crystallized vision for change.** The opportunity to see firsthand how other community partners operate (e.g., through observation of community context or how organizational space was used) deepened understanding and provided ideas for strategies to adopt (e.g., integrating art therapy into programming).
- **Leadership development experience.** Four of the community partners highlighted the value of having DV survivors, community members, and line staff participants in the PLEs. Furthermore, two reported being intentional about having line staff or clients deliver presentations during PLEs they hosted, which had implications for leadership development.
- **Establishment of trust and deepened relationships.** Like the regional and grantee convenings, informal aspects of the PLEs, such as sharing meals, were critical for strengthening connections and creating a sense of community between PLE participants.

Network connections were augmented through the sharing of culturally responsive tools, practices, and resources at the PLEs (e.g., the promotora model, a workforce development program, engaging faith leaders). However, the PLEs had less of an impact on increased engagement with non-DV providers and across different systems of care, allied sectors, and mainstream providers. The community partners emphasized that the PLEs were for the benefit of CRDVN community partners and therefore limited the participation of mainstream providers.

On an initiative level, staff from BSCF felt that PLEs were a particularly effective tool for learning as well as engagement. As a BSCF staff member noted, PLEs facilitated connections and “propelled” some of the less engaged community partners to become more active in the Network. PLEs also emerged as a tool with potentially larger applications and purpose. One BSCF staff member observed, “I think that particular approach [PLEs] served [as] a tool for cross-community sharing and learning. But it’s actually also now become almost a cross-community statewide organizing tool.”

## Broad-Level Network Outcomes

A full discussion of Network outcomes depends not only on the outputs of specific sub-components, such as the convenings and PLEs discussed above, but also on taking a broader perspective. For this, we use social network analysis as well as other qualitative and quantitative data that reveal the perceived impact of CRDVN on the community partners and beyond.

## What is Social Network Analysis?

Social network analysis is an approach to understanding relations among a set of actors. Using network analysis software, it allows for quantitative descriptions of specific network aspects, as well as graphic presentation of information about network patterns and structures.

In the networking maps shown on the next page, the circle nodes represent individual organizations, and lines represent the connections between them. The location of nodes relative to each other on the map is significant, as these maps are scaled using mathematical formulas that take into account all of the connections in the network. This means that (1) the proximity between organizations generally reflects their strength of connection, including direct and shared connections; and (2) organizations with more connections tend to be located towards the center of the network.

### Social Network Analysis

SNA allows us to see how the number and nature of connections between organizations change over time. SPR has incorporated this type of analysis into earlier evaluations of the BSAV CC project. For the present evaluation of CRDVN, we were interested in understanding how connections changed among the 13 current partners of the CRDVN between the beginning and end of the initiative (2014–2017).

Of the 13 current partners, seven had participated in the earlier BSAV CC; six had not. In this section we summarize the network formation and development over the three-year grant period among the 13 partners. The findings are based on data from 10 organizations.<sup>9</sup>

To track change over time, partners were asked to categorize their connections with each other on a scale from *no interaction* to *networking* to *coordination* to *collaboration*. See Exhibit III-1 for a description of the three categories of collaboration.

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<sup>9</sup> Three organizations did not complete the follow-up survey in 2017 (AWS, MUA, and A Safe Place). Baseline connections between AWS/MUA and the other previous grantees were available from the previous grant cycle but are not included in the current report because no follow-up data are available. The connections shown for these three organizations are *inbound* connections (i.e., reported by other grantees). Given these limitations to the data, findings presented here should be interpreted with care; it is likely that they underrepresent the interconnectedness of the group.

**Exhibit III-1  
Levels of Collaboration**

<i>Networking</i> →	<i>Coordination</i> →	<i>Collaboration</i>
Aware of other organization	Provides information to each other	Shares ideas and resources with each other
Loosely defined partnership roles	Defined partnership roles	Frequent communication
Occasional communication	Formal communication	characterized by mutual trust
Decisions made independently	Some shared decision making	Joint decision making
Examples: Membership as a cohort member in the BSAV CC learning community; membership in the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence	Examples: Working with local law enforcement around responses to DV situations; coordination in service referrals and tracking of client progress	Example: Formal arrangements and/or funding support to do joint projects or provide coordinated set of services

**Network Connections at Baseline**

Baseline connections among partners were captured via different data sources depending on whether they had participated in the previous BSAV CC:

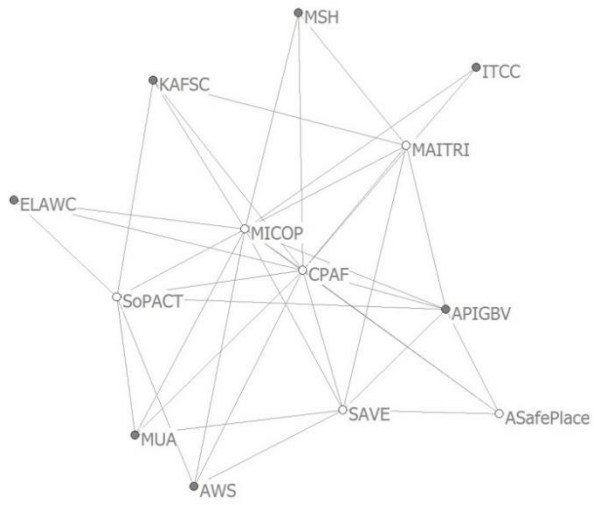
- For the seven continuing partners, the second-round SNA survey for the previous BSAV CC initiative was administered in winter 2013–2014. In addition, the retrospective baseline survey, administered in spring 2017, captured their connections with the six non-continuing partners at the beginning of CRDVN.
- For the six non-continuing partners, the retrospective baseline survey captured their connections with the full cohort of 13 partners at the beginning of CRDVN.

As shown in Exhibit III-2 below, at the beginning of CRDVN, all Network partners were connected to each other at the networking level and above. Coordination-level ties were most common, accounting for 39% of connections, followed by networking (33%), and collaboration (29%).

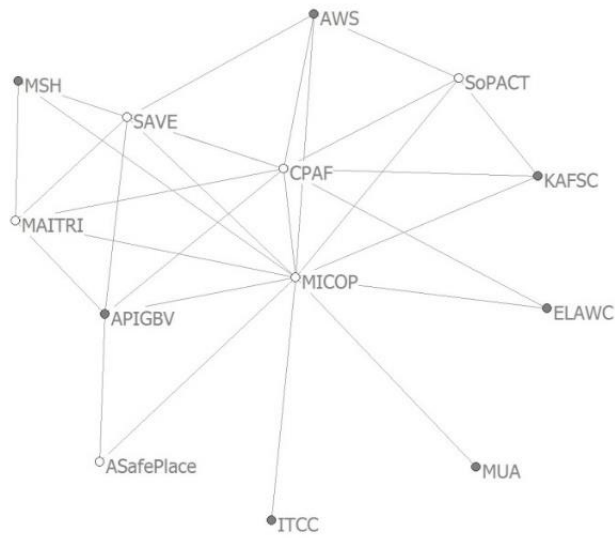
At the beginning of CRDVN, four partners (ELAWC, ITCC, SAVE, and A Safe Place) were not connected to any other organizations at the collaboration level (the highest level of partnership).

**Exhibit III-2**  
**Connections Among Network Partners at Beginning of CRDVN**

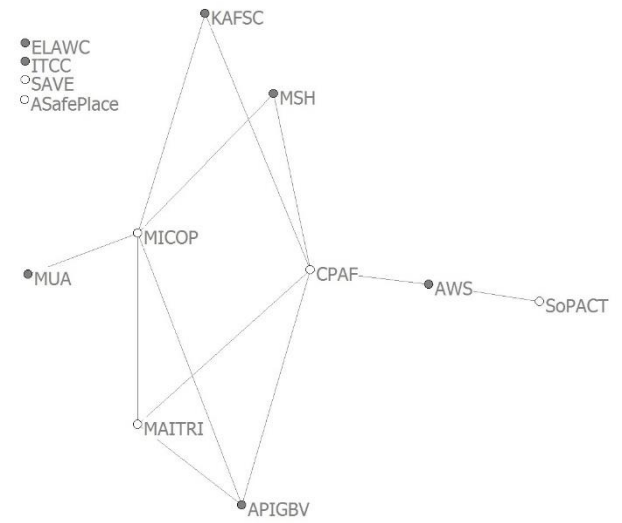
Networking and Above



Coordination and Above



Collaboration Only



- Continuing Partners
- Non-Continuing Partners

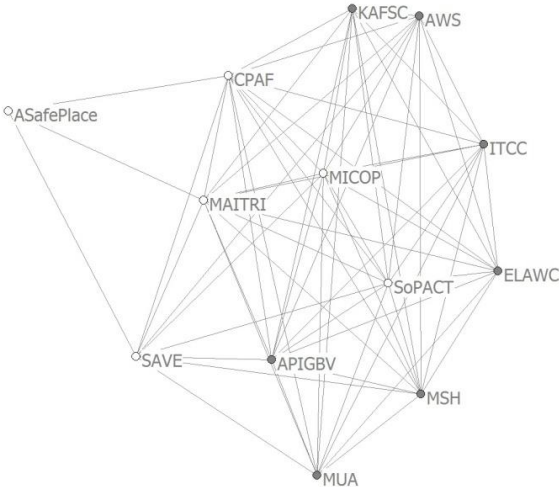
### Network Connections at Follow-Up

By the end of CRDVN, the number of connections had increased by 61%, with the largest growth at the networking level (+138%), followed by collaboration (+36%), and coordination (+16%). These patterns, as shown in Exhibit III-3, suggest that a strong foundation of informal connections was laid during CRDVN with room for continued and deepened connections going forward.

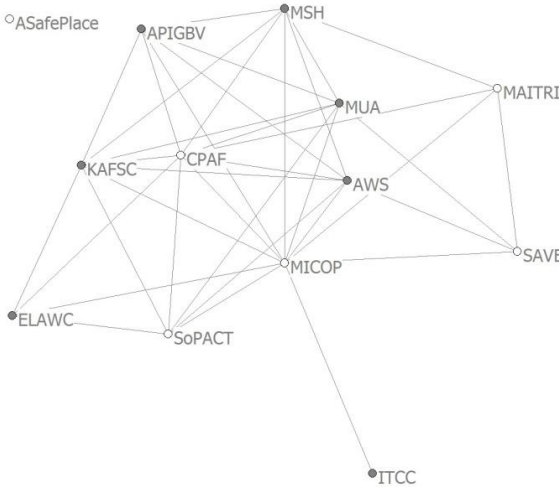
At follow-up, networking ties made up 48% of all reported connections, followed by coordination (28%), and collaboration (24%). All but two Network partners were connected to at least one other partner at the highest level of partnership (collaboration) by the end of CRDVN. The exceptions were ITCC and A Safe Place (an organization that did not complete the follow-up survey).

**Exhibit III-3**  
**Connections Among Network Partners at End of CRDVN**

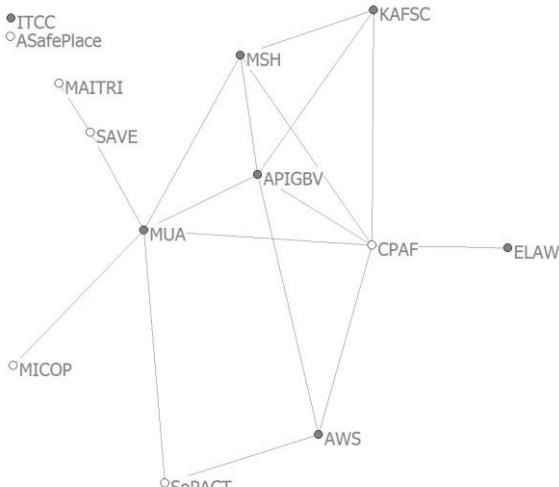
Networking and Above



Coordination and Above



Collaboration Only



- Continuing Partners
- Non-Continuing Partners



In addition to the growth in number of connections within the network, the shape of the network evolved and strengthened over time. At the beginning of CRDVN, the partners were connected in a hub-and-spoke network that was dependent on a handful of partners (e.g., MICOP, CPAF) to connect others (Exhibit III-2). By the end of CRDVN, the network developed and matured, becoming more stable and resilient, with partners connected to each other in multiple ways, particularly at the coordination level (Exhibit III-3).

However, even at the close of CRDVN, at the highest level of partnership (collaboration), a number of community partners were only loosely connected to the network via one other partner or were not connected at all (ITCC, A Safe Place, as noted above).

In assessing progress towards developing a network, it is important to consider the level of connection the initiative wishes to develop and how partners can realistically and strategically continue to build on what has been established to support future work together. Collaboration, at the highest level, is time-intensive and likely feasible only with a limited number of partners. On the other hand, a broader base of networking and coordination connections and partnerships increases the resources that an organization (and its clients) can access while not requiring an inordinate level of effort and capacity to maintain.

### *Reflections on Broader Network Outcomes*

The very establishment of the Network is an accomplishment. As a staff member from BSCF noted, “The fact that there is a network in and of itself is a huge step forward in the field....Organizations have not only really clarified and lifted up their voice around the individual work that they do, but really see the connection across communities and the importance of lifting up their voice and learning from each other.”

All the network partners that responded to the final networking and outcomes survey said that CRDVN had met (60%) or exceeded (40%) their expectations for participating in a network focused on a culturally responsive system of care. Indeed, even though CRDVN is, in the words of one network partner, “in its infancy,” from the perspective of partners it has accomplished much as a network and holds promise for more.

Because of CRDVN activities overall, partners felt that the following network-related outcomes had been accomplished for their organizations:

- **Shared culturally responsive practices.** All Network partners (100%) agreed that, because of CRDVN, organizations have shared culturally responsive approaches and practices with other organizations beyond CRDVN.
- **Strengthened network.** Again, all Network partners (100%) agreed that CRDVN had strengthened a network of organizations devoted to expanding and advocating for culturally responsive DV service delivery.
- **Strong sense of connection.** All the Network partners (100%) believed that CRDVN had helped organizations feel strongly connected to a network of providers working together to expand the availability of culturally-responsive DV services.

- **Increased partnerships.** Nearly all Network partners felt that, as a result of CRDVN, organizations had established or further developed partnerships with system partners to refer or offer culturally responsive services to high-need groups.
- **Increased centrality of culturally specific organizations.** Most Network partners (90%) agreed that CRDVN led to culturally specific organizations becoming more central to California's DV network/field.

With specific regard to a state-level network and progress on the policy front, Network partners were positive, but a bit more circumspect:

- **Increased awareness.** Eight of ten survey respondents (80%) agreed that CRDVN had successfully elevated awareness of the importance of culturally competent DV services throughout California; 20% indicated they could not say.
- **Policy impact.** Sixty percent agreed or strongly agreed that CRDVN informed or made contributions to shifts in California policies to ensure high-need, underserved populations had equal access to DV services; 30% disagreed and 10% indicated they could not say.

Many of the results above, particularly the first set of bullets, speak to CRDVN partners feeling a greater sense of community and a reduced sense of isolation. CRDVN facilitated human connections by bringing partners together, affirmed the importance of their work, and empowered them as leaders. As one Network partner reflected, "I think the fact that these organizations often, in their community, work in isolation...it is really helpful for them to come together and feel the power in numbers." Another community partner offered, "I was able to learn from the network, but in addition to that it was an opportunity for the network to empower us as leaders."

Network partners also described how the CRDVN experience had allowed them to share approaches, practices, and frameworks with the network. At a framework level, two described gaining "a shared framework of cultural responsiveness," as well as more specific framings such as around engaging the faith community.

At a deeper level, exchanges allowed for a cross-fertilization of approaches. This was the case not only with respect to engaging religious leaders in different ethnic communities to better serve clients, but also for other approaches such as workforce development programs and adapting the promotora model for API communities. Two Network partners also highlighted cross-fertilization of knowledge and approaches with mainstream DV agencies. For example, one community partner noted the organization had demonstrated that its model could be integrated and utilized by mainstream DV agencies to improve services to Latina immigrant women.

From the perspective of both JRG and BSCF, another important but somewhat unexpected outcome was a shift to a network mindset. The Network was initially grounded in learning objectives and the service delivery orientation of its members, but the potential for organizing and system change became more apparent over time. As JRG observed, "The network is

basically organized around delivering services....That’s their core mission. Service providers don’t usually think about how they need to interrupt the political process in order to exert more power over the way things are done in the delivery of services.” However, BSCF witnessed movement in that direction and a synergy—organizations coming together around their expertise and “really seeing across communities what a shared vision could look like.”

A couple of community partners also weighed in on the shift in mindset by describing the potential for a larger coalition devoted to system change, and “a mixed statewide network across different communities, across different language groups, that shares a framework of cultural responsiveness.” To this end, the peer-led institute was a harbinger of future potential in that “the baton of leadership” was passed to CRDVN members in the planning and execution of the event; it represented a key step toward a sustainable, self-organizing network.

## Network Lessons and Looking Ahead

*“I think the peer learning exchanges and the other elements of the CRDVN planted a lot of seeds, and even watered some of the seeds. But I think...with any plant, we still have to make sure that it continues to grow. We need to continue to water it, or a lot of what was starting to be beautiful won’t be.”*

—CRDVN partner

Though CRDVN’s original orientation (toward learning and service delivery) may have challenged a more ambitious systems-change mindset and agenda, the Network now appears poised to harness its collective power in this regard. While breaking out of its original mindset may continue to be a challenge, the Network is embarking on a new phase with refreshed objectives and a new member-driven leadership team.

On the one hand, the Network’s formation was facilitated by leveraging pre-existing connections between organizations and leaders who had participated in other BSCF initiatives, including the BSAV Strong Field Project.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, the Network comprised organizations funded by BSCF, leading one partner to remark that it was “a little bit like an arranged marriage of agencies,” with (some) members not knowing each other well.

Moving forward, the CRDVN leadership team and members have begun to think strategically about which organizations should be invited to join the Network and why. For example, at least one member flagged the need to “pilot cross-field collaboration” with the health sector given ongoing threats to the Affordable Care Act.

Finally, the next phase of CRDVN is an opportunity for members to self-lead and self-organize while still defining an appropriate ongoing role for BSCF. Many community partners expressed the wish for ongoing foundation support and investment in CRDVN, promotion of the Network

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<sup>10</sup> The Blue Shield Against Violence Strong Field Project aimed to strengthen California’s DV field through a three-prong strategy of leadership development, organizational strengthening grants, and network building and knowledge sharing.

among BSCF’s philanthropic networks, and BSCF maintenance of a platform of annual CRDVN events to showcase activities and policy advocacy efforts.

## IV. Lessons Learned

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*“The foundation has played an important role by believing and trusting in the work we are doing....They are paving the way for grassroots organizations.”*

*—CRDVN Partner*

Across multiple phases of BSCF’s support for culturally competent DV leaders and services, important lessons have arisen from the work of Network partners. While many of these have been at the organizational and network levels, here we pull back to highlight lessons on strategy and approach for the foundation’s consideration as it continues its support of the DV field in California.

### **Lesson 1: Investing in grassroots leadership is key to strengthening the domestic violence field.**

*“What we’ve learned, which has been very interesting, is that we need to invest in or believe in grassroots leadership—give this opportunity to women that may have limited opportunities to shine in other areas but that know their community well.” —Community partner*

One of the most visible and powerful aspects of CRDVN is that it has promoted grassroots leadership and the leadership of women of color. Building on findings from the BSAV CC evaluation, CRDVN started under the assumption that culturally specific organizations are experts in their own communities, and as such they are well positioned to address issues of violence. Community partner staff indicated that they deeply value having a space for culturally focused organizations to come together and learn from one another. In the words of a Network member, by providing this space, CRDVN “validates and underscores the rich diversity of our state, and our people, and our communities.”

Because CRDVN leaders are well connected to their communities, they were successful at engaging women and leaders in workshops and trainings on domestic violence. In some communities, such as those served by MICOP, this has meant that women came to understand the violence they had experienced in their own lives differently. In others, such as the Korean faith community, it has meant that pastors were better positioned to serve as first responders when faced with family violence. Among those organizations using the promotora model, including MUA and ELAWC, there was an effort to “teach women to speak up using their own voices.” In all cases, support for grassroots leadership provided access to communities not reached through traditional DV programming.

## Lesson 2: Centering the needs of survivors at the margins is an equity approach.

*“We respect all people, honor diversity, and aim to bring those at the margins of our society to the center of our work to ensure that every Californian has the opportunity to be healthy and live free from violence.” —Peter Long, BSCF President, on BSCF website <http://www.blueshieldcafoundation.org/our-work/blog/together-we-stand>*

The focus on centering the needs of all survivors is central to BSCF’s mission of improving “the lives of all Californians, particularly the underserved” and its president’s expressed interest in supporting “equity and dignity.” Although CRDVN is an important step in the direction of centering those who are most vulnerable, its approaches are still not well known or widely adopted in the DV community. One community partner described a woman who drove two hours to access services at her organization: If “the local shelter had someone who she could have related to, she wouldn’t have driven two hours.” She continued, “I knew there was a need for [culturally responsive services], but I didn’t feel like I would have to justify it so much....There is so much more work that still needs to be done.”

Thus, there continues to be a strong need for promotion and sharing of best practices and approaches through CRDVN, as well as investment in culturally specific organizations engaged in this work. CRDVN has not made inequities in funding for DV services targeted at communities of color disappear, but has—in the opinion of one JRG staff member—rather shined a light on “what form those disparities take,” and how the “role, work, and roles” of culturally specific organizations “improve conditions.” Placing the focus on those who are the hardest to reach is critical because it improves access and the quality of services for everyone. In keeping with this, one Network partner described her biggest lesson from CRDVN as “this idea of the whole margin to center” and “really focusing your attention and prioritizing the hardest to reach groups.” She continued:

*“If you do that first, the other groups will follow. I think it is really important, as opposed to what’s been happening now, which is to focus on the main DV services...then tweak them a little to get to the more underserved population. It’s switching it around. Start from the hardest to reach community first.”*

Furthermore, it is an approach that leads to innovation, in that it requires developing new partnerships, expanding networks, working across ideological differences, and revisiting some of the standard assumptions about how to effectively serve women and families experiencing violence. For this reason, one Network partner explained that she has been thinking of how she can “lead from the margins,” rather than seek to become part of the “center,” in order “to do more interesting and valuable things.”

CRDVN partners said they appreciate BSCF’s support in this area and feel like the foundation can continue to do more by continually asking, “Who is not being reached?” Muslim and African American communities can be further supported, for example, as can LGBTQ and gender nonconforming Californians. A Network partner elaborated: “I really feel that for California’s DV work to center [those at the margins], and to model that, means all of California

is better.” Another partner noted that to push this work forward, the foundation must “be willing to take some risks on new players and support them.”

### **Lesson 3: Peer Learning Exchanges are valuable for relationship building and cross-cultural exchange.**

*“If there was one thing that strengthened the network, it was those [peer] exchanges, because we were able to make a connection and see the human aspect of those who were behind those organizations.” —Network Partner*

ACRDVN members found the PLEs to be particularly helpful. BSCF also noted that for “some of our partners who have not been so active in the network,” the PLEs “propelled them to become more engaged.” Cross-cultural collaboration allowed at least three community partners to recognize the commonalities they shared with others despite working with different populations. As one observed, “It was helpful to see the commonalities in how we engage immigrant survivors and get ideas on specific strategies that we can adopt.” Through the PLEs, community partners not only gained in-depth understanding of how a strategy or approach was used in a community, but also facilitated the application of the strategy to other community contexts.

### **Lesson 4: Collaborative relationships and capacity take time and intentionality to develop and maintain.**

Collaboration occurred in CRDVN at the community and network levels. At the community level, a common refrain among CRDVN partners who were looking to engage community leaders as DV first responders was the need for the time and resources to put these relationships into place. One community partner explained that it had taken her organization 12 years to develop relationships with faith-based leaders so that they are “really feeling comfortable with the issue [of domestic violence] and addressing it with their congregation [and] referring some of their congregants to us.” Network partners, particularly those that received multiple rounds of funding, were very appreciative of the long-term support that BSCF has provided to enable these types of relationships to develop.

At the network level, several respondents felt that, although the foundation for collective action had been laid, they still needed infrastructure and facilitation support to move forward. While the process of collaborating on the institute had helped develop their collaborative capacity and understanding of one another and their place in the Network, they relied on JRG as an intermediary to walk them through it. JRG described Network partners as being in a stage of development where they still rely on BSCF as a funder and umbrella support, and are somewhat reluctant to make waves and push change.

Now that the Network is more self-organizing, community partners expressed excitement and uncertainty over its future. One said that the success of CRDVN “depends on how invested the agencies are going to be in it” and, to be successful, “it needs to be a much larger network of domestic violence advocates representing various roles...in communities of color, as well as

other vulnerable communities.” To do this, stakeholders said they still needed some infrastructure support. One Network partner explained that it “doesn’t just happen because people care.”

## **Lesson 5: An approach characterized by flexibility and trust affirms community partners and supports innovation.**

*[BSCF] has built its identity as a foundation that actually listens to the people who are doing the work that it wants to support....That is not a common view of foundations or government, and I hope the foundation sees the benefit in that and sees that it is working. —Network partner*

Finally, Network partners were very appreciative of the way that BSCF has partnered with them. CRDVN partners feel that BSCF’s long-term support has validated their work with culturally specific communities, providing a “voice” and a “seat at the table” for culturally specific and non-traditional DV providers. Network partner staff repeatedly expressed appreciation for the foundation’s commitment to listening and learning, which provided them the space to innovate and flexibly achieve their goals. CRDVN also provided partners with a new perspective on the diversity of the DV field and affirmed the leadership of women of color.

The structure of the funding opportunity, the translation and other supports for meetings, the support for risk taking, and the learning orientation have all helped to build a sense of trust and common purpose between Network partners and the foundation. This, in turn, has laid the groundwork for experimentation and innovation among partners. One community partner said, “Many times [foundations] just want to talk to us, but what we want is to talk with each other.” There was a sense that CRDVN provided partners with the space and opportunity to talk about their work and to share their “deeply held beliefs about the strength of their culture and gender.”

The long-term investment that BSCF has made in strengthening the capacity and leadership of the DV field has nurtured a deep level of trust rooted in a sense of common purpose. Grantees understand BSCF to be a committed partner in the effort to end domestic violence.

## **Lesson 6: Member-driven activities and peer networking opportunities deepened learning and engagement.**

In particular, the PLEs and the peer-led institute were activities in which community partners could develop concrete plans, engage in deep learning and peer exchange, and make clear contributions to the Network that facilitated a strong sense of engagement and ownership. Opportunities for partners to come together with their peers and network were highly valued and contributed to a sense of community and affirmation. Together—member-driven activities and peer networking opportunities—were likely critical ingredients for CRDVN’s shift to a network mindset, as members recognized one another’s strengths and the larger potential of the collective.



## Conclusion

California DV organizations are at the leading edge of innovation in providing culturally responsive services, in part because of the deep investment that BSCF has made in organizational and leadership development through both CRDVN and the earlier Strong Field Project. Given that the Violence Against Women Act may be under threat at the national level, it is even more crucial that California continue to showcase models of inclusive systems of care, including language access and access for gender nonconforming survivors. By broadly disseminating information about the effectiveness of these models, BSCF can play a vital role in leveraging learning and shaping a national conversation.

In thinking toward the future and CRDVN's next phase of work, SPR has developed questions for BSCF's consideration. While not exhaustive, the questions are designed to provoke reflection on critical topics such as the overarching vision of CRDVN, infrastructure needs, and the nature of BSCF's ongoing role.

### Questions for BSCF's Consideration

- What is the vision and purpose of CRDVN moving forward? Is CRDVN primarily about promoting and pushing the envelope on culturally responsive practices? What is the role for CRDVN in the informing and formation of policy?
- Is the infrastructure in place for CRDVN to sustain its work without the support of BSCF? What infrastructure needs to be in place for CRDVN to be self-sustaining?
- How does CRDVN engage new members that have not received BSCF grant funds for their participation? How can the Network leverage what has been learned so far to reach populations not significantly engaged in CRDVN? How do they grow their membership in a strategic way (e.g., across critical and allied fields)?
- What role can BSAV and CRDVN play in helping to frame the implications of gender fluidity and an expanding understanding of gender within the effort to end domestic violence? What implications does moving away from the gender binary have for the field?
- As the Network enters a new phase and becomes member-led, what will be the specific nature of BSCF's role? How can BSCF play a supportive role by spreading the word of CRDVN among its (philanthropic and other) networks?
- With the sunset of the Strong Field Project and CRDVN funding, what resources will be available to promote leadership development and capacity building? To showcase ongoing work?

SPR looks forward to hearing BSCF's thoughts on these important questions, and helping to inform the foundation's next steps in supporting DV organizations' efforts to ensure culturally responsive services for California's—and the nation's—diverse populations.

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# Appendix A: CRDVN Logic Model

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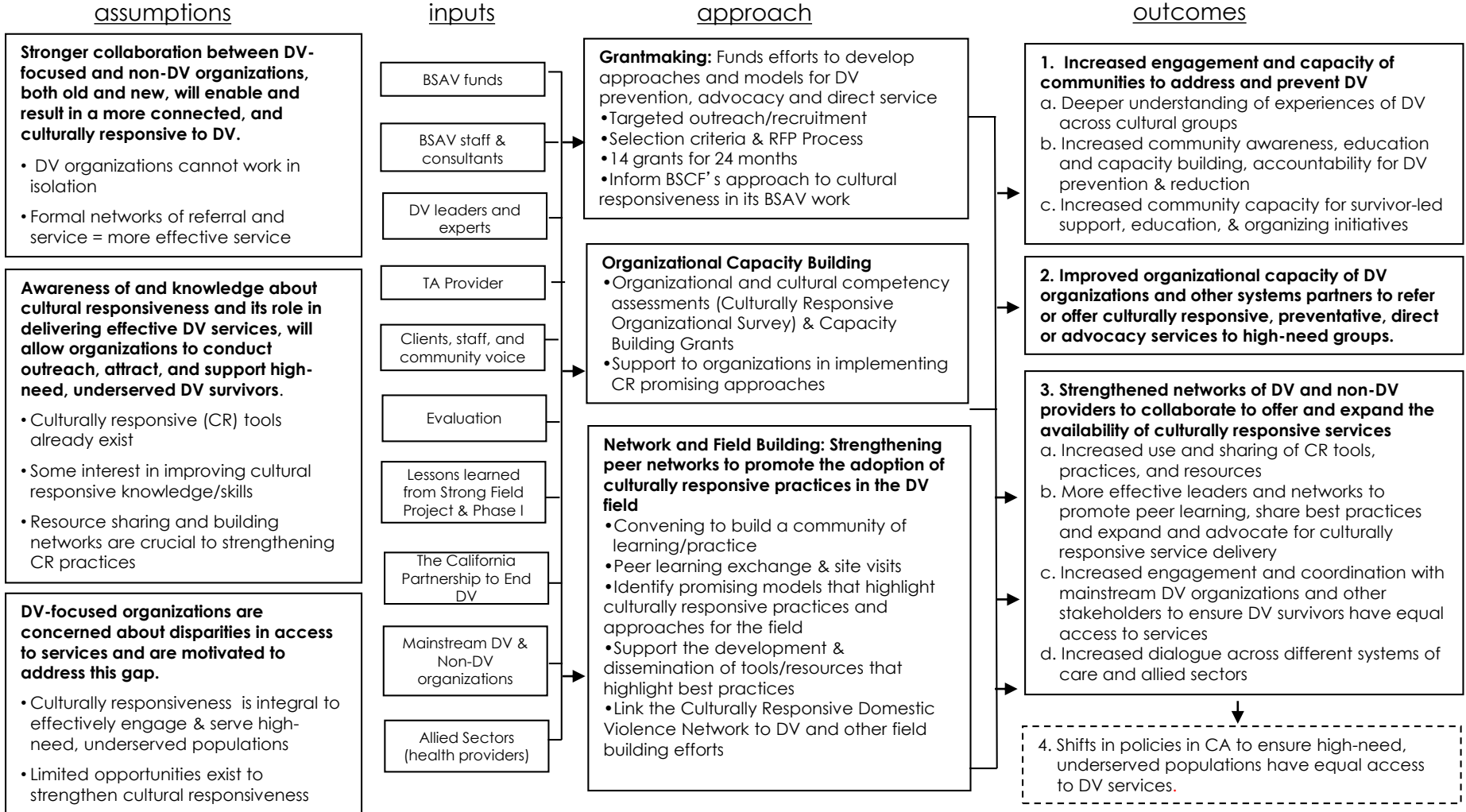
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# BSAV Culturally Responsive Domestic Violence Network Logic Model

**Vision: Create a culturally responsive, survivor-centered system of care that meets the needs of DV survivors and their families in high-need, underserved communities.**

guiding principles and values: prevention, equity, strength based, collaboration, learning and policy/systems change

Revised  
12/28/15



**Ultimate Outcome: Increased access & effective utilization by high-need populations from the sharing of effective practices and advancement of promising culturally responsive practices in DV services, systems of care.**

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## Appendix B: Data Sources and Methods

Data Sources	Description
Telephone interviews	<p>In winter/spring 2017, SPR conducted telephone interviews with 11 community partners, BSCF, and JRG. Interviews with community partners focused on core CRDVN accomplishments and challenges, organizational changes because of Network participation, lessons learned, and the effectiveness and future of the Network after BSCF funding. Interviews with BSCF and JRG did not ask about organizational-level challenges and successes, but rather the accomplishments of CRDVN overall, the feasible role of the Network going forward, and lessons for other funders and the field.</p> <p>Telephone interviews were conducted with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beckie Masaki, AGIGBV</li> <li>• Orchid Pusey, Asian Women’s Shelter</li> <li>• Carolyn Russell, A Safe Place</li> <li>• Debra Suh, Center for the Pacific-Asian Family</li> <li>• Paul Tupaz, ITCC</li> <li>• Connie Chung Joe, Korean American Family Services</li> <li>• Irene Gomez, MICOP</li> <li>• Aide Rodriguez, MUA</li> <li>• Nilda Valmores, My Sister’s House</li> <li>• Mimi Kim, Social Action Partners</li> <li>• Fran Jemmott, JRG</li> <li>• Lucia Corral Pena, BSCF</li> </ul>
Networking and Outcomes Survey	<p>In 2017 SPR administered a networking and outcomes survey to all Network partners. All but three of the partners participated in this survey. The survey had two parts, one that asked community partners about organization-level outcomes from CRDVN, as well as the larger impact of CRDVN on the field. The second part of the survey facilitated a social network analysis, as community partners were asked to indicate the number and nature of their connections with their peers at the beginning and end of CRDVN.</p>
Observations	<p>SPR staff conducted observations at multiple regional and grantee convenings held in 2016 as well as at the Peer-Led Institute in Berkeley in November 2016. As part of SPR’s attendance, we also administered evaluation forms to convening and Institute respondents and reported results.</p>
Document Review	<p>The CRDVN Final Report relies on several documents as data sources, including SPR’s past CRDVN deliverables to BSCF, convening evaluation results, CRDVN community partner final grant reports to BSCF, PLE reports, and source documents such as the CRDVN logic model.</p>

<p>Video Interviews</p>	<p>At the November 2016 Peer-Led Institute, SPR conducted video interviews with 13 community partners, BSCF, and JRG.</p> <p>All interviewees were asked to answer one overview question on what they and their organization had derived from CRDVN participation. Interviewees were then asked to choose two additional questions from a larger set. The larger set of questions included: what culturally responsive service within the DV field means to them; how CRDVN has helped strengthen peer learning and networks; how CRDVN has increased the capacity of DV organizations and communities; and what are the most innovative culturally responsive approaches shared through the Network.</p> <p>Video interviews were conducted with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beckie Masaki, AGIGBV</li> <li>• Orchid Pusey, Asian Women’s Shelter</li> <li>• Zakia Afrin, Maitri</li> <li>• Connie Chung Joe, Korean American Family Services</li> <li>• Debra Suh, Center for the Pacific-Asian Family</li> <li>• Dulce Maria Vargas, MICOP</li> <li>• Irene Gomez, MICOP</li> <li>• Nilda Valmores, My Sister’s House</li> <li>• Paul Tupaz, ITCC</li> <li>• Barbara Kappos, East Los Angeles Women’s Center</li> <li>• Genoveva Lopez, East Los Angeles Women’s Center</li> <li>• Fran Jemmott, JRG</li> <li>• Lucia Corral Pena, BSCF</li> </ul>
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## Appendix C: CRDVN Institute November 2016 – Survey Summary

### Response Statistics

	Count	%
Complete	83	67%
Total	123	



Please rate the following Day 1/Thursday elements of the Institute. Choose one answer for each statement.

	Not at all Useful		Somewhat Useful		Useful		Extremely Useful		Did not Attend		Missing	
		%		%		%		%		%		%
a. Opening lunch and plenary session	1	1%	1	1%	15	18%	58	70%	5	6%	3	4%
b. Workshop Session A: “Empowering Immigrant Survivors”	1	1%	1	1%	10	12%	23	28%	32	39%	16	19%
c. Workshop Session B: “The Power of Promotoras...”	0	0%	3	4%	13	16%	15	18%	32	39%	20	24%
d. Workshop Session C: “Beyond Survivors...”	0	0%	2	2%	6	7%	16	19%	32	39%	27	33%
e. Workshop Session D: “Strange Bedfellows...”	0	0%	2	2%	10	12%	6	7%	35	42%	30	36%
f. Subscription Dinner	1	1%	2	2%	14	17%	32	39%	24	29%	10	12%
g. CRDVN Open Mic Night	0	0%	3	4%	8	10%	7	8%	55	66%	10	12%

Please rate the following Day 2/Friday elements of the Institute. Choose one answer for each statement.

	Not at all Useful		Somewhat Useful		Useful		Extremely Useful		Did not Attend		Missing	
		%		%		%		%		%		%
a. Opening breakfast and plenary session	0	0%	1	1%	11	13%	64	77%	5	6%	2	2%
b. Networking break	1	1%	8	10%	23	28%	33	40%	14	17%	4	5%
c. Organizing for Power: Part 1	1	1%	0	0%	26	31%	47	57%	5	6%	4	5%
d. Lunch	4	5%	4	5%	20	24%	46	55%	5	6%	4	5%
e. Organizing for Power: Part 2	0	0%	2	2%	23	28%	27	33%	7	8%	24	29%
f. Closing Energy Circle	1	1%	5	6%	12	14%	29	35%	9	11%	27	33%

Please comment on how much you agree or disagree with the following statements. Choose one answer. As a result of attending the Institute...

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		Missing	
		%		%		%		%		%
a. I learned about successes and promising practices for replicating culturally responsive approaches to prevent and end domestic violence.	1	1%	1	1%	54	65%	25	30%	2	2%
b. I benefited from cross-learning and the generation of new knowledge for expanding the availability of culturally responsive DV services.	1	1%	0	0%	36	43%	44	53%	2	2%
c. I engaged in multi-ethnic, multi-issue coalition networking focused on building a broader audience to advocate for innovative, culturally responsive, survivor-centered systems of care.	2	2%	3	4%	44	53%	32	39%	2	2%
d. I took part in crafting an action agenda for moving the Culturally Responsive Domestic Violence Network forward.	0	0%	8	10%	46	55%	22	27%	7	8%

Please rate your overall Institute experience. Choose one answer for each statement.

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		Missing	
		%		%		%		%		%
a. I understood the purpose of the Institute before I arrived.	2	2%	16	19%	41	49%	20	24%	4	5%
b. The Institute met my expectations.	0	0%	2	2%	37	45%	41	49%	3	4%
c. The overall content of the Institute was useful and relevant.	0	0%	0	0%	26	31%	54	65%	3	4%
d. The speakers/facilitators were responsive to participants' questions and feedback.	0	0%	0	0%	23	28%	57	69%	3	4%
e. The Institute methods were appropriate and conducive to my learning and participation.	0	0%	3	4%	34	41%	44	53%	2	2%
f. The pace of the Institute was appropriate.	0	0%	3	4%	35	42%	43	52%	2	2%
g. I found the small group activities to be informative to my learning.	0	0%	4	5%	39	47%	37	45%	3	4%
h. I found the Institute conducive to networking with my peers.	0	0%	3	4%	28	34%	49	59%	3	4%

## Appendix D: Overview of Peer Learning Exchanges

Type and Date	Project Title & Key Activities	Learning Objectives
<p><b>Design Your Own</b></p> <p>MICOP &amp; MUA</p> <p>March 18-19, 2016 &amp; May 26-27,2016</p>	<p><b><i>Learning from the Mixteco Promotora and Community Prevention Model.</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preliminary site visit and planning session</li> <li>• MUA staff, volunteers, and survivor leaders conducted a two-day site visit to MICOP</li> <li>• MUA hosted 10 indigenous women leaders/DV survivors from MICOP’s Voz de la Mujer Indigena program and 2-4 male leaders from MICOP’s Entre Hombres program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a more comprehensive understanding of each agency’s services and experiences implementing survivor-led models</li> <li>• Initiate a planning process to develop a program that targets youth and adult men</li> <li>• Cultivate a shared understanding of best practices for serving underserved Latino/a and Indigenous communities</li> <li>• Gain knowledge around MICOP’s radio program and how survivors are trained to talk about their stories publicly</li> </ul>
<p><b>Design Your Own</b></p> <p>KFAM, Maitri, MICOP, &amp; MUA</p> <p>April 14, 2016 &amp; June 7,2016</p>	<p><b><i>Strengthening Leadership Among Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence to be Prevention Promotoras</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership interchange with MUA</li> <li>• MICOP staff delegation visit to KFAM</li> <li>• MICOP staff delegation visit to Maitri</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share strategies for training immigrant men and women to be DV Promotores</li> <li>• Identify best practices for building leadership skills of immigrant DV survivors to conduct outreach about DV to their community</li> <li>• Develop recommendations for overcoming cultural barriers to discussing DV in immigrant communities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cross-Site Culturally Responsive Tour</b></p> <p>Asian Women’s Shelter (AWS), CPAF, KFAM, and East Los Angeles Women’s Center (ELAWC)</p>	<p><b><i>Instituto de Promotora Training for API DV Agencies</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELAWC provided an in-depth training to partner API agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquire functional understanding of and organizational capacity needed to successfully implement the Promotora model</li> <li>• Explore what would be needed to replicate the model with positive results in API communities</li> </ul>

April 18, 2016		
<p><b>Cross-Site Culturally Responsive Tour</b></p> <p>Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence (APIGBV), KFAM, MUA, &amp; MSH</p> <p>April 12, 2016 &amp; May 9, 2016</p>	<p><b><i>Exploring Innovative Workforce Development Models for Asian and Pacific Islander Immigrant Survivors</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MUA hosted a site visit and provided training on its Caring Hands Workers’ Association to the partner organizations</li> <li>• Site visit to A Community for Peace in Citrus Heights, California</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the roles that API DV agencies play in supporting workforce development efforts to survivors that are grounded in social justice values and principles</li> </ul>
<p><b>Host-led Peer Learning Exchange</b></p> <p>AWS, CPAF, KFAM, Maitri, &amp; MSH</p> <p>June 21, 2016</p>	<p><b><i>Engaging Faith Leaders to Address Domestic Violence in the Korean American Community in Los Angeles</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KFAM conducted a one-day training and facilitated a discussion on the challenges of organizing in faith-based settings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share examples of culturally-specific community faith-based partnerships to address DV</li> <li>• Explore strengths and challenges of working with faith leaders and institutions</li> <li>• Engage in critical conversations on how to mobilize faith leaders/institutions to better address the needs of underserved API survivors and communities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Host-led Peer Learning Exchange</b></p> <p>MUA &amp; MSH</p> <p>March 3-4, 2016 &amp; March 28-29, 2016</p>	<p><b><i>Sharing Program Effectiveness and Efficiency for the Underserved</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MSH’s staff and board members conducted a site visit to MUA</li> <li>• MUA staff and members conducted a site visit to MSH</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand effective outreach strategies MUA has implemented to engage Latino communities in rural areas</li> <li>• Better understand MSH’s services and learn the process for obtaining Board of Immigration Appeals accreditation</li> <li>• Cultivate efforts to provide services to underserved API and Latino communities</li> </ul>