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The Urban Institute



2100 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037

2000 Report

Evaluation of the STOP Formula Grants

to Combat Violence Against Women

The Violence Against
Women Act of 1994

2000 Report:
Evaluation of the
STOP Formula Grants to
Combat Violence Against Women

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We met or interviewed well over 400 people during the course of our telephone surveys and site visits to 16 states, including state STOP grant administrators, STOP subgrantees, advocates, service providers, law enforcement professionals, prosecutors, judges, and many others. We deeply appreciate their willingness to share their experiences and insights with us. The accuracy of all descriptions of STOP-funded projects identified by project name in this report has been verified with project staff, and their permission has been granted to include their program's name in this report.

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Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ii
HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT	vii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Evaluation of the STOP Program Prior to This Report	2
An Overview of the 2000 Report	4
CHAPTER 2: STOP SUBGRANT AWARDS	5
Proportion of Awards Accounted for in the SAPRs	6
Subgrant Awards.....	6
Distribution of Funds Across Law Enforcement, Prosecution, and Victim Services	6
Distribution of Funds Across Types of Crime.....	9
Distribution of Funds Across Legislative Purpose Areas.....	10
Estimating the Number of Projects from SAPR Information.....	11
CHAPTER 3: IMPACT OF STOP SUBGRANTS	13
Introduction	13
Subgrant Statistics Documenting Changes from Before STOP to the Present ...	14
Prosecution.....	14
Law Enforcement	15
Victim Services.....	16
Subgrantee Perceptions of Impact from the 1999 Underserved Survey.....	19
Perceptions of Impact from Site Visits.....	23
CHAPTER 4: DEVELOPING A COORDINATED COMMUNITY RESPONSE	27
Introduction	27
Legislative and Administrative Support for Collaboration.....	28
Defining a “Coordinated Community Response”	28
Sources of Information	31
Levels of CCR Reported on the 1999 Underserved Survey.....	31
Work with Law Enforcement and Prosecution.....	32
Agencies with Which Underserved Programs Have the Most or the Most Meaningful Contact	33
Weak Links.....	34
The Nature of Joint Work Between Underserved Programs and Their Primary Agencies	34
Findings from Site Visits on CCR.....	36
Lack of Communication	36



	Communication	38
	Coordination	38
	Collaboration	39
	Coordinated Community Response	44
	What State STOP Agencies Are Doing to Promote Collaboration and CCR	47
	Maximizing the Effects of STOP Funding: Critical Elements for Creating an Effective Community Response	50
	Recommendations	53
CHAPTER 5:	REACHING AND SERVING WOMEN FROM UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES	55
	Introduction	55
	Data Sources	60
	Barriers of Underserved Populations	62
	Types of Programs	63
	Direct Services	65
	Outreach	68
	Training	69
	Recommendations	71
CHAPTER 6:	SEXUAL ASSAULT AS A FOCUS OF THE STOP PROGRAM	73
	Introduction	73
	Less Money, Less Attention, and Less Independence for Sexual Assault Services	74
	Evidence from the SAPRs and Telephone Surveys	74
	Evidence from the Site Visits	75
	Nevertheless, STOP Has Supported Expansions of Specific Sexual Assault Services	76
	Improvements in the Collection of Forensic Evidence	80
	Support for State Sexual Assault Coalitions and Their Role in Promoting Sexual Assault Services	81
	Promoting the Development of Coordinated Community Response to Sexual Assault	82
	Protocol Development as a First Step Toward a Coordinated Community Response	90
	Major Problems Still Exist with Payment for Forensic Medical Examinations . .	92
	How People Explain the Lack of Attention to Sexual Assault in the STOP Program Recommendations	95
	Recommendations	100
CHAPTER 7:	STALKING AS A FOCUS OF THE STOP PROGRAM	105
	Introduction	105
	Background on Stalking Crimes and Behavior	105
	Willful/Intentional Behavior	106
	Threat	106
	Fear	106
	Stalking Investigation and Prosecution	108
	Stalking Laws	108
	Identifying the Stalker	109
	Proving a Crime Was Committed	109
	Problems with Stalking Investigation and Prosecution	110
	Threat Assessment and Management	111
	STOP Funding	112
	Conclusions	119
	Recommendations	120



CHAPTER 8:	DATA COLLECTION AND COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS	121
	Introduction	121
	Data Collection and Communication Projects	122
	Use of STOP Funds for Data Collection and Communication System Projects	125
	Variation in Definitions of Data Collection and Communication Systems.	126
	Strategic Use of STOP Funds for Data Collection and Communication Projects	128
	Progress Toward the Vision of Data System Integration	130
	Reported Impact of Data Collection and Communication System Projects.	132
	Recommendations	133
CHAPTER 9:	ADMINISTRATION OF THE STOP GRANTS.	137
	Grant Application and Monitoring Requirements	137
	VAWO's Cooperative Agreements for Technical Assistance	138
	The STOP TA Project's 1999 Technical Assistance Activities	140
	Regional Meetings for State STOP Grant Administrators	140
	Outreach to State Administrators and Subgrantees	140
	Site Consultations	141
	Individualized Technical Assistance	141
	Sexual Assault Initiatives	141
	Promising Practices Initiative	141
	Special Projects	142
	Collaborations	142
	STOP Technical Assistance and Evaluation Publications Supported by VAWO	142
	VAWO Stalking and Domestic Violence Report	143
	ILJ Reports and Web Links	143
	University of Arizona Report	144
	Justice Research and Statistics Association Report	144
	The STOP TA Project's Promising Practices Manual	144
	Urban Institute Publications	144
	State STOP Agency Subgrant Award Processes	146
	Recommendations	148
CHAPTER 10:	SUBGRANT ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE.	151
	STOP Subgrant Goals and Activities	152
	Projects Addressing Full Faith and Credit Issues	152
	STOP Subgrant Performance	153
	Victim Service Projects	153
	Training Projects	155
	Special Unit Projects	156
	Policy Projects	158
	Data Collection and Communications Projects	160
	Stalking Projects	161
	Indian Tribes Projects Funded Under STOP	161
	Subgrantee Matching Requirement and Other Funding	162
	Subgrantee Evaluation Plans	163
	Victims Served	164
	General Description of Victims Served	164
	Victims Who Are Members of Underserved Groups	165
REFERENCES		167
APPENDIX		169

Highlights of the 2000 Report

Since the STOP (Services, Training, Officers, Prosecutors) program began in 1995, the states have made great strides in implementing their own strategies for helping victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Statistics on arrests, prosecution, and other justice system activities are beginning to show the impact of these changes stimulated by STOP.

STOP subgrantees perceive that their STOP funding has helped communities make significant strides in all three areas of violence against women. Most subgrantees emphasize the importance of STOP funds to their progress, even when some also mention that they engage in other initiatives to reduce violence against women concurrently with their STOP projects. Many say they “could not have done it without STOP.”

In many communities, STOP funding has also provided an incentive for agencies to work together to reduce violence against women. STOP funding has pushed communities in many states to find ways around seemingly insurmountable barriers; subgrantees have had to develop creative approaches to make collaboration a success. As a result of STOP, subgrantees have mapped out paths to or already arrived at real system change in their communities.

Despite significant achievements, many subgrantees noted during telephone surveys and site visits that the permanency of improvements in services for women victims of violence hinges on the continued receipt of funding. In their view, if funding decreased, they would lose the progress they have made using STOP funding in their ability to serve women victims of violence comprehensively. The validity of these observations is borne out by the experience of subgrantees that received one-time awards, especially nongovernmental victim service agencies. Most have not been able to maintain the gains they achieved through brief STOP funding.



The STOP program has funded more than 6,500 subgrants with FY (fiscal year) 1995 through FY 1998 program allocations, for a reported total of \$298.8 million.

Women who have experienced domestic violence or sexual assault, and the program staff who help them, report that their STOP project has made an important difference in their lives.

The 6,527 subgrant awards reported to VAWO (Violence Against Women Office) through November 15, 1999, totaled \$298.8 million dollars. Four-fifths of the subgrants (80 percent) provide direct service to victims, 75 percent increase the capacity of agencies receiving the subgrants, and 54 percent increase community capacity to serve women victims of violence. Fifty-one percent of the subgrants focus exclusively on domestic violence, 12 percent focus exclusively on sexual assault, 21 percent focus on both but not on stalking, and the rest report other combinations of focus on domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. With respect to VAWA's (Violence Against Women Act) authorized purpose area classifications, 68 percent of subgrants fall into victim services, 31 percent into training, 20 percent into special units, 15 percent into policy and procedure development, 12 percent into data/communication systems, 7 percent into stalking, and 3 percent into subgrants to Indian tribes from state allocations. Projects can be classified into more than one purpose area.

According to the subgrantees we interviewed during telephone surveys and site visits, victims are safer, better supported by their communities, and treated more uniformly and sensitively by first-response workers, among other benefits. Victims themselves, interviewed in focus groups during site visits to 16 states, generally supported these subgrantee perceptions. With regard to victims from underserved communities, subgrantees making a special effort to reach these communities reported significant increases in the people they have served. Thirty-six of the 44 private, nonprofit victim service agencies interviewed for the 1999 Underserved Survey reported numbers of domestic violence and/or sexual assault victims served annually by their agencies pre- and post-STOP. The number of domestic violence victims served annually increased for 29 of the 34 agencies providing domestic violence information. Twelve agencies increased services by more than 60 percent, eight agencies increased them more than 200 percent, and four provided domestic violence services for the first time. Similarly, the number of sexual assault victims served increased with STOP funding for 19 of the 22 agencies providing sexual assault data. Of these programs, nine increased victims served by more than 60 percent, five increased them by more than 100 percent, and four served sexual assault victims for the first time.

In addition to serving more victims, practitioners also reported that their jobs are easier now that they are working together with other agencies in their community and pooling their efforts on task forces and collaborative projects. In many areas, STOP projects are credited with introducing the idea of a *service community*. As a result of more coordinated and comprehensive services for victims, a number of subgrantees have seen more women victims of violence come forward to ask for assistance in their communities. Overall, the majority of those we interviewed indicated that through training, special units, policy and protocol development, and direct services to victims, STOP projects have improved the treatment of



women victims of violence while simultaneously fostering cohesion among service communities across the country.

Performance information for 2,369 subgrants was received by November 15, 1999; only subgrants that have run for a year or more are expected to report performance information. Training projects comprise 1,272 of these; reports indicated 218,586 personnel were trained in 10,668 training sessions. The professionals that most frequently attended were law enforcement (38 percent of training projects) and private, nonprofit victim service (25 percent of training projects) personnel.

Special unit projects comprise 663 of the subgrants reporting performance data. Thirty percent created new units, 28 percent supported or expanded an existing special unit, and 6 percent supported specialized functions for one or more members of agencies too small to justify a special unit.

Performance related to policies, procedures, protocols, administrative orders, or service development is reported by 663 subgrants. New policies were developed by 58 percent of these policy projects, and 48 percent revised or expanded previous policies and procedures. Agencies most frequently involved in developing or revising policy were law enforcement (45 percent), prosecution (40 percent), and private, nonprofit victim service agencies (31 percent).

The subgrants that support data collection and communications projects (23 percent, or 540, of performance reports) address a wide variety of data/communication system types. Case tracking or record-keeping systems are by far the most common, supported by 60 percent of the data projects. Also relatively common are forms development or standardization projects, representing 32 percent of data projects.

Two-thirds of all subgrants in the SAPR (Subgrant Award and Performance Report) database (1,637) fell into the victim service purpose area. Projects offering direct services to victims offered one or more of the following: crisis counseling (70 percent), an in-person information and referral system (53 percent), follow-up contact with victims (51 percent), and criminal justice advocacy (51 percent). Slightly under half of subgrants offered either telephone contacts or crisis hotline counseling (48 percent and 47 percent, respectively). Thirty-eight percent supported projects operating shelters or safe houses, 36 percent assisted victims in filing compensation claims, and 33 percent offered emergency legal advocacy. Twenty-nine percent provided group treatment or support, while 22 percent gave emergency financial assistance.

Forty-four percent of projects (715) with performance data in the victim service purpose area said their STOP funding permits them to offer new types of services not previously available to vic-

These subgrantees report many important accomplishments that benefit the citizens of communities throughout the country.

Victim service projects, the most common type of project funded under STOP, are serving many women who would not previously have been served, through a wide variety of activities.



tims, while 64 percent said they could now provide improved or enhanced services of a type they already offered. Forty-five percent are simply providing more of the same services that already existed. About half reported doing two or all three varieties of service expansion.

In terms of the population of victims these projects serve, 59 percent of the direct service projects helped the same groups of victims who already received services, while 79 percent reported being able to serve victims who would not have come to the program without the STOP project. Responses to these questions make clear that the resources of the STOP program are being used to offer more services to more women. Further, STOP has enabled violence against women programs to expand the types of services offered and reach many women who in the past would never have received help to deal with domestic violence or sexual assault.

States that have insisted on collaboration as a condition of STOP funding, or otherwise made extensive collaboration a very high priority, are the most likely to support projects that are creating a coordinated community response to violence against women. High levels of collaboration and coordinated community response exist as a result of STOP projects in other states, but are not as common. The payoffs experienced by communities that have moved a long way toward a coordinated community response strongly suggest that more communities and states should be moving in this direction.

Awareness is growing that the problem of violence against women is complex and requires comprehensive service responses involving agencies and services beyond the justice systems. A number of coordinated efforts have developed during the recent past, as some communities have moved beyond changes in individual agencies, usually those in the justice systems, to respond to domestic violence and sexual assault in a more comprehensive and coordinated way. Many of the early efforts focused on coordination among agencies within the criminal justice system, or between these agencies and victim service providers. In recent years, however, some communities have expanded their efforts to include a broader array of agencies and stakeholders, such as health care providers, child welfare agencies, substance abuse services, clergy, and businesses. Some communities have gone a step further and worked to involve the community as a whole in responding to violence against women through prevention and education efforts aimed at raising community awareness and reshaping attitudes about this issue.

A full coordinated community response (CCR) to either domestic violence or sexual assault is a complex set of interagency relationships, interlocking individual behaviors, and commitment. It does not happen in a day, or even in a few months, and it is difficult to maintain without the steady attention and support of at least one person who is *paid* to serve as coordinator or facilitator. This evaluation team's experience of site visits over the past four years to 16 states and more than 80 STOP subgrantees convinces us that the overall goals of VAWA—to enhance women's well-being and hold perpetrators accountable—are maximally realized when a coordinated community response is in place.

In reviewing the programs across the country that stand out as having accomplished the goals of STOP, several key elements emerge. It seems clear that the truly effective programs have



indeed transformed the way the criminal justice system handles domestic violence and/or sexual assault victims in their communities. The lessons learned from observing these programs may guide us in developing more comprehensive domestic violence and sexual assault services across the country. Two critical lessons are:

- There must be solid working relationships among all the players: law enforcement, prosecution, nonprofit victim service agencies, any victim witness assistance units that exist, and the medical establishment (for sexual assault). There must be a willingness to work together on every case unless there is a compelling reason not to, and participating agencies must develop and adopt protocols requiring them to contact the appropriate partner agencies in response to every call.
- Protocol development must be a cross-disciplinary process from beginning to end. Law enforcement, medical personnel, and victim service providers should be on the team developing the prosecution protocol, and the same cross-disciplinary representation should be applied to developing protocols for law enforcement, victim services, and medical services. This does *not* mean that other disciplines are asked to review a draft protocol once members of the discipline have written it; that strategy often leads to turf battles and defensiveness about ideas for improving “our” protocol. Rather, everyone needs to sit down together and understand how the actions of one agency depend on or are critical to the success of another agency. Then procedures to ensure the greatest possible coordination of operations can be written into official protocols. This takes longer up front, because each group must work through issues of territoriality, understanding each other’s professional language, and understanding each other’s roles and responsibilities. But it is actually more efficient in the long run than sending each discipline off to write its own protocol. Less controversy and fewer difficulties arise with implementation *after* protocol development, because the necessary cross-agency interactions and interdependencies will of necessity be considered and strategies will be developed to handle them; *every* agency contributes some changes in its own attitudes as well as procedures to make the whole system work better as a system.

States fund a number of programs addressing underserved populations. All states fund a mix of programs in rural, urban, and suburban areas, with some having special emphasis on rural programming. Many states added new services to rural areas or implemented satellite services in isolated areas for the first time as a result of STOP funding. One state initially funded only rural services with STOP money,

Some STOP-funded projects are making a difference for women from underserved communities, but more needs to be done.



thinking those women had long been neglected within the state. In later years of STOP funding, they opened up the eligibility to services across the whole state, regardless of geographic location.

Some states specifically fund special outreach and service efforts toward groups that have not been served adequately by mainstream services. These groups include elderly women, specific racial/ethnic minorities, women with mental health and/or substance abuse disorders, and lesbian and bisexual women. These programs increase women's knowledge about the services available to them and provide services tailored to meet the unique needs of the group of interest. For many agencies, STOP funding made it possible to address these underserved populations formally for the first time. Many of the efforts, however, are funded at low levels and with no assurance of continued funding, creating issues related to the scope of services available and the sustainability of such efforts.

The most common barriers reported for the populations of interest to these "underserved" programs were inadequacy of available services, norms or beliefs that inhibit women's willingness to access services, and insufficient means to access services. Across all categories of programs, the most frequently cited barriers to services for underserved populations were:

- Language barriers,
- Lack of culturally appropriate or problem-specific services,
- Social tolerance of violence in families,
- Importance of the family and/or women not wanting to leave their families,
- Distrust or fear of the "system,"
- Geographic isolation from the community and any available services,
- Lack of transportation, and
- Poverty and/or no independent source of income.

Sexual assault remains underemphasized and underfunded in the STOP program.

The major findings of this evaluation with respect to sexual assault as a part of the STOP program are: (1) sexual assault receives less attention, less money, and less independence than domestic violence; (2) when STOP funds have been devoted to sexual assault, most states visited have used them to expand specific services for sexual assault victims, not to develop coordinated community responses; (3) STOP has had only limited impact in building coordinated community responses and changing the way most com-



munities respond to sexual assault in the 16 states we visited; (4) in contrast to the general findings, STOP funds have been used to establish collaborative sexual assault response teams in a very small number of communities, with results reported to be “phenomenal”; (5) STOP funds have supported improved forensic evidence collection for sexual assault cases through several approaches; (6) service providers report continuing problems with mechanisms to pay for forensic medical examinations in most states and localities visited; and (7) statewide sexual assault coalitions now exist in some states where there were none prior to STOP, and where they exist, they make a difference.

These generalizations were already emerging as findings after the first three years of research activity on this evaluation. However, to allow sufficient time for sexual assault programming to develop (if it was going to happen), researchers decided to wait several more years before drawing conclusions. Those years have now passed, and initial impressions have been consistently supported by later investigation.

VAWA specifically identifies stalking as one of the seven purpose areas within which states should target STOP funding efforts, as well as one of the three crimes about which the legislation is concerned. Since STOP funding became available, however, few states have focused their efforts on issues related to stalking. Only eight states included stalking in their initial implementation plans, and stalking is the crime that receives the *least* amount of attention from STOP-funded activities, with only 7 percent of STOP subgrants citing stalking as a purpose area.

Part of the reason that stalking has received less attention than domestic violence and sexual assault is because stalking cases are particularly problematic to deal with—law enforcement and prosecution have a difficult time following, investigating, and obtaining convictions in such cases. Some promising approaches to handling stalking cases have been developed, however, in special law enforcement and prosecution units.

STOP funding plays an important role in ensuring a response to stalking and aid to its victims. Often STOP-funded projects fill a critical link in the justice system–victim service network and complement other, locally funded initiatives. In some jurisdictions, STOP-funded stalking projects are the starting point from which other initiatives may develop. Indeed, without many of these projects, stalking victims would have nowhere to go for help.

More is needed, however. A critical starting point would be to focus on increasing awareness among the state grantees about the prevalence of stalking offenses, their seriousness, and the existence of many programs that can be used as models for emulation. The

Stalking receives even less attention than sexual assault, perhaps because it is a relatively new focus and perhaps because legal standards of proof are difficult to meet.



only state that has targeted a funding initiative is California, and that initiative used the experiences in Los Angeles and San Diego as a guide. The California initiative was limited, however, to prosecution agencies and was, as a practical matter, limited to larger counties that can support a special stalking unit. Other approaches are needed for smaller jurisdictions and for law enforcement agencies. A noticeable and needed emphasis among the existing stalking projects is an emphasis on training and community education. A large proportion of the STOP stalking grants have gone to such projects, and a considerable amount of operational (nontraining) projects' energies are directed at training law enforcement personnel and community education. Only a few projects are directed at training prosecutors, however. Any future STOP initiative must include criminal justice training and community education as important components of an overall community initiative against stalking.

States still experience difficulties complying with VAWA's requirement that 25 percent of STOP funds be allocated to each of law enforcement, prosecution, and victim services.

When all of STOP funding is considered together over the fiscal years for which we have adequate information (FY 1995 through FY 1998), the 25 percent distributional requirement is met only for the victim services funding category, which receives from 41 percent to 25 percent of STOP funding, depending on how one defines the funding category. Prosecution receives 22 percent of the funds reported on SAPRs in the database, regardless of how the category is defined, while law enforcement receives 22 percent of reported STOP funds when the state-assigned funding category is used as the criterion and 16 percent of STOP funds when the type of agency receiving the subgrant is used as the criterion. With sufficient time now elapsed since the STOP program began to feel confident that observations reflect reality, the evidence shows that states continue to fall short of the legislative requirement to devote 25 percent of STOP funds to both law enforcement and prosecution. Only 16 states or territories (out of 56) meet the requirement to devote 25 percent of STOP funds to prosecution, and only 12 do so for law enforcement. In contrast, 43 states meet the requirement for victim services.

State STOP agencies should apply some of the lessons learned in efforts to develop victim service programs to increase the number, size, and quality of law enforcement and prosecution projects. Primary among these lessons is the utility of engaging a statewide organization (coalition, professional association, etc.) to design and organize projects and to stimulate and assist local agencies to write STOP proposals to adapt them, get trained to conduct them, and join in project development with other similarly placed agencies throughout the state.

States follow similar processes for distributing STOP grants but vary a great deal in: (a) when they begin and end these activities; (b) how they carry them out; and (c) the time that it takes to complete them. For the most part, the award process in each state includes the same steps subsequent to receiving notice of their award from VAWO: planning, sending out requests for proposals (RFPs), assessing proposals, notifying applicants of awards, and disbursing funds.

States are on very different timeliness—and have been from the beginning of STOP. For instance, the first state to begin planning for FY 1995 did so in August 1994 (even before the VAWA legislation passed), while the last state to begin planning for FY 1995 did so in September 1996—a span of two years and one month. The first state to begin each activity for FY 1997 did so before all or even 80 percent of states had completed that same activity for FY 1996.

The variety in state timeliness is especially apparent in sending out RFPs. The last state to send out RFPs for FY 1995 funding did so at the same time that the first state sent out RFPs for FY 1997 funds. It appears that some states have become quite efficient at awarding funds, while others are still struggling to make timely awards.

States vary greatly in the efficiency of their STOP funding cycle and the speed with which they transfer funds to projects after receiving federal allocations. Recognizing the dilemmas states face in getting STOP funding into action in programs, it is not surprising that only now is it possible to document the initial impact and benefits of STOP for women and communities.

The following recommendations focus on specific issues that would improve or expand the ability of the STOP program to help women victims of violence. It goes without saying that evaluation findings support continued or expanded funding of the STOP program and the domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking projects whose functioning will be jeopardized without continued STOP support.

Table of Recommendations

Subject	Recommendation
<p><i>Promote collaboration</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congress should endorse the use of STOP funds to support collaborative functions at both the state and local levels by specifying a new purpose area called “creating collaborative responses.” It should be clear in the wording of this purpose area that funding coordinator positions and administrative backup are explicitly allowed and encouraged. (p. 53) • State STOP agencies should structure their STOP grant making and other activities to maximize the development of communitywide collaborative responses to domestic violence and sexual assault in locations with STOP funding. (p. 53) • State STOP agencies should do more to promote coordinated community responses to sexual assault and the conditions under which such responses will be most likely to flourish. (p. 102) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use STOP funds to create collaborative efforts at the state and local level that include representatives from all disciplines involved, whether in government or private entities. • Use STOP funds to advance the understanding of rape and sexual assault among the public and also among criminal justice system and private, nonprofit victim service agency professionals themselves, so as to debunk the myths and stigma that often prevent rape from being dealt with effectively.



Subject	Recommendation
<p><i>Promote collaboration</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support training in sexual assault and in the collaborative process. • Support the infrastructure necessary for collaboration. • Support data collection as feedback on successes and indicators of opportunities for further improvement. • State STOP administrators should make funding for underserved programs contingent upon collaboration with agencies that can work together to meet the needs of the population of interest. (p. 71)
<p><i>Expand funding for sexual assault projects</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congress and/or VAWO should make clear that sexual assault deserves to receive a higher priority for funding and creative thinking to develop appropriate projects. • State STOP agencies should support more subgrants whose major focus is sexual assault. (p. 100)
<p><i>Support needs assessment for sexual assault</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State STOP agencies should support statewide needs assessments to obtain up-to-date information about the true incidence and prevalence of sexual assault in their state and the need for appropriate services. (p. 101)
<p><i>Support statewide sexual assault coalitions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State STOP agencies should support statewide sexual assault coalitions. (p. 104)
<p><i>Promote projects for women from underserved communities</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VAWO and the STOP TA (Technical Assistance) Project should continue to promote effective outreach and service to women victims of violence in underserved communities, through workshops and seminars. (p. 71) • VAWO and state STOP administrators should promote programs that focus their efforts on urban Native American women, a particularly underserved population. (p. 71)
<p><i>Support efforts in small agencies and communities</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State STOP agencies should make greater efforts to ensure that small agencies, and agencies in small communities, are included in STOP support. (p. 54)
<p><i>Promote more cross-pollination, less reinvention</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VAWO and state STOP administrators should promote more proactive cross-pollination and sharing of ideas, approaches, and materials among programs within and across states. (p. 149) • State STOP agencies should support information sharing among their subgrantees. (p. 103)
<p><i>Promote a more focused approach to addressing issues of stalking</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State STOP administrators should support more focused approaches to stalking separately from domestic violence and sexual assault. Specifically, they should: (p. 120) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct needs assessments to determine the scope of the problem in their state. • Include stalking in state implementation plans and solicit proposals from their constituents addressing stalking. • Support information sharing among their subgrantees to increase knowledge about stalking within the field. • Provide funding to those programs already involved in stalking projects to conduct evaluations. Enabling current stalking projects to document their successes will provide critical information about what types of programs to support in the future. • State STOP administrators and the STOP TA Project should provide training regarding stalking. (p. 120)



Subject	Recommendation
<p data-bbox="217 260 505 369"><i>Develop better data and evaluation systems</i></p> <p data-bbox="168 827 505 936"><i>Promote strategic plans for data/communication projects</i></p> <p data-bbox="172 995 505 1142"><i>Find and disseminate “promising practices” regarding data/communication systems</i></p> <p data-bbox="180 1201 505 1272"><i>Promote more effective grants management</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="581 260 1466 317">• States should support small, focused database projects/systems that link together existing data systems in communities. (p. 134) <li data-bbox="581 333 1466 480">• States should require data/communications projects to have a plan for training system end users to use the system, and managers in agencies using the system in how to analyze data from the system in ways that will promote agency development. Many data systems fail because end users (the people who have to enter the data, and who want to use it on a daily basis) never get the appropriate training. (p. 135) <li data-bbox="581 497 1466 611">• States should require data/communications projects to have a plan for obtaining support for continued operation after the STOP-funded development phase ends. Unless support for the programs is incorporated into local, regional, and state operating budgets, the data systems will not be sustained. (p. 135) <li data-bbox="581 627 1466 684">• Future STOP funding priorities should define more clearly what activities and goals qualify as data collection and as communication within this purpose area. (p. 133) <li data-bbox="581 701 1466 789">• Future STOP funding priorities should promote more proactive projects, such as systems that track information on prior incidents of violence by identified perpetrators and use linked and coordinated data systems. (p. 134) <li data-bbox="581 837 1466 951">• VAWO should ensure that states have strategic plans to address the need for stronger data and communication systems to aid in handling crimes of violence against women, and that individual programs receiving funding make sense in light of that plan. (p. 133) <li data-bbox="581 999 1466 1087">• VAWO should support the STOP TA Project to create a new section of its <i>Promising Practices Manual</i> focusing on the best options for pursuing data and communication projects. (p. 135) <li data-bbox="581 1201 1466 1289">• VAWO should require all states to submit an annual report on their goals, activities, and achievements for the previous fiscal year at the same time they submit their grant applications and implementation plans for the coming fiscal year. (p. 148) <li data-bbox="581 1306 1466 1362">• VAWO should continue to provide more assistance to states and subgrantees in grants management issues. (p. 148)

Introduction

1

CHAPTER

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), Title IV of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (P.L. 103-322), provides for Law Enforcement and Prosecution Grants to states under chapter 2 of the Safe Streets Act. The grants have been designated the STOP (Services, Training, Officers, Prosecutors) grants by their federal administrator, the Department of Justice's Violence Against Women Office (VAWO) in the Office of Justice Programs (OJP). Grants are provided "to assist States, Indian tribal governments, and units of local government to develop and strengthen effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies to reduce violent crimes against women, and to develop and strengthen victim services in cases involving violent crimes against women." The long-term goal of VAWA is to effect institutionalized system change, such that victims encounter a positive and effective response from the criminal and civil justice system should they need to use it.

This report assesses the progress and accomplishments of the STOP program through October 1999, covering the fifth year of STOP program authorization. It was prepared as part of an ongoing national evaluation of the STOP program being conducted by the Urban Institute under a grant from the National Institute of Justice. The evaluation assesses the distribution of STOP funds to states and local projects, compliance with legislative mandates, and the success of STOP in improving community and state responses to violence against women. The evaluation also addresses areas of special emphasis in the legislation. These include the goals of reaching underserved communities (whether defined by race, culture, ethnicity, language, or geographic isolation) and developing or improving collaborative relationships among justice system and victim-serving agencies. As part of this assessment, the evaluation seeks to identify aspects of the legislation or its administration that affect the attainment of STOP goals. The report also incorporates findings from two other STOP program evaluations funded by the National Institute of Justice—assessments of training, special unit, and policy development projects in law enforcement and prosecution agencies and of progress in addressing stalking, being con-



ducted by the Institute for Law and Justice (ILJ), and an assessment of STOP-funded data and communication projects, being conducted by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC).

This *2000 Report* is based on data gathered from many sources:

- Subgrant Award and Performance Reports (SAPRs) submitted by the states to VAWO are used to analyze the distribution of funds by the states. Performance reports on subgrantee accomplishments are used to describe the victims served by the grants and document project activities.
- Site visits to 16 states by Urban Institute researchers examine STOP funding procedures and how the VAWA legislation has affected the landscape of the criminal justice system response to victims within each state. Site visit states include California, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Vermont, and West Virginia. Site visits were also conducted to selected law enforcement and prosecution project sites by ILJ researchers.
- Telephone surveys were undertaken by the Urban Institute, the ILJ, and the NCSC. The Urban Institute's telephone survey was done to examine the work of subgrantees that operate projects to serve women victims of violence from groups that often have not received adequate services in the past. ILJ researchers contacted state STOP administrators regarding projects funded with a focus on stalking. NCSC's telephone survey was conducted to examine the activities and accomplishments of STOP-funded projects with a data and communication systems focus.
- The VAWO staff and their technical assistance providers submitted information on their activities and accomplishments.

Evaluation of the STOP Program prior to This Report¹

Four annual reports have preceded this one. The *1996 Report* presented brief histories of developments in the fields of domestic violence and sexual assault along with current issues in both fields. It described VAWA's focuses on law enforcement, prosecution, and victim services and the seven purpose areas specified by the Act, noting special legislative emphases on reaching communities underserved because of race, culture, ethnicity, or language and on reaching geographically isolated communities. It also summarized how OJP handled the administrative steps necessary to distribute the STOP funds as quickly as possible and presented an analysis of state planning documents for implementing STOP-funded projects.



The *1997 Report* presented findings of the Urban Institute's site visits to 12 states to examine their STOP programs. It also reported the first analyses of actual subgrant award documents, covering subgrant awards made with FY 1995 appropriations and showing that STOP funds were allocated with close attention to VAWA's requirements and served the people intended. Site visits revealed that the STOP planning and grantmaking process was beginning to change interactions among law enforcement, prosecution, and non-profit, nongovernmental victim service agencies. The process of soliciting STOP subgrant applications and selecting subgrants for award varied greatly from state to state. In addition, people interviewed on site visits identified many barriers to effective use of the civil and criminal legal systems and pointed out gaps in services that STOP funds might be used to remedy. These included current state statutes and their enforcement, gaps in training for many types of professionals, inadequate levels of victim services, structural and political barriers to progress, and data system gaps.

The *1998 Report* included analyses of subgrant award reports describing how STOP funds from FY (fiscal year) 1995, FY 1996, and FY 1997 were being spent in accordance with VAWA requirements. It also examined the nature of subgrants intending to reach underserved communities of women and tried to assess the ways in which subgrants were being used to bring about system change. In addition, it reported for the first time on the extensive evaluation activities of four complementary evaluation projects funded by the National Institute of Justice to examine STOP-funded subgrants that were pursuing specific purpose areas allowed under VAWA. These included police and prosecution activities relating to training, special units, development of policies and procedures, and stalking; victim services; data and communication systems; and Indian tribal grants.

The *1999 Report* also analyzed subgrant award reports describing how STOP funds from FY 1995, FY 1996, FY 1997, and FY 1998 were being spent in accordance with VAWA requirements. It also reported the results of special telephone surveys of all state STOP administrators, 50 projects intending to reach underserved communities of women, 51 projects trying to bring about system change, and representatives of 171 randomly selected STOP subgrantees covering all aspects of STOP funding. In addition, it presented the results of a second year of the evaluation activities of four complementary evaluation projects funded by the National Institute of Justice to examine STOP-funded subgrants that were pursuing specific purpose areas allowed under VAWA. These included police and prosecution activities relating to training, special units, development of policies and procedures, and stalking; victim services; data and communication systems; and Indian tribal grants.



An Overview of the 2000 Report²

This report describes the distribution of STOP funds by the states (chapter 2) and evidence of the impact of the STOP subgrantee projects (chapter 3). This is followed by analysis of evidence that STOP has contributed to the development of coordinated community responses to violence against women (chapter 4) and increased services to victims from communities that previously had limited or no access to services (chapter 5). Issues related to how the STOP program is addressing sexual assault, stalking, and the development of data and communication systems are the subject of the next three chapters (chapters 6, 7, and 8). Chapter 9 is devoted to analysis of the federal and state administration and support of the STOP grants program. Finally, chapter 10 presents information about subgrant activities and performance as reported on Subgrant Award and Performance Reports and a state-by-state summary of subgrants reported to the Violence Against Women Office by November 15, 1999.

Notes

1. The *2000 Report* and all STOP evaluation reports from past years may be found on the Urban Institute's Web page: <http://www.urban.org>.

2. Major writing responsibility for the chapters of this report is as follows: chapter 1, Burt; chapter 2, Kamya; chapter 3, Schlichter; chapter 4, Burt and Zweig; chapter 5, Zweig; chapter 6, Katz and Burt; chapter 7, Miller; chapter 8, Keilitz; chapter 9, Ursula Barrett (Violence Against Women Office) and Joan Kuriansky (STOP TA Project); chapter 10, Kamya.

STOP Subgrant Awards



This chapter provides a brief overview of how STOP funds have been spent. In 1999, states received their fifth round of STOP funding, which also was their fourth fully funded round of grants. Law enforcement, prosecution, victim services, and other programs aiding women victims of violence could have had STOP funding for up to four years, although two or three years of funding has been more the norm. Each time a subgrant award is made, either recipients or the state STOP agency files a Subgrant Award and Performance Report (SAPR) that contains information about the size of the award and intended nature of the project. This award information is due to the Violence Against Women Office (VAWO) by October 15 of each year.

As explained in the *1999 Report* and again below in chapter 9, a considerable amount of time elapses between Congress appropriating each fiscal year's STOP funding and projects actually receiving notice that they can begin spending on their STOP activities. This lag time produces the pattern of SAPR award reports we have seen in the last few reports to Congress. Very little information is included about the two most recent fiscal years, with more information provided about earlier years.

This chapter examines how well states are adhering to legislative requirements in their allocation of STOP funds. The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) places several legislative requirements on how STOP funds are to be spent. Every year, states must award 25 percent of their funds to each of three areas: law enforcement, prosecution, and victim services. STOP awards are restricted to seven legislatively designated purpose areas, including training, special units, and policy development for law enforcement and prosecution agencies; communications/data system development; victim services; needs of Indian tribes; and stalking. In addition, states may use STOP funds to benefit victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking, with no prerequisites as to how the funds are to be distributed over the three crimes. The findings reported in this chapter come from the award section of all SAPRs submitted to VAWO by November 15, 1999 (allowing a one-month grace period after their due date).



Proportion of Awards Accounted for in the SAPRs

This analysis is based on reports submitted by the states covering subgrants awarded from the STOP program's beginning through November 15, 1999. It includes reports of awards made from states' FY 1995, FY 1996, FY 1997, FY 1998, and FY 1999 STOP grants. The data set includes 6,527 subgrant award reports totaling \$298,844,684, which represents 55 percent of the approximately \$541 million of STOP funds available for distribution by state STOP agencies during these five fiscal years.¹ The reported subgrants account for:

- 128 percent of the \$21.3 million in FY 1995 federal funds available for subgrant awards,
- 94 percent of the \$117.3 million in FY 1996 funds,
- 74 percent of the \$127.7 million in FY 1997 funds,
- 45 percent of the \$135.9 million in FY 1998 funds, and
- Less than 8 percent of the \$138.4 million in FY 1999 funds.

Though the FY 1995 total appears to suggest that states have spent more than 100 percent of their grants, this is not necessarily the case. Sometimes a subgrantee cannot spend all the money awarded to it, and the funds revert to the state STOP agency. When this happens, states will make new awards with these funds. Because SAPRs are submitted for both projects, the same funds are counted twice.

It is also clear that the large proportion of recent fiscal year appropriations unaccounted for in these SAPR data is due to at least two causes. First, states' timetables for making subgrants are highly variable, and many states are one and even two years behind the federal schedule for making awards (see chapter 9 for a more detailed analysis). Second, states vary in the completeness of their reporting, even after they have made subgrant awards (see appendix).

Subgrant Awards

Half of all subgrants reported to date received less than \$29,170, and half received more. Subgrants have been made for less than \$1,000 and for more than \$5 million.

While some STOP subgrants have been for millions of dollars, most are for considerably less money. We calculated the median subgrant amount for the 6,350 SAPRs containing the necessary information to show the funding level below which half of the subgrants fall (table 2.1, first row). Over all the years of STOP funding reported to date, the median subgrant was slightly more than \$29,000, with some going as low as \$1,000 and others going as high as \$5 million. The rest of table 2.1 shows the distribution of subgrants across the funding categories as assigned by state STOP administrators, along with their median subgrant amounts and total amount of funds reported.

Distribution of Funds Across Law Enforcement, Prosecution, and Victim Services

VAWA requires states to use at least 25 percent of each year's funds for each of the victim services, law enforcement, and prosecution



categories. The remaining 25 percent are discretionary funds that can be used for any of these three areas or for any additional activities that states deem important. As noted in earlier STOP evaluation reports, states interpret this requirement differently. Some states consider an award to be “for” law enforcement (for example) if the subgrantee was a law enforcement agency. Other states use the beneficiary as the criterion and consider an award to be “for” law enforcement if project activities benefit law enforcement (such as officer training), no matter what type of agency receives the award. Office of Justice Programs (OJP) regulations allow states to interpret this requirement as they choose, but emphasize that they must demonstrate that they meet the requirements.

TABLE 2.1 *Cumulative Distribution of Reported FY 1995–1999 STOP Subgrants, Total and by the Funding Category Assigned by the States*

Assigned Funding Category	Number of Reported Subgrants (\$)	Median of Amount of Reported Subgrants (\$)	Total Amount of Reported Subgrants (\$)	Percentage Reported Funds Awarded Under Each Funding Category
All Subgrants with the Necessary Information	6,350	29,170	298,798,422	Not Applicable
Law Enforcement	1,514	25,000	64,735,826	22
Prosecution	1,260	31,078	65,333,351	22
Victim Services	2,788	24,526	103,643,831	35
Discretionary	704	22,926	25,956,048	9
Funding Category Not Reported	1,094	20,000	39,129,366	13

Source: Urban Institute analysis of FY 1995–FY 1999 SAPR data reported as of November 15, 1999.

Note: When a subgrant reported more than one funding category per award, the funds have been allocated to funding categories according to the proportion of the award assigned by the state to each funding category.

By every criterion, states meet the requirement to award at least 25 percent of STOP funds to victim services. However, most states have not been able to meet the 25 percent criterion for law enforcement and prosecution.

The flexibility with which states may interpret the 25/25/25 requirement makes the task of documenting compliance somewhat complicated. This is especially true with respect to victim services, because there are both governmental and nongovernmental victim service agencies, and victim service agencies frequently perform training, participate in policy development, and take on other tasks that are intended to affect law enforcement and prosecution practices but do not involve direct victim services. We therefore used three approaches to assess how the 25/25/25 requirement is being met. The first approach uses the subgrant’s funding category as assigned by the state (table 2.1) to define law enforcement, prosecution, and victim services. The second approach uses the recipient agency to define the three sectors. The third approach uses the assigned funding category for law enforcement and prosecution, but for victim services we include only funding going to nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service agencies—and then only if they are using the STOP funds to perform direct victim services.



As in past years, each of these methods yields the same results, but to different degrees. Table 2.2 illustrates that even using the third approach, which has the most stringent definition of “victim services,” states are indeed allocating at least 25 percent of their STOP funds to victim services. However, most states do not meet their obligation to allocate 25 percent each to law enforcement and prosecution.

Criterion	Percentage of Funds		
	Law Enforcement	Prosecution	Victim Services
By State-Assigned Funding Category	22	22	35
By Recipient Agency	16	22	41
Victim Services = Nonprofit Agencies to Provide Direct Services to Victims	22	22	25

Source: Urban Institute analysis of FY 1995–FY 1999 SAPR data reported as of November 15, 1999.

- When analyzed **by funding category**, funds reported on SAPRs submitted for FY 1995 through FY 1999 went 35 percent to victim services and 22 percent each to law enforcement and prosecution. State-by-state analysis shows that 43 states (77 percent) met the 25 percent requirement in the victim services category, compared with 16 states (29 percent) in the prosecution category and 12 states (21 percent) in the law enforcement category.
- When the same data are analyzed **by recipient agency**, 41 percent of the funds went to victim service agencies, 16 percent to law enforcement agencies, and 22 percent to prosecution agencies.
- Using the third approach, with its **more stringent definition of victim service projects**, awards to nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service agencies for the provision of direct victim services accounted for 25 percent of STOP funds, with law enforcement and prosecution defined by state-assigned funding category still at 22 percent each.

Obviously there is a big difference between the 41 percent of funds designated for victim services defined solely by the type of agency receiving the subgrant and the 25 percent of funds going to nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service agencies for direct services. The difference is accounted for by subgrants going to public-sector victim service agencies or to private, nonprofit victim service agencies for such uses as working with law enforcement and prosecution agencies on training, policy or protocol development, or other activities.

These findings, occurring as they do for the third year in a row, lead to several conclusions for which we have substantial evidence.



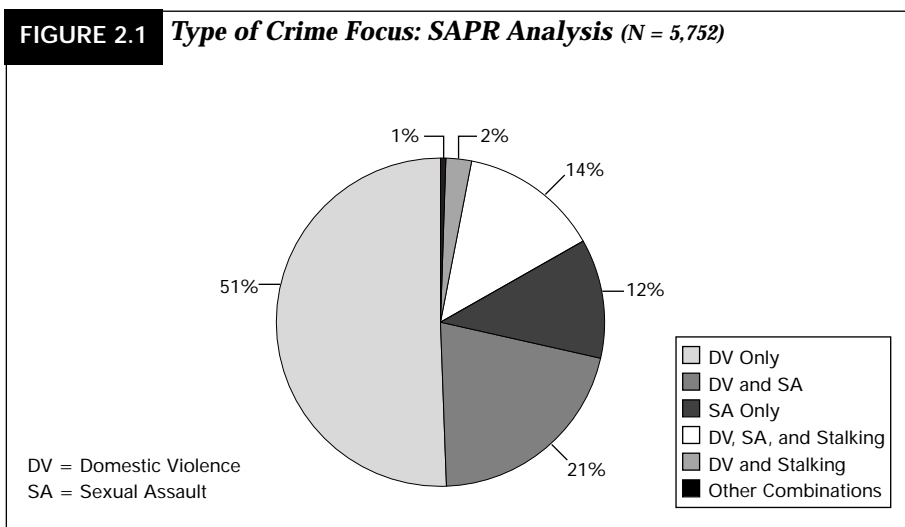
First, most states spend a good deal of their discretionary funds for victim services and report them as such, and second, awards designated as law enforcement and prosecution remain below 25 percent. Readers interested in more detail may refer to the *1998 Report* and the *1999 Report*.

Distribution of Funds Across Types of Crime

VAWA specifies that STOP funds are to be used to combat domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, but does not require any particular distribution across these types of crime. We found that the subgrants supported a great deal of work on domestic violence, provided much less funding for sexual assault, and funded stalking programs at negligible levels.

Figure 2.1 shows the proportion of SAPRs reporting a focus on domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking. Fifty-one percent of the subgrants addressed domestic violence alone, while only 12 percent addressed sexual assault alone. Of all subgrants reporting a crime focus, 88 percent included domestic violence, of which almost 3 in 5 focused exclusively on domestic violence. In contrast, 47 percent included sexual assault, of which only 1 in 4 had an exclusive focus on this crime. And only 17 percent including stalking, of which less than 2 in 100 focused exclusively on stalking. Fourteen percent of subgrants addressed all three types of crime. We also examined whether the emphasis on domestic violence and the relative scarcity of funding for sexual assault and stalking held true within the three designated funding categories of law enforcement, prosecution, and victim services. In fact, the emphases observed for the entire group of subgrants do hold true within the three funding categories, with some variations.

Domestic violence receives much greater attention than sexual assault when measured either by the number of subgrants or the amount of funds devoted to each crime. Stalking, in turn, receives significantly less attention than sexual assault.



Source: Urban Institute analysis of FY 1995–FY 1999 SAPR data reported as of November 15, 1999.

With respect to sexual assault, law enforcement and prosecution subgrants were less likely to focus exclusively on this crime (only 3



Three percent of law enforcement and prosecution subgrants focused exclusively on sexual assault, compared with 18 percent of victim service subgrants.

Twenty-four to 25 percent of law enforcement and prosecution subgrants included stalking at all in their crime focus, with victim service subgrants significantly lower at 13 percent.

percent in each category did so), and law enforcement subgrants were the least likely, at 39 percent, to focus on sexual assault even when combined with other crimes. In contrast, victim service subgrants were much more likely to have an exclusive sexual assault focus (18 percent), although they were not more likely than the whole group of subgrants, or than prosecution subgrants, to have a sexual assault focus that may have included other crimes as well (47 percent for all subgrants, 51 percent for victim service subgrants, and 46 percent for prosecution subgrants).

For stalking, prosecution and law enforcement subgrants were more likely than victim service subgrants to include stalking, either exclusively or in combination with other crimes. Twenty-five percent of prosecution and 23 percent of law enforcement subgrants included stalking as a crime focus, compared with 13 percent of victim service subgrants. Only 0.1 percent of victim service, 0.3 percent of law enforcement, and 0.7 percent of prosecution subgrants focused *exclusively* on stalking.

The emphasis on domestic violence is also reflected in state-by-state analyses of the FY 1995–99 awards. In no state was domestic violence a focus of fewer than 63 percent of subgrants (with or without a focus on other crimes), while 34 states had domestic violence as a focus in 90 percent or more of their subgrants, and in 10 states domestic violence was a focus of every subgrant. Sexual assault was a less common focus, with one state reporting sexual assault as a focus in 10 percent or fewer of its subgrants and only 25 states having sexual assault as a focus in at least 50 percent of their subgrants.

Distribution of Funds Across Legislative Purpose Areas

VAWA specifies seven purpose areas for which STOP funds may be used:

- Training for law enforcement and prosecution
- Special units for law enforcement and prosecution
- Developing policies and/or protocols
- Developing data and communications systems
- Victim services
- Stalking
- Indian tribes

Subgrants could report multiple purpose areas, and nearly one-third did.² Table 2.3 presents their distribution across purpose areas. Victim services is one of the purpose areas, or the only purpose area, on the most subgrants by far (68 percent), followed by training, special units, and policy development. The fact that many subgrants with a primary purpose other than victim services also offer some victim services accounts for this high proportion. Twelve percent of reported STOP projects have addressed data/communica-



tions systems, and very few awards have been made for stalking and Indian tribes. The small number of projects awarded to Indian tribes from these funds may be explained by the availability of other VAWA funds allocated specifically for grants to Indian tribes. However, this STOP set-aside is only available for projects on reservations, even though a significant proportion of Indian women live in urban areas. In addition, the STOP purpose area specifies Indian tribes, not Indian populations. Tribes have no jurisdiction, and therefore no ability, to help their women members or other Indians who live in urban areas or near but not on reservations. Yet, only tribes may receive funding under either the set-aside or the purpose area. Thus, many Indian women may be getting left out of consideration in the distribution of STOP funds by states because they do not live in places under the tribes' jurisdiction, yet have not come to the attention of most state STOP agencies. A few states appear to use this purpose area flexibly to fund projects serving Indians living in urban areas; others do not.

More than two-thirds of subgrants have victim services as a purpose area. In contrast, only 7 percent include stalking and only 3 percent include the needs of Indian tribes as purpose areas.

TABLE 2.3 *Cumulative Distribution of Reported FY 1995–FY 1999 STOP Subgrants, by Purpose Area*

Purpose Area	Number of Subgrants	Percentage of Subgrants Reporting a Purpose Area
Develop/Enhance Victim Services	3,736	68
Law Enforcement/Prosecution Training	1,682	31
Special Law Enforcement/Prosecution Units	1,067	20
Policy/Protocol Development	808	15
Data and Communication Systems	670	12
Stalking	389	7
Indian Tribes	139	3
Other	467	9
Not Specified/Reported	1,059	19

Source: Urban Institute analysis of FY 1995–FY 1999 SAPR data reported as of November 15, 1999.

Projects must submit a report each time they receive a STOP subgrant, even if a new subgrant provides funds to continue the same STOP project. In addition, some subgrants are awarded for periods longer than a year. The 6,527 subgrants reported as of November 15, 1999, went to 4,727 distinct projects. As the large number of projects suggests, most projects (73 percent) have as yet submitted SAPRs for only one year of funding. Nearly a fifth of projects (19 percent) have reported subgrants from two fiscal years, and 6 percent have spanned three fiscal years. Less than 2 percent of projects have thus far reported subgrants from four or more fiscal years.

The number of years of STOP funding for projects varied little across different types of agencies. Private, nonprofit victim service projects have tended to last slightly longer than prosecution and law

Estimating the Number of Projects from SAPR Information



enforcement projects (each with 31 percent, 25 percent, and 21 percent of projects reporting more than one fiscal year, respectively). Only 19 percent of STOP projects administered by other government agencies and 18 percent of those run by other private-sector agencies have thus far reported multiple awards.

The likelihood that projects reported funding from more than one fiscal year varied more by purpose area than by agency type. Of the projects indicating a stalking purpose area, 39 percent received funding for more than one fiscal year. Thirty-seven percent of projects reporting Indian populations as a purpose area had multiple years of STOP funding. Twenty-nine percent of projects with a victim service purpose area, 29 percent of those with a special units purpose area, and 27 percent of those with a policy/protocol development purpose area reported more than one year of funding. As one might expect, training and data and communication systems projects received one-time grants the most often, with only 25 percent of training and 18 percent of data projects funded over multiple years.

In interpreting these results, it is important to remember that relatively few projects were funded from FY 1995 appropriations and that one-fourth of FY 1997, 55 percent of FY 1998, and 92 percent of FY 1999 funds have yet to be reported on SAPRs. So the picture of continuation funding is likely to change considerably in future years as the SAPR database becomes more complete.

Notes

1. Throughout this chapter, the funds available to states for subgrant awards are used as the denominator in calculating percentages. This excludes the portion of the state grant allocated for administrative costs.
2. Since many subgrants designated more than one STOP purpose area and it is not possible to divide project funding among several purpose areas with any precision, table 2.3 presents only subgrant numbers.

Impact of STOP Subgrants



STOP's impact is defined in many ways. Some people are interested in “hard numbers” about accomplishments of criminal justice agencies as a result of STOP. These might include documentation of increases in the proportion of calls that result in arrest, the proportion of cases that result in prosecution, and the proportion of cases prosecuted that end in conviction, or reductions in repeat incidents involving the same people. Other people are interested in knowing whether the number of women served has increased or whether STOP-funded projects are succeeding in reaching and serving women who would never have used victim support services without the project. Still others want to know whether the women served are better off—whether they feel listened to, believed, supported, and helped, and whether they are in fact safer and more secure. A different kind of impact of interest to many is whether criminal and civil justice systems and other agencies in a community have changed in ways that support women victims of violence and help rather than hinder their situations.

Many of these signs of STOP's impact are difficult to measure—for different reasons. The most convincing “hard numbers” are those that compare the situation before STOP funding was available with the situation now, with the STOP-funded project up and running. However, while most projects are able to report their own activities, many are unable to report what the situation was like before STOP. In the case of criminal and civil justice agencies, either no one kept track of numbers (of cases, calls, protection orders, and so on), or cases were not described in a way that lets them be identified as domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking cases. Changes in the degree of coordination among agencies in a community can be measured by perceptions and testimonials of the participants, which are easy to gather, or by actually documenting changed behavior, which is a good deal harder to do. Changes in women's well-being as a consequence of receiving services or using an agency whose procedures have changed are perhaps the most difficult impact to document. Most programs have no “before” data, nor do they have reasonable comparison groups that have not received STOP services, so all they can do is ask their current clients how they feel about the services they have received. This information is important, but it does not prove that things have changed.

Introduction

A program's “impact” can be defined in many ways, some of which are difficult to document with confidence.



This chapter offers a taste of two types of impact data. The first is documentation of change in outcomes for law enforcement or prosecution, or the number of victims served for victim service agencies, provided by agencies that could assemble similar data from before their STOP project began and from the present. Some of these agencies were identified during telephone interviews for the 1999 Underserved Survey, and others were identified during site visits. The second type of impact data comes from the programs interviewed for the 1999 Underserved Survey and consists of agency staff perceptions of their community's ability to meet the needs of their underserved victim clients before and after STOP. These perceptions of impact add an important qualitative element to impact analyses.

Subgrant Statistics Documenting Changes from Before STOP to the Present

This section summarizes numeric evidence provided by some of the more than 400 subgrantees with whom we spoke during telephone interviews and site visits, showing significant improvements in criminal justice and other activities that they attribute to the influence of their STOP funding. While their data demonstrate profound impacts as a result of STOP, we only have this type of information for a small proportion of all STOP subgrants, which cannot be taken as representative of all STOP-funded projects.

Nearly half (44) of the 98 subgrantees interviewed for the 1999 Underserved Survey provided some numeric evidence of their STOP project's impact, as did some of the over 80 programs visited during site visits. Some programs provided information on numbers of victims served pre- and post-STOP to demonstrate project effectiveness, while others tracked and provided criminal justice statistics to show STOP's impact on criminal justice system outcomes. These data, gathered from prosecution, law enforcement, and victim service agencies, collectively illustrate STOP's capacity to improve services and systems for women victims of violence in a variety of arenas.

Prosecution

Prosecution agencies providing impact data noted positive changes across numerous prosecutorial indicators. Of the six prosecution agencies interviewed in the 1999 Underserved Survey, four provided information on the number of domestic violence and/or sexual assault cases charged, heard by courts, and/or resulting in convictions before and after STOP. Examples from the 1999 Underserved Survey include:

- The U.S. Attorney's Office in *Washington, D.C.*, increased the number of domestic violence cases charged by 76 percent, the number of domestic violence cases tried by 76 percent, and the number of domestic violence cases resulting in conviction by 324 percent since receiving STOP funding.
- The Special Prosecution Division of *Westchester County, New York*, reported more than a 25 percent increase in the number



of domestic violence cases tried and resulting in conviction as a result of STOP.

Site visits identified significant prosecutorial achievements, as well. For example:

- The STOP-funded Illinois Sexual Assault Guideline Implementation Team in *Kankakee County, Illinois*, developed and implemented streamlined service protocols for medical, law enforcement, and prosecution personnel that resulted in a 280 percent increase in active sexual assault prosecution cases during the first year of guidelines implementation. As a result of the team's collaborative approach to sexual assault service provision, active sexual assault prosecution cases went from 5 in the last quarter of 1997 (before STOP) to 14 in the last quarter of 1998 when the STOP-supported protocols were operating. (See textbox on p. 83 for full description of project.)
- Sheriff's office staff involved with the Domestic Violence Order Monitoring Program in *Fayette County, Kentucky*, monitor perpetrators' compliance with court-ordered services and help victims obtain emergency protection orders (EPOs) and other needed services. Since its inception in 1996 and through 1999, the Domestic Violence Order Monitoring Program served 790 victims and perpetrators. In FY 1998 alone, it helped victims obtain 1,756 EPOs, compared with 545 in FY 1990 (a 320 percent increase).

Law Enforcement

Among projects interviewed for the 1999 Underserved Survey, 6 of the 11 subgrantees from law enforcement agencies were able to report the number of pre- and post-STOP calls and arrests with respect to domestic violence and/or sexual assault. Some law enforcement subgrantees interviewed during site visits offered similar evidence of impact. Collectively, these data indicate substantial improvements in criminal justice statistics as a result of STOP-stimulated law enforcement projects. For example:

- Four of the six law enforcement agencies providing data in the 1999 Underserved Survey experienced increases of between 35 and 75 percent in the number of domestic violence calls received, and three experienced increases of more than 150 percent in the number of sexual assault calls received.
- Three law enforcement agencies in the 1999 Underserved Survey increased domestic violence arrests by over 40 percent, and two increased sexual assault arrests by over 65 percent.



- The Rapid Response Team in Newburyport, Massachusetts, is a first-response collaboration between the Women's Crisis Center Inc. and the Salisbury Police Department. The team provides trained lay advocates to the police station 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to assist victims of domestic violence. The team has been operating for three and a half years and has received 199 calls. Before the STOP funding and the establishment of the team, the Women's Crisis Center was not able to respond to victims at such a crucial time.
- The Lakewood Police Department in *Lakewood, Colorado*, has experienced impressive increases in the number of calls and requests for referrals received by its STOP-funded mobile response unit. In the last quarter of 1996 and prior to receiving STOP, it received 62 calls and 56 requests for referrals; in the last quarter of 1998 and subsequent to receiving STOP, it received 185 calls and 170 requests for referrals.

Victim Services

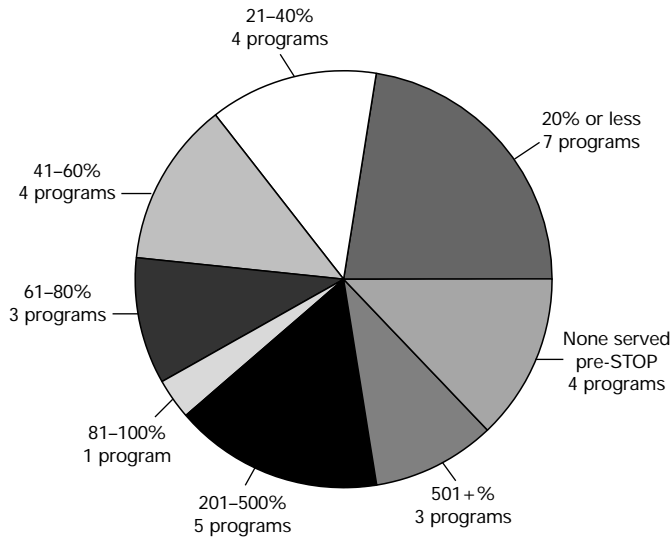
Many victim service agencies undertake STOP projects with the goal of adding services new to the agency, improving services, or increasing access to services for women victims of violence. Therefore they look to changes in the number of victims they serve for evidence of program impact. Of the 44 private, nonprofit victim services agencies interviewed for the 1999 Underserved Survey, 36 reported numbers of domestic violence and/or sexual assault victims served annually by their agencies pre- and post-STOP. The number of domestic violence victims served annually increased for 29 of the 34 agencies providing domestic violence information. Twelve agencies increased by more than 60 percent, and eight agencies increased more than 200 percent (figure 3.1). Finally, four provided domestic violence services for the first time. One cannot calculate a percentage increase when the denominator (the pre-STOP service level) is zero, but it is clear that every victim served is an increase over the pre-STOP situation. Similarly, the number of sexual assault victims served by subgrantee agencies increased with STOP funding for 19 of the 22 agencies providing sexual assault data. Of these programs, nine increased victims served by more than 60 percent, five increased by more than 100 percent, and four served sexual assault victims for the first time (figure 3.2). Program highlights include:

- *Acercamiento Hispana/Hispanic Outreach of Columbia, South Carolina*, has used STOP funding to begin a domestic violence service program specializing in services for Hispanic victims of domestic violence. With two years of STOP funding, the agency has increased the number of women it serves annually from one victim prior to FY 1997 to 119 victims during FY 1998.
- The Ramah Navajo School Board, Inc., in *Pinehill, New Mexico*, used STOP funding to institute a formal domestic violence



FIGURE 3.1 *Subgrantee Agencies Serving Underserved Populations: Change in Number of Domestic Violence Victims Served Annually Before and After STOP Funding*

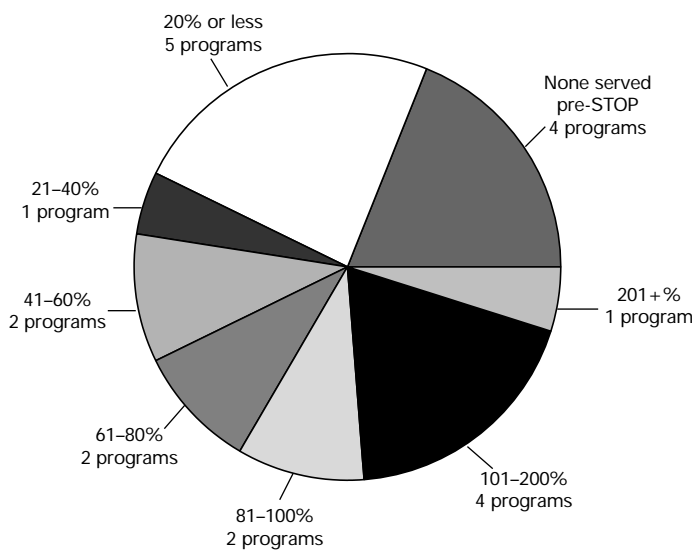
1999 Underserved Survey



Note: Of the 44 nonprofit, nongovernmental “underserved” victim service programs interviewed, 27 were able to provide pre- and post-STOP data on domestic violence victims served annually by their agencies. The percent change in their data is depicted above. Four programs provided services for the first time with STOP funding, so their pre-STOP number is zero (0), which cannot be used as a denominator to create a percentage increase.

FIGURE 3.2 *Subgrantee Agencies Serving Underserved Populations: Change in Number of Sexual Assault Victims Served Annually Before and After STOP Funding*

1999 Underserved Survey



Note: Of the 44 nonprofit, nongovernmental “underserved” victim service programs interviewed, 17 were able to provide pre- and post-STOP data on sexual assault victims served annually by their agencies. The percent change in their data is depicted above. Four programs provided services for the first time with STOP funding, so their pre-STOP number is zero (0), which cannot be used as a denominator to create a percentage increase.



victim service program for Navajo women. As a result of the outreach and service efforts of STOP-funded staff, the agency has increased the number of domestic violence victims served annually by 550 percent (from 12 to 66) over the course of two years of STOP funding.

- The Family Counseling Agency Inc. in *Alexandria, Louisiana*, used STOP funds to support outreach efforts and services for incarcerated and/or substance-abusing female victims of violence. Prior to receiving STOP funding in FY 1997, the agency served 212 victims of domestic violence and 133 victims of sexual assault annually. After three years of STOP funding, the agency increased the number of domestic violence and sexual assault victims it serves annually by 199 percent and 492 percent, respectively, for annual totals equaling 633 domestic violence and 787 sexual assault victims.

Subgrantees visited during site visits also reported increases in victims served as a result of STOP, for example:

- The ACCESS-York, Inc., legal advocacy program at the courthouse in *York, Pennsylvania*, was begun with STOP funding in 1997. Starting from a base of zero, it has served hundreds of women every year, many of whom had no previous contact with victim services. In 1999 alone, the program's legal advocates provided orientation to the legal system for 800 women (a 45 percent increase since 1997); made 781 criminal justice system advocacy contacts (an 85 percent increase since 1997); conducted 600 intake interviews (a 22 percent increase since 1997); assisted with 855 legal obligations (a 37 percent increase since 1997); and provided 547 assists with filing protection orders (a 20 percent increase since 1997).
- The YWCA CHOICES for Women of Color Program in *Salt Lake City, Utah*, received STOP funding in 1997 to provide individual advocacy and community outreach to women of color in the community. Starting from a base of zero, in FY 1998 it served 173 clients, and in FY 1999 it served 268 clients—a 155 percent increase even within the period of STOP funding. It is the only program of its kind in the state of Utah.
- The Community Abuse Prevention Services Agency (CAPSA) in *Logan, Utah*, increased its participation in mobile crisis team responses from 35 in the quarter before STOP to 101 in the most recent quarter (fall 1999). As early as 1993, CAPSA had made advocates available to law enforcement to accompany them on calls involving violence against women, but law enforcement seldom used them. The increased communication, cross-training, coordination, and advocate presence in the police station that came about through the STOP funding has greatly increased the frequency with which advocates are



involved in crisis response. In the same manner, STOP support for increased Hispanic staffing has allowed CAPSA to increase its support sessions in Spanish from 23 to 137 in the most recent quarter.

- With STOP funding, the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ICASA) in *Chicago, Illinois*, supported the creation of 16 satellite sexual assault service programs throughout the state—4 in FY 1996, 10 in FY 1997, and 2 in FY 1998. Prior to the satellite project, victims in underserved areas had little if any access to ongoing sexual assault services and legal advocacy. In FY 1997 satellite office staff served 550 clients, and in FY 1999 they served 1,506 clients, providing over 10,000 hours of counseling and advocacy services.

Subgrantees perceive impact in different ways and, as a result, relay information about different kinds of impact. Some can offer statistics to substantiate claims that STOP has changed their community and improved victims' experiences of the system, as described above. Others explain the structural impact STOP has had on their service community. Still others discuss impact in terms of qualitative service improvements made possible by the support of STOP funding. While changes in statistics are an easy way to gauge impact, the projects that cannot report such statistics, especially for the time before STOP, are certainly no less valuable to the communities they serve. For that reason, it is important to understand subgrantees' perceptions of the difference their projects are making for women victims of violence in their communities.

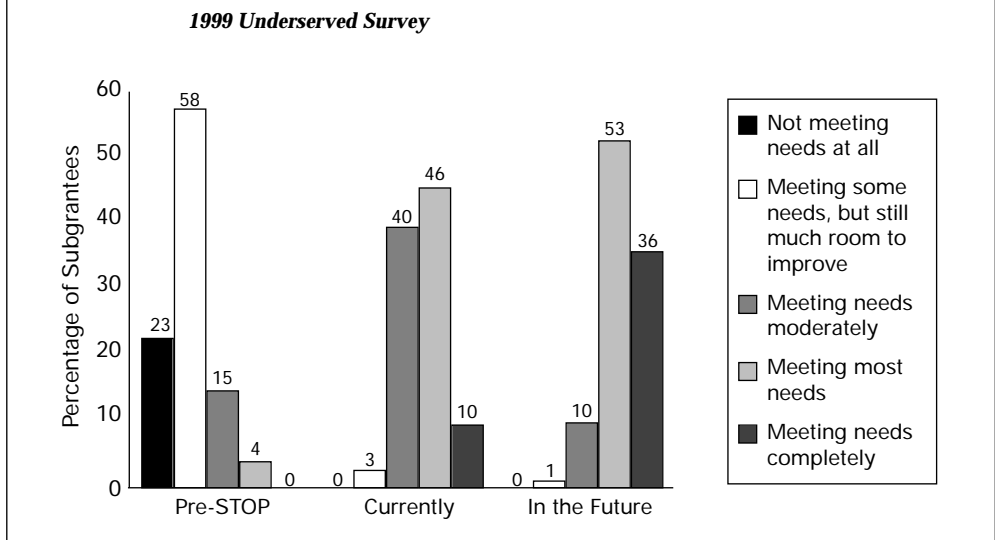
Subgrantee Perceptions of Impact from the 1999 Underserved Survey

According to subgrantees interviewed during the 1999 Underserved Survey, STOP has improved their community's ability to meet the needs of women victims of violence. As figures 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 show, most subgrantees believe their jurisdictions did very little to address the needs of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking prior to STOP. In fact, 81 percent of respondents indicated that with respect to domestic violence, their communities either met no victim needs prior to STOP or met some needs but with much room for improvement. Seventy-one percent of respondents believed this was the case for sexual assault, and 88 percent believed this was the case for stalking.

Since receiving STOP funding, subgrantees perceive significant improvements in their jurisdiction's ability to meet victims' needs, and expect these improvements to continue in the future. Perceptions of impact are perhaps most dramatic in the area of domestic violence, with nearly 50 percent of respondents ranking their communities as meeting most of victims' service needs and 96 percent indicating that they meet victims' needs moderately or better. Respondents most frequently described their jurisdiction's cur-

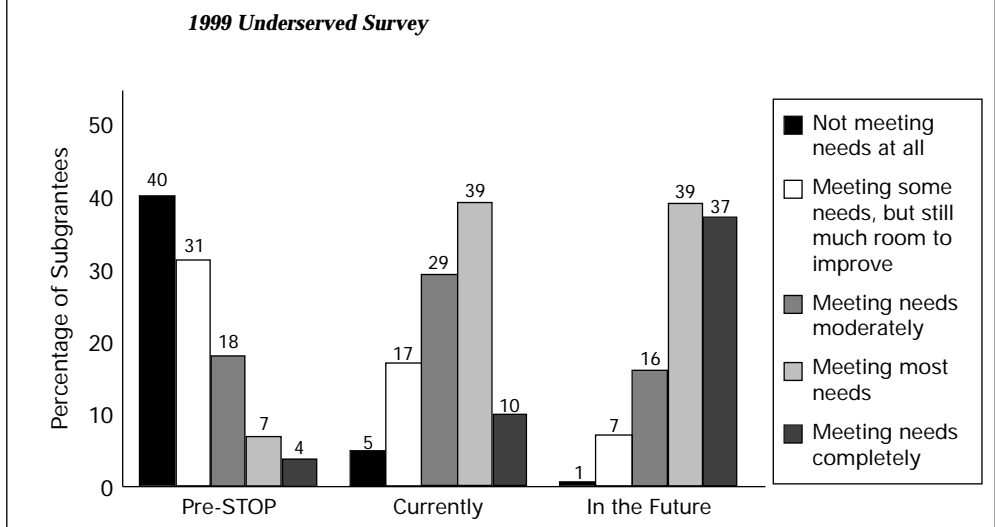


FIGURE 3.3 *Domestic Violence: Underserved Subgrantee Perceptions of Their Jurisdiction's Ability to Meet Victim Needs Before STOP, Currently, and in Five Years' Time*



Note: All 98 respondents were asked to rank their jurisdiction's ability to meet the needs of victims of domestic violence before STOP, currently, and in five years' time. Of the 98 respondents to this question, 84 believed they had enough information to assess services pre-STOP, 89 believed they had enough information to assess current services, and 87 believed they had enough information to assess services five years from now

FIGURE 3.4 *Sexual Assault: Underserved Subgrantee Perceptions of Their Jurisdiction's Ability to Meet Victim Needs Before STOP, Currently, and in Five Years' Time*



Note: All 98 respondents were asked to rank their jurisdiction's ability to meet the needs of victims of sexual assault before STOP, currently, and in five years' time. Of the 98 respondents to this question, 72 believed they had enough information to assess services pre-STOP, 77 believed they had enough information to assess current services, and 75 believed they had enough information to assess services five years from now.

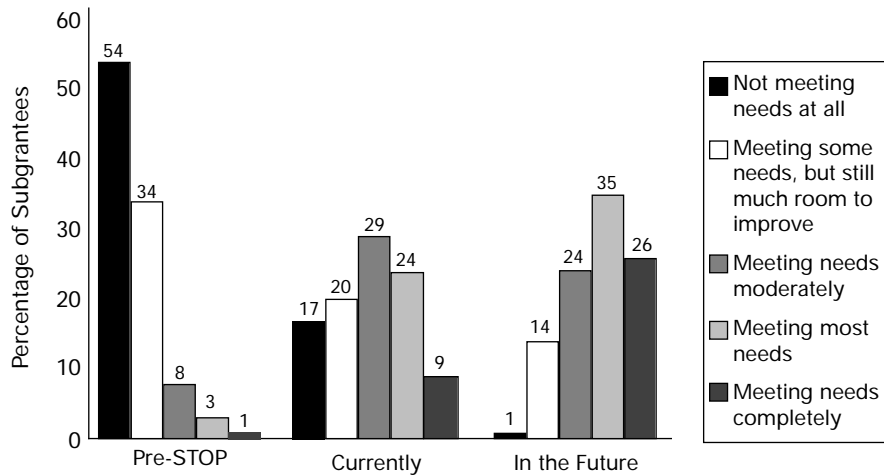
rent sexual assault services as meeting a moderate portion or most of victims' service needs (68 percent), with 78 percent indicating they meet victims' needs moderately or better. Services for stalking victims are perceived by subgrantees to have improved as well, though on a somewhat smaller scale, with 62 percent of respondents ranking their communities as



FIGURE 3.5

Stalking: Underserved Subgrantee Perceptions of Their Jurisdiction's Ability to Meet Victim Needs Before STOP, Currently, and in Five Years' Time

1999 Underserved Survey



Note: All 98 respondents were asked to rank their jurisdiction's ability to meet the needs of victims of stalking before STOP, currently, and in five years' time. Of the 98 respondents to this question, 71 believed they had enough information to assess services pre-STOP, 73 believed they had enough information to assess current services, and 74 believed they had enough information to assess services five years from now.

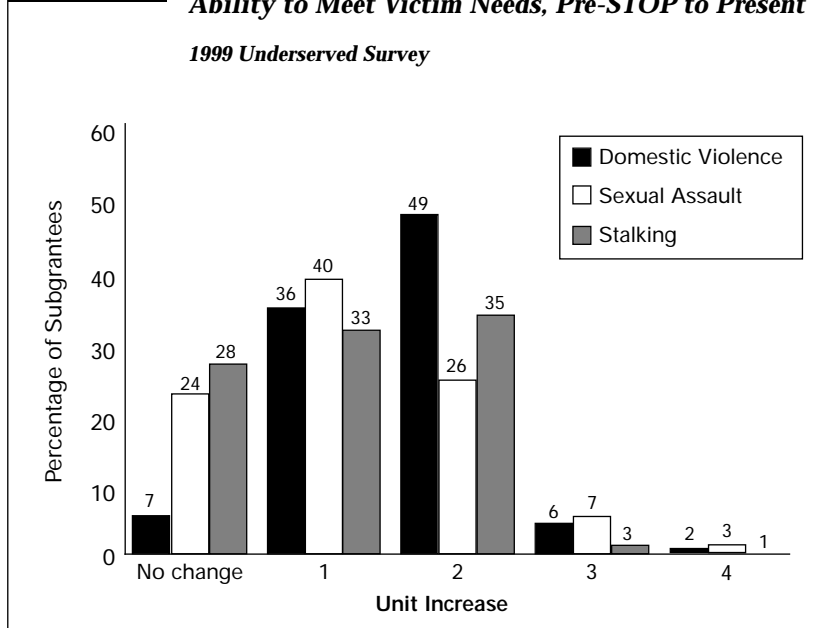
currently meeting victims' needs moderately or better. (However, information from site visits suggests that as a crime, stalking is widely misunderstood, state laws are seen as unenforceable, and local authorities take little action in stalking situations. Chapter 7 addresses issues related to stalking in greater detail.) Subgrantees anticipated continued improvements in all three arenas and expect to be meeting victims' needs more comprehensively in five years' time.

On the five-unit scale presented in figures 3.3 through 3.5, ranging from not meeting victim needs at all to meeting victim needs completely, 93 percent of respondents indicated that since receiving STOP funds, their jurisdiction has improved one unit or more in its ability to meet the needs of domestic violence victims (figure 3.6). Seventy-six percent perceived at least this much change with respect to sexual assault, and 72 percent reported at least this much change with respect to stalking. Respondents rarely indicated more than two units of change in their jurisdiction's ability to meet victim needs since securing STOP funds; however, 49 percent, 26 percent, and 35 percent of respondents did indicate two units of change in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, respectively.

STOP subgrantees interviewed in the 1999 Underserved Survey emphasized the contribution of STOP funding to service improvements in their community—particularly for services to women from underserved communities. Most respondents (90 percent) believe women in underserved communities are currently being served better than they were prior to STOP, and 86 percent of respondents attribute many, almost all, or all underserved service improvements

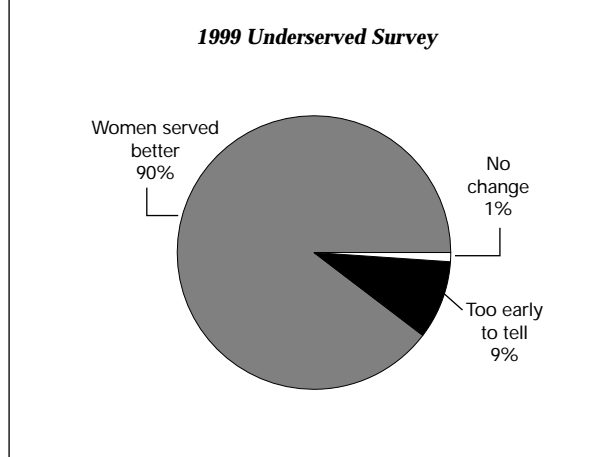


FIGURE 3.6 *Change in Underserved Subgrantee Jurisdictions' Ability to Meet Victim Needs, Pre-STOP to Present*



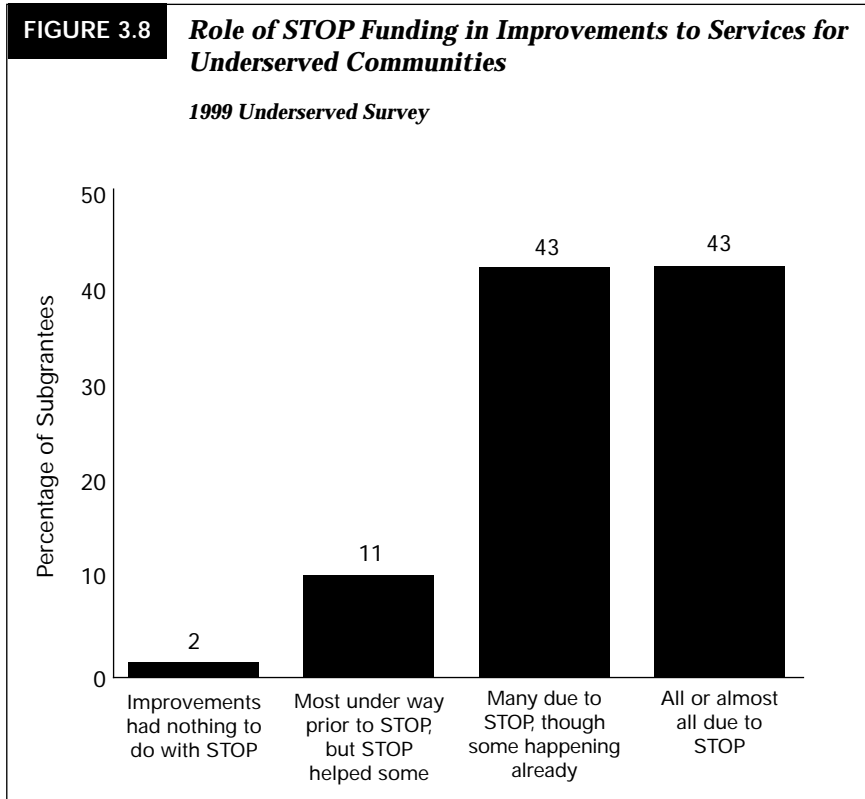
Note: All 98 respondents were asked to rank their jurisdiction's ability to meet the needs of women victims of violence before STOP, currently, and in five years' time. Of the 98 respondents to this question, 84 were able to provide both pre-STOP and current assessments with respect to domestic violence; 70 were able to provide both pre-STOP and current assessments with respect to sexual assault; and 69 were able to provide both pre-STOP and current assessments with respect to stalking.

FIGURE 3.7 *Perceived Impact of STOP on Quality of Services for Women Victims of Violence*

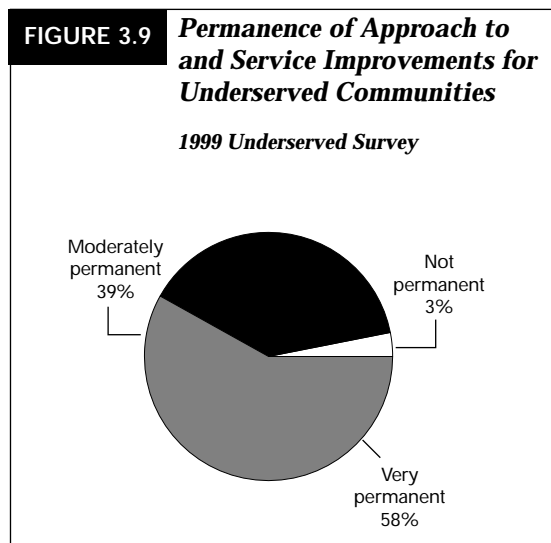


Note: 97 respondents answered this question.

to STOP (figures 3.7 and 3.8). Moreover, nearly 60 percent believe that the STOP-stimulated improvements and new services for underserved women will be “very permanent” fixtures in their communities (figure 3.9). However, some of the subgrantees who answered “very permanent” noted that the permanence of system change would likely be contingent on continued funding to support their service and coordination efforts.



Note: 97 respondents answered this question.



Note: 97 respondents answered this question.

Because information gathered during site visits is narrative rather than being recorded on rating scales, it is more difficult to develop a quantitative summary of perceptions of STOP's impact from site visit information than it is to score survey results. The tendency is to select reports of dramatic impact, but to forget the possibly larger number of reports of moderate or no impact. Yet certain key themes stay with us from site visits, despite our having no way to summarize site visit information systematically or turn it into percentages or other statis-

Perceptions of Impact from Site Visits



tics. This brief section, then, presents some of those key themes, indicating that many subgrantees interviewed during site visits perceived significant qualitative service improvements resulting from STOP-funded projects.

- ***Collaboration improves services for/experiences of victims.***

Subgrantees participating in collaborative approaches or coordinated community responses (CCRs) were eloquent in their descriptions of how much things had changed and how different a victim's experience was now from what it had been before STOP. The *absence* of similar convictions of change among subgrantees that were operating without collaborative or CCR structures reinforces the impression that collaboration is important for victims as well as for system outcomes.

- ***If a STOP project does not itself produce or promote collaborative or CCR structures, it is not clear whether or not these structures will emerge on their own.***

Some STOP subgrants have had a ripple effect, spurring non-STOP-funded service enhancements in other agencies. For instance, a STOP grant to a prosecutor may include training for law enforcement in better evidence collection, and the increase in convictions arising from better evidence demonstrates to law enforcement that these cases can be won and spurs the agency to create its own special unit for domestic violence and/or sexual assault.

However, at least as likely is the situation in which a STOP project improves or expands its own services but meets resistance on the part of other agencies that may render irrelevant the work of the STOP project. For instance, police may get better at collecting evidence but the prosecutor refuses to charge the cases. Or a prosecutor may develop a special unit skilled in presenting evidence sufficient to obtain a conviction even without the in-person testimony of the victim, but the local judge refuses to hear cases without a victim present, asks the victim what she wants to do, and when she says she wants to drop the case, the judge drops it.

- ***Every type of agency has its own forms of resistance and intransigence; no type of agency is exempt.***

People expect to hear that justice system agencies and personnel need to improve their treatment of women victims of violence; we encountered many instances during site visits to support this expectation, but we also encountered many others in which these agencies had undergone remarkable changes. It is important to recognize that attitudes harmful to women victims of violence also exist in other sectors of the community (e.g., health services, substance abuse services, clergy, and business leaders), keeping these sectors from participating in efforts



to increase women's safety and well-being and frequently supporting behaviors that increase the difficulties encountered by women victims of violence.

Victim service agencies also have their points of resistance, including long-held positions about the meaning of empowerment and confidentiality. A conviction that "empowerment" means the victim has to take the first step to ask for help sometimes prevents victim service agencies from joining first-response teams or making first contact with women who call the police or seek protection orders. Yet these approaches have proven very effective in reaching and serving more women, and the women themselves report appreciating the support and their need for such support before they could take steps to help themselves. In addition, fears that working with justice agencies will require them to violate their commitment to preserving women's confidentiality has kept some victim service agencies out of serious collaborative efforts. Yet other victim service agencies have been able to negotiate mutually acceptable principles and rules of action with both law enforcement and prosecution. These principles govern what information will and will not be shared and under what conditions, while protecting women's rights of both confidentiality and consent to reveal information. Finally, behavior on the part of some victim service agencies that law enforcement and prosecution agencies interpret as meaning that victim services want to tell justice agencies how to change, but do not themselves need to learn or change anything, can get in the way of progress toward collaboration.

- ***Specialized law enforcement and prosecution teams improve victims' experiences of the system. They also develop better cases against perpetrators and thus are more likely to obtain convictions.***

This is a very consistent finding from site visits. Interviews with staff of special units virtually always report that the existence of their unit has made a difference in the way their own agency treats victims and collects evidence or develops cases. However, we also encountered situations in which either law enforcement or prosecution had created a special unit with STOP funds but the other had not done so, and the work of the one with the special unit was in part blocked by the lack of commitment of the other. These situations are testimony to the importance of having all parts of the system in place and working together.

- ***If STOP funding were to disappear, the services it supports would be greatly reduced. The funding is often what makes them possible, even when they have produced significant system change.***

During site visits, we encountered a number of agencies that had been able and willing to pick up positions initially funded by STOP and support them with agency resources. These were virtually always law enforcement, prosecution, and sometimes health agencies that (a) had seen the benefits of the new way they



were doing things and (b) had the resources either to hire new people or shift assignments of existing staff.

On the other hand, when nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service agencies lost STOP funding, they virtually always had to cut back on services, as they had no way to compensate for the lost support. Representatives of victim service agencies in states that made a practice of funding short, nonrenewable victim service projects were the most likely to report this experience and to say that the funding could not make any permanent difference to their services or their community because it did not last long enough and was not reliable enough. But cuts in victim services also happened in states that provided continuation funding but cut the size of grants for the later years.

When STOP was used to fund a coordinator or other mechanism for developing and maintaining collaboration or a CCR, participants in the resulting system were adamant that continued STOP support for coordination was vital to their community's ability to maintain the gains it had made. This perception was shared by informants from every type of agency participating in the collaboration. One subgrantee's sentiment, echoed many times in the course of site visits, was: "I just can't imagine what will happen if the funding dries up. We're just starting to make progress. We'll be right back where we were 20 years ago."

Developing a Coordinated Community Response

4 CHAPTER

Over many years of program development, an important mechanism for improving the treatment of women victims of violence has been the creation of coordinated community responses to domestic violence and/or sexual assault. Other efforts may include approaches that build collaborative arrangements between two or even three systems in a community. For instance, law enforcement and victim services may develop ways of working together, or victim services and emergency room staff may do so. But as long as significant elements in the community are not part of the solution, they often remain part of the problem. Police and victim services can only do so much together if prosecutors will not prosecute cases against perpetrators of violence against women. Even when police and prosecutors work together and victim services gets left out of the loop, the experience of women victims will not be as good as when all elements work together. It is also likely that women's willingness to bring charges and to maintain their involvement in law enforcement and prosecution efforts will be greater with the involvement of victim services, with higher reporting rates and better legal cases likely to be the result.

There is also a growing awareness that the problem of violence against women is complex and requires comprehensive service responses involving agencies and services beyond the justice systems. A number of coordinated efforts have developed over the recent past, as some communities have moved beyond changes in individual agencies (usually those in the justice systems) to respond to domestic violence and sexual assault in a more comprehensive and coordinated way. Many of the early efforts focused on coordination among agencies within the criminal justice system or between these agencies and victim service providers. In recent years, however, some communities have expanded their efforts to include a broader array of agencies and stakeholders, such as health care providers, child welfare agencies, substance abuse services, clergy, and businesses. Some communities have gone a step further and worked to involve the community as a whole in responding to violence against women through prevention and education efforts aimed at raising community awareness and reshaping attitudes about this issue.

Introduction

The problem of violence against women is complex and requires comprehensive service responses involving agencies and services beyond the justice systems.



Legislative and Administrative Support for Collaboration

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) supports collaborative efforts in its language, requiring that nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service agencies within a state work with law enforcement and prosecution in developing state implementation plans for STOP programs (sec. 2002 (d)). The Violence Against Women Office (VAWO) took the lead to promote collaboration in several important ways. The regulations it developed to govern the STOP program emphasize the value of collaboration in developing coordinated, systemwide responses to violence against women. In addition, VAWO sponsored a grantee conference during the first year of STOP (“Collaborating to STOP Violence Against Women,” July 27–29, 1995) to help states develop their implementation plans and capitalize on the most promising approaches to address violence against women. The goals of this conference included: (1) sharing promising collaborative approaches to preventing, reducing, or eliminating violence against women; (2) building state teams into collaborative working units; and (3) exposing participants to many different promising approaches and ideas for programs appropriate for STOP grant funding and providing a framework for developing their implementation plans.

The conference was instrumental in making clear that VAWO strongly expected collaboration in the interest of producing serious system change focused on reducing violence against women and its consequences. States were encouraged to send teams that included representatives from law enforcement, prosecution, sexual assault and domestic violence service and advocacy programs, the courts, the state agency administering the STOP program, and other components of the criminal justice system. Teams from all 56 states and territories attended; most included six representatives.

A coordinated community response to either domestic violence or sexual assault is a complex set of inter-agency relationships, interlocking behaviors, and the commitment of many people. It does not happen in a day, or even in a few months, and it is difficult to maintain without steady attention and support.

Defining a “Coordinated Community Response”

A full coordinated community response (CCR) to either domestic violence or sexual assault is a complex set of interagency relationships, interlocking behaviors, and the commitment of many people. It does not happen in a day, or even in a few months, and it is difficult to maintain without steady attention and support. This evaluation team’s experience of site visits to 16 states and more than 80 STOP subgrantees over the past four years convinces us that the overall goals of VAWA—to enhance women’s well-being and hold perpetrators accountable—are maximally realized when a coordinated community response is in place. Therefore, this chapter is geared toward documenting the effectiveness of this approach and identifying the conditions under which it is most likely to develop and continue.

Recognizing that developing a CCR can take years and has as yet not been accomplished in very many places, we are also inter-



ested in steps along the way. Therefore, this chapter also examines STOP-funded activities that are trying to create pieces of a CCR by coordinating the work of and/or enhancing communication and understanding between at least two agencies or systems or their personnel.

We are interested in documenting the *activities* of agency personnel with respect to communication, coordination, and collaboration; the *formal commitments* of agency heads to support and maintain these activities; and the *maintenance mechanisms* that exist to keep the current level of joint work going or to expand it to include more players.

In the *1999 Report* on the National STOP Evaluation, we offered definitions for several activities, including communication, coordination, and collaboration. We repeat and expand these here, as they are still important for helping the reader understand the findings reported in this chapter:

- *Communication*: Talking to each other and sharing information is the first, most necessary, step. This means friendly, helpful communication, not hostile or negative communication.

Communication may happen between or among front-line workers (e.g., a police officer and a victim advocate), mid-level workers, and/or chiefs/directors/heads of agencies. It may occur among these personnel in two systems, three systems, and so on up to all the systems in a jurisdiction. In many communities, the parties who need to work together to create a coordinated system of services for women victims of violence have not reached even this first level. Everyone operates in isolation or, worse, in hostile relationships that do not advance understanding or assistance for victims.

- *Coordination or Cooperation*: At this level, agency staff work together on a case-by-case basis and may even do cross-training to appreciate each other's roles and responsibilities.

Again, coordination or cooperation may happen between or among frontline workers, mid-level workers, and/or chiefs/directors/agency heads, who could make policy commitments for whole agencies. It may occur among these personnel in two systems, three systems, and so on up to all the systems in a jurisdiction.

- *Collaboration*: Collaboration adds the element of joint analysis, planning, and accommodation to the base of communication and coordination. Collaborative arrangements include joint work on developing protocols for each agency that allow each agency to do its work in a way that complements and supports the work done by another agency.



Collaboration cannot happen without the commitment of the powers that be. In this respect it differs from communication and coordination. If chiefs/directors/agency heads are not on board, supporting and enforcing adherence to new policies and protocols, then collaboration is not taking place (although coordination may still occur at lower levels of organizations). Collaboration may occur between or among two or more agencies or systems.

To these three activities that promote better treatment of women victims of violence, we add a fourth level, which is collaboration involving all of the critical and most of the desirable systems and actors in a community. This type of response has sometimes been called a *coordinated community response* (CCR) among people working on domestic violence issues, and we adopt that terminology here to distinguish this type of communitywide collaboration from collaboration among two or three agencies.

- *Coordinated community response* goes beyond collaboration in several directions.
 - First, all of the critical systems in a community must be involved. This includes the criminal justice agencies of law enforcement, prosecution, and the courts (and ideally, probation and parole); the civil courts; domestic violence and sexual assault victim service agencies; and hospitals, other health agencies, and protective agencies (i.e., child protective services and adult protective services). It is also great if others are involved, including clergy; businesses and their employee assistance programs; mental health and substance abuse agencies; agencies and organizations serving women in communities isolated by language, culture, ethnicity, geography, or other factors; and batterer intervention programs.
 - Second, CCR entails *organizational commitments*, not just personal ones.
 - Third, CCR entails a functioning feedback mechanism. In many communities this is a monthly (or more frequent) meeting of those most actively involved in responding to victims, to deal with individual cases and also iron out problems with the system. Some communities have also found that forcing themselves to collect data on the progress of cases and then to review the data at the monthly meetings shows them their progress and provides a powerful positive incentive.
 - Fourth, CCR includes an ongoing mechanism for thinking about what comes next, asking what needs to be done, how best to accomplish it, and, finally, what needs to change for the goals to be accomplished. This mecha-



nism can take one or more of a number of forms, such as a task force or council, regular meetings of partner agencies, and quarterly retreats. Whatever the mechanism, it must translate into shared decisionmaking and planning at multiple levels, as well as the expectation that each part of the system must modify its own activities to support and complement the work of the other parts.

- Fifth, it is a great deal easier to maintain the first four elements of a CCR if someone is being paid to serve as coordinator, and if that coordinator has the necessary administrative support in the form of telephone, fax, photocopy, and other mechanical aids, and most particularly staff assistance.

Given what it takes to develop and maintain a functioning CCR, it is perhaps not so surprising that relatively few communities rise to this level of performance. In 1996, when Urban Institute staff were looking for communities with a full-scale CCR focused on domestic violence, knowledgeable informants were able to identify no more than 20 or 25 possibilities in the whole country (Clark et al. 1996). Nevertheless, some communities come very close, and STOP has been instrumental in increasing their number.

The information reported below comes from two sources: responses of 98 STOP-funded programs to the 1999 Underserved Survey, and site visits to 16 states and more than 80 STOP subgrantees conducted by Urban Institute staff over the course of this evaluation. The data are in several formats—numeric/percentages and coded responses to open-ended questions from the survey, and interview responses, observations, and program statistics from the site visits. Examples of programs and practices similar to those cited in this chapter may be found in chapters 3 and 6 of this report, where they are used to illustrate impact and sexual assault programs, respectively.

Sources of Information

The 1999 Underserved Survey involved in-depth telephone interviews with 98 subgrantees specifically tailoring their services to underserved populations, as reported on their SAPRs. The 98 interviews represented many different types of agencies, including 44 victim service programs, 11 law enforcement agencies, 6 prosecution agencies, 5 legal services agencies, 12 minority community service agencies, 3 courts/corrections agencies, and 12 agencies of other types. Chapter 5 describes these projects in depth; this chapter uses information from the survey describing the extent to which the subgrantees interviewed reported that they worked with other community agencies to meet the needs of their population of interest.

Levels of CCR Reported on the 1999 Underserved Survey

The interview asked these agencies about their work with a variety of other agencies and programs in their community. The 87 pro-



grams that were not themselves a law enforcement agency were asked about their interactions with law enforcement. Likewise, the 92 programs that were not themselves prosecution agencies were asked about their interactions with prosecution. In addition, each program was asked to identify the two agencies with which it had the most, or the most meaningful, contact. Throughout this section these two agencies are described as “primary agency #1” and “primary agency #2.” Occasionally, one of these two primary agencies was the same law enforcement or prosecution agency that had been the subject of earlier questions. When this happened, the respondent was asked the additional questions relevant to our inquiries about the two primary agencies, but no question already answered was repeated.

Work with Law Enforcement and Prosecution

Most (93 percent) of the 87 programs that were not themselves law enforcement reported that their agency was working with law enforcement to serve women in their underserved populations. Similarly, 87 percent of the 92 programs that were not themselves prosecution agencies reported that they worked with prosecution to help underserved women. The majority of the programs in the 1999 Underserved Survey initiated or enhanced their work with law enforcement and prosecution as part of a STOP-funded effort (table 4.1).

This joint work with law enforcement and prosecution involved interactions with frontline workers (e.g., patrol officers, victim witness advocates), middle management (e.g., captains, shift supervisors, assistant district attorneys), and leaders of organizations (e.g., sheriffs, police chiefs, district attorneys). Of the agencies that worked with law enforcement, 95 percent had contact with frontline workers, 77 percent had contact with middle management, and

The majority of the programs in the 1999 Underserved Survey initiated or enhanced their work with law enforcement and prosecution as part of a STOP-funded effort.

	Work with Law Enforcement	Work with Prosecution
Number of Programs Answering*	87	90
Percentage of Programs That Did Any Work with Agency	92	89
Percentage of Programs Whose Work Was Governed by Formal Procedures	46	30
Percentage of Programs Whose Work Began As Part of STOP Project	23	23
Percentage of Programs Whose Work Expanded Through STOP Project	51	45
Percentage of Programs Whose Work Did Not Begin or Expand Through STOP Project	22	31

Source: Urban Institute's 1999 Underserved Survey.

*Percentages in this table are based only on the agencies that we asked about work with law enforcement and prosecution. The 11 law enforcement programs were not asked about working with law enforcement and the 6 prosecution programs were not asked about working with prosecution.



74 percent had contact with leaders of the law enforcement agencies. Of the agencies that worked with prosecution, 95 percent had contact with frontline workers, 68 percent had contact with middle management, and 69 percent had contact with district attorneys.

Forty-five percent of non-law enforcement programs reported having a formal procedure for their work with law enforcement, and 26 percent of nonprosecution programs had such a procedure for work with prosecution. The nature of the work that is considered formal varies from a great deal to very little staff contact between agencies. With respect to law enforcement, formal procedures to work together included:

- Victim service staff participating in Sexual Assault and Domestic Abuse Response Teams (SARTs and DARTs);
- Legal advocates working with the sheriff to ensure that protective orders are served the same day they are issued;
- Law enforcement staff handing out palm cards with victim service referral information during response to every domestic call;
- Staff from law enforcement and victim services regularly meeting to discuss specific cases; and
- Victim services staff having access to all arrest and incident reports to conduct follow-up with victims.

With respect to prosecution, formal procedures to work together included:

- Victim service staff working closely with victim witness advocates;
- Prosecution staff sending victim service agencies information about victims in their cases so victim service staff can offer follow-up supports;
- Victim service staff and/or prosecution staff providing referrals and/or transportation to the other agency; and
- Prosecution staff serving on victim service agencies' boards of directors.

Agencies with Which Underserved Programs Have the Most or the Most Meaningful Contact

Despite the evidence that most of the underserved programs in the survey worked with law enforcement and prosecution in some way, agencies focusing their efforts on underserved women were more



Programs with a focus on reaching women in underserved communities were most likely to name a victim service agency as the program with which they had the most meaningful contact. This was true even when the program itself was a victim service agency.

On the 1999 Underserved Survey, agencies were considered to be weak links in a community's system of response for two primary reasons: insensitivity toward victims in general, and insensitivity toward the underserved population that the STOP program was trying to help.

likely to name other agencies or programs as their “primary agencies,” that is, those they worked with *most, or most meaningfully*. Underserved programs were most likely to report that victim service programs were their primary agencies (even when the respondents were themselves victim service programs), including victim service agencies focused on single racial/ethnic minority groups (about 41 percent of primary contacts). In contrast, only 14 percent named law enforcement as a primary agency, 6 percent named prosecutors or victim witness advocates within a prosecutor’s office, 6 percent named court-based programs, and 2 percent named programs based in probation, parole, or correctional facilities.

Other primary agencies named by a significant proportion of underserved programs included health agencies, such as hospitals and emergency rooms (8 percent), and mental health or substance abuse treatment agencies (7 percent).

Weak Links

Not only were projects that were trying to reach and serve underserved women less likely to work with the criminal justice system than with other types of agencies, they also frequently reported that particular criminal justice system agencies were the weakest link in their community when it came to serving women victims of violence from underserved populations. Thirty respondents reported that one or more law enforcement agencies were the weakest link in serving victims in their community. Sixteen reported that prosecution agencies were the weakest link, and 11 reported that judges were the point where the system was most likely to fail. Another 11 programs reported specific nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service agencies as the weak link. All of the above agencies were considered to be a weak link for two primary reasons: insensitivity toward victims in general (bias against victim work, negative attitudes toward victims, and lack of seriousness about domestic violence and sexual assault), and insensitivity toward the underserved population being served (bias against the group of interest or lack of ability to communicate with the group). Other reasons for being named as weak links in the service system included lack of follow-through on promises made, lack of adherence to established policies, and resistance to change.

The Nature of Joint Work Between Underserved Programs and Their Primary Agencies

In addition to identifying the primary agencies with which underserved programs work in their community, it is also important to document the nature of their work. Therefore, respondents were asked to describe the types of interactions they had with their two primary agencies, using questions reflecting communication, coordination, and collaboration activities. Most of these underserved projects participated in communication and coordination activities with other organizations, but fewer participated in collaborative activities (table 4.2).



To examine the intensity with which agencies participated in joint work, program staff were asked if they and their two primary agency affiliates had an institutionalized commitment to work together. Staff were asked if the relationship with the agency was

TABLE 4.2 <i>Number and Types of Communication, Coordination, and Collaboration Activities That Underserved Programs Have with Their Two Primary Agencies (N = 98; weighted percentages)</i>		
	Primary Agency #1	Primary Agency #2
Communication		
Share general information about violence against women issues.	92	86
Have frequent or regular phone contact about the services each agency provides or about violence against women issues in general.	83	76
Have informal meetings, not a task force. Meet on an as-needed basis to share information about the services provided in each organization, discuss community concerns, etc.	81	72
Refer clients to one another's agencies.	91	86
Coordination		
Help one another on an as-needed basis for specific cases by sharing information.	87	84
Facilitate referrals by contacting one another to coordinate service provision for specific victims.	86	82
Cross-train one another's employees.	73	63
Have routine meetings to share information and discuss specific cases (e.g., a "multiagency team").	40	35
Provide coordinated community awareness/education activities (e.g., co-conduct education seminars for community groups).	66	59
Collaboration		
Participate on a task force together.	71	61
Strategize together about approaches to reach women victims of violence in the _____ community and how the approaches will be implemented (e.g., share decisionmaking about batterer accountability and how each agency in the system will address it).	71	59
Share a joint mission statement.	22	16
Influence one another's agency protocol.	54	50
Participate together on a multidisciplinary first-response team (e.g., Sexual Assault Response Team, Domestic Abuse Response Team).	23	17
Routinely provide integrated services to victims.	54	43
Have a regular mechanism to provide feedback to one another to ensure the collaboration is working.	52	45
Share funding (i.e., the collaboration is funded).	26	13

Source: Urban Institute's 1999 Underserved Survey.

personal (a relationship initiated by a particular staff member that would be lost if s/he left the agency), organizational (a major organizational commitment to work with the agency was in place and if any one person left the agency the relationship would persist), or a combination (the relationship was developed by particular staff, but if any one person left the agency the relationship may continue).



Many agencies reported having a commitment at the organizational level to work with other agencies in the community.

Many agencies reported having an organizational commitment to working with others in the community. Fifty percent reported organizational commitment to primary agency #1 and 41 percent reported the same commitment to primary agency #2. Few agencies reported only personal commitments to working with other agencies (3 percent to work with primary agency #1 and 10 percent to work with primary agency #2). The remaining agencies reported a combination of personal and organizational commitment (47 percent to work with primary agency #1 and 49 percent to work with primary agency #2). When asked how necessary work with other agencies was in providing effective services to underserved women, 73 percent reported their work with primary agency #1 was very necessary and 61 percent reported their work with primary agency #2 was very necessary.

Building working relationships can sometimes be difficult, and most agencies (77 percent) reported experiencing barriers to working with their two primary contacts. Only 50 percent of agencies reported being very successful at building their working relationship with primary agency #1. Fewer (37 percent) reported very successful relationships with primary agency #2. The most common barriers encountered by agencies included territoriality and turf issues, other agency staff being resistant to feedback from outside, the perception that other agencies do not like working with their clients (e.g., the “drunks” or “crazy people”), and a lack of resources and funding to work together.

In response to questions about what works well in building relationships with other agencies in the community, the most common recommendation involved ways to build relationships—building teams, building trust, ironing out past differences, and being inclusive. Other common recommendations were to work toward common goals with partners and to establish formal protocols, policies, or procedures between agencies to define clear roles for all the partners.

Findings from Site Visits on CCR

During site visits, we encountered programs and communities at every level of communication, coordination, collaboration, and CCR. This section illustrates these levels with site visit examples. In addition, we learned from state STOP administrators what they were doing to promote greater collaboration and CCR. These findings are also discussed.

Lack of Communication

During site visits, informants offered many examples from the period preceding their STOP subgrants that revealed lack of communication among law enforcement, prosecution, victim services, health services, judges, and other elements that need to work together to help women victims of violence. Usually these examples were followed with a description of “the way it is now” and how much



more effective informants believe the current level of communication to be.

However, we also encountered instances in which, *even with* a STOP subgrant, significant levels of noncommunication still prevailed. The following are examples of noncommunication reported to exist at the time of our visit, despite the operation of STOP-supported activities.

- In a rural area with a STOP-funded victim advocacy project, the victim advocate reported that the “good old boy” system is alive and well in local police departments. If a woman gets an emergency protection order and the batterer has friends among the police, some police officers will warn the man to go to another county for a while so the order cannot be served, or advise him to get an attorney. Police officers have actually told this advocate that “if it was my friend, I wouldn’t give [the order] to him.” This victim advocate has also had law enforcement officers and judges shout at her in the course of her work with victims.
- In a rural community with a victim advocacy project, the advocates reported that they asked to attend a law enforcement training program on domestic violence because they wanted to understand the police perspective. Permission was finally granted for them to attend, although they felt it was given with great reluctance. On the last day of the training, a victim advocate was allowed to speak for 15 minutes about *her* perspective. All the officers in the room closed their eyes and made inappropriate comments to each other for the whole time she spoke.
- We interviewed representatives of several police departments (in communities of different sizes and in several states) that had STOP grants with which they had greatly transformed their own approach to domestic violence or sexual assault. However, they reported one of two unfortunate situations. Some of them could not get their prosecutor to pay attention to these cases at all. Others reported some cooperation, but could not convince the prosecutor that proceeding with strong evidence but without the victim’s in-court testimony (i.e., the victim was cooperative but the police wanted to spare her the court appearance) was both feasible and effective. Similarly, we interviewed representatives of STOP-funded prosecution units in more than one community and state that had transformed their approach to prosecution, focusing especially on evidence-based prosecution and sparing the victim the need to testify in court. However, judges would still ask the victim what she wanted to do (with the batterer present), and would dismiss the case despite strong evidence if the woman said she wanted the case dropped. In one community, the judges would not even allow cases in court if the victim was not present.



Communication

- A police department in a medium-sized city in a western state has a STOP grant to fund a special unit consisting of two advocates and one investigator. These police advocates are developing contacts with advocates at the women's shelter. In addition, a representative from the district attorney's office, the police advocates, and the advocates from the women's shelter meet once a week to review cases.
- A district attorney with a STOP subgrant to establish and support a special domestic violence (DV) unit reports that the unit is taking a "very aggressive" stance on DV cases and sometimes takes cases to court without adequate consideration of the victim's wishes and needs. The district attorney has developed a protocol for use by the many local law enforcement agencies in the district and has offered training in its use to officers in most of the local police departments. Because these departments are small and budgets are tight, attendance at training is mostly voluntary and has fallen far short of universal. So some communication has occurred, but representatives of six local police departments who participated in our interview reported that the training did not include any basic information on DV and that most of the officers in their departments had never had any DV training beyond the few hours they received at the police academy. Little has changed in the way that police handle these cases.

Coordination

- Staff members of a big-city prosecutor's office reported they had been "staggering" under their caseload (more than 50,000 a year), for which women failed to appear for 80 percent of court dates. They described their realization that to be more effective, they had to have better cases, and to get better cases they had to treat women differently. With the participation of law enforcement, the office used STOP funding to develop and implement a joint protocol. They established a team approach, creating partnerships with advocates from a victim-witness program and civil attorneys, and hired investigators to pursue evidence. They also worked with law enforcement to create a new approach, responding to all victims consistently and developing better cases through a new focus on evidence and documentation. They say they are finding that working closely with the police results in better evidence collection, better training for both groups, and better working relationships in most cases.
- A police department in a medium-sized city has a STOP grant to support non-sworn DV investigators and a victim advocate through a contract with the local DV victim service agency. The investigators do all the evidence collection on



DV cases and call on the sworn officers to make an arrest when there is evidence of a crime. Thanks to some training from the district attorney, police officers now record everything said in the heat of the situation for future use in court as “excited utterances.” The victim advocate’s role is deliberately set up to differentiate it from that of the investigators; she is meant to be a resource for the victim, not for law enforcement. She gets a copy of all DV cases involving an arrest and all other incidents without criminal elements. She makes personal contact with victims in cases involving any criminal element and mails letters to the others, trying to reach victims on the day after their incident. She helps women get temporary and permanent restraining orders, accompanies them to court as necessary, and helps them find emergency housing, cash assistance, counseling, education, and employment opportunities.

Collaboration

The first example documents collaboration in a big-city environment. Thereafter, we present a small-town example—Granville, New York—at some length, because it shows so well how the advent of a small STOP project focused initially on only one part of the criminal justice system can snowball into a significant alteration in the way many agencies in a community handle violence against women. It is also an example in which both domestic violence and sexual assault are getting attention.

- Before STOP, a victim service agency, police department, prosecutor’s office, and one hospital in a very large city teamed up to create a Sexual Assault Response Team. The SART required and obtained commitments from agency heads, especially the police chief, ensuring that officers will bring all victims to the right hospital and that the hospital administration itself will host the program and absorb significant unreimbursed costs. Before the SART was established, police said they would drive victims from hospital to hospital to find one that would take them; in some cases, 8 to 12 hours passed before the victim could see a nurse. Now victims are seen in a timely, victim-sensitive way. STOP has contributed a project coordinator, has cut the waiting time to get sexual assault victims into counseling by two-thirds, and supports more intensive services. The team believes this more intensive approach has resulted in more women following through with the criminal justice process. The forensic nurse team members do the evidentiary exams and court testimony. Both law enforcement and prosecution members say how important it is to know that the evidence was collected correctly, that they can rely on the nurses to show up to testify, and that they will do a good job in court. The prosecutors say they give extra credence to the evidence in cases with exams done at this hospital. Team members say that for



SART to work, team members must respect each other's different roles and responsibilities. Each must remain independent but willing to work as a team.

Example: Granville, New York

Information is summarized from interviews that took place in summer 1998 with representatives of the police department, the district attorney's office, the local DV and sexual assault victim service programs, the SANE program, the local magistrate, and several women who had been served by the new police DV unit. In addition, updated information was received from the program for this report.

Granville is a small village (population 2,700) on the New York-Vermont border. Its police force consists of six full-time and six part-time officers, and most shifts are staffed by only one patrol officer. The police department's STOP program was spearheaded by one part-time police officer dissatisfied with the way domestic violence (DV) cases were handled in her district. She learned that STOP monies were available and, though the officers had never applied for a grant, had never participated in any statewide program like this, and had to take turns preparing the proposal on a manual typewriter, they applied.

Their primary goals for establishing a DV response unit were to respond more effectively to domestic violence calls, to reduce the number of repeat calls from the same household, and to improve prosecution outcomes. They began by obtaining a great deal of DV training so that they would have a better understanding of the problem; they also visited other departments in the state.

They formed two teams of two officers each to provide round-the-clock, on-call coverage; they also purchased cell phones, pagers, portable radios, and a computer to support the on-call system. When a DV call comes in, the patrol officer on duty responds and calls the DV team, which interviews the victim away from the offender while the patrol officer endeavors to secure the "perp." The DV unit officer then accompanies the victim to the hospital if there is medical evidence to collect, gives her information about DV, and links her up with counseling/support/legal services as needed. That same officer "follows" the victim through the entire criminal justice system (CJS) process. The DV unit meets every other week to review paperwork, policies, and charges and to go over specific cases that are presenting problems. One of the officers also tracks cases on the project's computer.

The project tries to provide a large scope of services, spreading support for victims far beyond the police department. If the victim needs it, the police officers who are part of the department's DV unit provide short-term intervention counseling to victims, almost on call; supervise an exchange of children for visitation; and patrol the victim's neighborhood for safety. Part of their next subgrant application requests funds to secure 911 cell phones for victims.

Patrol officers not in the DV unit said they were very enthusiastic about the project's effect on their ability to work at the scene in these DV incidents. They feel it has reduced their stress in dealing with the

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Example: Granville, New York (continued)

defendant and victim at the same time and may be contributing to better evidence collection. They have found they collect the best evidence when they learn as much as they can at the scene and do not wait for follow-up investigation. Officers can access the statewide protection order registry; they also say that the training they received as part of the STOP program made a big difference in how they handle an investigation. They now look for patterns and for ways to prevent domestic violence. Their new approach takes more time to prepare the case, but the time spent is offset by the time savings associated with having the DV team to deal with the victim.

IMPACT—ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS. The police personnel themselves seem to have been transformed in their political awareness, with everyone interviewed confirming their change in attitude and behavior. The police attribute their newfound understanding of the DV problem to the excellent training they received. Their new attitude has both created their new procedures and been reinforced by the procedures they are implementing.

Police respondents also reported their perception that the department has seen a dramatic change in community perception since creating the DV unit. The unit has continued to enhance the “community policing” model while partnering with other agencies to continue community education and awareness about domestic violence. They have participated with Granville High School to sponsor “The Yellow Dress,” a teenage dating violence prevention program for 500 high school students, working with teachers to lead discussion groups to process the emotionally charged program. Their community has become quite visible to women in the surrounding area; during their second year of funding, they received 10 requests from victims outside the village for referrals to DV services.

IMPACT—POLICE STATISTICS. Police statistics indicate that the number of domestic violence cases was down from 150 in the year before STOP to about 97 in the STOP project’s second year. Only two cases in the second year were repeat cases, which was a dramatic reduction. There has also been a dramatic rise of 33 percent in the number of arrests for criminal contempt on orders of protection between the project’s first and second years. Of the 97 DV cases investigated in the second year of funding, 77 percent of the victims participated in services through the DV unit.

IMPACT—POLICE EXPANSION. During its second year of STOP funding, the police department added sexual assault and stalking cases to the duties of the DV unit. These new responsibilities were added after officers received additional training to ensure that they were comfortable in providing services for these victims and investigating these types of crime.

THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY’S PERSPECTIVE. Respondents from the district attorney’s office credit the Granville police project with preparing victims for the legal process and for what to expect in both building the case and in the court process. They report that victims are more willing to listen to their options and actually consult the police in making some decisions. These respondents noted that *they*

(continued)



Example: Granville, New York (continued)

are still the ones who make the final decisions on which cases to pursue, based on whether they think they can win. They often make plea bargains to get a conviction, but it is very helpful that the victims come into the court now with a better attitude about prosecution. For the first time, the district attorney has begun prosecuting marital rape, and feels that the new police approach should be able to provide better evidence in these cases.

THE NONPROFIT VICTIM SERVICE PERSPECTIVE. Victim service representatives confirmed that victims' experiences in the CJS have been transformed because of the change in how they enter it (through the new police DV unit). Victims have a better understanding of DV, they are more likely to self-identify as DV victims, and they have a more positive attitude toward the sources of help in the system. This results in more cooperation during investigations, better evidence being collected at the scene and at an initial hospital exam, and more willingness on the part of the victim to hold the batterer accountable. Victims are also participating more extensively in counseling and support group services.

SPINOFF PROJECTS—SEXUAL ASSAULT. Although the Granville Police Department's STOP subgrant had only been functioning for one year at the time of our visit, two other agencies in the community had applied for their own STOP subgrants and were just beginning their operations. The local DV coalition had just hired a staff person to do coordination, supported by a new STOP subgrant. The local hospital had just begun a STOP-funded SANE project, creating a spinoff effect not just with how the community handles domestic violence but also with the way it handles sexual assault.

Medical staff and victim service people working in the SANE project and other sexual assault activities in Granville reported the Granville police are very cooperative. The local sexual assault coalition gave the police two hours of training in sexual assault and reported that officers were eager to know what to do and how to do it, in contrast to other police departments in the area. Police will work with SANE by bringing victims to the hospital. When it was formed, the SANE project expected to be handling about one sexual assault a month, based on its past experience. Very early in its operation, however, the SANE project was seeing one sexual assault victim a *week*. This project works with seven local police departments, two state police substations, and sheriff's departments in its own and some adjoining counties.

The view shared with us by advocates from the local nonprofit sexual assault victim service program is that the Granville police show great sensitivity to sexual assault victims and that victims have benefited from contact with them. They also said that referrals to their agency have increased since the SANE project began operation. The advocates expect to be included in follow-up evaluations of victims and to be present during police questioning. They are very impressed by the kindness of the Granville police.

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Example: Granville, New York (continued)

SPINOFF PROJECTS—INTERJURISDICTIONAL ACTIVITIES. Since completing the first year of its STOP project, the Granville Police Department has become involved in a number of interjurisdictional activities to promote better handling of domestic violence cases. These activities include responding to requests from many other law enforcement agencies throughout New York state regarding the Granville DV unit, working on a bicounty Domestic Violence Community Coordination Council, training others at an annual domestic violence conference, and inviting officers from surrounding jurisdictions to participate in ongoing training offered by the New York State (NYS) Police. The department also cohosted “The Border Conference” with the NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, the NYS Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services. This conference was held in the village municipal center, with law enforcement officers from New York, Massachusetts, and Vermont training with other agencies on interstate issues around domestic violence.

SUMMARY. Overall, the change in this community is really striking. Some of the key lessons are:

1. One person can make a difference.
2. Good training matters, and more training is better. Training is also necessary with respect to the most effective use of new equipment, such as computers.
3. One focused program, implemented well, can have effects that extend far beyond the effort itself.
4. This project had a very specific goal—to fill the gap created by the fact that Granville is geographically “38 miles from everywhere.” The police have tried hard to work together with the other agencies to link victims up with services, providing whatever was needed. This means that they provide a lot of transportation to services that are unavailable in their town. Their commitment to do this has made a huge difference. The police are seen as allies, facilitators, and links to services, as opposed to adversaries. They report that they continue to enjoy excellent working relationships with the local Domestic Violence Project, SANE, and sexual trauma and recovery programs.
5. Small communities need more help from state STOP administrators if they are going to benefit from STOP funds.



Coordinated Community Response

We give two examples of CCR related to domestic violence here, one of which also involves a response to sexual assault. For two lengthy examples of CCR focused exclusively on sexual assault, the reader is referred to chapter 6.

Example: Charleston and Kanawah County, West Virginia

Information is summarized from interviews that took place in fall 1998 with representatives of the police and sheriff's departments, the district attorney's office, the local DV and sexual assault victim service programs, legal aid, several coordinating task forces and councils, and a woman who had been served by the team. It was reviewed for current accuracy by program staff.

West Virginia's state STOP administrator asked the Charleston Public Safety Council to form a team to address domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking issues and to apply for STOP funds. The DV Task Force was the result—a multidisciplinary task force that meets monthly and has five working subcommittees. This was the first collaborative planning mechanism in the county. Two members of the Charleston Police Department spearheaded the effort to apply for their first STOP grant (FY 1996 funds). Their first STOP grant funded overtime pay and training for law enforcement, a victim advocate in the police department, development of an intake procedure and a special unit in the prosecutor's office, and development of a transportation network to facilitate victims' appearances at police interviews, court hearings, and doctors' appointments. In the first year, 9 of the county's 17 law enforcement agencies participated in the team, which increased to 16 of the 17 by the time of our visit (in fall 1998). The STOP project has provided training to officers in all of these departments.

MAJOR CHANGES. The Charleston Police Department adopted a "zero-tolerance" policy. The prosecutor adopted a no-drop policy and began to proceed with prosecutions for which the victim was not called on to testify in court. STOP funds used to purchase Polaroid cameras, video cameras, audiorecorders, tapes, and police training in evidence collection and victim interviews are felt to have had a "tremendous positive effect" on the quality of evidence available for cases, a result that has supported the prosecutor's no-drop position.

STOP-funded victim advocates provide never-before-available counseling and support services, including transportation, to a much broader victim population. Advocates are present at women's first contact with a court for a protection order, and police call them routinely at first police contact. Thus nearly every victim in their system is offered advocacy services, usually in person, early in their involvement with criminal or civil justice systems. STOP funding is reported to have had a huge impact on victim services. Only minimal advocacy or support was available in this area prior to STOP. Through STOP there are now three full-time victim advocates—one stationed at the police department, one at the sheriff's department, and a third in the prosecutor's office. The

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Example: Charleston and Kanawah County, West Virginia (continued)

police department has assigned a full-time detective to work with its advocate. All the advocates work together to ensure that no woman drops through the cracks, and they report that their presence in the different agencies has resulted in a much more effective and seamless response to most victims, as well as more effective prosecution. Advocates also report that the STOP funds have allowed them to go beyond case-by-case cooperation, which they were doing before STOP, and evolve into a collaborative planning team.

GAPS. There are still gaps in the system for domestic violence, due largely to lack of resources. These include basic equipment, such as radios in police cruisers, and overtime, especially for law enforcement in small departments. At the time of our site visit, legal services for victims were lacking; updated information is that Legal Aid now provides women with legal representation at civil protective order hearings. This assistance is important because interviewees in Charleston reported that perpetrators often have attorneys, including *public defenders* representing the perpetrators in related criminal cases who come into civil court to “help out.” (This is not the only state where we heard of this practice, which was reported to us by prosecutors in each instance.) In addition, the area of sexual assault remains largely undeveloped.

Example: York County, Pennsylvania

Information is summarized from interviews conducted in summer 1999 with representatives of the largest police department in the county, the district attorney’s office, the local DV and sexual assault victim service programs, and the local batterers intervention program. In addition, updated information was received from the program for this report.

York had a long-standing DV Task Force in operation for 11 years before receiving STOP funds and was among the first counties in Pennsylvania to apply to STOP. The county was first funded from FY 1996 monies, giving it one of several “demonstration” teams in the state. Team members say they “were already together, but STOP has made it possible for them to be more together, and to fill in the gaps.”

THE STOP PROJECT. The project supports a special assistant district attorney who functions with the coordinator as a special prosecution unit. It also pays for a police officer, who worked with several of the local police chiefs to revise York City’s law enforcement protocol for domestic violence and develop a new one for sexual assault. This officer has also provided training for officers in three-quarters of the law enforcement agencies in the county (at least 30 agencies) and serves as ongoing liaison and trainer for law enforcement personnel in the county. Officers call him to ask how to handle particular cases, so he is in a real sense a “floating special unit” for law enforcement throughout the county. The STOP project also pays for victim service advocates, including an advocate from the local DV agency stationed

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Example: York County, Pennsylvania (continued)

at the courthouse, available to all women who come for protection orders and offering them assistance; a community outreach and education position, also in the local DV agency; and a sexual violence systems coordinator and a portion of a salary for a sexual assault victim advocate at the local sexual assault services agency. The county Police Chief Organization has been strongly supportive, ensuring that its officers take the training and show up in court when needed to testify. The DV Task Force also has a strong clergy committee and has developed protocols and material specifically for clergy. The outreach worker gets calls from some clergy about how to help a woman who has come to them.

ONGOING FUNDING. The state STOP agency promises ongoing funding for all of its collaborative county projects. But the agency also makes clear that the size of the STOP subgrant will be reduced by 25 percent in the third funding year, and requires hard cash matches from law enforcement and prosecution from the project's third year onward. (For the first two years, the match can be "soft" or "in-kind.") This means two things. First, county boards of commissioners have to be willing to commit county funds to support one-fourth of the new law enforcement and prosecution positions initially paid for by the STOP grants. This was universally felt to be a tough requirement, but one that the group eventually met, and the commissioners are now reported to be proud of the York team. The York team was in its third year at the time of our visit, and the law enforcement and prosecution components of the team were intact, thanks to county funding. Second, however, the nonprofit victim service agencies also lost 25 percent of their STOP funding and have had a much harder time compensating. Some positions and services have had to be reduced.

IMPACT OF STOP. Everyone interviewed agreed that they have all recognized the difficulties of doing this work alone and that they all need each other. Now they definitely have respect for each other and are working together in a new way.

Law Enforcement. Every law enforcement department in the county is now using the domestic violence and sexual assault protocols. The STOP-supported liaison officer gets 10 to 15 calls a day from officers in different departments with questions about how to handle cases, as does the assistant district attorney who handles only cases involving violence against women.

Prosecution. The district attorney now has a no-drop policy but will take a lesser charge in order to get a guilty verdict, so when a perpetrator re-offends, he will have a record for a domestic violence charge. The new unit proceeded with 339 indirect criminal contempt cases in the past year; 90 percent of offenders brought in on criminal contempt for violating the conditions of a protection order got convicted. The district attorney also handled 48 other felony domestic violence and sexual assault cases in the past year and is getting an estimated 90 to 95 percent conviction rate on both types of cases.

(continued)



Example: York County, Pennsylvania (continued)

Victim Services. Having an advocate at the courthouse has meant services to more than 600 women a year who never received services before. The victim service outreach worker gets calls from police officers around the county to help with victim interviews and consult with the woman on whether to press charges, none of which happened before STOP. The effect of all the changes, victim advocates reported, is that women feel more comfortable, more confident, and more believed, and that “there is a force in the county stronger than the abuser.”

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NOW WITHOUT STOP? Even with the strong bonds developed by this team, and with protocols in place and operating, respondents reported that their county would feel serious effects if STOP funds went away. The special-unit work of the district attorney would be cut in half, and the ability to maintain connections would be reduced. Outreach to rural areas would disappear. “We couldn’t logistically do the services and maintain our level of cooperation without the money. We would still work together, but not as well.”

State STOP agencies have great flexibility under the STOP Formula Grants to structure their state’s program in many ways, and to offer more or less assistance to their subgrantees to promote collaboration and CCR. Our site visits to 16 states have left us with a good deal of information about how states are or are not using that flexibility to promote greater levels of collaboration and CCR. After reviewing and summarizing our findings and impressions, we also consulted staff of the STOP TA (Technical Assistance) Project (which works with all the state STOP administrators in the course of its technical assistance duties—see chapter 9) about all the states. We corroborated our impressions of the 16 states we visited and obtained information about similar activities in other states. The following summary therefore reflects information from our site visits and also from the experience over four years of STOP TA Project staff working with all of the state STOP administrators.

We believe that the best efforts of state STOP agencies to promote collaboration and CCR are important, because these are the projects that really stand out during site visits. Their participants are enthusiastic, excited, and describe their efforts as producing “phenomenal” or “incredible” results—results they say they “wouldn’t have believed if they hadn’t seen them happen.” The results include improved experiences and outcomes for women victims of violence, and increased offender accountability. It is also quite clear that the more a state STOP agency does to promote collaboration or CCR, the more STOP funds in that state are being used to support collaborative and CCR projects. Such efforts on the part of state STOP agencies can, therefore, serve to promote the outcomes most desired by VAWA.

What State STOP Agencies Are Doing to Promote Collaboration and CCR



Most states only pay “lip service” to the idea of promoting collaboration.

The most vigorous thing they do to promote it is to require “sign-off” from local victim service agencies on STOP proposals from law enforcement, prosecution, and other agencies. Most victim service agencies placed in this position feel they have no real choice but to provide the requested sign-off if they are to maintain even minimally cordial relations with these criminal justice agencies, even when they have learned from experience that no real collaboration will ensue.

Some state STOP agencies use their authority to promote collaboration or CCR in a variety of ways, including:

- ***Offering training and technical assistance***

Some state STOP agencies have supported a variety of technical assistance activities designed to help potential and actual subgrantees develop an approach to helping women victims of violence that contains a strong collaborative or CCR component. These technical assistance activities have included:

1. Holding prefunding meetings to help potential subgrantees think about ways they can work together with other agencies in their community.
2. Holding prefunding conferences for teams assembled by local communities and representing the necessary agencies for a CCR. Sessions at the conference then deal with the issues involved in creating collaborative or CCR protocols and interactions, help the teams plan the elements of a CCR, and point attendees in the direction of applying for STOP money to implement their plans.
3. Using STOP to fund a training project with the ongoing multiyear task of offering pre- and postfunding assistance in developing cross-agency protocols and collaborative arrangements.
4. Using STOP to fund training or technical assistance *after* funding, or including such training or technical assistance within the scope of the state STOP agency’s duties, to help projects move toward greater collaboration or CCR, including components focused on team building as well as on technical skills development.



- ***Using the state STOP agency's monitoring function***

Creating a monitoring structure for the state STOP agency that looks at progress toward collaboration or CCR as part of its ongoing monitoring of subgrantees and seeks to strengthen all efforts and movement in this direction, even if the original goals of the subgrantee did not include a strong intention to do so.

- ***Partial commitment of STOP funds to support collaboration and/or CCR***

1. Using STOP funds to support the development of CCR protocols for domestic violence and/or sexual assault, or having such protocols already developed, and then issuing requests for proposals to implement the protocols. This amounts to a set-aside of some portion of STOP funds that will be used only to support efforts to develop a CCR according to the protocols.
2. Specifying a proportion of STOP funds that can only be used to support projects displaying certain types of collaboration (e.g., projects with an underserved focus must include the active collaboration of a traditional victim service agency and an agency primarily serving the group of women that is the focus of the outreach effort) and issuing a request for proposals to develop such projects.
3. Establishing a strong preference, but not a requirement, for funding projects that are wholly or at least partially collaborative/CCR.

A very few states require strong evidence of collaboration or CCR as a condition of receiving STOP funding for all subgrants.

These states establish in their policies and their requests for proposals a *requirement* that only projects with a strong team effort will be funded, and carefully scrutinize proposals and postsubgrant activities to ensure that the evidence for this commitment is clear and strong. This requirement may be coupled with materials distributed to potential applicants by the state STOP agency specifying the minimal elements/systems/approaches that must be included in the collaboration or CCR, in-person interviews with the entire proposed team before the funding decision is made, and other mechanisms to ensure that the applicants really get the message and intend to develop a functioning CCR. In addition, these states monitor projects post-funding to ensure compliance, and some projects have been refused continuation funding if it is clear that they are not working as a team.



Maximizing the Effects of STOP Funding: Critical Elements for Creating an Effective Community Response

In reviewing the programs across the country that stand out as having accomplished the goals of STOP, several key elements emerge. It seems clear that the truly effective programs have indeed transformed the way the criminal justice system handles domestic violence and/or sexual assault victims in their communities. The lessons learned from observing these programs may guide us in developing more comprehensive domestic violence and sexual assault services across the country.

- There must be solid working relationships among all the players: law enforcement, prosecution, nonprofit victim service agencies, any victim witness assistance units that exist, and the medical establishment (for sexual assault). This must include a willingness to work together on every case unless there is a compelling reason not to, and participating agencies must develop and adopt protocols requiring them to contact the appropriate partner agencies in response to every call.
- *Protocol development must be a cross-disciplinary process from beginning to end.* Law enforcement, medical personnel, and victim service providers should be on the team developing the prosecution protocol, and the same cross-disciplinary representation should be applied to developing protocols for law enforcement, victim services, and medical services. This does *not* mean that other disciplines are asked to review a draft protocol once members of the discipline have written it; that strategy often leads to turf battles and defensiveness about ideas for improving “our” protocol. Rather, everyone needs to sit down together and understand how the actions of one agency depend on or are critical to the probability that another agency will be able to succeed at its own job. Then procedures to ensure the greatest possible coordination of operations can be written into official protocols. This takes longer up front, because each group must work through issues of territoriality, understanding each other’s professional language, and understanding each other’s roles and responsibilities. But this process is actually more efficient in the long run than sending each discipline off to write its own protocol. There is less controversy and fewer difficulties with implementation *after* protocol development, because the necessary cross-agency interactions and interdependencies will of necessity be considered and strategies will be developed to handle them, with *every* agency contributing some changes in its own attitudes as well as procedures to make the whole system work better as a system.
- Prosecution must be on board—with support for the others’ activities, a willingness to proceed with tough cases, and a readiness to work in collaboration with both victim advocates and law enforcement.



- Certainly for sexual assault, and ideally for domestic violence as well, the medical establishment must participate in the community protocol. A full coordinated community response for sexual assault requires support and training for the practitioners doing rape exams; the institution of SANE programs; the use of colposcopes, digital photography equipment, and other state-of-the-art evidence collection tools; and the training of examiners to provide high-quality testimony. It would also be desirable to monitor hospital billing practices to ensure that the victim is not billed for the forensic aspects of the exams. Procedures might also be worked out to cover the cost of ancillary medical interventions that are not solely forensic. For domestic violence, medical facilities and personnel should be committed to screening for domestic violence and documenting the extent of related injuries as part of the evidence in a case. They also need to develop or adapt screening protocols and receive training in how to use them and in how to prepare documentation that will be useful in court.
- Victim witness assistance staff in law enforcement and prosecution offices and advocates in private, nonprofit victim service agencies must develop strategies for working together. There should be advocacy services for victims as they go through police, medical, court, and other hurdles (which may be financial, housing related, or the need for counseling) while dealing with rape or domestic violence.
- Developing a successful coordinated community response takes time—often several years. Funding must be available to support the infrastructure of the coordinated effort. This means paying for the time of a coordinator and someone to prompt uniform and useful data collection for feedback purposes. Further, this funding for coordination must continue; good will alone cannot keep agencies working together. Reduction or elimination of the coordinating function after a good CCR has been established appears inevitably to lead to disintegration of the CCR, although it may take a year or two to become evident. Typically, none of the agencies has the extra resources internally to provide the type of support required for either initial or continued success, even if they are convinced the new approach is better than the old one.
- Weekly or monthly meetings, regularly attended by all the participants, appear to be a critical part of this process. The meetings are used to discuss individual cases; they are also the place where problems in the smooth functioning of the system are worked out and where participants can exchange information about events in their own agencies.



- Top leadership of each of the partner agencies need to lend strong, visible support for the project and provide accountability for the actions of their own representatives.
- Representatives of each discipline must understand the role—the tasks, the standards of practice, the mission, and the ethical guidelines—of all of the disciplines.
- The protections and limits of confidentiality for each of the players must be clearly defined and clearly understood and respected by all parties, including the victims themselves.
- Building trust among the players appears to be facilitated by the presence of a few players who are familiar with one another and who have had contact with one another over a period of many years. It seems that a few key personnel with longevity in the field can make a critical difference in establishing a willingness among agencies to trust one another (this has been especially true with law enforcement agencies and private, nonprofit victim service agencies).
- The services must have a visible presence in the community that they are targeting—easy accessibility is critical. This might include physical and geographical location, hours of availability, ease of reaching a live person (rather than voice mail), and community education regarding myths and realities about violence against women. The reduced stigma that may result from this community education appears to help women self-identify as victims of domestic violence or sexual assault and to seek help. In this area, the local media might be enlisted as a partner in the development of a coordinated community response.
- Training is a critical part of protocol development and implementation and should be cross-disciplinary. Content needs to include information to counter common misunderstandings about domestic violence, sexual assault, their perpetrators, and their victims, as well as information about the role each partner plays in the collaboration and technical details of how to fulfill that role (e.g., evidence collection for law enforcement and medical personnel, effective prosecution strategies for prosecutors, knowledge of community resources, and legal options for advocates).
- Build in data collection, baseline measures, and tracking of outcomes from the beginning of the team's work, and use this information to motivate and reward the team for its efforts.



Recommendations

Two of the recommendations we make this year are expansions of recommendations we made in the *1999 Report*. They are still relevant, and the evidence to support them is even more compelling.

- **Congress should endorse the use of STOP funds to support collaborative functions at both the state and local levels by specifying a new purpose area called “creating collaborative responses.” It should be clear in the wording of this purpose area that funding coordinator positions and administrative backup are explicitly allowed and encouraged.**

Many federal funding programs explicitly **disallow** support for administrative functions. In STOP, different states have taken different positions with respect to supporting such functions. The evidence from this evaluation strongly suggests that these coordinative and administrative functions are **vital** to the success of efforts to change the treatment of women victims of violence, and that communities **cannot** afford to support these functions on their own. STOP support for these functions should not only be allowed, it should be encouraged.

- **State STOP agencies should structure their STOP grant making and other activities to maximize the development of communitywide collaborative responses to domestic violence and sexual assault in locations with STOP funding.**

Coordinative functions can occur at both the state and local levels. State STOP agencies that have used STOP funds to create or support statewide DV and sexual assault coalitions to organize and strengthen victim services, prepare agencies to write proposals, offer technical assistance, and undertake other coordinative activities have seen the emergence of strong local programs as a result. The same technique might also work to develop interest on the part of law enforcement agencies, particularly the many small departments that would never develop a project on their own.

STOP agencies in more states could increase their emphasis on funding serious collaboration efforts. Site visit observations strongly suggest that CCRs are most likely to develop locally when the state STOP administrator does as much as possible to encourage them. Methods of encouragement states should use include:

- Offering technical assistance to communities trying to develop collaborative teams;
- Conducting conferences, seminars, and workshops with the same goal in mind;
- Giving priority to applications that show feasible



plans to develop a coordinated community response;

- Developing models of CCR (sets of protocols, practices, and procedures) and dedicating significant proportions of STOP funds to support projects that will implement them;
 - Approving use of STOP funds to support a coordinator, a data gatherer and analyst, and administrative expenses for these projects; and
 - *Requiring* a commitment to and strong evidence of a collaborative team approach as a condition of funding.
- **State STOP agencies should make greater efforts to ensure that small agencies, and agencies in small communities, are included in STOP support.**

The example of the Granville Police Department illustrates the huge impediments to the “little guys” getting grants. This police department only heard about the availability of STOP funds by accident, because one of their part-time officers heard about STOP at the Department of Social Services, where she also works. It took a major effort for them to find out who to call, to get the request for proposals (RFP) and application forms, and to think through how to write their grant. They had no prior experience with proposal writing. State STOP administrators could do a better job of getting the RFPs out to *all* potential recipients. They also need to offer more technical assistance in grant writing and guidance in how to get through the process. For this police force, even getting the grant proposal typed was a major ordeal.

Their situation is probably echoed in many small law enforcement and prosecution agencies around the country (as well as, of course, small victim service agencies). We also visited STOP-funded prosecution projects in small communities that were equally transforming of victim experiences. With examples of successful police and prosecution projects before them, implementing in departments of their own size, other small law enforcement and prosecution agencies might be more willing to come on board if they got the necessary help to do so. Their inclusion could help the overall STOP program meet its legislative mandate to distribute 25 percent of STOP funds to law enforcement and prosecution projects.

Reaching and Serving Women from Underserved Communities

5 CHAPTER

One important goal of the STOP program is to expand services to women who historically have not used or had access to victim services. Lawmakers knew that numerous groups of women were not being served at all or, when obtaining services, were not receiving appropriate services. These underserved or unserved women face greater barriers than those encountered by “mainstream” women victims of violence, such as geographic isolation, inability to speak English, or the absence of culturally appropriate/problem-specific services.

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) intended that special efforts be made to identify, attract, and provide accessible and culturally competent services for underserved women. These were to be explicit, new efforts—not just serving women from underserved groups that happen to reside in an agency’s jurisdiction and sometimes seek help. For a project to serve an underserved community, it must *tailor its services* to that population’s needs and change its *basic operating procedures* if necessary to accommodate that population. For example, a victim service program that occasionally serves women involved in prostitution would not be meeting STOP’s definition of an underserved program unless it made special efforts to change outreach strategies to be appropriate to this audience, trained all personnel to reduce the stigma around prostitution, increased staff competence regarding the special needs of the population, placed a satellite service site on a street where prostituting happens, or made other special accommodations to reach out to and provide services to women involved in prostitution. Projects that increase services to women in rural areas through new or satellite offices or other means of increasing access also qualify as focusing on an underserved population.

Subgrantees report on their Subgrant Award and Performance Reports (SAPRs) if particular underserved populations exist within their jurisdictions. The most commonly reported underserved groups were rural women, Hispanic women, and Spanish-speaking women. Many programs also identified urban women, African American women, Asian American women, and Native American women as underserved groups within their region. Fewer programs reported Pacific Islander and Asian language-speaking women.

Introduction

On the SAPRs, the most commonly reported underserved groups were rural women, Hispanic women, and Spanish-speaking women.



In addition, subgrantees are asked if their STOP project “**emphasized—made specific efforts to reach or serve**” (SAPR item 13) underserved populations in their regions. Many subgrantees reported underserved groups within their regions, but do not emphasize the particular groups through their programming efforts (see table 5.1). Rural, urban, and Spanish-speaking women are those most likely to be identified as underserved and to have programming efforts focused on them. Sixty-seven percent of the subgrantees who identified rural women as underserved within their community are also emphasizing them in programming efforts. The same is true for 57 percent of subgrantees who identified urban women and 52 percent who identified Spanish-speaking women. The groups of women identified as underserved who are least likely to be emphasized by subgrantees are Asian American, Pacific Islander, and Asian language-speaking women. Only 39 percent of subgrantees who identified Asian American women as underserved were emphasizing them with programming efforts, 31 percent for Pacific Islander women, and 37 percent for Asian language-speaking women. For the remaining groups, 49 percent of subgrantees who identified Native American women as underserved were emphasizing them with programming efforts, 48 percent for Hispanic women, and 42 percent for African American women.

TABLE 5.1 *Subgrantee Reports of Underserved Populations in the Region They Serve, and Their Program's "Underserved" Emphases*

Underserved Group	Number of Subgrantees Reporting the Group As Underserved in Region	Number of Subgrantees Reporting Both the Group in Region As Underserved and Emphasizing in Programming	Number of Subgrantees Emphasizing Group in Programming, but Not Reporting As Underserved in Their Region
Rural Women	1,283	856	1,142
Urban Women	449	256	384
African American Women	788	334	454
Asian American Women	458	178	266
Pacific Islander Women	235	74	14
Hispanic Women	1,019	492	521
Native American Women	513	253	358
Spanish-Speaking Women	924	484	252
Asian Language-Speaking Women	372	138	33

Source: Urban Institute analysis of SAPRs reported as of November 15, 1999, $N = 4,683$.

Other subgrantees reported emphasizing particular groups through programming, although they do not view them as underserved groups within their regions. The groups most commonly emphasized by subgrantees, although not considered underserved, were rural women, Hispanic women, and African American women.

Subgrantees also reported emphasizing populations with special needs through programming. Many subgrantees (365) reported focusing on women who are mentally/emotionally challenged, 425 reported focusing on physically/medically challenged women, 463



reported focusing on older women, 235 reported focusing on migrant farm workers, 277 reported focusing on lesbian women, 229 reported focusing on immigrants, and 241 reported focusing on women at risk (e.g., incarcerated, prostituted, substance abusing, etc.).

During site visits, we learned that states fund a number of programs addressing underserved populations. All states fund a mix of programs in rural, urban, and suburban areas, with some having special emphasis on rural programming. Many states added new services to rural areas or implemented satellite services in isolated areas for the first time as a result of STOP funding. One state initially funded only rural services with STOP money, thinking those women had long been neglected within the state. In later years of STOP funding, eligibility was opened up to services across the whole state, regardless of geographic location.

Some states specifically fund special outreach and service efforts toward groups that have not been served adequately by mainstream services. These groups include elderly women, specific racial/ethnic minorities, women with mental health and/or substance abuse disorders, and lesbian and bisexual women. These programs increase women's knowledge about the services available to them and provide services tailored to meet their unique needs. For many agencies, STOP funding made it possible to address these underserved populations formally for the first time. Many of the efforts, however, are funded at low levels and with no assurance of continued funding, creating issues related to the scope of services available and the sustainability of such efforts.

Example: Asian Women's Shelter in San Francisco, California

The Asian Women's Shelter (AWS) in San Francisco was started 11 years ago. While working at mainstream domestic violence shelters, the current executive director of AWS learned that no Asian women used shelter services. In response, she initiated a grassroots effort to start an Asian women's shelter in which Asian women could receive culturally competent services. AWS has accomplished this task. AWS provides culturally competent services by focusing on serving a smaller number of women but providing more comprehensive and longer-term services. It highlights quality of services, not quantity.

In the beginning, AWS's primary referral source was health care providers and not the criminal justice system. The director guesses that Asian women are less likely than the general population to contact the criminal justice system, because of fear of deportation, the anti-immigrant attitude of law enforcement, and Asian women's misunderstanding of the role of the criminal justice system.

THE STOP PROJECT. STOP funds are used as part of AWS's general budget and support the shelter operation and services provided by staff. Fifteen staff (12 full-time and 3 part-time) and 50 active volunteers provide services for a 24-hour crisis hot line, comprehensive

(continued)



Example: Asian Women's Shelter in San Francisco, California (continued)

Over 80 percent of AWS's clients are successfully leaving domestic violence situations and establishing new lives for themselves.

multilingual case management, support, shelter services, children's services, and Queer Asian Women's Services (QAWS).

The shelter runs a language advocacy program—the Multi-Lingual Access Model (M-LAM)—to provide language services to residents and clients, of whom 95 percent do not speak English or have limited English ability. As part of M-LAM, AWS recruits and trains bilingual women. The M-LAM advocates are given 60 hours of training on being a counselor, interpreting, and understanding domestic violence issues. The trained advocates are on call and are paid by the hour when their services are accessed. Currently, AWS has 30 active advocates and can provide services in 24 different Asian languages.

Asian cultures are ones of interdependence. People do not perform tasks by themselves, but rather work together to reach a goal. In addition, Asian cultures value the family as central to a woman's life. Therefore, AWS's philosophy is to build interdependent relationships with its clients and the community and to become an extended "family" of support to the women it serves. The extended "family" of support works in two ways, through intensive advocacy and through collaboration with other agencies in the community.

- AWS staff provide intensive advocacy with every woman. For example, AWS staff do not merely make referrals, they do the work with the women—make and attend appointments, discuss relevant issues and next steps, etc.
- AWS relies on its partnerships within the domestic violence community for many services. The staff have not created a one-stop shop, but have created strong partnerships with other agencies in the community, so their clients can receive comprehensive services. For example, approximately 50 percent of their clients have some type of problem with their immigration status (although this is not to say they are all undocumented women). AWS does not initially ask women if they are "legal," but once the women come into services, AWS helps them understand and/or address their immigration status. To do this, AWS has developed a strong partnership with a local legal advocacy agency. The partnership has grown such that, at this point, the two agencies share funding to serve the shelter clientele.

Over 80 percent of AWS's clients are successfully leaving domestic violence situations and establishing new lives for themselves.

WHAT MAKES IT WORK. AWS feels there are three reasons for the changes in its clients:

- AWS has made a commitment to helping women meet their long-term goals by focusing on serving a smaller number of women but providing more comprehensive and longer-term services. Women can stay at AWS up to five months. AWS is one of only five shelters in the nation whose work focuses specifically on Asian women.

(continued)



Example: Asian Women's Shelter in San Francisco, California (continued)

- By the time women find AWS, they have exhausted other options to end the violence in their lives. Many AWS clients are resolute, strong, and ready to do something different with their lives. Although AWS believes what women do is their choice and supports all decisions women make, most women it sees are ready to leave their batterer. If they do return to their batterer, however, "the shelter door is always open."
- AWS provides intensive advocacy services and builds an extended family of support. The executive director believes this approach makes a crucial difference in a woman's ability to become self-sufficient.

REMAINING ISSUES.

- More transitional housing programs need to be developed so women can commit to meeting their long-term goals and have the resources to do this.
- Locally, there is tension in the advocacy community regarding the work of AWS. Many advocates believe that AWS does "too much" for women. Although the executive director believes there may be some truth to these claims, she believes AWS prepares women for independent living using a culturally appropriate model of service provision. Further, the executive director thinks the AWS approach could be a practical alternative to empowerment and can be applied to other non-Asian battered women with similar success. However, she realizes it would affect the system of funding, because it focuses on serving fewer women more intensively.
- Women who go through AWS's services have special barriers to deal with, including racism. As an agency, AWS has to face the same issues. The executive director looks forward to a time when the needs of Asian women are not seen as special needs, but are routinely dealt with as part of mainstream thought. At this time, however, meeting the needs of the Asian community requires additional advocacy.
- In recent years, there has been a noted change in the domestic violence field. Many individuals have been in the domestic violence field for a long time, but now more and more new people are taking on the issue. The veterans of the field need to be more open to approaches to services other than shelter. Although shelter still needs to be seen as an important piece of a bigger domestic violence picture, veteran groups need to start partnering with new domestic violence groups and agencies. Turf issues are growing and the veterans of the field, as a community, need to address these issues internally, as well as with the new groups. Veterans should see this time as the "chance they've all been waiting for" and must find a way to partner with people they may not have in the past and must think about domestic violence issues in new and different ways.

AWS has made a commitment to helping women meet their long-term goals by placing the program's focus on serving a smaller number of women but providing more comprehensive and longer-term services.



Data Sources

The Underserved Survey involved in-depth telephone interviews with 98 subgrantees specifically tailoring their services to underserved populations. The 98 interviews represented many different types of agencies, including law enforcement, prosecution, legal services, minority community service agencies, and health agencies (table 5.2).

Agency Type	Number Interviewed
Private, Nonprofit Victim Services	44
Minority Community Services	12
Law Enforcement	11
Prosecution	6
Legal Services	5
Social Services	5
Court/Correctional Facility	3
Government Victim Services	2
Health Agency	2
State Administrative Agency	1
Tribal Government	1
Other	6
Total Agencies	98

Source: Urban Institute 1999 Underserved Survey, $N = 98$.

To evaluate programs with specific focus areas, we first selected all projects that reported on their SAPRs that their project “**emphasized—made specific efforts to reach or serve**” (SAPR item 13) one of four underserved populations (rural women, urban African Americans, urban Hispanics, and women with multiple barriers) or that their project’s host agency was a community-based organization (CBO) serving an underserved community. We wanted to interview staff from 20 projects in each of these five categories, so we took all projects that looked as if they qualified for a category and randomly selected 20 projects as the primary sample. We identified every program that seemed to have a CBO as its host agency. We also selected a backup sample of 20 more projects (if the category included that many projects). Native American programs were identified to include if all original cells were not filled at the end of the initial selection process.

The initial pool of programs was identified based on information available prior to SAPR data entry in the fall of 1999. In total, 595 programs served only rural women. Twenty-eight programs served only an urban African American population and another 154 programs served urban African American women along with other groups of women. For urban Hispanic women, 28 programs



served only those women, with another 168 programs serving urban Hispanic women as portions of the service population. Eighty-six programs were serving women with multiple barriers. Only 33 programs appeared to be CBOs. Seven programs served only urban Native Americans, with another 105 programs serving urban Native Americans along with other populations.

Once the sample frame was identified, we screened each project sampled to ensure it met our criteria before initiating an interview. The screening process involved determining if programs were really doing something different from business as usual. We were looking for *increased access* to services for underserved women and/or whether the program *tailored* its services toward a specific population being served. For programs serving rural, urban African American, urban Hispanic, and urban Native American women, as well as women with multiple barriers, we asked if a significant portion of program time was spent serving the group of interest. If so, we asked if programs implemented any special or different services, or were increasing access to services, when serving the population of interest. For CBOs, the screening involved determining if indeed the agency was a CBO, how it became involved in violence against women services, and what types of other services it provided to its population of interest.

We screened 204 projects to get the 98 projects with which we ultimately conducted interviews. Four programs were screened in but did not participate. In total, we interviewed representatives of:

- 20 programs serving women in rural areas;
- 19 programs serving African American women in urban areas;
- 19 programs serving Hispanic women in urban areas;
- 18 CBOs serving a specific population that have developed violence against women services as part of their existing service package to their population of interest, for example, an Asian community center;
- 20 programs serving women with multiple barriers, specifically women with substance abuse and/or mental health disorders, women involved in prostitution, and women who are incarcerated; and
- 2 programs serving Native American women in urban areas.

It is interesting to note how many programs were screened out, indicating how *few* programs tailor their services for certain populations despite the fact that some, or many, of their clients belong to this population. In total, we screened out 102 programs—as many as we screened in. These included 15 programs that did not serve



the population of interest despite reporting on their SAPR that they did; 44 programs that did not provide special or different services for the population of interest; 19 programs that were not community-based organizations, although they appeared to be so on their SAPR; 7 programs whose key staff implementing a special effort had left; 7 programs that did not use the STOP money to provide direct services (e.g., it was used to buy equipment); and 10 programs that were not appropriate for other reasons.

Finding programs that tailored services for urban African American women and women with multiple barriers was especially difficult. Fourteen programs were screened out in the process of identifying the 19 urban African American programs interviewed. Another 25 programs were screened out while identifying the 20 programs serving women with multiple barriers. We consistently heard from staff who were not ultimately included in the study that they worked under the philosophy of “not treating anyone different,” even though they served women from different backgrounds and with different needs. In an effort to appear “equitable,” these programs implement only “mainstream” services. The programs fail to recognize and address unique barriers to services and distinct service requirements for many subgroups of the women they serve.

Few programs tailor their services for certain populations despite the fact that some, or many, of their clients belong to this population.

The results of the Underserved Survey are presented below. Impact findings from the Underserved Survey are presented in chapter 3, and information about community communication, coordination, and collaboration is presented in chapter 4.

Barriers Facing Underserved Populations

In part, groups of women are underserved due to the unique barriers they face when dealing with violence against women issues and accessing services, such as inability to speak English or having a physical handicap that limits mobility. Program staff were asked to identify unique barriers faced by their population of interest. They reported barriers they felt to be unique but, as the list below testifies, these same barriers face most women who experience domestic violence or sexual assault.

The most common barriers reported were inadequacy of available services, cultural norms or beliefs that inhibit women’s willingness to access services, and insufficient means to access services. Across all categories of programs, the most frequently cited barriers to services for underserved populations were:¹

- Language barriers;
- Lack of culturally appropriate or problem-specific services;
- Social tolerance of violence in families;
- Importance of the family and/or women not wanting to leave their families;



- Distrust or fear of the “system”;
- Geographic isolation from the community and any available services;
- Lack of transportation; and
- Poverty and/or no independent source of income.

Programs serving the five major sample categories reported different types of barriers.²

- Lack of transportation, isolation from the community, and social tolerance of violence in families were cited by programs serving rural women.
- For the women served by CBOs, the most frequent barriers encountered were language, social tolerance of violence in families, and importance of the family and/or women not wanting to leave their families.
- Programs serving urban Hispanic women cited barriers related to language, immigration issues, fear of deportation, importance of the family and/or women not wanting to leave their families, social tolerance of violence in families, lack of culturally competent services, and employment issues.
- According to programs focusing on urban African American women, the most frequently reported barriers were distrust or fear of the “system,” poverty and/or no independent source of income, lack of culturally competent services, not wanting to seek help outside of the black community, and the cultural belief that seeking help is unacceptable.
- For programs focusing on women with multiple barriers, the most frequently cited barriers were the lack of credibility these women have within the service system (e.g., the system “believes” these women less and takes them less seriously than other women) and lack of problem-specific services.

STOP has made a major difference in the amount and kinds of services that agencies can provide for underserved populations. New and different types of services are offered as a result of STOP funding, with 47 percent of agencies in the survey reporting they added new services or activities. Another 34 percent improved or expanded existing services, including placing existent services in new locations. Five percent used STOP money to formalize activities already being offered in their agency. Few agencies used STOP funds to improve staff understanding of violence against women (3 percent), improve interagency collaboration around underserved issues (7 percent), or improve technical resources (1 percent). Approximately

Types of Programs



30 percent of the agencies in the study focus one-half or more of their budget and activities on domestic violence–related issues; only 12 percent focus one-half or more of their budget and activities on sexual assault–related issues; and no programs focus one-half or more of their budget or activities on stalking.

Most agencies implement more than one program element with their STOP funding. The most common program elements implemented by agencies focusing on underserved women programs include individual advocacy/case management (i.e., coordinating services of any type for women—40 percent), legal advocacy (40 percent), outreach to the underserved populations (41 percent), and counseling (27 percent).

The most frequently implemented program elements vary by category:³

- Rural programs commonly implement legal advocacy, individual advocacy/case management, and outreach to rural women.
- CBOs provide counseling, individual advocacy/case management, and outreach to their underserved population of interest.
- Urban African American programs are likely to conduct legal advocacy and outreach to African American women and to build interagency collaboration.
- Urban Hispanic programs are most likely to provide legal advocacy and conduct outreach to the Hispanic population.
- Programs focusing on women with multiple barriers commonly provide individual advocacy/case management.

Example: Adams County State's Attorney's Office, Hettinger, North Dakota

The Adams County State's Attorney's Office provides victim services to rural women in North Dakota. The services provided did not exist prior to STOP funding, and the STOP grant funds a significant portion of the general operating budget of this program. Domestic violence services were necessary in this region because of the geographic isolation of women in rural areas and the "kinship" of small towns that encourages women to stay in abusive relationships. The service providers funded through STOP "wear many hats" and address any needs the women have, including legal advocacy, medical advocacy, shelter, case management, safety planning, victim witness services, transportation, and crisis intervention. Program staff advise others serving rural populations to recognize there are few resources and options available in rural areas, and therefore one must be willing to "wear many hats" and be on call 24 hours a day.



- Of the two urban Native American programs, both provided training on domestic violence and sexual assault to other agencies, and one provided training about cultural sensitivity issues to other agencies in the community.

While all programs *increased access* to services for underserved women and/or *tailored* their services for underserved populations, those that *tailored* their services implemented direct services, conducted outreach to underserved groups, and/or provided training.

Direct Services

The programs aimed at providing culturally appropriate or problem-specific assistance implemented many different types of services.

- **Diversity Liaison staff to work with women.** Diversity Liaison staff are professional women from within the underserved population of interest (e.g., African American women) who conduct culturally competent/problem-specific services. These staff are bilingual and/or bicultural and provide many types of services, including case management, counseling, and advocacy.
- **Legal advocacy specifically addressing women's immigration concerns.** Batterers often use immigration concerns as a means of control; therefore, many women have immigration status issues when they seek help. Some women do not even know what their status is, but batterers have instilled fears of deportation or fears of losing their children to the system. Programs provide women with information regarding their immigration status and their corresponding rights. In addition, programs collaborate with and connect women with attorneys in legal service organizations who can work with women to address any concerns or problems regarding immigration.
- **Substance abuse or mental health treatment or advocacy.** Some programs provide both violence against women services and substance abuse or mental health treatment in order to address both issues in women's lives. Other victim-focused programs have staff that advocate for women with substance abuse and/or mental health disorders to help them identify and become involved in services to treat such problems, while at the same time working on violence against women issues.
- **Third-party intervention.** For nonlethal domestic violence cases, some programs recruit laypeople from within the underserved population of interest (e.g., Native American or African American community members) to serve as mentors/elders and provide assistance to women victims of violence and their families. The mentors/elders are assigned to



women and/or their family members to help address the primary concerns of each family member and work on stopping the violence without dissolving the family.

- **Translation and interpretation services.** Programs fund staff who are bilingual/bicultural to provide translation and interpretation services. Translation/interpretation is used during meetings and appointments when obtaining services from other agencies or when dealing with the criminal justice system. Translation/interpretation is also provided to specific agencies whenever it is necessary; for example, a

Example: Council of Elders Program, Family Crisis Center, Inc., of Prince George's County, Brentwood, Maryland

The STOP project was developed because members of the community recognized the denial in the African American community that domestic violence exists. Cultural beliefs around domestic violence prevent women from coming forward to seek help. These beliefs include, "only weak women become involved in domestic violence and black women are strong" and "domestic violence is dirty laundry that should not be aired." The agency decided to develop a project that would get the community involved in solving the problem of domestic violence. The goal was to create a project with involvement from community members with the hope that they would arrive at a zero-tolerance policy for domestic violence and encourage the main population of abused black women to seek help.

THE STOP PROJECT. The Council of Elders project is based on an African tradition of involving community members in social therapy action. The project addresses only nonlethal violent situations and begins when families are experiencing a "honeymoon" phase following a domestic violence incident. The project involves training community members about domestic violence and partnering with them to provide early intervention services.

Once members of the Council of Elders are trained, they are assigned to families dealing with domestic violence. The perpetrator is assigned a sponsor, who maintains daily contact for support and advice. The victim is assigned a protector to ensure needed services are obtained and safety issues are addressed. Children are assigned a liaison to advocate on their behalf. These elders maintain daily contact with the family. Members of the household, with the help of the Council of Elders, make a no-violence contract by which they must abide or incur agreed-upon consequences.

The quality of services has improved with the Council of Elders approach, and more women who have not been served before have been reached through this program.

WHY IT WORKS. The African American community responds to such a program because it involves training community members and black church leaders. Churches see the elder approach as being user-friendly and, more importantly, as not breaking up families.



Example: Brockton Family and Community Resources, Inc., Brockton, Massachusetts

Few services exist to meet the needs of battered women with substance abuse issues. Staff of this project felt that mainstream domestic violence services do not deal with multiple problem issues simultaneously, nor do they provide a proper focus on co-occurring issues. Some agencies may even refuse to serve women with substance abuse issues. Such women are met with inadequate emergency services, clinical services, and legal representation.

THE STOP PROJECT. Brockton Family and Community Resources, Inc., uses its STOP funding to provide problem-specific services focusing on battered women with substance abuse issues. The center has hired a clinician trained to deal with both domestic violence and substance abuse issues. STOP funding supports her salary and the equipment to provide direct services to women, including case management and support group services.

Agency staff conduct case management for battered women with substance abuse issues and involve other agencies, such as the Department of Social Services, to ensure a woman receives all the services she requires. The groups work together to help women receive substance abuse treatment, other services addressing domestic violence issues, and services to help mothers maintain custody of their children.

Two support groups are conducted for battered women with substance abuse issues—one for women who are in recovery and one for women who are not yet in recovery. Women who are not yet in recovery are required only to be sober during the group. The clinician reports the most surprising lesson she learned was the large number of women who attend the group for women who are in early recovery and who have not been previously identified as victims by other service providers. The number of attendees indicates a great need for support groups such as this. The clinician believes the group is very effective at helping women.

REMAINING ISSUES. The “missing” services for battered women with substance abuse issues are shelter services and halfway houses that allow children to stay with their mothers. Few shelters allow women with substance abuse issues to be in residence, leaving women without emergency protection. In addition, halfway houses do not allow children, making it difficult for mothers to receive the services they need. Services should no longer separate children from mothers; issues need to be addressed by the whole family.

court will hire such services from an agency whenever violence against women cases require it.

- **English as a second language (ESL) classes.** Programs provide ESL classes to improve women’s ability to communicate in the United States, as well as increase their employability.



- **Bilingual counseling.** Programs fund bilingual/bicultural staff to provide counseling services in women's first language.
- **Culturally specific or problem-specific victim support groups.** Programs provide support groups addressing violence and victimization issues that are culturally specific, that is, led by women of color and/or in a specific language other than English, and are problem-specific, that is, addressing specific barriers to mainstream services, such as women in recovery.
- **Violence against women services for incarcerated women.** Agencies work with correctional facilities to gain access to women who have been victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Support and educational groups are provided to incarcerated women to address trauma surrounding their victimization and life after incarceration.

Outreach

Programs employ a number of different strategies to reach out to women in underserved populations. Most agencies (70 percent) reported conducting community education programs. Other common strategies include flyers (44 percent), public service announcements (25 percent), collaborating with other agencies to create referral systems for women (29 percent), and working with churches or other indigenous resources to reach women (29 percent). The two outreach strategies agency staff perceived to be the most successful were community education programs and collaborating with other agencies to create referral systems. Although an indirect outreach strategy, program staff also reported that if an agency provides quality services, women share this information with one another and the agency's reputation grows in the local community.

Fifty-eight programs reported experiencing barriers to implementing their approaches to reaching underserved women. The most commonly cited barrier to successful outreach was gaining entry into the underserved community of interest. Programs had difficulty identifying ways to engage women from particular groups. Using culturally specific or problem-specific strategies is crucial when implementing outreach. For example, community education presentations allow staff to interact directly with women from the underserved population of interest. This type of one-on-one or small-group contact is an important way to reach some women. Programs reported that Hispanic women respond well to more direct contact with staff because of the rapport built between the staff member and the individual woman. Additionally, women who do not trust the service system, such as women involved in prostitution, must be sought where they are—on the street.



Example: Y.A.N.A. Inc., Baltimore, Maryland

The Y.A.N.A. (You Are Never Alone) project focuses on serving women involved in prostitution. The specific issues of women who are prostituted are invisible to most other agencies, and few people understand or care about these women. These women believe there is no one to go to for help.

THE STOP PROJECT. The STOP project is a sexual assault project for women involved in prostitution. Its goals are to help women find alternatives to prostitution and to help with the criminal justice process for those who want to prosecute. The project existed only in a limited way prior to STOP funding. Project activities include outreach to women, comprehensive case management, and mental health services. Staff conduct assessments of women and help them set goals, provide them with referrals, and help them through the whole process so they can become more self-sufficient.

Y.A.N.A. staff employ unique strategies to reach out to women involved in prostitution. Staff go out on the street during the day and at night and gently approach women who are prostituting. The staff have to park their cars far enough away so as not to be mistaken as law enforcement officers. Staff provide women with condoms and business cards; educate women about the available services and self-protection, such as HIV prevention; and let women know someone cares. Sometimes staff find they provide support services for women on the spot. The staff use this outreach strategy because they believe to reach this population of women, you must go to them. It is a strategy that can be dangerous, so staff are particularly careful at night and go only in pairs.

Staff also work closely with other community entities to ensure that their clientele receive appropriate services. They identify those people within the other agency who are the most sensitive toward and understanding of their women and engage those individuals in their work. For example, they have been successful at developing relationships with particular law enforcement officers who are sensitive to the needs and challenges facing prostituted women. When a woman would like to press sexual assault charges, the agency staff know who to call. Some officers will take women's statements right at the Y.A.N.A. agency instead of having them go into the law enforcement agency.

Using culturally specific or problem-specific strategies is crucial when implementing outreach.

Training

Most programs in the study both give and receive basic training on violence against women issues. Many programs also tailor the training they receive and provide to include issues related to underserved populations. Forty-six programs *receive* training on cultural sensitivity, sensitivity toward women with multiple barriers, and overcoming barriers to services for underserved populations. Thirty-five programs *provide* training on cultural sensitivity, sensitivity toward women with multiple barriers, and overcoming barriers to services for underserved populations. In addition, some groups provide specialized training on immigration issues.



Example: Project S.A.R.A.H.—Stop Abusive Relationships At Home, Clifton, New Jersey

Project S.A.R.A.H. is a statewide community education, training, and direct services program to make domestic violence services available to Jewish and Russian-speaking women. It was developed to address the denial within the Jewish community that domestic violence exists.

A local rabbi contacted the Jewish Family Services Agency when he became aware of a domestic violence situation in his congregation. He was interested in learning what was being done within the community to address domestic violence. At the same time, the director of Project S.A.R.A.H. encountered a woman who was meeting with other women in her kitchen to discuss the services available for women in New Jersey. As a result, a group was formed—the New Jersey Jewish Women’s Consortium on Domestic Violence—to develop a plan to address domestic violence. The consortium includes shelter directors, legal services, and lay and professional leadership. The STOP project emerged from this group’s effort.

THE STOP PROJECT. The STOP project includes three components: (1) community education, (2) training, and (3) hot line services. The community education piece involves educating Jewish community leaders on how to recognize domestic violence, find safe settings (such as ritual baths) where it is possible to educate women about domestic violence issues, and educate prospective brides on domestic violence issues. The group has developed posters, videos, and a community education program to create awareness and educate the public about domestic violence in the Jewish community. The training component involves providing rabbinical training on domestic violence issues and providing training to at least one mental health provider in every Jewish Family Service Agency statewide. The training primarily addresses dealing with domestic violence during counseling services. It emphasizes the importance of rabbis in teaching the community that domestic violence is not the victim’s fault and that, with help, the family structure can shift for the better. Some centers also provide emergency assistance and counseling, connect women to other victim service agencies, and provide services to children in families dealing with domestic violence. The STOP project supports hot line services implemented by another agency. STOP funds a portion of the hot line services, including advertisement.

IMPORTANT LESSONS. It is important to address domestic violence from within the Jewish community because it is a closed community whose members often do not seek help from mainstream service systems. It is crucial to have rabbis “buy in” when addressing domestic violence and to communicate the message that, by addressing domestic violence, community members are not being antifamily.



Recommendations

- **The Violence Against Women Office and the STOP TA Project should continue to promote effective outreach and service to women victims of violence in underserved communities, through workshops and seminars:**
 - For state STOP administrators and subgrantees, to develop interest in promising projects of this type;
 - For state STOP administrators and subgrantees, regarding the unique barriers faced by underserved populations (e.g., the barriers faced by women with multiple barriers as compared with the different issues facing racial/ethnic minority populations);
 - About collaborating with agencies around the specific and unique needs of underserved populations, recognizing that protocols and practices should be *different* and *tailored* to the distinct needs of the underserved group.
- **State STOP administrators should make funding for underserved programs contingent upon collaboration among agencies that can work together to meet the needs of the population of interest.**
- **VAWO and state STOP administrators should promote programs that focus their efforts on urban Native American women, a particularly underserved population.**

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1. Fifteen percent or more of programs cited the barrier, and programs from at least three different categories cited the barrier.
 2. Twenty-five percent or more of the programs within a category reported the most frequently cited barriers.
 3. Twenty-five percent or more of the programs in each category reported implementing the program elements described.

Notes

Sexual Assault as a Focus of the STOP Program

6 CHAPTER

This chapter summarizes Urban Institute findings with respect to sexual assault as a focus under the STOP Formula Grants Program. It is based on the information collected and impressions formed during the past five years of evaluation work on the STOP program. Research activities have included telephone interviews with all the state STOP administrators, telephone interviews with staff of over 400 STOP-funded projects throughout the country, and site visits to 16 states¹ to speak with state-level program administrators, STOP planning group members, representatives of state-level sexual assault and domestic violence coalitions, and representatives of 4 to 8 STOP-funded projects in each state (70 to 90 programs in all).

Introduction

The generalizations contained in this chapter were already emerging as findings after the first three years of research activity on this evaluation. However, to allow sufficient time for sexual assault programming to develop, if it was going to happen, researchers decided to wait several more years before drawing conclusions. Those years have now passed, and initial impressions have been consistently supported by later investigation. It is therefore time to present these findings as an important outcome of this evaluation.

The major findings are summarized here; the rest of this chapter presents the evidence on which they are based:

- **Sexual assault receives less attention, less money, and less independence than domestic violence.**
- **When STOP funds have been devoted to sexual assault, most states visited have used them to expand specific services for sexual assault victims, not to develop coordinated community responses.**
- **STOP funds have supported improved forensic evidence collection for sexual assault cases through several approaches.**



- **Statewide sexual assault coalitions now exist in some states where there were none prior to STOP.**
- **STOP has had only limited impact in building coordinated community responses and changing the way most communities respond to sexual assault in the states we visited.**
- **In contrast to the general findings, STOP funds have been used to establish collaborative sexual assault response teams in a very small number of communities. When this has happened, the results are reported to be “phenomenal.”**
- **Service providers report continuing problems with mechanisms to pay for forensic medical examinations in most states and localities visited.**

Less Money, Less Attention, and Less Independence for Sexual Assault Services

The STOP program was intended to address sexual assault as well as domestic violence across all of its purpose areas. The legislation created the expectation that states would include sexual assault, independent of domestic violence, as a focus of their efforts to develop community responses to improve the experience of victims and the effectiveness of the criminal justice system. In reality, most of the states we visited have focused their STOP activities most heavily on domestic violence, with sexual assault receiving perfunctory attention and dramatically less funding. Most of the sexual assault efforts are in fact “hybrid” programs, with sexual assault programming tacked onto a domestic violence program. Few states prioritize funding for freestanding sexual assault programs. The prevailing attitude encountered on site visits is that sexual assault is not as pervasive a problem as domestic violence, and that it is already being adequately addressed.

Evidence from the SAPRs and Telephone Surveys

The 4,200 subgrants whose Subgrant Award and Performance Report (SAPR) included information about type of crime make very clear the relative lack of emphasis on sexual assault in most states’ STOP programs. Only 12 percent of STOP subgrants are made to projects focused exclusively on sexual assault, compared with 50 percent with an exclusively domestic violence focus. If one examines the proportion of STOP subgrant awards that include sexual assault or domestic violence with or without other crimes, one notes that 87 percent of all subgrant awards include domestic violence, of which almost 3 in 5 are exclusively domestic violence. In sharp contrast, only 46 percent include sexual assault, of which only about 1 in 4 have an exclusive sexual assault focus. These distributions also hold true within the funding categories of law enforcement, prosecution, and victim services, as documented in chapter 2 (pages 9–10).



Responses to a telephone survey of a random sample of STOP subgrantees conducted in 1998 sheds light on how sexual assault fares in programs that report a dual emphasis. No program reporting focuses on both domestic violence and sexual assault indicated that sexual assault received more than half of the program's attention, and only 13 percent reported that the two types of crime received approximately equal attention. The remainder committed more of their time and resources to domestic violence.

Evidence from the Site Visits

Conversations during site visits with state STOP agency staff, members of the states' STOP planning groups, representatives of statewide sexual assault and domestic violence coalitions, and representatives of programs funded through STOP yielded the finding that most states did not place the same priority on sexual assault that they did on domestic violence. The fact that we encountered very little disagreement on this point makes it a strong one.

Even in states whose legislatures have committed public funds to support programs for women victims of violence, public funding for rape victim support programs has not increased at the same pace as funding for domestic violence programs. In most places the rape crisis centers have been in existence longer than the domestic violence programs. But as public interest has shifted away from rape and toward domestic violence, the rape crisis centers see themselves as less visible in their communities. They also feel less likely to be viewed as the seat of professional leadership for the victim services community. Many of the statewide coalition leaders in the states visited commented that the national-level organizations and leadership for domestic violence are substantially stronger and more organized than those dedicated to sexual assault.

In nearly all the states visited, governors have established cabinet-level commissions and task forces to address domestic violence, while only a few have done the same for sexual assault. In some states, a sexual assault commission was established a few years after the domestic violence group was found to be effective. In one state where a governor's task force was charged with addressing violence against women in general, only one of the task force's more than 40 recommendations related to sexual assault; the rest pertained to domestic violence. In one state where the attorney general's office is extremely proactive in working on domestic violence (and has been the leader in that state in establishing training and outreach, rewriting legislation, lobbying for domestic violence victims, and writing protocols for adoption by local communities), virtually no attention focuses on adult sexual assault and its victims.

This pattern also occurs locally. In most counties we visited where outstanding collaborative teams and task forces exist to address domestic violence, little cross-disciplinary work is being done on sexual assault. In one major metropolitan area we visited,

Most states did not place the same priority on sexual assault that they did on domestic violence. This pattern also occurred at the local level.



the mayor established a whole office to address domestic violence in the city but has not paid comparable attention to sexual assault. In some places visited, the individuals working together to form Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTs) reported that they had not been able to get their work funded until they sought assistance from their local domestic violence task force.

Nevertheless, STOP Has Supported Expansions of Specific Sexual Assault Services

The most frequent use of STOP funds for sexual assault in the states visited appears to be to establish “satellite” locations to provide selected rape crisis services to women who cannot or do not access the primary rape crisis center.

Although sexual assault services have had a lower priority than those for domestic violence, SAPRs received as of November 15, 1999, indicate that STOP agencies throughout the states *have* awarded 1,924 subgrants that included a focus on sexual assault, with 508 subgrants having an exclusive sexual assault focus. The major goal of most of these grants has been to increase services by supporting entirely new programs, additional locations for existing programs, or expanded services at existing programs. There has also been a considerable emphasis on reaching women from underserved communities.

- Some states have used STOP funds to establish rape crisis centers; others have used STOP to expand the services offered by existing rape crisis centers.
- Formerly unserved and underserved populations are receiving sexual assault advocacy and counseling services for the first time as a result of the STOP funds.

The most frequent use of STOP funds for sexual assault in the states visited appears to be to establish “satellite” locations to provide selected rape crisis services to women who cannot or do not access the primary rape crisis center. In nearly all cases, these satellite offices exist *only* as a result of STOP funding. They serve geographically and economically isolated women, as well as targeting members of ethnic, cultural, or language subgroups and women who have other characteristics that may create barriers to service (e.g., physical and mental disabilities, vision or hearing impairments, substance abuse problems).



Example: Illinois Sexual Assault Programs Expanding Services to Underserved Women

In Illinois, nearly all of the state's sexual assault funds went to the statewide sexual assault coalition, with the mandate to allocate funds to its member rape crisis centers for the expansion of services to unserved and underserved populations. The coalition and its members appear to have made significant progress toward this goal, primarily via funding satellite offices.

SATELLITE OFFICE IN EAST ST. LOUIS. The East St. Louis Sexual Assault Victims Care Unit is an excellent example of how STOP has made a difference in a small community. Program staff describe their program as a satellite of the Call for Help Sexual Assault Services, Belleville, their "mother" rape crisis center. The satellite is located in the local hospital, which serves four counties. Staff indicated that prior to receiving STOP funding, no local advocacy services existed for rape victims. No working relationship existed between law enforcement officers and the nearest rape crisis center, and victims frequently did not even come to the hospital for exams and follow-up health care because they had no transportation. The private, non-profit victim service agency advocates reported to us that their first efforts were to participate in mutual training together with local law enforcement agencies. They describe the change since then as the difference between "night and day." They feel they now have rapport with the police officers, and that officers are treating victims with more respect. Police officers routinely transport victims to the advocates' office for follow-up counseling appointments. Advocates hear from individual officers that the officers feel the advocates are helping them do their own job better. Advocates have also been able to enlist a local ambulance company to transport victims to the hospital and to bill the sexual assault program rather than the victim. They are, however, disappointed that they have had only minimal success involving the prosecutor's office and are having a difficult time getting their clients' cases prosecuted. Of 50 arrests the police made on sexual assault charges in the previous year, the prosecution only took one case to court.

THE CHICAGO METROPOLITAN YWCA. The Metro YWCA is the largest provider of sexual assault services in the state and runs several STOP-funded projects. Metro Y began providing services in 1971 by housing Chicago Women Against Rape, and now four sexual assault centers provide services under the Y's umbrella. Despite all this activity, staff reported that before STOP funding became available, Chicago did not have a 24-hour sexual assault telephone hot line, and they were unable to target underserved populations effectively. STOP funds let them take on several new projects that they had not previously been able to fund: several satellite clinics, programs to serve targeted minority groups, and the 24-hour hot line.

Metro Y's Englewood Satellite. The Englewood YWCA satellite serves a large portion of the south side of Chicago. In 1993, Englewood's catchment area had the highest number of sexual assaults in the nation, and in

(continued)



Example: Illinois Sexual Assault Programs Expanding Services to Underserved Women (continued)

1997 alone, 327 sexual assaults were reported in the Englewood neighborhood. Metro Y's program, which is supported by STOP plus other funds, consists of a site coordinator, a counselor, a prevention educator, a legal advocate, and a medical advocate. The population served is primarily African American. The program has dealt with some of its own funding limitations by making arrangements with the Chicago Public Health Department, which houses its offices: the program trades free training for Health Department staff by the Sexual Assault Coalition in return for free space. Program staff feel that having a presence in the neighborhood allows them to reach far more women, both with intervention services and prevention messages, than was ever possible before the STOP push to fund satellite offices.

Metro Y's Focus on Women with Disabilities. STOP funding also supported the YWCA to hire a legal advocate and a counselor who work specifically with disabled victims, including those with mental, physical, emotional, and developmental (MRDD) disabilities. This program operates from the Englewood satellite and serves the entire city, sending its "disability specialists" to various locations as needed. These specialists often work in conjunction with the "regular" legal and medical advocates or the Victim Witness Assistance advocates. They are reaching a population of rape victims that they believe has not been served in the past.

The Y's Chicago-Area Sexual Assault Hot Line. The ICASA (Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault) encouraged Metro YWCA, as the largest provider of sexual assault services in the state, to take on the challenge of implementing a 24-hour hot line for the Chicago area. Metro Y and two other rape crisis centers did the development work, and the hot line opened in January 1998. The hot line's advisory board meets every three months and includes representatives from law enforcement, the state's attorney's office, local hospitals, survivors, and the state STOP agency. It also has a joint management team that meets monthly. The project initially hired a full-time hot line coordinator; as the project developed, it also hired a volunteer recruiter/coordinator (in June 1998) and a night/weekend manager (in October 1998). The hot line now receives about 200 calls a month. Project representatives reported that this project has been very challenging. The coordinator was extremely overextended until the additional staff came on board. In addition, volunteers have been hard to recruit and keep; additional 24-hour staff would enable the hot line service to be even more effective. The hot line is very dependent on STOP funding; staff at Metro Y doubt that it could continue without the STOP funds.



Example: Sexual Assault Response Team of the Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women

The SART members at the California Hospital Medical Center began in 1994, before STOP. Los Angeles County has 88 cities and 118 law enforcement agencies serving a population of 9.5 million. The hospital sees 250 to 300 sexual assault victims a year.

THE STOP PROJECT. The STOP grant began in 1997 and allowed the SART to provide a greater depth of services during initial contact and to follow up with more women than was possible before STOP. Victims are getting into counseling sooner as a result of STOP (four months after the assault as compared with one year), and the SART staff are able to “hold the victim’s hand” through the process much more closely than before STOP. Staff believe this more intensive and earlier intervention has resulted in more women persisting through the criminal justice system process. Since the SART was implemented, expectations have grown and the team has been “overwhelmed” with the need for services.

The SART uses volunteer advocates at the hospital and crisis hot line. They have 75 active volunteers. All go through the 40-hour training required by the Office of Criminal Justice Programs, plus an additional 25-hour training conducted by program staff that goes beyond the basics and includes multicultural and special populations issues. Volunteers are asked to commit to one year of service and 25 hours per month; 80 to 85 percent fulfill this commitment. The program conducts extensive initial screening for volunteers and does retraining on a monthly basis. Some of its veteran volunteers have been with the program for 10 to 12 years.

SART members do cross-trainings with law enforcement, prosecutors, advocates, and medical personnel. Difficult turf issues arose when the team first started but have been overcome through persistent effort. Law enforcement personnel and prosecutors now report that officers did not at first understand how valuable advocates could be, both in assisting in the investigation and collecting high-quality evidence via good rape exams coupled with good testimony in court. Currently, law enforcement pays \$200 for the forensic exam. The hospital picks up the remainder of the cost (nearly \$600). SART members worry whether the hospital can continue to assume these losses—the state has not increased the amount paid to hospitals for over 13 years and they feel fortunate to have such a committed hospital.

Before SART, police drove victims from hospital to hospital to find one that could take them. The victim, the officer, and the advocate might have to wait for 8 to 12 hours before seeing a nurse. Adoption of a protocol that sends all victims to the California Hospital Medical Center has completely changed this picture and has changed how victims are treated. Victims are now seen in a timely, victim-sensitive way. Staff feel their efforts demonstrate that these cases can be prosecuted if the evidence is collected carefully and victims receive support from the beginning of their criminal justice system experience.

(continued)



Example: Sexual Assault Response Team of the LA Commission on Assaults Against Women (continued)

STOP has helped support Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner programs via training, purchase of colposcopic and digital photography equipment, and development of forensic rape exam kits. The resulting increase in high-quality evidence collection and testimony is perceived as beneficial to victims whose cases do proceed to prosecution.

WHAT MAKES IT WORK. This team pointed to several factors that they see as essential to the success of a SART project. They emphasized the need (1) for a devoted nursing professional who is willing to commit the resources to the actual work of the exams and of the collaborative process, and (2) for the leadership of the law enforcement and prosecution agencies to be committed to the project. (3) The team process must also receive attention: team members must respect each other's different roles and responsibilities, and each member must remain independent but be willing to work as a team. (4) Monthly team meetings to discuss general issues and unsolved individual cases are important. Finally (5), team members must be willing to communicate with one another and to accept critical feedback at times.

REMAINING ISSUES. Despite its many successes, this team identified a number of barriers to improving its response to sexual assault victims. The nurses who work with the SART have to work double shifts, and they have a difficult time with burnout and staff turnover. In general, teams such as this seem to rely on members' willingness to be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If these programs are to be sustained over long time periods, they must expand to more locations with larger numbers of qualified staff and more people trained to do the work. This team sees the need for additional funding sources for the rape exams, as the local hospitals may not be willing to subsidize their cost forever. The team also has identified several populations that are not being served well, including developmentally delayed adults and lesbian victims.

This program, as is the case with so many others, has received no formal evaluation. All team members said that the victim's experience in the criminal justice system is dramatically better than it was before the SART began and before the addition of STOP funding allowed it to expand. But they have no systematic assessment of their effectiveness.

Improvements in the Collection of Forensic Evidence

In several of the states visited for this evaluation, STOP has helped support Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) programs via training, purchase of colposcopic and digital photography equipment, and development of forensic rape exam kits. Informants reported their perceptions that the more widespread availability of high-quality evidence collection and testimony is beneficial to victims whose cases do move forward through the criminal justice system. These benefits are reported even in situations, which are the majority of cases, where neither the equipment purchase nor the SANE training is being done in the context of a community collaboration. In the few communities that have used their STOP funding to develop an active cross-disciplinary collaboration, these STOP-supported practices are reported to contribute to dramatic increases in prosecution of acquaintance rape in particular.



In a few of the states visited, the state STOP administrator has used STOP funds to establish a statewide sexual assault coalition for the first time, and in another case, to strengthen an existing coalition greatly. In these states, STOP funding has made *all* the difference for victims of sexual assault. Subgrantees have created an infrastructure to provide professional and administrative support and technical assistance to existing rape crisis efforts, and the new coalitions also coordinate efforts to found new services.

Support for State Sexual Assault Coalitions and Their Role in Promoting Sexual Assault Services

Example: Utah's Statewide Sexual Assault Coalition

The implementation of STOP in Utah illustrates the powerful role that the state STOP agency may play in determining STOP's impact in a state. The strong support of the Utah STOP administrator, and her clear commitment to proactive funding for sexual assault, has resulted in the creation of a network and statewide response for sexual assault victims that simply did not exist before STOP. This approach stood out because it was so clear and directed. In Utah, STOP has essentially created the community of sexual assault subgrantees through which a sexual assault agenda can now be pursued.

There was no sexual assault coalition in Utah until 1996, when the state STOP administrator took action to form one. Her own background was as director of a rape crisis center, and she reported that she saw the lack of an independent statewide sexual assault coalition as problematic. She developed a plan, awarded funding, and hired a coordinator who has established the Coalition of Advocates for Utah Survivors' Empowerment (CAUSE). Coalition staff began work under the umbrella of—and were initially housed at—the Salt Lake City Rape Recovery Center. During 1997 they moved into their own office space.

Only STOP funding has allowed a sexual assault coalition to function apart from the statewide domestic violence coalition. Prior to 1994, there were only four rape crisis programs in the entire state, even though Utah ranks as the 14th highest state in the nation for sexual assaults. In 1996 the coalition conducted a needs assessment to identify gaps in rape crisis services across the state. Since then, six new rape crisis programs have been developed with the support of STOP, the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), and/or the Public Health and Health Services Block Grant. The CAUSE director has provided extensive technical assistance and logistical support to help these new rape crisis programs get started. STOP has promoted community outreach that is bringing people together over this issue. Without STOP, CAUSE would shut down and the rape crisis programs would be in serious trouble (9 of the 10 rape crisis programs in the state rely almost entirely on STOP grants).

When STOP funds have been used to establish a statewide sexual assault coalition for the first time or to strengthen an existing coalition greatly, STOP funding has made all the difference for sexual assault.

In the few states visited where the sexual assault coalitions themselves are multimillion-dollar agencies, the coalitions play a critical role in legislative lobbying. They have also had a significant role in determining states' policies governing how STOP is implemented. These coalitions have helped to establish STOP implemen-



tation plans that define one of STOP's major roles to be funding the work that the coalitions and their member service agencies were already doing.

In these few states, in addition to their influence in shaping STOP's goals and priorities, the sexual assault coalitions exert substantial control over which sexual assault programs receive STOP funding. In a few states, the coalitions themselves are given all the STOP funds earmarked to support sexual assault services. They, in turn, write and disseminate the RFPs, review proposals, and decide on the subgrant awards. Funding goes almost exclusively to their member agencies.

STOP funding has allowed sexual assault coalitions to fund new programs, and many satellite rape crisis centers and programs designed for underserved target populations have been the result. STOP also has given a number of coalitions the resources to develop substantial statewide training initiatives. The STOP process has also often enlisted the coalitions to provide technical assistance to local programs. In addition, statewide sexual assault coalitions in some states have worked across disciplines on particular projects, resulting in better relationships between coalition and criminal justice system leadership.

Promoting the Development of Coordinated Community Response to Sexual Assault

Few localities see the necessity for collaborative criminal justice system responses to sexual assault, and even fewer focus on establishing the relevant protocols. But such efforts can, and have, transformed communities.

In contrast to STOP's impact on community responses to domestic violence, STOP funding for sexual assault has not generally been targeted toward producing new models of service delivery or novel approaches by the criminal justice system for responding to victims of sexual assault. Few localities see the necessity for collaborative criminal justice system responses to sexual assault, and even fewer focus on establishing the relevant protocols.

In a few places, STOP funding has been used to support the development of collaborative teams that have implemented true communitywide response protocols for sexual assault. The results of these programs are phenomenal, in the eyes of their participants, just as similar efforts for domestic violence elicit enthusiastic endorsement. The success of these few programs reveals what could be accomplished if sexual assault were a higher priority for STOP funding.

In these community collaborations, both top-level and "street-level" personnel from criminal justice agencies, hospitals and other health system agencies, and private, nonprofit victim service agencies are working together. Their efforts have transformed the experience of sexual assault victims in their encounters with these systems. Prosecution and conviction rates are increasing dramatically, and rates of reporting sexual assaults to law enforcement are increasing as well. In each community using such an approach, the changes have only occurred because of STOP funding.²



Example: Kankakee County, Illinois, Sexual Assault Guideline Implementation Team

The Kankakee County team was funded by the Illinois STOP agency as a test site to implement model sexual assault guidelines that the state of Illinois had developed before the STOP program began. The Kankakee team includes the local nonprofit sexual assault agency, several law enforcement departments (city, county, and state police and the sheriff), the state's attorney, and the medical administration of the local hospitals. Kankakee County Center Against Sexual Assault (KC-CASA) took the lead in team development. Its director saw that becoming an implementation site would be an opportunity to bring about radical change in her community, by requiring all the players to come together to work on the community's response to victims of sexual assault. The director reported that before STOP, some degree of informal cooperation existed on a case-by-case basis among certain individuals in the law enforcement community, but that they did not have any agencywide collaborative response to sexual assault.

Team members from all participating agencies agreed that they had each come into this process begrudgingly and as a favor to the director (because they liked her) without really believing that such a collaborative process could work or that it would make much difference. They uniformly remarked that—to their surprise—their changed approach has truly transformed the experience of the typical sexual assault victim in their county. Members of this group emphasized how challenging it is to work together across disciplines, given the often competing missions of each agency, and also how effective it is.

CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT. Kankakee County is about an hour south of the Chicago metropolitan area and has a largely rural, small-town population. KC-CASA has been the private, nonprofit sexual assault victim service agency in Kankakee for many years and is a member program of the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ICASA). KC-CASA's current director has been at the agency for seven years. She and other team members reported that prior to STOP, the relationships between agencies were strained with respect to responding to sexual assault victims. In addition, the hospital emergency rooms and the other agencies had essentially no relationship, resulting in a good deal of inconsistency in both evidence collection and the availability of doctors to testify. Law enforcement officers rarely referred victims to KC-CASA advocates, though at times KC-CASA and law enforcement worked together on specific cases. There was little cooperation between the several independent law enforcement agencies in the county and only a very limited working relationship between the prosecutor's office and the law enforcement agencies. The state's attorney's office rarely prosecuted sexual assault cases, and medical advocacy for victims at the hospital was rarely utilized.

THE STOP PROJECT. STOP funds have directly paid for only a portion of the expense of this project, with the member agencies combining STOP with other funding sources to support the community's new approach to sexual assault. Through the STOP grant, Kankakee County (1) developed an advisory board to oversee interagency

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Example: Kankakee County, Illinois, Sexual Assault Guideline Implementation Team

cooperation; (2) developed and conducts training for all law enforcement, prosecution, victim service agency, and medical personnel involved in the sexual assault project; (3) funds two positions; (4) paid for half the cost of two colposcopes for evidence collection at the two local hospitals; and (5) funds overtime pay for all law enforcement personnel to attend the training regarding guideline implementation.

STOP-funded positions include two part-time advocates at KC-CASA dedicated to this project, whose specific mandate is to communicate with law enforcement and prosecution offices to collect information about cases, monitor team efficacy, and collect statistics on effectiveness.

The project's implementation team meets monthly to discuss specific cases and their handling across agencies. The team also addresses concerns or issues that have arisen and strategies for promoting smooth service delivery to sexual assault victims. Team members reported that their initial goals were to achieve a 10 percent increase in the number of sexual assault reports to the police, to involve advocates in the criminal justice system process, and to establish effective collaboration across disciplines (see below for results).

IMPACT. Team members agree that implementation of their guidelines has had a substantial impact on any given victim's experience. Victims have much more contact with professionals and more support than ever before. A victim is more likely to have an advocate's support and assistance, to have more contact with the law enforcement officers, and actually to meet with a prosecutor and be informed about the status of her court case. There is also a greater likelihood that her case will be thoroughly investigated and that charges will be filed and the assailant prosecuted.

Medical. The two physicians reported that historically, the emergency room staff was extremely frustrated by having to deal with sexual assault cases—"these were greeted by staff as the world's worst cases to be stuck with." They felt they were duplicating much of what law enforcement was also doing, they rarely had any idea what happened to the women they were treating, and they resented being called to court months or years after having performed an exam on someone about whom they never heard again. Furthermore, the cases were an enormous drain on staff resources as the exams often took several hours. Also, because residents represent the primary on-call staffing for emergency rooms, they were (and are) constantly challenged to perform competent exams that follow the established protocol. With the purchase of the colposcopes, the training crisis increased, as the proper use of this equipment requires specialized training.

Medical personnel on the team report that the team approach has transformed the emergency room experience. They say they now are kept informed about the criminal justice system outcomes of their patients, they have worked out more effective notification and schedul-

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Example: Kankakee County, Illinois, Sexual Assault Guideline Implementation Team

ing with the state's attorney's office for court appearances, and they have learned about the role of the medical advocate and contact her and use her services more routinely. They have been able to streamline their protocol and no longer repeat what the police have already done. They are strong supporters of the SANE program and are working to implement some aspects of the SANE approach in their hospital. They see SANE as the best solution for all concerned, because it would provide more consistent exams, easier access to testimony (nurses' time is easier to schedule and less costly than doctors' time), a more timely and efficient response in the emergency room, and more expertise specifically on sexual assault (as of now, the doctors performing the exams are assigned randomly). The two local hospitals are also now working to coordinate their sexual assault services so that evidence coming from the two locations is more consistent.

Law Enforcement. The representatives of the various law enforcement agencies on the team expressed the shared opinion that they are working closely with both private, nonprofit victim service agency personnel and prosecutors on a routine basis for the first time. Less redundancy in the system results in less trauma for the victim, because she does not have to cover the same ground several times. They agreed that the promise of funding to provide training for their officers was a powerful incentive to participate in the team, and that they have seen better investigations of sexual assault cases as a result. The various law enforcement agency representatives also commented that the STOP process has resulted in a much higher level of cooperation among the law enforcement entities than they have ever had before. They all agreed that the focus on training for their officers has been invaluable; the state police representative reported that *all* their officers are being required to attend one day of training as first responders to sexual assault calls. Investigators and detectives are required to attend two additional days. All team members agreed that law enforcement officers throughout the county desperately needed this sexual assault training, as there was widespread ignorance among officers regarding the issues faced by sexual assault victims and also regarding proper police procedure in these cases, as well as utilization of victim advocacy and other community resources.

Prosecution. The state's attorney emphasized that the team has worked, partly due to the clear commitment of all the players to work together. He thinks the team has been very successful largely because of the preexisting relationships many of them already had simply from decades of living in the same community and working on cases together, giving the "players" high credibility with one another. He emphasized that they can trust each other to only ask for things that are truly important.

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Example: Kankakee County, Illinois, Sexual Assault Guideline Implementation Team

The team reports that their new, collaborative approach has resulted in a dramatic increase in cases in all arenas. The state's attorney reports that in the last quarter of 1997, before the collaborative approach got under way, his office handled 5 sexual assault court cases. During the same quarter a year later (last quarter of 1998), they had 14 active sexual assault court cases. They also report they are now more successful in resolving cases with plea bargains instead of having to go to trial, largely because the defense bar is learning that the state's prosecution efforts have improved—due to the better quality of police investigations and also because emergency room doctors now show up to testify.

Victim Services. One major change is that the victim advocates now proactively follow up with victims to offer them information about sexual assault, the criminal justice system, and community and counseling resources. The medical advocates are positioning themselves to contact women who choose not to report to law enforcement, but who come into the hospital emergency room; they want to follow up with these victims to inform them about the need for treatment of post-sexual assault medical concerns.

Now, KC-CASA has three legal advocates and has experienced a tremendous increase in victims wanting to attend every court appearance. The extent to which victims are being referred to KC-CASA advocates is also tracked: in the first quarter of the project, 40 percent of victims who had contact with law enforcement were referred to advocates; in the most recent quarter, 70 percent of victims were referred. The team reports an increase in calls to KC-CASA from both victims and community agencies asking for information and to inquire about delayed reporting. KC-CASA reported that it is also increasingly receiving calls from individual law enforcement officers requesting an advocate to assist in the initial victim interview.

REFLECTIONS ON COLLABORATION. The team identified a few specific things that have contributed to their successful collaboration. The clearly stated commitment of each of the agencies to participate and to do the work of working together has been key. The initial multi-agency training they received on the guidelines themselves was critically effective in changing individual attitudes about each other's disciplines. They agreed that prior to this work they knew and understood little about each other's roles in the process and about the specifics of the requirements/rules/mandates/missions of each other's jobs. They cited the extremely different confidentiality guidelines that apply to advocates versus police officers as an example of an issue that was full of conflict, which they largely resolved through mutual education about their differences. They all agreed that this may have been the most difficult hurdle in building the relationship between law enforcement and victim services: the police were very resentful that the advocates would not share information they learned from the victims, not fully understanding the utility and the function of the confidentiality rules for advocates.

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Example: Kankakee County, Illinois, Sexual Assault Guideline Implementation Team

Team members feel that their regular meetings (once a month, lasting about an hour) have been pivotal to their success. They review statistics, goals, and objectives; formulate future directions; and touch base about shared cases. They have built a tracking/monitoring function into their team, so they are able to see and report the status of any case they are working on, including knowing what team services any given victim is utilizing. They have worked to establish uniform record keeping and reporting so that all the agencies are tracking similar information and the team is able to collect and compile it in a useful format. They reflected that this ongoing real-time monitoring of statistics is providing a powerful incentive to the team to continue collaborating, in that the results of their efforts become immediately obvious and are very reinforcing. They have been able to use their data in planning/decisionmaking/resource allocation. All members noted that if they did not have specific (STOP-funded) staff people dedicated to reminding everyone to stay current with their reporting and to assist with data collection when needed, it would definitely not be happening on a consistent basis.

All agree that KC-CASA's ability to "push without being pushy" has been critical in their work together. They all concur that their collaboration has positively transformed the way their community handles sexual assault, but that they could not sustain this level of effort without the funding STOP provides. Although they would still retain their inter-agency respect and some cooperation, they do not believe there would be enough staff time available to maintain a true collaborative effort.

LESSONS LEARNED. Collaboration is effective and transforms the way each of the agencies does its work. Someone has to have dedicated time to attend to the process itself. Tracking information about impact is a powerful reinforcing tool and seems to work best if it is built in to the process from the beginning. This team was clear that implementing the guidelines in their community has had an impact beyond the 10 percent increase in cases prosecuted that was their original goal.

"We are a group of idealists; we know each other and we want to live in a better place.... Working together makes all of us less vulnerable to public attack.... We have gone from being a community of finger-pointers to being a community of advocates for each other's work."

—Kankakee team members

Example: Cache County Prosecutor's Office and CAPSA Sexual Assault Team, Logan, Utah

This sexual assault team evolved as a byproduct of the community's 10 years of work with a domestic violence task force. The Community Abuse Prevention Service Agency (CAPSA) director was aware of the STOP program and organized the local effort to apply for funding. Each of the participating agencies wrote their own proposals for STOP funds, with the goal of working together to change the way their community responds to sexual assault. The group has grown beyond the partners involved in the original domestic violence coalition and includes several law enforcement entities, the mobile crisis unit, SANE, and the Victim Witness Assistance unit from the prosecutor's office, as well as the pros-



Prosecution of Rape Cases Increased Dramatically

Most recent year under STOP grant: 58 rape cases prosecuted.

Annual average during the seven years before the new prosecutor took office and the STOP grant started: 1/7 a year (one case in seven years).

ecutors and CAPSA representatives. Now, and for the past few years, the coalition meets monthly; attendance is reportedly very consistent.

CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT. Logan, Utah, has a state university campus and the reputation of being a relatively liberal, progressive city in the midst of an otherwise rural and politically conservative county. Fruit farms and dairy farms dot the mountainous landscape, and migrant farmworkers are a significant subpopulation.

Several years ago, *Glamour* [magazine] did a feature on Cache County and identified it as one of the worst places in America to be raped, because nothing would be done. This was part of the catalyst for the current county attorney to take on this issue in his election campaign. The team summarized the prevailing local reality: "When you're shot, everyone rallies around you; when you're raped, everyone blames you." One member of the team repeated a comment she had heard from a respected local physician: "Rape is like buying a used car—usually a situation of buyer's regret." Similarly, team members frequently hear comments from judges that betray their biases: "She should be happy—he didn't kill her," and "I just can't understand why women are so affected by this—what's the big deal?"

CAPSA is a well-established, multiservice victim advocacy agency that existed long before STOP (CAPSA was founded in 1976). It has many non-STOP programs, including a domestic violence shelter, a rape crisis center, prevention and education programs, a Hispanic program, and a mobile crisis team. A new county prosecutor was elected in 1994. In the seven years before his election, the team recalls only one prosecution of a rape case. The current county prosecutor believes these cases should be prosecuted, and the team attributes its existence and its success largely to this prosecutor's support and commitment to prosecute rape cases.

THE STOP PROJECT. First, the project hired an advocate, then began prosecuting a few cases, and the number of reports began to climb. STOP then funded the prosecutor to hire a full-time assistant county attorney and a full-time victim witness advocate doing only violence against women cases, in an office with a total of four prosecutors. There have been very obvious effects of this new resource and attention to violence against women. During the past year, 58 rape cases have come to the prosecutor's office.

Establishing a SART/SANE team has been a primary focus for this group. The rape crisis center director learned of this approach in 1993 but was unable to proceed toward implementation until the former prosecutor left office. The SANE program began before the community got its STOP money when a few individuals paid for their own SANE training. SANEs are now the stipulated forensic examiners for rape cases in the county. They perform the examinations in the private clinic of a doctor who has donated space in his office. Before this arrangement was developed, the exams were done in the emergency room. The charge is a standard \$200 for each exam and the state VOCA agency reimburses the full amount. This amount covers the forensic aspects of the exam as well as preventive treatment and testing for pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. When a rape

*Cache County Prosecutor's Office*

case is reported, the police bring the woman to the clinic and call CAPSA advocates to meet them there. The SANEs report that the presence of the advocates results in a better experience for the victim and also reduces the length and cost of the exams. The advocates assist with the exam procedures and have reduced the average time from four or five hours down to 90 minutes. Team members—particularly law enforcement and prosecution representatives—were emphatic in their preference for SANE exams over physician exams. They reported that the nurses are more readily available when called and provide the victims with a more positive experience (locating the exams away from the hospital has resulted in a tremendous change for the better in terms of *not* retraumatizing the victim); they consider the nurses to be far better witnesses when the cases actually do come to trial. The SANEs are experts in the forensic issues relevant to the prosecutions, they can be counted on to appear to testify (which typically was not the case with physicians), and they have proven to be effective witnesses. Anecdotally, the SANE who had been performing forensic exams for many years reported that the victim experience is totally different now from before and that she can now trust that the victim will not fall through the cracks.

Most of the rapes in Cache County are acquaintance rapes. The current attitude of law enforcement is that they will take reports even long after the alleged incident. Prior to the new county attorney, law enforcement officers often felt it was not worth the effort to investigate these cases, as they knew the cases were not going to be prosecuted. Now, they pursue information and develop cases much more actively, and they do so in collaboration with victim advocates. Law enforcement representatives acknowledge that in the past they did not routinely involve the victim advocates in their cases, but now they feel that the advocates' involvement is key to successful investigation and to victim cooperation.

Many of the resources and individuals to make this collaboration work were already present in this community. But only with the availability of the STOP funding did they begin working together and coordinating their efforts. STOP has supported many educational projects, including some spearheaded by the community's own multidisciplinary teams.

BARRIERS TO PROGRESS. Juries and judges were identified as a tremendous barrier to changing the way sexual assault victims are treated and the outcomes of sexual assault prosecutions. Judges are of an older generation and are reported to be extremely naive about these issues. Team members saw judges as being very punitive toward victims and noted that judges do not get any relevant continued education or training. Recently the county attorney was arguing a case in the state supreme court when the judge was quoted as remarking, "These are just date rape cases, right?" in response to a request to keep a serial rapist in jail. Team members reported that in their county, the vast majority of people still believe that rape is largely the victim's fault, and acquaintance or date rape is not seen as "rape" at all. The prosecutor's office tries to resolve most cases through plea agreements to avoid having to go before a jury, while still obtaining some degree of punishment for the offender. In about 50 percent of cases that do go to trial, the offender is convicted.

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STOP funds have made a big difference in this county, but team members feel they are still struggling to have enough resources to meet the challenges of the "demand" they have created by having a better community response. Specifically, the prosecutor's office does not have enough staff to handle the exponential increase in cases—they do not have their own investigators for the sexual assault cases, but rely on collaboration with CAPSA and the law enforcement agencies to get the work done.

IMPACT. This team is full of passion and commitment to work together to make their community one where rape victims can have a positive and "just" experience in the justice system. In addition to prosecuting cases, the prosecutor dedicated to these cases has been active in training activities, and he has written a prosecution manual for acquaintance rape that takes a very strong stand regarding the need to pursue these cases aggressively.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORT. Team members report that the collaboration makes each of their jobs much easier, and they now see more victims come out as healthy survivors. They also receive a great deal of gratitude from the victims, particularly in the form of "thank you for believing me." Team members appear to work extremely closely with one another. One of their comments is that they now have a very good understanding of each other's jobs and the challenges and limits of one another's positions. They report that it is the norm for law enforcement to involve a victim advocate at the first contact with a victim of any sexual assault, and they report that a victim advocate is now often present at the interview with the victim. Collaboration throughout the investigation and prosecution process is also the norm.

Protocol development is an important step, although protocols alone cannot make a community operate in a coordinated manner. Nor can protocols keep a community on track without the other components of teamwork, leadership, and administrative support. It is clear that most communities have not established or adopted such protocols for sexual assault.

Protocol Development as a First Step Toward a Coordinated Community Response

One important way that STOP funds have been used to promote coordinated community response to sexual assault is support for projects to develop protocols that specify how each agency in the community should be responding to sexual assault victims in order to create a coherent, coordinated approach. Protocols can help keep the different agencies in a community operating toward the same, agreed-upon ends; they are often the vehicle through which a coordinated community response begins to operate. Thus protocol development is an important step, although protocols alone cannot make a community operate in a coordinated manner. Nor can protocols keep a community on track without the other components of teamwork, leadership, and administrative support.

Based on site visits and telephone interviews with many STOP subgrantees, it is clear that most communities have not established or adopted such protocols for sexual assault. As already noted earlier in this chapter, there is widespread lack of interest in creating such coordinated responses or a belief that they are not necessary. In addition, communities that *are* interested often do not know how



to get started or proceed, or the various agencies cannot reach agreement regarding the details of the response. The state of Colorado stands out in using STOP funds to support the creation of effective community protocols. Since the beginning of STOP, the state has funded a multidisciplinary training team, including members representing law enforcement, prosecution, domestic violence, and sexual assault. This team has the responsibility of offering training and ongoing technical assistance to teams around the state that want to improve their community's responsiveness to violence against women. As a result, a number of communities in Colorado have developed protocols and moved toward a coordinated response to both domestic violence and sexual assault. The following are two sexual assault examples.

Examples: Colorado's Support for Protocol Development to Create a Coordinated Community Response

In Durango, Violence Prevention Coalition members first began addressing sexual assault in 1996 (earlier they had focused solely on domestic violence). They spent two years developing sexual assault protocols for all the relevant agencies. They chose not to have the victim advocates lead the protocol development team because they thought it was important for law enforcement and prosecution to develop a stake in the process through serving in leadership roles. The outcome of this strategy is that the county's law enforcement agencies have adopted the new sexual assault policies without issue; the district attorney's office adopted a "protocol" but stopped short of establishing it as "policy."

In Denver, the Rape Assistance and Awareness Program has been a key player in the local Sexual Assault Interagency Council (which also includes the local district attorney, the attorney general's office, and law enforcement agencies). The Council, originally funded by the Denver Victim Assistance Law Enforcement Board and additionally by STOP, was formed before STOP to produce victim-centered policies around sexual assault. Protocols were completed and signed in 1995, after which the focus shifted to ensuring uniform implementation across agencies. The Council has become aware that the protocol does not satisfactorily address the needs of women who are victims of acquaintance rape. It obtained STOP funding to conduct a national symposium, inviting national and local experts to address the process of dealing with sexual assault cases from the perspectives of prosecution, judges, juries, victims and victim advocates, and also special populations of victims. The Denver Council plans to use the information to assist in improving the local protocols. It also hoped that the symposium would result in "cutting edge" strategies for responding to sexual assault that could also be shared nationally. Its ultimate goal is to create a reusable curriculum to teach prosecutors, law enforcement officers, and judges how to deal with non-stranger sexual assault.



Major Problems Still Exist with Payment for Forensic Medical Examinations

Victims are not supposed to bear any cost for the medical exam, and hospitals are supposed to wait for reimbursement from insurance or from victim compensation boards. However, most local program staff report that the norm was to bill women directly and let the women seek reimbursement, or that victim compensation boards would not pay. The majority of sexual victims interviewed during site visits reported paying hospital bills with their own insurance.

To be eligible to receive STOP funding, the Violence Against Women Act required states to certify that women victims of sexual assault would not be held financially responsible for the costs of medical examinations conducted to collect forensic evidence. Every state and territory has stipulated to this “fee waiver” requirement, with those that were not in compliance when VAWA became law coming into compliance through new legislation or regulations. These acts or regulations establish some mechanism to relieve victims of paying the costs of forensic rape exams.

These mechanisms take many forms. No *state* pays all of these costs directly with state funds. But some localities *do* use public funds from law enforcement or prosecution budgets to pay for the exams, either in full or in conjunction with the local hospital’s willingness to absorb the remaining costs. Far more common, however, are mechanisms that combine direct payments to hospitals from state victim compensation boards, requirements that victims bill their personal health insurance for the exams (including Medicaid and health insurance for military personnel and families), and victim compensation boards’ reimbursement to victims of their out-of-pocket expenses. The expectation is that victims are not supposed to bear any cost for the medical exam and that hospitals are supposed to wait for reimbursement from insurance or victim compensation boards.

State STOP administrators in most of the states visited said they did not know whether the system was working as intended. Nor did mechanisms appear to be in place in any of the states visited to track actual billing practices or to monitor the extent to which victims or hospitals are being reimbursed, and for what expenses. Many of the state STOP agencies indicated that they know of some instances in which hospitals have billed women directly. When this happens, they say it has been dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Local service providers are not so reticent. In visiting local programs, we were much more likely to hear that the *norm* was to bill women directly and let *them* seek reimbursement, or that victim compensation boards would not pay, than we were to hear that women did not bear any of the cost, either financial or bureaucratic, of evidence collection.

Reimbursement, the current approach to “fee waivers,” has many limitations that affect the majority of victims. In most states visited, the victim cannot be reimbursed if she chooses not to report the rape to the police, often within a specified time frame (e.g., within 72 hours of the rape). In addition, only a few state STOP administrators reported that state policy allows them to cover the *total* cost of the emergency room visit. This may leave even those victims whose forensic exams are covered with hundreds of dollars of medical expenses, including treatment of injuries, testing for exposure to HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, and prophylaxis for pregnancy, all of which are common interventions following rape.



Theoretically, victims can seek reimbursement for these expenses from victim compensation funds. However, nearly all states visited require victims to use their own private health insurance first—even for the forensic exam. Victim compensation funds will then reimburse what is not paid by the insurance. But reimbursement only happens *IF* the case meets all of the criteria set by the victim compensation program.

The process of applying for and receiving reimbursement can be cumbersome and take many months. In nearly all the states visited, state STOP administrators and subgrantees reported that if a woman has private insurance but does not want to use it for reasons of confidentiality, the victim compensation program will not reimburse her expenses. Only one state STOP agency administrator reported that its victim compensation program will pay for *all* expenses incurred at the hospital, regardless of whether the woman has private insurance. She also indicated that her office is being pressured by the legislature to rely more on insurance so that the VOCA funds will go farther.

States' reliance on private health insurance to relieve women of the cost of forensic rape exams raises important concerns:

1. This reliance appears to be contrary to the wording and intent of the VAWA legislation, which reads (P.L. 103-322, Ch 2, sec. 40121, Part T, sec. 2005) "...a State, Indian tribal government, or unit of local government, shall not be entitled to funds under this part unless the State, Indian tribal government, unit of local government, or another governmental entity *incurs* the full out-of-pocket cost of forensic medical exams described in subsection (b) for victims of sexual assault" (emphasis added).
2. Private health insurance benefits are conventionally restricted to medically necessary treatment and exclude procedures conducted for forensic purposes. The practice of requiring victims to bill their own public or private health insurance for the cost of collecting forensic evidence means that the victim, and not the state, is bearing the cost of prosecuting her own victimization. This practice also requires most victims to violate the terms of their own insurance benefits; thus it is, or may be, insurance fraud.
3. Requiring victims to use their own health insurance has additional implications both for the victim herself and for the role of the state in restricting victims' freedom of choice regarding treatment. Billing private insurance requires the insured to waive confidentiality of records, and billing public insurance, such as Medicaid or armed forces health services/CHAMPUS (for active military personnel or their families), means that government officials also know about the rape. Information about the rape then becomes a part of the

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A victim is required by the state to use her insurance, and she is required by her insurance to go to a treating source referred by them. But often no one on the insurance company's panel of providers has any expertise in rape and sexual assault, and seeing them may do the victim more harm than good.

woman's permanent medical history in insurance computer databases. The information that a woman has potentially been exposed to HIV, that she has incurred hospital expenses for a rape, and everything else about her treatment at the hospital becomes known to the insurance provider and therefore becomes part of subsequent applications for insurance. This, in turn, may raise obstacles to insurability in the future. It may also put the victim in the position of having to tell the primary insured party (a family member) and/or an employer through which she has the insurance about her assault, whether or not she would want them to know.

4. The requirement to use private or public insurance also puts the state in the de facto position of limiting the resources that women can access for services following a victimization. Specifically, if the woman's insurance has any "managed care" component (which nearly all policies do), then she can only be reimbursed for care by providers who are on the insurance company's "panel." For both physical and mental health, this usually means that she cannot be reimbursed for any services provided by people other than "participating providers." If the hospital where she is taken for the rape exam is not on her panel, she may not be covered. If she wishes to seek counseling or support services at her local nonprofit victim services agency because of their expertise, and they are not on her panel, she cannot get reimbursed. She is required by the state to use her insurance, and she is required by her insurance to go to a treating source referred by them. But often no one on the insurance company's panel of providers has expertise in rape and sexual assault. A further problem is that managed care organizations tend to approve payment for only a very limited number of treatment sessions. Therefore a woman's insurance company may not permit her to receive as much treatment as she needs or as much as she might receive at a nonprofit victim service agency. The limits to confidentiality also may be troubling to a victim in the treatment arena: for mental health services, every detail of her rape experience and her counseling sessions is fully disclosable to her managed care organization and can potentially become part of insurance databases.

In conclusion, the situation women face in many states we visited, as reported by service providers and victims, is as follows. As felony victims, they or their insurance providers are usually billed for evidence collection that for any misdemeanor, let alone a felony, is a financial responsibility assumed by law enforcement. The state refuses to pay unless a victim first bills her insurance; the insurance limits the services she can receive and will not cover nonmedical services, such as the forensic parts of the exam, if these were clearly identified to them; and the state's position is that it will not pay for services that are within the scope of the insurance (as the state, not the insurance company, defines it). Therefore the woman effec-



tively has no source of reimbursement for the cost of gathering evidence or receiving treatment.

During site visits, representatives of many nonprofit victim service agencies also discussed the effects of this dilemma on their own agencies. They reported that the added burden of trying to get paid by insurance companies for services rendered and dealing with managed care agencies, coupled with the inability to get reimbursed by the state, affects their ability to provide high-quality counseling services. This predicament increasingly forces victim service agencies to offer free counseling services if they are to help women at all and makes it difficult for them to cover their own costs and maintain a staff of well-trained counseling professionals. Interestingly, only a few of the sexual assault victims who participated in focus groups in the states visited had ever heard of their state's victim compensation program. The majority reported paying their hospital bills with their own insurance. This reality has received little attention to date, but it has enormous implications for both victims and nonprofit victim service agencies. It also appears to be contrary to VAWA's explicit legislative language.

It should be reasonably clear from the findings reviewed thus far that helping victims of sexual assault is not a very high priority in many states' STOP programs.³ The obvious question is "Why?" During site visits, state STOP agency staff, subgrantees, planning group members, and representatives of statewide coalitions discussed their views of why STOP in their state has focused so little on sexual assault. Several themes emerged in their responses. Here we summarize these themes and offer brief analyses of how well they correspond to the reality we saw during site visits.

1. *We already dealt with rape and sexual assault in the 1970s. We developed protocols and put systems in place for these victims. We don't use STOP funds for sexual assault because it's all taken care of; there is no problem to address.*

It is true that during the 1970s, many communities established rape crisis centers. Some of these communities also created specialized sexual assault units within local police departments, trained emergency room personnel, and took other relevant actions to create a coordinated community response to sexual assault. Police officers in cooperating departments received training in interview and investigation techniques specific to sexual assault, and many cities adopted standardized rape examination kits for hospital use to secure appropriate evidence. Efforts to educate medical and criminal justice system professionals coincided with the development of victim witness assistance units in prosecution offices, protocols for emergency room use with rape victims, and an advocacy community that typically tried to provide 24-hour rape crisis hot lines and accompaniment to

How People Explain the Lack of Attention to Sexual Assault in the STOP Program



hospitals, courts, and police stations. Rape began to be recognized as a “legitimate” violent crime, and the criminal justice system began to take rape victims more seriously.

In most of these communities, private, nonprofit victim advocates began to interact with law enforcement officers, emergency room nurses, and prosecutors as they attempted to accompany individual victims through the criminal justice system process. These interactions almost always occurred on a case-by-case basis. It was not unusual for them to be characterized by hostility, territorialism, high levels of distrust, and skepticism about one another’s contributions to the victim’s well-being. Nonetheless, in many communities with active rape crisis centers, individual victim advocates and individual police officers and prosecutors did develop some manner of working relationship—even if it was only to tolerate one another’s activities. Rape crisis centers operated on relatively low budgets and, for the most part, operated outside the established social service agencies. Victim advocates became accustomed to working outside “the system,” trying to convince “the system” that rape and rape victims should be taken seriously and to educate criminal justice system professionals about the dynamics of rape and rape trauma.

However, even as early as 1982, only one decade after the first rape crisis centers opened their doors, the picture had changed substantially (Gornick, Burt, and Pitman 1985). The number of rape crisis centers was already reduced from a high of about 1,000 in 1979 to about 600, and many had lost their freestanding character. Funding problems had forced some rape crisis centers to close, while others changed their character as they became part of public or private social service or mental health agencies. Their advocacy and system change agendas softened or disappeared entirely (Burt, Gornick, and Pittman 1987). People with the original vision left, while turnover and the passage of time ensured that criminal justice and medical staff trained in the 1970s no longer fulfilled their roles in a coordinated community response. Nor did most of them pass on their expertise, their training, or their understanding of sexual assault to their successors.

In most communities, explicit training about sexual assault has not been ongoing. In the course of the STOP site visits, most state STOP administrators indicated that their efforts centered around domestic violence. Most communities had done little to develop their response to sexual assault beyond where it was as a result of the efforts of the late 1970s and early 1980s. The number of rape crisis centers appears to have dwindled even more, although no full count of programs with a primary focus on sexual assault has been made since the mid-1980s.



2. *The small number of women affected by rape, relative to domestic violence, does not justify large community expenditures or efforts.*

This position was expressed by more than one state-level official (state STOP administrators in a few states, as well as members of STOP advisory boards/planning groups). This belief, apparently based on Uniform Crime Report statistics, does not acknowledge the reality that the vast majority of rapes are never reported and never counted in such statistics. Conservative estimates are that only 1 in 10 rapes are reported; this is without accounting for the large proportion of acquaintance rapes that the victims themselves never even label as rape (Koss and Cook 1993; Parrot and Bechofer 1991).

Looking at the incidence of sexual assault within a 12-month period, women respondents to the National Crime Victims Survey (U.S. Department of Justice 1999) reported rape at a rate of 2.7 per 1,000 women ages 12 and older. This was lower than the 8.0 per 1,000 women found for domestic violence, but still considerable. Looking at rates for women in the years during which domestic violence is also most likely, Koss, Gidycz, and Wisniewski (1987) estimated that 16.6 percent of college women had experienced a rape or attempted rape within the 12 months prior to being surveyed. A random telephone survey of Oregon women (Glick, Johnson, and Pham 1999) found that 1 in 14 women reported at least one act of sexual coercion in the 12 months before being interviewed.

Lifetime prevalence of sexual assault is even higher, approaching estimates of lifetime prevalence for domestic violence. Laumann et al. (1994) found, in the National Health and Social Life Survey, that 20 percent of women had experienced at least one incident of forced sex in their lifetime. A random telephone survey of Michigan women ages 18 to 69 (Michigan Department of Public Health 1997) found that 27 percent reported a rape or attempted rape by a non-partner since age 16, while 38 percent reported some type of unwanted sexual acts by a nonpartner. Had sexual assault by intimate partners been included, these rates would be even higher.

Given widely accepted estimates that at least one in four women will experience some form of nonpartner sexual assault in her lifetime (and the number experiencing sexual coercion and assault *within* relationships or from ex-partners adds to these expectations), there is ample reason to assume that sexual assault victims are present in sizable numbers in every community and that their needs do require attention. Unfortunately, though, the belief that only a few women are affected by sexual assault has somehow allowed states and communities to assign lower priority to improving existing criminal justice system remedies.



An important factor contributing to the widespread view that sexual assault is rare relative to domestic violence is the way statistics are collected: domestic violence victims tend to report numerous incidents and to seek help on numerous separate occasions. Each time the victim makes contact, she is “counted” again; the same woman is likely to be repeatedly counted, thereby inflating estimates of the prevalence and number of domestic violence victims served. In contrast, sexual assault victims typically are counted only once, unless they experience a revictimization and recontact law enforcement or the nonprofit victim service agency. Sexual assault is also often not counted when it occurs in the context of domestic violence, which it often does.

3. *The stigma associated with rape, and myths about rape, continue to affect people’s willingness to address it. Stranger rape is seen as something that doesn’t happen very often (and that only happens to women who aren’t careful enough), while acquaintance rape continues to be viewed as not “real” rape at all.*

State STOP administrators and local communities across site visits consistently reported that victim-blaming attitudes about rape, and belief in a variety of rape myths, are pervasive among their judges and juries. The belief that a woman cannot be raped unless she is either careless or willing sets the stage for the reluctance of both prosecution and law enforcement agencies to proceed with any cases that do not overwhelmingly fit the stereotype of a stranger rape in a back alley. Related to this is the phenomenon of people not addressing sexual assault because it touches too closely on their own personal fears—they need to believe that rape is a remote problem that only affects a few people. They can deal with domestic violence because they believe they can rely on their own choices to stay out of abusive relationships. But acknowledging that rape can happen to anyone and is not something that can be controlled causes great discomfort and results too often in failure to address the problem and help its victims.

4. *Rape cases are extremely difficult to investigate and to prosecute, regardless of what approach is tried, so efforts to change the community’s response are unlikely to make a real difference.*

Respondents cited a list of factors that contribute to this attitude that nothing anyone can do will change the situation. These factors all relate in different ways to the perception that juries will not believe that the woman was “really” raped. They include the frequency with which the entire case boils down to “he said—she said” because witnesses are rarely available; delays in reporting the crime; the frequency with which the assault takes place between people who know each other or between people who have had a prior



relationship; the circumstances of the incident that contribute to victim blaming (presence of alcohol or drug use; a party scenario; high-risk behavior, such as hitchhiking; or being out late at night because one works the late shift); and whatever can be made of the victim's "reputation."

Although all of these points are valid, they do not capture the whole picture. In communities where police, prosecutors, and nonprofit victim service agency advocates are working together in a coordinated community response to sexual assault cases, they find that these cases can be successfully prosecuted. In a few communities we visited, changes in the system's response to these victims in turn has served to legitimize their claims and seems to have brought about changes in the media's reporting of these crimes as well as changes in public attitudes about the victims.

5. *Sexual assault victims can be served within the context of domestic violence programs. Since many domestic violence victims are also victims of sexual assault, it makes sense to have sexual assault services as an add-on component.*

Although sexual assault and domestic violence victims do share some overlapping concerns, their needs are, for the most part, quite distinct. The dynamics of the victimization are different, as are the legal remedies. The social stigma associated with being a rape victim is different from attitudes toward domestic violence victims. An expertise in counseling domestic violence victims does not necessarily serve rape victims well. The changes a woman must make in her life and in herself in order to escape an abusive relationship present challenges that are only minimally related to the often equally daunting psychological work of recovering from a rape experience. The roles of the police and the courts are also very different for these two crimes. Given all these differences, it is logical to establish separate resources for serving these distinct types of victimization.

6. *We don't get relevant applications.*

The states we visited varied considerably in the specific priorities set by the state STOP agency and in the extent to which the agency proactively ensures that those priorities are funded. In most states, the state STOP administrator described a very passive process of funding for all projects, including those addressing sexual assault. The agency sends out an RFP framed in the most general terms, awaits applications, and then chooses subgrantees from among those applicants. The state STOP administrators in most of the states we visited pointed to the paucity of sexual assault applicants as the reason for their relatively small sexual assault allocations. (One often encounters the same excuses for why states are not able



to spend the 25 percent of STOP funds that are supposed to go to law enforcement and prosecution.)

However, in states where the state agency sets a high priority on addressing sexual assault, the agency makes sure it receives a sufficient number of appropriate applications through several mechanisms. One mechanism is to give a large grant to the statewide sexual assault coalition and allow the coalition to define projects, offer technical assistance, and ensure that its member rape crisis centers get appropriate projects up and running. Another mechanism is to fund collaborative teams from whole counties and insist that sexual assault agencies be part of the team and get a part of the grant. A third mechanism is to set aside a reasonable amount of money and write a targeted RFP specifically for sexual assault programs. Commitment and vision can make it happen; in their absence, little will change.

Recommendations

- 1. State STOP agencies should support sexual assault separately from domestic violence; Congress and/or VAWO should make clear that sexual assault deserves to receive a higher priority for funding and creative thinking to develop appropriate projects.**

Require states to make significant efforts to generate fundable sexual assault projects. The position of most of the state STOP administrators is that they don't fund more sexual assault subgrantees because not many apply for funding. Therefore, it may be necessary to require them to be proactive, either soliciting applications from existing programs or creating new programs to implement the STOP process for sexual assault. An alternative in some states would be for the state STOP administrator to work with the statewide coalition to boost the number of applicants and work toward developing new programs.

STOP should fund domestic violence and sexual assault separately. The expertise required to deal effectively with domestic violence is quite different from that required for sexual assault, even though they both reflect a pervasive societal tolerance for women as victims of male violence. There are differences between sexual assault and domestic violence in the content of public attitudes toward both perpetrators and victims. Social stigma regarding the nature of the violence and the role of the victim in causing it remains especially problematic for rape victims. Attitudes about what constitutes appropriate accountability and appropriate punishment are often different for rapists versus batterers. The challenges rape and domestic violence victims face are also quite different across financial, social, physical, emotional, and psychological domains. These differences in impact and recovery tasks call for different expertise and different solutions on the part of service providers. The nature of the legislation, available legal remedies, and the dynamics of inves-



tigating and prosecuting cases are also different for domestic violence and sexual assault. Systems set up to manage domestic violence victims are not necessarily effective for sexual assault victims, and vice versa.

The question of whether sexual assault and domestic violence coalitions at either the state or local level should merge was addressed in nearly all the states visited. Some of the pragmatic reasons for merging include shared overhead, shared common goals of combating violence against women, more effective lobbying for legislative change around related issues, and improved relationships between nonprofit victim service agencies and the criminal justice system players. Despite the widespread acknowledgment of these reasons (and others) for pooling resources and efforts, the two coalitions have merged in only a few states and cities we visited; the effectiveness of this solution is not yet clear. The nearly unanimous opinion of state STOP administrators, coalition leaders, and subgrantees was that sexual assault and domestic violence *must* continue to have separate coalitions, separate advocacy programs, separate legislative lobbyists, and separate funding. As one local rape crisis center director commented, the primary focus of the sexual assault community centers is on prevention, while the domestic violence community's focus is primarily on intervention. However, even though separate organizations may work best to accomplish these different goals, it is well understood that the two groups must coordinate their efforts and collaborate when possible if they are to be truly effective.

- 2. State STOP agencies should support statewide needs assessments to obtain up-to-date information about the true incidence and prevalence of sexual assault in their state and the need for appropriate services.**

Surveys such as those conducted recently in Michigan and Oregon (Glick et al. 1999; Michigan Department of Public Health 1997), with their high levels of reported sexual assault and coercion, could be repeated in many more states. State STOP agencies could include questions on their survey instruments to learn whether women know about or use available services, or live in areas with no services. Questions could also probe to identify the types of services and approaches that women found most helpful when they did seek help in relation to a sexual assault. For women who did not seek help, a survey could identify reasons why they did not do so and what would make them more likely to use services.

- 3. State STOP agencies should do more to promote coordinated community responses to sexual assault and the conditions under which such responses will be most likely to flourish.**

This recommendation has several parts, including:



- 3a. Use STOP funds to create collaborative efforts at the state and local levels that include representatives from all disciplines involved, including government and private entities.**
- 3b. Use STOP funds to advance the understanding of rape and sexual assault among the public and also among professionals in criminal justice system and private, nonprofit victim service agencies, so as to debunk the myths and stigma that often prevent rape from being dealt with effectively.**

While piecemeal efforts do increase availability and access to specific services, they do not qualitatively change the way sexual assault victims are dealt with by the criminal justice system. The site visits have provided convincing evidence that the STOP process *can* transform the typical victim's experience and *can* result in increased reporting, prosecution, and convictions. If STOP is to achieve its own stated goals, then there must be increased emphasis on developing coordinated community responses to sexual assault.

- 3c. Support training in sexual assault and in the collaborative process.**

It is critical to support ongoing training and professional development even for long-time private, nonprofit victim service personnel. There is a trend across the country for the local rape crisis center or the state sexual assault coalition to be in the position of training the remaining parties, while they themselves do not have funding for new training opportunities for themselves. Evolution of ideas is most likely to occur if there is adequate support for professional development and contact with others outside one's own profession and community. There is also an enormous need for training specifically in the process of collaboration.

- 3d. Support the infrastructure necessary for collaboration.**

Collaboration requires time and money, and there must be a funding source to support it. The time it takes to communicate with outside agencies, the equipment it requires (computers, phones, faxes, paper supplies, extra space), and the impact on the home agency are all factors that do not typically appear to be directly supported by STOP funding. Communities are finding that as collaboration does occur and they do succeed at making positive changes in the CJS, they generate more client demand, which in turn overloads the system that was previously in place. They end up without enough service staff, support staff, space, and supplies to manage the increased demand. In the most successful programs, there is a staff person designated as coordinator of the team effort, and this individual has both time and resources to invest in promoting the work of the team.



Recommendations 3c and 3d are also relevant to DV collaborative efforts.

3e. Support data collection.

There is nearly universal absence of accurate or meaningful data about what sexual assault services are being provided, what effect they have, and the impact of these services on criminal justice system outcomes. In those few places that do seem to be compiling and interpreting statistics regarding service use and progression of cases through the system, the information serves as a powerful feedback tool. Simple counts of the number of complaints, the number of cases investigated or prosecuted, the outcomes of prosecutions, and the extent of service utilization can be motivating and rewarding to the team itself. Tracking such information allows the team to assess its own performance in an ongoing manner and also may serve to identify areas of success and areas needing improvement. Such data also are necessary if the impact of programs is ever to be evident to outside reviewers. Successful data collection requires dedicated staff time and should be implemented as an integral part of the project from its inception. There must be a person designated to proactively pursue the needed information—to follow up with team members who have not provided case updates, to assist with recordkeeping and reporting of statistics, and to promote the ongoing development of consistent and streamlined reporting methods. In order to be useful, the data must also be compiled, analyzed, interpreted, and reported back to the team on a regular basis (even monthly) in an accessible format.

4. State STOP agencies should support information sharing among their subgrantees.

There is currently little evidence that ideas and solutions are regularly being shared across communities. In most states and communities, there is minimal awareness of who else has already developed effective solutions to the problems a community is just tackling. It seems that nationally STOP could play a much more active role in making connections between communities and facilitating the sharing of information and technical assistance.

5. State STOP agencies should support statewide sexual assault coalitions.

If a state does not have a statewide sexual assault coalition, using STOP funds to support one is critical. If a state does have a statewide sexual assault coalition, using STOP funds to strengthen it is essential. A strong statewide network provides general guidance, specific technical assistance, and tangible support to local programs. It also provides a necessary voice at



the state level for political and legislative lobbying and for providing leadership in forging relationships with criminal justice system entities. There are a few states where the two coalitions have merged (largely because one was floundering and therefore essentially rescued by the merger). It is unclear whether these hybrid coalitions will be effective; some argue that the pooling of resources will benefit both groups, that they will be able to continue their legislative work on both the domestic violence and sexual assault fronts simultaneously, and that working together as partners rather than competitors will only serve to improve the quality of the product. Others posit that attention to sexual assault will quickly be overshadowed by the domestic violence agenda.

Notes

1. California, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Vermont, and West Virginia. These 16 states are not a random sample of all states, but they include large and small states, are reasonably representative of major regional and population differences among states, and are home to about half (50 percent) of the U.S. population. They have pursued a wide variety of approaches to handling their STOP grant and thus are also quite representative of state orientations to doing so.
2. It is important to note that these efforts are the exception rather than the rule. In the 16 states visited so far, we were able to identify only four projects targeting sexual assault that aimed to establish a true coordinated community response involving all the criminal justice system partners as well as the medical establishment and the local nonprofit victim services agency.
3. It should also be noted that state STOP programs in four of the states visited did have a high commitment to sexual assault. Two of these states had a long-standing statewide sexual assault coalition that was very powerful. In the other two states, the state STOP administrator had a personal background of work in sexual assault services and insisted that it was important to fund them.

Stalking as a Focus of the STOP Program



Although most STOP efforts have been directed toward domestic violence, the STOP program's legislative authority is to address three major types of violence against women: domestic violence, sexual assault, and *stalking*. The legislation specifically identifies stalking as one of the seven purpose areas within which states should target STOP funding efforts. Since STOP funding became available, however, few states have focused their efforts on issues related to stalking. Only eight states included stalking in their initial implementation plans (Burt et al. 1996). To date, stalking is the crime that receives the *least* amount of attention from STOP-funded activities, with only 7 percent of STOP subgrants citing stalking as a purpose area.

Part of the reason that stalking has received less attention than domestic violence and sexual assault is because stalking cases are particularly problematic—law enforcement and prosecution have a difficult time following, investigating, and obtaining convictions in such cases. Some promising approaches to handling stalking cases have, however, been developed in special law enforcement and prosecution units. This chapter includes background information about the crime of stalking, the reasons why these cases are so difficult to handle, and the ways in which this problem is being addressed through STOP formula grants. The information reported here is based on evaluation projects funded by the Violence Against Women Office (VAWO) and conducted by the Institute for Law and Justice (ILJ).

Introduction

Stalking is predatory behavior, but not only predatory behavior. Predatory behavior is not uncommon to criminal justice, where the criminal may target his victim for sexual assault or even homicide, follow the victim until conditions are most propitious, and then commit the crime without the victim having any advance warning.

In contrast, the crime of stalking involves much more than predatory behavior, although such behavior is typically one element of criminal stalking. It is important to include stalking in discussions of violence against women because stalking is an intrinsic part of the pattern of severe domestic violence and an extension of the batterer's control over the victim. Stalking may culminate in sexual assault and/or the murder of the victim.

Background on Stalking Crimes and Behavior



It is important to include stalking in discussions of violence against women because stalking is an intrinsic part of the pattern of severe domestic violence and an extension of the batterer's control over the victim. Stalking may culminate in sexual assault and/or the murder of the victim.

Most state penal codes define stalking as involving:

- A pattern of willful or intentional harassing or annoying/ alarming conduct, such as repeat messages, following, vandalism, and other unwanted behaviors;
- Infliction of credible explicit or implicit threats against a victim's safety or that of her family; and
- Actual victim fear of the stalker resulting from this behavior.

The prosecution must prove every part of this definition to convict an offender of stalking, and every part creates problems for prosecutors.

Willful/Intentional Behavior

State stalking laws in most jurisdictions require that the prosecution show that stalking behavior was intentional; that is, the stalker meant to perform those acts that constituted the stalking, such as following a victim or sending gifts. In many of these states, the prosecution must also prove that the stalker intended to threaten the victim and to cause her fear. Court decisions in several states have reduced the prosecutorial burden of proving intent to threaten and cause fear by holding the defendant's actions were such that he knew, or should have known, that the consequences of his actions would provoke threat and fear. Nonetheless, a common practice among police and prosecutors is to ensure that the stalker is made aware by the victim or her representative (e.g., a police officer) that his actions are not welcome and provoke fear.

Threat

Under most states' stalking laws, a threat may be either explicit or implicit. Stalking threats need not be for "right now," but may be in the indefinite near future. However, the threats must meet a "reasonable person" standard to exclude oversensitive reactions. A number of states have also recently amended their stalking laws to cover "cyberstalking" by e-mail, the Internet, and other forms of electronic communication.

Fear

Stalker threat and victim fear in response to that threat are easy to separate when the stalking threat is made explicit. But most stalking cases do not involve explicit threats. In cases where the threat is implicit in the stalker's actions, threat and fear are difficult to separate. Proof of one often also requires proving the other, per the "reasonable person" standard.

An experienced stalking prosecutor with the San Diego district attorney's office notes that it is the context within which the harassing



or stalking behavior occurs that provides the link between that behavior and victim fear in stalking cases. For example, sending flowers as a gift may be stalking behavior, depending upon the actions preceding the gift. In some cases, the threat against the victim may be obvious even where only implicit—for example, the stalker places a sex doll with a nylon rope tied around its neck in the victim's bed. In other cases, more background information is needed, for example, where the stalker uses the phrase “love forever” in conjunction with references to his prowess as a rifle sharpshooter.

The requirement in most jurisdictions that actual fear be present for the case to be categorized as stalking means that unless the victim is aware of the following, simple predatory behavior does not constitute the crime of stalking. Victim testimony about her fear may be corroborated by showing that actual behavioral changes occurred. In many cases, however, the victim's actions in response to the stalking may not be straightforward and can cloud the issue of victim fear.

Examples of Stalking Cases

1. **PRIOR DATING RELATIONSHIP.** Ms. X was involved in a dating relationship with a fellow student at a university in San Diego. After three months together, Ms. X felt that this man was trying to isolate her from her friends and family and seemed controlling and demanding. Soon after Ms. X told him their relationship was over, she found her car tires slashed and a brick thrown through the windshield. The vandalism was followed by threatening phone calls and messages on her pager citing the California penal code section for murder—187. Ms. X went into hiding from then on. A couple of months later, she was asleep in bed with her daughter when she was awakened by a loud popping noise—the perpetrator was striking Ms. X in the mouth with a ball peen hammer. He fled the scene but was arrested days later. While awaiting trial, the perpetrator approached a cell mate in an attempt to hire a “hit man” to kill Ms. X. Upon being informed of this, the prosecutor's investigators staged a “murder.” A make-up artist was hired to prepare Ms. X to appear as if she had been shot in the head. Polaroid photos were then taken of the “assassinated” Ms. X. An undercover investigator then went to the jail and visited the perpetrator, who, after seeing the photo, acknowledged that the murder is what he wanted. Charges were filed by the prosecutors in San Diego, and the perpetrator was convicted of stalking, burglary, assault with a deadly weapon, torture, and soliciting for murder. He received a prison sentence of 13 years to life.
2. **TOTAL STRANGER.** An 18-year-old female was singing in her church choir. She was seen performing with the choir by a total stranger, who began to stalk her. Among other things, he sent pornographic pictures and videos to her home. With the pornography, he would add a message saying, “This is you and this is me.” He also called her at home, making threats and playing the soundtrack from a pornographic movie. When he was arrested, he explained his actions as motivated by his being a “student of human nature.” He said he simply wanted to see how she would react to

(continued)



his presents, and he would sit in the back of the church to see how she was holding up. The defendant was convicted of stalking by prosecutors in Los Angeles and sentenced to 16 months in prison.

3. **USE OF THE INTERNET.** The defendant had become fixated upon the victim, who refused to engage in a romantic relationship with him. After several years, the defendant began to pose as the victim on the Internet. He placed several sexually graphic "want ads" on Internet bulletin boards and in this way began to correspond with men while posing as the victim. He then solicited the men to rape the victim by claiming that he/she enjoyed rough sex and rape fantasies. As part of the solicitation, he provided the men with the victim's address, phone number, and other personal information. When the victim learned of these events from one of the men so solicited, she went to local police and was told there was nothing they could do. Eventually, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) referred her to the Los Angeles district attorney's Stalking and Threat Assessment Team (STAT). After extensive investigation by STAT and the FBI, a felony stalking complaint was issued. The defendant eventually pled guilty and received a six-year sentence to state prison.
4. **FORMER HUSBAND.** After Mrs. Y was divorced, her ex-husband began to threaten and stalk Mrs. Y and her mother, including sending written death threats to both. The perpetrator also sent threats and defamatory mail to the victim's place of employment. This resulted in Mrs. Y being transferred from a job as a nurse to a clerical position. Complaints to local police were not acted upon because there was no physical harm to Mrs. Y and because the threats came from another state. The victim sought help from a local rape treatment center, where a relationship between the center and a special stalking prosecution unit had already been established. The complaint was referred to the prosecutor's victim advocate. The investigator followed up the complaint, and a warrant for felony stalking was issued against the ex-husband. The case was also referred to the U.S. attorney's office, which filed a federal criminal complaint for interstate stalking. As of this writing, the suspect is still a fugitive from justice.

Stalking Investigation and Prosecution

Statutory law defines the elements of the crime of stalking. Each crime element must first be investigated and then proven by the prosecution for a defendant to be convicted of stalking. How law enforcement and prosecution respond to victim reports of stalking varies, depending upon reports of particular stalking activities. Stalking cases do, however, present some unique case elements, including the necessity for threat assessment and management. At the same time that the investigation and prosecution are occurring, officials must also ensure victim safety. Thus, threat assessment and management should be an integral part of the agencies' stalking response.

Stalking Laws

As of November 1999, all 50 state legislatures (and the District of Columbia) had enacted laws making stalking a crime. As discussed



in the *Third Annual Report to Congress on Stalking and Domestic Violence* (1998), these laws vary significantly in the specific behaviors outlawed and the penalties provided for their violation.

Stalking is one of several related crimes that threaten a victim's privacy and safety. Related crimes include harassment, terroristic threats, and invasion of privacy. The most serious of these offenses is the terroristic threat against the victim's person. Stalking differs from terroristic threats in that for stalking, both the threat and the victim fear result from a series of acts, and the threat is for an act that may occur at some indefinite time in the future. With terroristic threats, a single act can constitute the threat, but that threat must be one of imminent behavior ("right now") and must include the capacity to act on the threat.

"Making" a stalking case is almost always a long process. Each stalking investigation must proceed on two tracks—identifying the stalker and proving a crime has been committed.

Identifying the Stalker

In most criminal cases, especially the most serious, identifying the criminal is all that the investigation is required to do—that is, the need is to prove "*who* did it." In many stalking cases, the identity of the stalker is unknown. Indeed, in many instances, there may not even be any suspects. Thus, the first task in a stalking investigation in these latter cases will be to develop a list of potential suspects. These may be gained from the victim, the victim's family, friends, and coworkers. Each possible suspect must be investigated and each alibi checked out.

Because stalking is an ongoing crime that continues to occur after law enforcement enters the case, it may be possible to use surveillance methods to help identify the stalker. Thus, law enforcement may use cameras posted at the victim's home that show the area around the residence. Or their own stalking team may follow the victim to see if any of the possible suspects appear in the area of the victim (e.g., while shopping). Alternatively, law enforcement may set up a counterstalking watch over a possible suspect to see if he engages in stalking behavior. In one case, law enforcement staked out the suspect's vehicle and when he appeared at the car, he was found carrying an envelope he planned to mail to the victim that contained a threatening note and feces. In another case, law enforcement used cameras at a local university computer laboratory to identify who was using a specific machine that was determined to be the site of cyberstalking.

Proving a Crime Was Committed

Proving stalking requires showing both that specific stalking acts occurred and that they resulted in victim fear. The primary source of evidence for proving both crime elements is the testimony of the

"Making" a stalking case is almost always a long process. Each stalking investigation must proceed on two tracks—identifying the stalker and proving a crime has been committed.



victim herself. This testimony must be corroborated by other evidence, such as:

- Testimony of victim's friends or coworkers who were present at a stalking event;
- Documentary evidence, such as letters or notes sent to the victim by the stalker;
- Printed versions of e-mail messages sent to the victim; and
- A log of stalking events maintained by the victim noting time, date, and specific occurrences.

Proof that the victim had a reasonable fear for her safety due to the stalking also begins with the victim's testimony. It, too, must be corroborated by testimony from:

- The victim's friends and coworkers regarding changes in the victim's behavior, such as asking for an escort to go shopping or to the parking lot when leaving work;
- A psychiatrist, psychologist, or other treatment professional offering expert testimony;
- Security officials at the workplace who had been informed of stalking occurrence;
- A record of victim statements that are not hearsay rule limited (e.g., 911 tapes, police incident reports);
- Answering machine tapes, audiotapes of phone calls, etc.;
- Pictures of the stalker taken by the victim (date and time stamped);
- Search warrant-gained evidence, including computer files, the stalker's diary, property of the victim found at the stalker's residence, pictures of the victim taken by the stalker, etc.; and
- A videotaped interview with the stalker.

Problems with Stalking Investigation and Prosecution

One California prosecutor describes the difficulties with investigating and prosecuting stalking cases as follows:

- Cases are hard to identify at the outset. A course of conduct must be seen and shown.
- Investigations may be going on in different jurisdictions at the same time.



- Cases require a threat assessment that also informs the decision to seek a temporary restraining order.
- Cases require corroboration to prove what the defendant did.
- Cases require corroboration to prove the victim's state of mind (fear).
- Cases do not necessarily end with a conviction.
- Conviction and incarceration may not end the stalking, even during incarceration.

Some other, less frequent problems that may be encountered include:

- A stalker on probation requests a move to a state where supervision of stalkers may be less vigorous unless law enforcement is contacted and warned;
- The need to add special conditions of probation for stalkers (e.g., barring a stalker from possessing painting equipment if spray painting the victim's possessions is one element of his stalking pattern); and
- Enforcement of witness-tampering laws when stalking involves former intimates.

In addition to the problems discussed above, it should also be noted that stalking is one of three personal crimes that can be committed on the Internet. The other crimes are, of course, terroristic threat and harassment, both stalking-related offenses.

The most important question in a stalking case is "How dangerous is the stalker likely to be to the victim?" Protecting the victim is a higher priority than a successful prosecution. Hence, both law enforcement and prosecution will try to assess the degree of danger that exists both at the initial complaint and as the case continues. Typical factors considered in threat assessment include the suspect's history of mental illness or violence, history of domestic violence, explicit threats of violence, vandalism or pet abuse, and increases in stalking activity.

Once the threat is assessed, the question arises as to how best to protect the victim. Each case must, of course, be assessed on its individual merits. Thus, in some cases, a simple intervention interview will suffice; in others, a court injunction or protection order may be sought. In yet other cases, obtaining a civil order of protection may have the reverse effect of increasing the level of danger to the victim. Other common tactics used by law enforcement include

Threat Assessment and Management



Protecting the victim is a higher priority than a successful prosecution—both law enforcement and prosecution should try to assess the degree of danger that exists both at the initial complaint and as the case continues.

providing the victim with an alarm system that will trigger police action at the home. Where this is done, more advanced systems will also ensure that the 911 dispatcher has access to descriptive information about any suspect and his vehicles. Victims will also be advised to take other actions such as changing phone numbers, varying routes to work, or renting a post office box for mail. In extreme actions, the victims will be aided in relocating their residence, perhaps even out of the jurisdiction. In a number of states, laws now permit victims to protect their personal information, such as driver's license and even Social Security numbers.

Either as part of threat management or for her own sake, the victim should receive additional services, for example, education about the nature of stalking and what she must do to help prove the case. A number of jurisdictions have developed brochures and other resources, such as a formal log for recording stalking incidents. Victims should also be helped to plan for their safety by changing their behavioral patterns to reduce the likelihood of stalking incidents (e.g., changing the route by which they travel to and from work). Therapeutic services may also be made available, although such programs are still rare.

STOP Funding

Because stalking laws are so new, their implementation has not yet been fully achieved. Both criminal justice and victim service personnel require training in recognizing and responding to stalking cases. Policies and procedures must be implemented to guide agency staff. Because these cases are often complex and time consuming, specialized staff need to be designated to develop the necessary expertise.

The STOP program explicitly provides for funding of stalking projects. However, stalking has not been a major priority for most of the state offices administering the STOP funds. Few state grantee initiatives have asked for proposals from subgrantees for projects directed at stalking, nor has any effort been made to encourage subgrantees to specify that stalking be part of a larger project directed at domestic violence or sexual assault. According to a review of Subgrant Award and Performance Reports (SAPRs), 389 subgrants reported conducting work within the purpose area of stalking. However, no programs reported an exclusive focus on stalking, only 11 percent reported focusing on stalking in addition to domestic violence and sexual assault, and just 3 percent reported focusing only on domestic violence and stalking. Thus it is not surprising that further analysis revealed only 18 subgrants with a significant portion of their work focused on stalking. Even among these reports, stalking enforcement or prosecution is in most instances a secondary objective. Moreover, none of the domestic violence or sexual assault project descriptions indicate any significant commitment to including stalking crimes in their scope of work.



There is good reason to believe, however, that these reports significantly underestimate the number of STOP-funded projects that deal with stalking cases. These reports are based on subgrantee project proposals; project activities are likely to vary considerably once they begin operations and have to meet victim demands. Because stalking cases are, in fact, much more numerous than many subgrantees understood when first submitting proposals, personnel are seeing many more stalking cases than originally estimated. The federal reporting program does not, however, track changes in project design or objectives.

To fill this information gap, ILJ personnel conducted site visits to stalking projects, reviewed project materials, and undertook a limited telephone survey of state STOP administrators to:

- Verify the information provided that stalking was a project component;
- Identify other projects that contain a stalking element, even if not officially reported as such.

Once a stalking project was identified by state officials, further telephone calls were made to verify that stalking was an important project component. Not all states responded to the survey. Furthermore, not all state STOP agencies were able to identify stalking projects because their funds are allocated to regional offices for further distribution to subgrantees. Hence, the information reported here is not a census of STOP-funded stalking projects. Table 7.1 shows those states reporting STOP-funded stalking projects.

A total of 16 states report having funded 38 projects directed at stalking. These include 7 projects to improve investigation of stalking, 9 projects to improve prosecution of stalking crimes, 12 projects to help victims of stalking, and 10 projects primarily providing training or developing protocols on stalking.

In addition to the subgrantee projects funded under STOP, the Violence Against Women Office directly funds the STOP TA (Technical Assistance) Project. As part of its work, the project prepared a *Promising Practices Manual* (STOP TA Project, 1998), profiling some of the exemplary projects directed at violence against women around the country. Chapter 3, on law enforcement initiatives, includes a section, “Develop Police Strategies to Intervene in Stalking Cases.” Chapter 4, on prosecution, includes a section, “Develop a Plan and Implement Strategies for Complex Cases,” and a subsection, “Develop Specific Strategies for Investigating and Prosecuting Stalking Cases.” Chapter 5, on victim services, includes a section entitled “Design Services to Address Stalking and Advocate for an Improved Community Response to Women Who Are Stalked.” Also included in these materials are profiles of anti-stalking initiatives in the Nashville, Tennessee, Metropolitan Police Department; the Dover, New Hampshire, Police Department; and

No programs reported an exclusive focus on stalking, 11 percent reported focusing on stalking in addition to domestic violence and sexual assault, and 3 percent reported focusing only on domestic violence and stalking.


TABLE 7.1 *STOP-Funded Stalking Projects by State*

State	Grantee	Description/Activity
Arizona	Mt. Graham Safe House	Provide services to domestic violence victims, including those who have been stalked by their abuser; advocates attend state POST training on stalking.
California	San Diego District Attorney	The stalking prosecution unit includes one attorney, one investigator, and a victim witness advocate assigned to vertically handle all domestic violence-related stalking cases; complements existing unit staff assigned to stranger stalking cases.
	Los Angeles District Attorney	The stalking prosecution unit includes two attorneys, one investigator, and a victim witness advocate assigned to vertically prosecute most serious stalking cases in county.
	Alameda County District Attorney	Stalking prosecution team to vertically prosecute stalking cases in county and to coordinate state efforts to collect data about stalking protection orders.
	San Joaquin District Attorney	Establish part-time stalking prosecution unit and assign one probation officer for intensive supervision of stalkers on probation.
	San Francisco District Attorney	Establish stalking prosecution team to vertically prosecute all stalking cases in county.
	California District Attorneys Association	Multidisciplinary training program, including stalking seminar and stalking as part of domestic violence training.
	Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission	Train law enforcement using a previously developed multimedia stalking training unit as part of training for first responders (40 sessions), detectives (5 sessions), and sexual assault first responders (20 sessions).
Colorado	Ending Violence Against Women	Coalition of state prosecutors, sheriffs, and coalitions against domestic violence and sexual assault sponsors statewide training on violence against women issues, including stalking.
	AMEND	Statewide training.
	Project PAVE	Provide group counseling to domestic violence and stalking victims; individual counseling also provided.
	Violence Prevention Coalition (Durango)	Develop protocols for risk assessment, victim logs, employers, and other system professionals.
	Project Safeguard (Denver)	Assist with gaining orders of protection for domestic violence victims, including stalking victims (30 percent estimate), and provide related services, such as name change and safety planning.
	Douglas County Sheriff 18th Judicial District Fast Track Prosecution	Domestic violence investigative unit also handles all stalking cases. Include stalking in the fast track prosecution program; special emphasis on training for CJ (criminal justice) personnel, volunteers, and the community in recognizing stalking and implementing new stalking law and on tracking stalking defendants' locations through the pretrial release Emergency Protection Program using beepers and mandatory callbacks.
Connecticut	Sexual Assault Coalition & POST	Develop sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking training materials. A Train-the-Trainers model was first implemented, then multidisciplinary teams deliver training
Delaware	Wilmington Police Department	Provide victim advocate services to victims of violence against women, including stalking.
Georgia	Athens/Clarke County Police Department	Establish a special investigative unit for domestic violence crimes where no arrest was made, including protective order violations and stalking.

(continued)



Table 7.1: STOP-Funded Stalking Projects by State (continued)

State	Grantee	Description/Activity
	Richmond County Sheriff's Office	Improve investigation of stalking related to domestic violence or sexual assault offenses through enhancement in staffing of the special investigative unit.
Iowa	Iowa State Police	Develop a protocol/form for victims to fill out for police or prosecutor; hold series of workshops.
Michigan	Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan	Provide multidisciplinary domestic violence training that includes a stalking component.
	Council Against Domestic Assault (Ingham County)	Provide help to women seeking court protection orders against stalking and domestic violence; coordinate with prosecutor's victim witness unit and receive police reports on order violation complaints where no arrest is made.
Mississippi	Lamar County District Attorney	Prosecutor assigned to handle domestic violence and stalking cases; also provides technical assistance to other prosecutors.
Nevada	Elko County Sheriff's Office	Purchase of surveillance camera to help in stalking investigations.
New York	New York City Police Department	Special units for stalking investigation established in two precincts.
Ohio	Huron County Department of Human Services	Develop protocols for investigation and prosecution of stalking and to provide assistance for stalking victims; provide training and community materials on stalking prevention.
	Southeast Inc.	Provide advocate services for victims of stalking to help with evidence collection, assist in gaining protection orders, provide short-term counseling, and arrange referrals for psychiatric assessment and counseling.
	Rocky River Municipal Court	Establish support group for stalking victims.
Oklahoma	Youngstown Police Department	Hire full-time investigator for stalking cases.
	District Attorney for District 10	Victim advocate helps domestic violence and stalking victims with orders of protection.
Oregon	Lane County Prosecutor protective order clinic	Assist victims with applications for orders of protection against domestic violence and stalking.
	Clatsop County Women's Resource Center	Fund court advocate who assists domestic violence/stalking victims in obtaining stalking orders of protection.
	Sexual Assault Support Services	Provide legal advocacy and other services to stalking victims, presently numbering about 16 per month. Work with legal services agency and law school clinic to assist with civil protection orders and university hearing process.
Virginia	Chesterfield County District Attorney	Prosecutor assigned to domestic violence and stalking cases.
	Winchester Women's Shelter	Develop stalking kits for victims, including cell phones, tape recorders, etc.
	Roanoke County Police Department	Hold workshop on stalking.
	Henrico County (Richmond) Police Department	Special domestic violence unit has one officer assigned to all stalking cases (about 20 per year). Officer also does training for own (recruit, in-service), local, and regional agencies.
West Virginia	Cabell County District Attorney violence against women prosecutor	One attorney assigned to violence against women cases spends 25 percent of time on stalking; conducts training.

Source: Institute for Law and Justice (ILJ) site visits, project materials reviews, and telephone survey to state STOP administrators.



Project Examples

SAN DIEGO DISTRICT ATTORNEY. The Stalking Prosecution Unit of the San Diego County District Attorney's Office is responsible for the prosecution of felony stalking cases in San Diego County. In addition, the unit prosecutes misdemeanor stalking cases outside the city of San Diego. Office policy, however, is that stalking cases that can be prosecuted as either a felony or misdemeanor should, in most cases, be prosecuted as felonies. Both stranger and domestic violence-related stalking are prosecuted by the unit. However, most stranger stalking cases that arise outside the city of San Diego are prosecuted by attorneys in the district attorney's branch offices. Office protocol requires, however, that the unit be notified whenever a branch office deputy district attorney receives a stranger stalking case. This policy permits the unit to take over cases when appropriate and to provide technical assistance in other cases.

The Stalking Prosecution Unit has two attorneys, two investigators, a victim advocate, and one full-time support person. One deputy district attorney is funded through STOP to prosecute domestic violence-related stalking. An experienced investigator supports this attorney. In addition, expansion of the unit with STOP funds justified the addition of a victim advocate from the office's state-funded victim witness assistance unit.

In the first year of the grant, the domestic violence stalking prosecution deputy received 74 cases for review. Of these, 33 cases resulted in criminal charges being filed. Twenty-four cases are being monitored for future prosecution, and 17 cases were rejected or referred to another agency. In the prior year, when domestic violence stalking was handled by the Family Protection Division, 38 cases were received for review and 16 of these cases were filed. The STOP-funded stalking prosecutor also participates in the work of the San Diego SCAT (Stalking Case Assessment Team), which meets monthly to review and discuss problematic cases and provide case management advice to the attorneys and investigators responsible for the cases. Issues considered by SCAT include assessing seriousness of threat, victim safety, and new investigative approaches. Members of SCAT include the District Attorney's Stalking Prosecution Unit; representatives of most law enforcement agencies in San Diego County (including federal agencies); probation, court security, and law enforcement forensic specialists; victim service providers; and the private sector. Additional duties of all members of the unit include community education for increased recognition of stalkers by victim aid groups and training of law enforcement personnel throughout the county.

CABLE COUNTY (WEST VIRGINIA) PROSECUTOR. Under a STOP grant, the prosecutor has assigned one attorney to handle domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking cases. The position is two-thirds funded by STOP, with the remainder picked up by the county. Most cases handled by the violence against women prosecutor involve domestic violence battery, about 50 to 60 per month. Before STOP, the office's reported conviction rate in these cases was about 6 percent. It is now about 50 percent. Between 50 and 60 stalking cases are referred to the prosecutor each year. Because of the narrow definition of stalking under state law, only about 10 to 15 of these cases can be prosecuted as stalk-

With a special prosecutor for domestic violence stalking, more cases are being reviewed and more criminal charges are being filed.

*Project Examples (continued)*

ing. In other cases, alternative charges are sought, such as telephone harassment, burglary, or vandalism. Although small in number, stalking cases take a disproportionate amount of time to handle, and the prosecutor estimates that up to 20 percent of her time is spent on these cases. In addition to prosecution duties, the STOP prosecutor also provides training to other criminal justice personnel and victim advocates. This is estimated to involve about five hours per month. The STOP grant has also paid for equipment, such as telephone recorders used to gather evidence of stalking.

DOUGLAS COUNTY (COLORADO) SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT. A STOP grant funds a full-time investigative unit, including a victim advocate, assigned to handle domestic violence cases for patrol follow-up. Since stalking cases cannot be resolved by patrol and most stalking involves domestic violence partners, the unit also handles all stalking cases in this small county (population 150,000). The unit sees about 10 stalking cases each year, with many other cases being treated as harassment (an easier charge to prove under state law). The unit staff also provides "roll call" training on stalking to patrol officers to keep them aware of the need to probe more deeply when a victim is showing more fear than normal. In addition, the department files all complaints through information reports in order to track repeat calls for service that do not by themselves constitute crimes, but that may be part of a series of acts constituting stalking.

CLATSOP COUNTY (OREGON) WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER. STOP funds a court advocate who, among other duties, helps stalking victims obtain court orders of protection against stalking. Because state law provides for petitions for stalking orders to be filed by police officers, the advocate helps victims gather the necessary evidence and identify a police officer willing to file the petition and testify in court. The advocate also helps victims deal with the court process, including obtaining witnesses for hearings and trial. The success of these efforts is largely due to the center's participation on a county-wide domestic abuse response team (originally funded by STOP). This provides the center with credibility in asking for officer assistance with these orders. A final advocate duty is to undertake community education about stalking, especially with minority groups.

CALIFORNIA DISTRICT ATTORNEY ASSOCIATION (CDAA). STOP funds support a statewide training program for prosecutors, law enforcement, and victim advocates/service providers that offers six to eight programs annually. One of the training programs offered by CDAA is a three-day stalking seminar. The program includes instruction on stalking dynamics, stalking legislation, evidentiary issues, law enforcement investigative methods, stalking prosecution, victim safety issues, and protection orders. Two other training programs on domestic violence included stalking instruction specifically and included stalking as part of other presentations on evidence practice, homicide prosecution, and law enforcement-victim advocate collaboration.

COUNCIL AGAINST DOMESTIC ASSAULT (INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN). Project staff provide assistance to women seeking personal protection orders in stalking and domestic violence cases.

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All cases accepted by the STAT are prosecuted vertically. Low caseloads are maintained (no higher than 15 cases per attorney) in recognition of the effort required to manage a stalking case. On average, stalking cases take about six months to reach the trial or plea stage.

Stalking personal protection orders receiving project help numbered 287 from October 1997 through September 1998. Assistance is provided at three stages. First, help is provided with preparing the papers to be filed with the court detailing the need for the order. As needed, victims will be referred to other service providers for non-legal advocacy services or to the prosecutor's victim witness unit. When requested, staff will escort victims to a court hearing, but in most cases the orders are signed ex parte and are not contested. Second, similar assistance is also provided in the event the order is violated and no arrest was made by law enforcement. Third, should the victim wish to extend the court order upon its near expiration, staff will again provide help in filing and at hearings. Project staff have also provided 13 training sessions to local law enforcement agencies (320 officers), to the judiciary, to volunteers helping in domestic violence cases, and to local industries concerned with domestic violence and stalking.

LOS ANGELES DISTRICT ATTORNEY. The LA District Attorney's Stalking and Threat Assessment Team (STAT) is responsible for prosecuting the most serious stalking and other high-profile or dangerous threat cases in the county. The STAT was formed in June 1997 and received augmenting funds under a STOP subgrant beginning in January 1998. The STAT receives about 400 stalking referrals annually; of these, about 100 to 125 are accepted for prosecution. A small number of these cases may be resolved informally by aggressive "intervention" activities by the investigator, who will interview the suspected stalker to explain the potential criminal law consequences of future stalking behavior. A number of other cases may not be immediately prosecuted; instead, they are monitored for further developments that might warrant increased STAT action. All cases accepted by the STAT are prosecuted vertically. Low caseloads are maintained (no higher than 15 cases per attorney) in recognition of the effort required to manage a stalking case. On average, stalking cases take about six months to reach the trial or plea stage. Cases not accepted by the STAT are handled by deputy prosecutors in the district attorney's regional offices in the county or by the city attorney's offices in Los Angeles and several other smaller cities in the county.

The STAT originally consisted of two deputy prosecutors. With the help of STOP funds, the unit added an investigator and was assigned a victim advocate from the district attorney's victim witness unit, funded under a state grant. The investigator also has a reduced caseload compared with other investigators, again reflecting the extra work required to handle ongoing case investigations compared with the more common investigation of past events required for other crimes. The victim advocate provides assistance to victims (and witnesses) whose cases are handled by the STAT. In addition, the advocate also screens case referrals from other advocates and responds to direct calls to the STAT from victims (about 15 to 20 per month). All members of the unit also devote a considerable proportion of their time (as high as 15 percent) to training and community education efforts to increase awareness of the crime of stalking and to make better known the STAT's availability. It is estimated that as many as 20 percent of the cases accepted by the STAT come from non-criminal justice referrals.



the Orange County, New York, Safe Homes Project. The manual was distributed in 1999 and used by the TA Project for multidisciplinary training at two workshops. Attending these workshops were about 100 participants from various states.

Stalking is a serious and widespread crime. It remains in many ways, however, at the periphery of both justice system and service provider consciousness. The difficulty of identifying, investigating, and prosecuting stalking crimes plays a significant role in the lack of policy attention it has received. Thus, the failure to either effectively respond to stalking or to recognize stalking complaints that are presented to law enforcement discourages victims from making complaints or discourages service agencies from referring their clients to law enforcement. The seeming “low” numbers of stalking complaints then “justify” these agencies’ continued inattention. A number of local agencies are, however, moving forward with stalking programs—larger agencies are developing special stalking units and smaller agencies are combining stalking with other duties, most commonly domestic violence cases.

STOP funding is playing an important role in ensuring a response to stalking and aid to its victims. STOP-funded projects often fill a critical link in the justice system–victim service network and complement other, locally funded initiatives. In other jurisdictions, such as several in Oregon, these projects are the starting point upon which other initiatives may develop. Indeed, without many of these projects, stalking victims would have nowhere to go for help.

More help is needed, however. A critical starting point would be to focus on increasing awareness among the state grantees of the prevalence of stalking offenses, their seriousness, and the existence of many programs that can be used as models for emulation. The only state that has targeted a funding initiative is California, and that initiative used the experiences in Los Angeles and San Diego to guide its efforts. The California initiative was limited, however, to prosecution agencies and was, as a practical matter, limited to larger counties that can support a special stalking unit. Other approaches are needed for smaller jurisdictions and for law enforcement agencies.

A noticeable and needed emphasis among the existing stalking projects is an emphasis on training and community education. A large proportion of the STOP stalking grants have gone to such projects, and a considerable amount of operational (nontraining) projects’ energies are directed at training law enforcement personnel and community education. Only a few projects are directed at training prosecutors, however. Any future STOP initiative must include criminal justice training and community education as important components of an overall community initiative against stalking.

Conclusions

STOP funding is playing an important role in ensuring a response to stalking. STOP-funded projects often fill a critical link in the justice system–victim service network and complement other, locally funded initiatives.



Recommendations

- **State STOP administrators should support more focused approaches to stalking separately from domestic violence and sexual assault. Specifically, they should:**
 - Conduct needs assessments to determine the scope of the problem in their state.
 - Include stalking in state implementation plans and solicit proposals from their constituents addressing stalking.
 - Support information sharing among their subgrantees to increase knowledge about stalking within the field.
 - Provide funding to those programs already involved in stalking projects to conduct evaluations. Enabling current stalking projects to document their successes will provide critical information about what types of programs to support in the future.
- **State STOP administrators and the STOP TA Project should provide training regarding stalking.**
 - State STOP administrators should support training efforts for both law enforcement and prosecution about how to handle stalking cases.
 - State STOP administrators should support training efforts about stalking that promote coordinated community responses, including representatives from all disciplines involved.

Data Collection and Communication Systems



Efforts to hold offenders accountable for their actions, or even to keep victims informed about the progress of their case, often fail due to lack of information. Police answering a domestic violence call often do not know that an offender has prior offenses, that a woman has a protection order or what its conditions include, or that the offender is known to have been armed in the past. Prosecutors do not know about prior offenses in the current or other jurisdictions, especially if they have been pled down to charges such as “disturbing the peace,” “disorderly conduct,” or “drunk and disorderly” without leaving any trace in the system that they began as domestic violence offenses. Judges do not know about violations of their conditions of probation or protection orders, or of prior related offenses. Victims do not know how far their case has progressed, whether offenders have been released from custody, or what their options are in the justice system. In addition, crucial information about cases is often lost because no one used appropriate mechanisms (such as cameras, audio and video recorders, forensic rape examination kits or colposcopes) for recording and preserving it.

Data and communications projects were included as a funding category in the STOP program because good information can make a huge difference in the ability of law enforcement, prosecution, victim service, judicial, and corrections agencies to do their job on cases involving violence against women. A statewide protection order registry to which patrol officers have easy access can give them vital information at the moment they respond to a domestic violence call—information that can protect both victim and law enforcement personnel. The same is true about easy access to complete criminal history files. Law enforcement and prosecution data systems that consistently label a case as originating in an offense involving violence against women are critical in providing the information that will let criminal justice agencies take appropriate actions against repeat offenders.

But most systems in place today do not include codes for DV and/or do not maintain them when a case ends up as a non-DV charge. Even Polaroid cameras, as simple as the idea may seem, have helped create documentary evidence of violence leading to convic-

Introduction

Good information can make a huge difference in the ability of law enforcement, prosecution, victim service, judicial, and corrections agencies to do their job on cases involving violence against women.



tions that would not have happened without photographs of the scene. This chapter reports on how agencies have enhanced their efficiency by using STOP funds for data and communications projects.

Data Collection and Communication Projects

The purpose area of data collection and communication systems covers efforts to develop, install, or expand such systems. This purpose area is broad and specifically anticipates that STOP grant funds will be used to develop or enhance computerized systems to link law enforcement, prosecutors, and courts or to identify and track justice system actions to reduce violence against women (e.g., arrests, prosecutions, convictions, protection orders, and violations of orders). In total, 670 subgrantees reported on their Subgrant Award and Performance Reports (SAPRs) that they planned activities under this purpose area. To date, evaluation findings of the National Center for State Courts' project focused on projects of this type indicate that STOP subgrantees have interpreted the language of the purpose area expansively to address particularly acute local needs through projects that do not entail integrated or even automated data and communication systems. For example, dedicated phone lines were installed to support the prosecution of domestic violence cases, radio repeaters were purchased to enhance officer and victim safety in responding to domestic violence calls in rural areas, and databases were created to support *intraagency* efforts to collect data concerning violence against women.

STOP subgrantees have interpreted the language of the data communication systems purpose area expansively to address particularly acute local needs through projects that do not entail integrated or even automated data and communication systems.

Few data collection and communication system projects enhanced *interagency* communication through electronic means; pooled data among law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, and service providers in an integrated automated system; or coordinated grant monies across subgrantees to achieve a regional or statewide strategic data system goal. Not unexpectedly, developing major data and communication systems has proved to be a massive undertaking that experience is showing is mostly not possible within the scope of the STOP program. The U.S. Department of Justice has other vehicles whose mission is more appropriate to large-scale data system development, such as the National Institute of Justice's technology arm or the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Perhaps these agencies could undertake the work of helping states and localities develop the infrastructure necessary for functioning statewide data systems.

Projects with a data collection and communications purpose area composed 23 percent (540) of the subgrants reporting performance information on their SAPR. These projects addressed a wide variety of data/communication system types (table 8.1). As in previous years, these subgrantees employed STOP funds for case-tracking or record-keeping systems more often than any other purpose. Cumulatively, 60 percent of data/communications projects reported that STOP funds established or maintained a case-tracking or record-keeping system. Thirty-two percent of data projects supported forms development or standardization. Protection/restraining order track-



ing systems were a focus of 28 percent of data projects, 26 percent supported hot line calls, and 20 percent supported victim notification systems. Criminal history information was the focus of 14 percent of data projects, while 10 percent initiated or expanded capacity to receive or make 911 calls. Least frequently cited, a sex offender registry was the focus of only 5 percent of data projects. Finally, 21 percent of data projects supported some other data system.

TABLE 8.1 *Data and Communications Subgrants*

Type of Data Project	Percentage of Data Projects (N=540)
Case-tracking or record-keeping system	60
Forms development or standardization	32
Protection/restraining order tracking system	28
Hot line calls	26
Other	21
Victim notification system	20
Criminal history information	14
911 calls	10
Sex offender registry	5

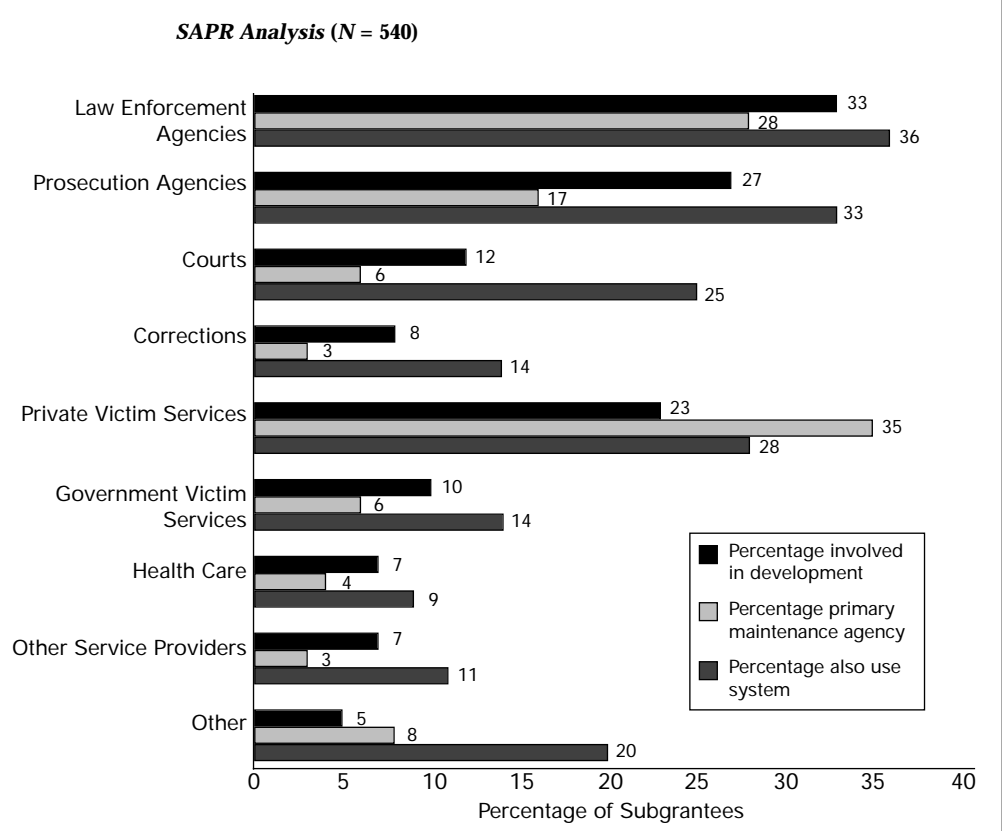
Source: Urban Institute analysis of SAPR data received as of November 15, 1999, N=540.

The SAPR performance reports include information on the agencies involved in the development of the data/communications system. Subgrantees mentioned law enforcement, prosecution, and private, nonprofit victim service agencies most frequently (33, 27, and 23 percent, respectively). Courts played a role in developing data/communications systems for 12 percent of the data projects, public-sector victim services contributed to 10 percent of the projects. Corrections made up 8 percent of those named as helping to develop these systems. Data projects indicated that both health care providers and other service providers assisted in data development in 7 percent of projects. Only 5 percent of subgrantees mentioned agencies other than those already listed as participants in developing data/communication systems.

Information about which agencies have primary responsibility for maintaining the data/communication system reveals some interesting patterns (figure 8.1). Although law enforcement agencies were the most likely to be involved in developing data/communication systems (in 33 percent of projects), the primary responsibility for maintaining these systems was most likely to be in the hands of nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service agencies (35 percent of projects). In contrast, only 28 percent of law enforcement agencies and only 17 percent of prosecution agencies had primary responsibility for maintaining these systems. Only 6 percent of data projects named courts and public-sector victim service agencies as primarily responsible for data systems. Corrections,



FIGURE 8.1 *Types of Agencies Involved in Development, Maintenance, and Use of Data Systems*



Source: Urban Institute analysis of SAPR data received as of November 15, 1999, N=540.

Twelve percent of the data projects reported use by agencies across the state, and 4 percent of the data projects reported use by agencies across large regions of the state. However, 33 percent of data projects reported that only one agency uses the system.

health care providers, and other service providers each have primary responsibility for maintaining data systems in less than 5 percent of these reports. Eight percent of data projects report that some other agency has primary maintenance responsibility for the data system.

Quite predictably, agencies' use of the data system bears a strong relationship to the agency's involvement in data/communication design. Approximately one-third of data projects not actually maintained by law enforcement and prosecution agencies named these agencies as other users of the data systems (36 percent and 33 percent of projects, respectively). Private victim service followed as the next most commonly cited user of these systems, named in 28 percent of data projects. Interestingly, courts and other agencies used data systems far more often than they assisted in their development. Though courts were involved in data system development in 12 percent of projects, twice as many (25 percent of data projects) listed court agencies as users. Twenty percent of data projects reported that other agencies access the data system even though they did not assist in the development of data systems for more than 5 percent of projects. Other secondary user agencies included government victim service agencies and corrections (both 14 percent of data projects), other service providers (11 percent), and health care providers (9 percent).



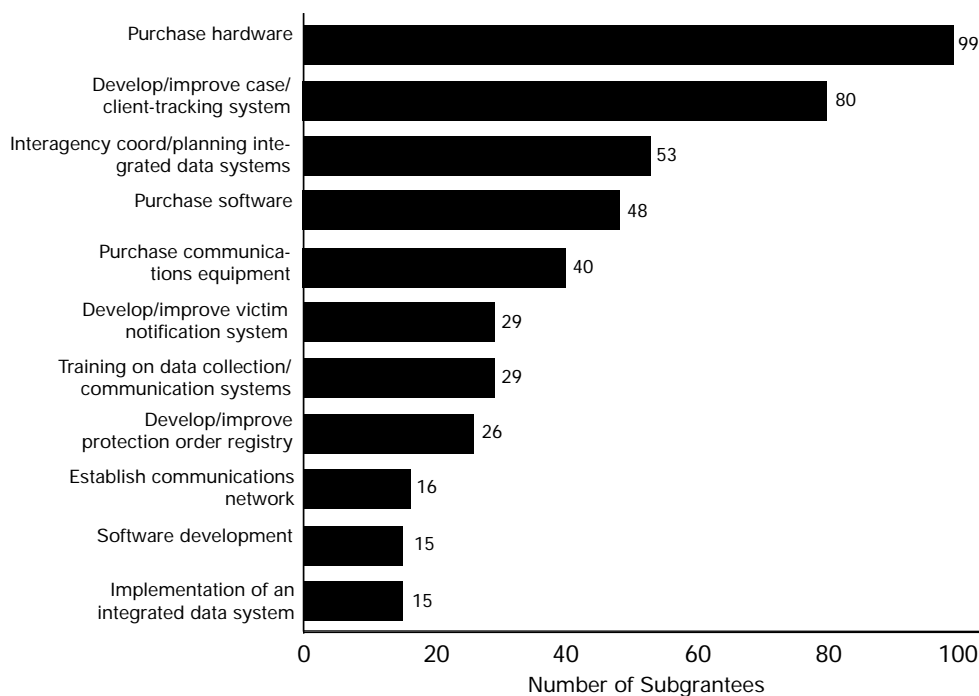
The data projects also reported the geographic location of the agencies that access the data/communication system. For 43 percent of the data projects, agencies using the data system were located in the same local jurisdiction, including city, county, community, or tribe. Twelve percent of the data projects reported use by agencies across the state, and 4 percent of the data projects reported use by agencies across large regions of the state. However, 33 percent of data projects reported that only one agency uses the system.

Among SAPRs reported for FY 1997 and FY 1998, 171 subgrantees with data collection and communication projects reported the basic uses to which they put STOP funds (figure 8.2).¹ The most common use of funds was to purchase hardware (99 subgrants/58 percent), followed by developing or improving a case- or client-tracking system (80 subgrants/47 percent). Relatively few subgrants were used to develop or improve a protection order registry (26 subgrants/15 percent). This is in sharp contrast to the first two years of the STOP program, when 67 percent of the subgrants applied at least some of their funds to protection order registry development. Fifty-three subgrants (31 percent) were used for interagency coordination or planning for integrated data systems, but only 15 subgrantees (9 percent) moved to implementing an integrated data system.

Use of STOP Funds for Data Collection and Communication System Projects

FIGURE 8.2 *Use of STOP Grant Funds by Reported Projects*

NCSC Survey of Data/Communications Subgrants (N = 171)





Variation in Definitions of Data Collection and Communication Systems

Telephone interviews conducted by NCSC with 27 STOP subgrantees provided a closer view of the types of activities subgrantees identified as data and communication system projects. The interviews revealed that subgrantees used varying definitions for software and hardware, communications network, training, development, and, most particularly, integration. Software included office automation software, forms development software, database management software, and database development software. Hardware was defined variously as personal computers, radio repeaters, and video or still cameras, as well as hardware to support network infrastructure. A communications network might be defined as a telephone notification protocol for shelter vacancies or availability of services for batterers or victims.

Training was not focused exclusively on using the data or communication equipment or system, but instead encompassed training of law enforcement, prosecutors, and community stakeholders in the indicators of domestic violence, creation and implementation of a safety plan, and the completion of domestic violence incident reports. Development covered a wide range of objectives, from creating forms and curricula to building case management and services management systems. Integration most typically included regular communication of information by any means, not typically electronic, among justice partners and nongovernmental entities responding to domestic violence.

Activities of Data Collection and Communication System Projects

- **ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE STUDIES, MESA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, MESA, ARIZONA:** Develop training programs and materials to enhance the knowledge of violence against women within the law enforcement, courts, and corrections communities, including a model training program to assist probation and parole in responding to domestic violence, a video and accompanying handbook outlining an effective law enforcement response to violence against women, a court response train-the-trainer program, and a Web site at http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/academic/soc_sci/ajs/vaw.
- **RAPE COUNSELING SERVICES OF FRESNO, INC., FRESNO, CALIFORNIA:** Purchase and adapt the SART program, a data processing system for information about sexual assault victims. Information is stored by individual case record, but with no personal identifiers, and can be aggregated in a variety of ways, including by the number of victims, the location of assaults, and use of weapons. Information in the system is shared with local law enforcement, prosecution, hospitals, other shelters, and other sexual assault crisis centers.

(continued)

*Activities of Data Collection and Communication System Projects (continued)*

- **DEPARTMENT OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY, CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU, HAWAII:** Establish dedicated phone lines for each of the prosecuting attorneys in the four counties in the Hawaiian Islands.
- **IOWA STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE, DES MOINES, IOWA:** Develop a system to upload protection orders entered into the court's protection order registry on a real-time basis into the Department of Public Safety system and subsequently to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) protection order database. Protection orders also are linked with warrants information. State and local law enforcement, prosecutors, probation, corrections, and batterer intervention programs can access this system. Courts access their own court database and the protection order registry.
- **MARYLAND STATE POLICE:** Purchase computer equipment (two personal computers and two laptop computers), develop an information system training manual, and provide quality control personnel. The personal computers are linked to a local area network (LAN), and data are entered into them to generate statistical reports on operations. The laptops and quality assurance personnel (auditors) are used to ensure that information entered into state criminal information systems and NCIC is accurate.
- **THE FORENSIC DIVISION, MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, MISSOULA, MONTANA:** Assist in the development of a DNA database for sexual offenders within the state of Montana. The Forensic Division laboratory uses the polymerase chain reaction typing method for DNA analysis and intends to interface electronically with the FBI Combined DNA Index System.
- **NEW JERSEY STATE POLICE, WEST TRENTON, NEW JERSEY:** Link the information contained in two New Jersey automated state police systems, the Criminal Justice Information System and the Firearms Investigation System, by building a master index of personal identifiers called the Master-Name Index/Computerized Criminal History (MNI/CCH) index. The index contains the person's last name, first name or first initial, date of birth, and Social Security number. The two systems can be queried simultaneously, which expedites background checks on potential gun purchasers and allows police on domestic violence calls to find out the serial number, make, model, and caliber of every handgun registered to the alleged perpetrator.
- **OSWEGO COUNTY VICTIM SUPPORT PROJECT, OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY, OSWEGO, NEW YORK:** Build a database of perpetrator, victim, and event data, used by law enforcement and prosecution to identify repeated domestic violence offenses, to better define the circumstances and victims of domestic violence, and to track services provided to victims.
- **OAKES POLICE DEPARTMENT, OAKES, NORTH DAKOTA:** Purchase radio communication systems for road patrol officers,

(continued)



Activities of Data Collection and Communication System Projects (continued)

including portable radios connected to mobile radios in patrol cars enabling officers on foot to transfer information in and out of the valley in which Oakes lies. The portable radios operate through a vehicular repeater and enable road patrol to call for criminal information and criminal histories through NCIC and the Criminal Warrant Information System. The Oakes Police Department shares this system with the county sheriff's office system, which extends the area's law enforcement base.

- **CLINTON COUNTY WOMEN'S CENTER, CLINTON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA:** Purchase state-of-the-art equipment to investigate domestic violence and sexual assault cases, including photography equipment to document victims' injuries and software for preparing composite sketches of sexual assault perpetrators for distribution to all local law enforcement agencies.
- **8TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE, JACKSBORO, TENNESSEE:** Develop a domestic violence unit within the attorney general's office for the five-county district. The unit maintains an access database of domestic violence and sexual assault incidents and arrests throughout the region, but the database is not linked to other databases or case management systems. Local law enforcement agencies forward domestic violence reports to the attorney general's office for entry into the database. The attorney general's office uses the database for decisionmaking, seeking sentencing enhancements, and increasing batterer accountability through compliance monitoring.
- **WHEATLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT, WHEATLAND, WYOMING:** Install a fiber optic link between the Platte County Court House, the Wheatland Town Hall, and the Wheatland Police Department. This infrastructure enhancement will facilitate access to automated information systems maintained by the county's criminal justice partners and support the exchange of data, including orders of protection from the court to law enforcement and domestic violence incident reports from the police to prosecutors and the court.

Strategic Use of STOP Funds for Data Collection and Communication Projects

The wide range of data collection and communication system projects reflects differences in the degree to which state STOP administrators applied standards for or coordinated the use of STOP monies to support data collection and communication systems. In many instances, the data collected were specific to the subgrant itself or were used to meet subgrant reporting requirements. Data collection aimed at increasing the total knowledge base of violence against women either at an individual case level or at the aggregate level was less typical. One project enabled a subgrantee to go beyond collecting data related to its operations to provide statistical information for local, state, and national reporting, yet the subgrantee had to manually compute its statistics due to the limitations of the database it created. The subgrantee indicated that its efforts would have been improved if the state had made greater efforts to develop unified and standardized reporting protocols and to facilitate coordination and networking among agencies.



Many statewide and some local projects achieved greater success in meeting the goals outlined by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) through more coordinated efforts. For example, Delaware capitalized on its long history of information sharing across branches of government and between local and state entities. Building on five separate information systems² in existence in 1989, Delaware today provides seamless information sharing between the major components of the Delaware Justice Information System (DELJIS), including the Criminal Justice Information System and the Judicial Information Center (JIC). The JIC electronically generates Protection from Abuse (PFA) orders when the family court judge signs an order. This information is immediately available to law enforcement through DELJIS.

Delaware statutes require relinquishment of firearms by gun owners subject to a PFA. STOP subgrant monies were used to develop an automated printed notice to the registered owner when the PFA is issued. A component of this system's application monitors the gun owner's compliance with the relinquishment notice. In Delaware's project, STOP subgrant monies were used for a limited and narrowly targeted purpose, but the project fit within the context of a thriving, integrated environment already addressing issues of violence against women. Delaware's advantage of implementing a range of strategies allowed the specificity of this funding to fill a fundamental gap and enhance the delivery of justice services overall. This is in contrast to other narrowly targeted projects where overall goals have not been defined and projects are not synergistically linked to provide a strategic approach to resolving the problems of violence against women. Although Delaware's small size and population have contributed to the success of this effort, the strategic planning efforts of its leaders were essential.

Another example of a data collection and communication system developed within a coordinated community response to violence against women is the Rapid Enforcement and Containment Tracking (REACT) program established by the Miami Police Department. The data collection and communication system portion of the project is a local area network consisting of two PCs and five laptop computers connected to a central server to support the REACT unit. The overall goals of the REACT program are to raise awareness of domestic violence in all segments of the community, to identify potentially volatile situations, and to promote the use of appropriate services before violence or more serious violence occurs. Law enforcement officers responding to calls for service are trained to gather information to assess the offender's risk for domestic violence regardless of the type of call. The information is communicated to the REACT unit, which analyzes the offender's level of risk. The REACT unit also participates in all fatality reviews, which lets it continually evaluate the validity and scope of its risk factors. Information currently collected tracks identified high-risk offenders through their various contacts with the police department and other components of the justice system. It includes warrant status, incident and arrest data, reasons for declining pros-

In many instances, the data collected were specific to the subgrant itself or were used to meet subgrant reporting requirements. Data collection aimed at increasing the total knowledge base of violence against women either at an individual case level or at the aggregate level was less typical.



education, services offered to and used by the offender, pretrial and postconviction conditions of release, and case dispositions.

Progress Toward the Vision of Data System Integration

Current information about the use of STOP grants for data collection and communication system projects indicates that without a basic infrastructure to support individual agency operations aimed at identifying, curbing, and treating violence against women, the establishment of a fully integrated response cannot become a reality. In addition, local agency efforts need assistance in building compatible infrastructures in order to ensure that when connectivity with other agencies is desired, it can be achieved. This cannot be done without a coherent approach that addresses violence against women across agencies, across jurisdictions, and across politics. Yet, the definition, creation, and support of programs to curb and treat violence against women cannot occur in a vacuum, ignoring the individual agency's other operational responsibilities. These complex issues are difficult to address through the smaller subgrants that the STOP program supports, which typically fund parts of projects or fill gaps in systems. However, some subgrantees are finding reasonable success in meeting these challenges.

Examples

MIAMI'S REACT: The Miami Police Department's REACT program demonstrates the viability of data collection and communication system projects in a coordinated community response, but it also exemplifies the gaps that STOP grants have yet to fill in this purpose area. The information the REACT unit collects is shared among local law enforcement, prosecution, shelters, and sexual assault crisis centers, but not electronically. Furthermore, data are collected manually despite the availability and potential of a local area network. Finally, although data integration is a goal for the future, the REACT unit's data are not integrated into the Miami Police Department's incident, arrest, and case management system. STOP grant funds have provided a much-needed boost to data collection and communication to help Miami address violence against women, but more steps must be taken to achieve the goals of this purpose area.

NEW YORK CITY'S JUDICIAL TRACKING SYSTEM: New York City provides an example of a local jurisdiction working in concert with the state's strategic goals for data system integration while addressing the needs and limitations of the participating local agencies. Working in partnership with the Unified Court System of New York State, the Center for Court Innovation is in the final stages of implementing a comprehensive Windows-based intranet system for case processing and tracking compliance with treatment ordered in domestic violence felony cases heard in the Brooklyn Supreme Court and misdemeanor cases heard in the Bronx Criminal Court. This system is modeled after the system developed for the Midtown Community Court in Manhattan. The domestic violence case system is a court-based application and runs on a court-based server housed in Albany.

(continued)

*Examples (continued)*

The system was designed in collaboration with an advisory board composed of high-ranking representatives of the criminal justice system agencies, victim service providers, and treatment providers. Prior to implementation, the Center for Court Innovation conducted a thorough needs assessment in partnership with the advisory board. The time line calls for implementation in the Brooklyn Domestic Violence Court, followed by connection of the criminal justice system partners with the Brooklyn court, and finally the addition of the Bronx Domestic Violence Court. Ultimately, the same technology will be used statewide and will run on a courtwide LAN system.

The Center for Court Innovation is providing both substantive and technological support to the court system using funds from three federal grants. VAWA STOP grant funds are being used to build the system for the Bronx Domestic Violence Court established in the Bronx Criminal Court (misdemeanors). VAWA Grants to Encourage Arrest funds are being used to build the application for the Brooklyn Domestic Violence Court (felonies). State Justice Institute funds were used to link criminal justice system partners, noncourt victim service agencies, and batterers' treatment programs to the Brooklyn Court.

Currently, the system has two primary applications. The first is case processing in criminal cases. The system speeds case processing in a number of ways, including electronically calendaring cases and producing all forms (e.g., sentencing forms). The second application is monitoring compliance with court-ordered treatment programs in domestic violence cases. Treatment providers enter treatment and compliance information in their offices and it appears in real time on various compliance screens. The court, authorized criminal justice system partners, batterer treatment programs, and victim service agencies can access these screens.

The system features several screens that assist the court. The main screen is a court calendar with the names of the defendants, the charging documents, court appearances, and other pertinent case-specific information. Compliance screens will identify the names of the providers that are treating the defendant and all compliance information. The screens will give the judge a chronological readout of court-ordered activity as well as specific information about noncompliant activity, such as a positive urine test. The judge can access treatment notes in real time from the courtroom. This feature enables the judge to access the provider's notes immediately after the treatment group has concluded and enter an order based on information of noncompliance obtained from the computerized report.

The domestic violence judge can obtain case-specific information on all related domestic violence criminal cases entered into the system since its inception and on all pending related criminal cases because these cases have been entered into the new system. However, the system is not integrated electronically with two key systems, the New York State Criminal History System (CRIMS) and the court computer. The project addresses this gap through the employment of court research coordinators in both the Brooklyn and Bronx Domestic Violence Courts. Prior to hearings, the resource coordinators search CRIMS to provide the judge with the defendant's rap sheet and examine the

(continued)



Examples (continued)

court's data system for any closed criminal, family, or civil case, or any pending family or civil case.

The system provides great advancement over the current way that orders of protection issued in criminal cases are entered into the system. At present, orders of protection are filled out by hand with six copies. This process is time consuming and the copies become increasingly illegible. The new system will provide for electronic signature by the judge, and criminal justice system partners will be able to print out their own copies. Also, when an order of protection is entered by a judge, it will be uploaded on a real-time basis into the state protection order registry maintained by the Office of Court Administration and then into the NCIC system. The system is designed to provide a remote link to the district attorney's office, victim service agencies, probation departments, and batterer treatment programs. In time, more access will be granted to other partners.

Reported Impact of Data Collection and Communication System Projects

Thirty-six subgrantees reported self-assessments of the impact of their data collection and communication system projects on their response to violence against women (figure 8.3). Eighteen of these subgrantees have statistical data to measure the impact they reported, but 11 of them have no assessment information. Three reported having ratings from system users and four have ratings from victims. This low level of measurement is an obvious impediment to effective program evaluation.

The top three areas of impact were fairly general and related to greater availability of information and stronger ties across agencies addressing violence against women. Twenty-one subgrantees (58 percent) reported having more reliable or immediately available information upon which to base decisions. Most of the subgrants reporting this impact involved an automated data system or a database of some type. Eighteen of the subgrantees (50 percent) reported having stronger linkages across agencies to provide a more coordinated response to victims. This set of subgrantees was a mix of automated data system projects and various types of communications projects. Sixteen of these subgrantees (47 percent) reported improved ability to provide services to victims of violence against women as a result of enhanced communications across agencies. This set of subgrantees also had a mix of project types, but the mix was not the same as the set of subgrants that reported stronger linkages across agencies.

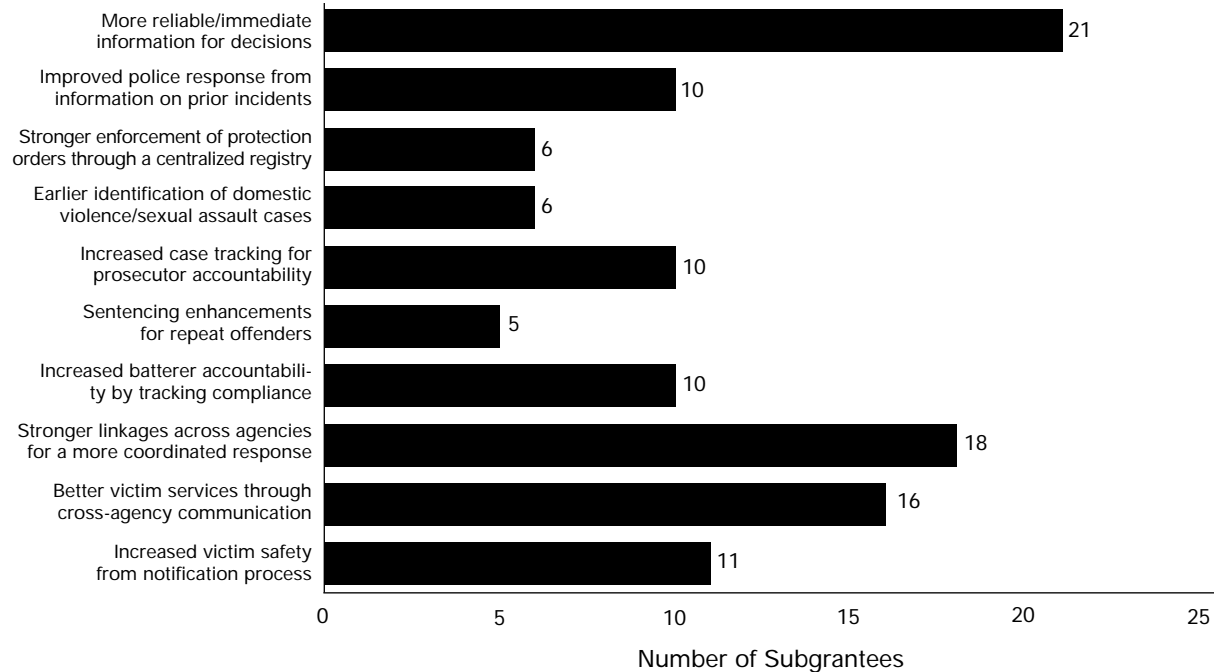
The next most common project effects (each reported by 10 or 11 subgrantees) were more specific. This second tier of impact included improved police response based on information about prior incidents, greater accountability of prosecutors through case tracking, increased batterer accountability through compliance tracking, and greater victim safety through notification measures. The lowest rung of project effects (each reported by 5 or 6 subgrantees) included earlier identification of domestic violence and sexual assault



FIGURE 8.3

Impact of Data Collection/Communication System Projects on the Response to Violence Against Women

NCSC Survey of Data/Communications Subgrants (N = 171)



cases, stronger enforcement of protection orders through a centralized registry, and sentencing enhancements for repeat offenders who were not previously tracked.

- **Future STOP funding priorities should define more clearly what activities and goals qualify as data collection and as communication within this purpose area.**

Recommendations

A few STOP-funded projects in the data collection and communication system purpose area are carrying out the vision of the policymakers who hoped to see more computerized systems linking justice system components or identifying and tracking justice system actions to reduce violence against women. The majority of the STOP data collection and communication system projects, however, were designed to fill a single and, most often, compartmentalized and localized requirement.

- **The Violence Against Women Office (VAWO) should ensure that states have strategic plans to address the need for stronger data and communication systems to aid in handling crimes of violence against women, and that individual programs receiving funding make sense in light of that plan.**



Fostering the development of technologically competent data systems that can be integrated with other data systems will require greater coordination and direction by state-level administrators of STOP and other VAWA monies. The direction and goals of programs applying for funds should be consonant with the strategic direction of the state in addressing the issue of violence against women. Without ensuring that states *have* a strategic plan to address the issue of violence against women, and further ensuring that individual programs receiving funding make sense in light of that plan, it is difficult to assist local entities to resolve particular issues in ways that contribute to these wider goals of reducing, prosecuting, and preventing violence against women. The goal of addressing violence against women through data and communication systems also should not be separated from the broader goal of integrated criminal justice involving all the community's justice partners and service providers in providing a comprehensive response to ensure community safety.

- **States should support small, focused database projects/systems that link together existing data systems in communities.**

Efforts to induce several agencies to change their own record-keeping systems so they can become part of a larger system of shared information often fail. Agencies are too invested in their own systems, which, in addition to data elements of common interest across agencies, usually contain items whose specialized purpose is relevant only to the activities of one type of agency. Rather than continuing to fail in the face of these inherent barriers, states would do better to fund efforts to take data from several systems and link them in such a way that they make sense and are useful together but do not destroy the usefulness of each agency's data for its own purposes.

- **Future STOP funding priorities should promote more proactive projects, such as systems that track information on prior incidents of violence by identified perpetrators and use linked and coordinated data systems.**

Some projects under STOP's data and communication systems purpose area fall within a broad conceptualization of data collection and communication, such as purchasing equipment to gather evidence or to enhance radio and telephone communications. Others involve the creation of computer databases, but most of these databases are freestanding and support only the individual agency's operations. Indeed, these projects are valuable and assist police in responding to incidents of violence against women, prosecutors in convicting offenders, and victim service providers in tracking their clients. They are, however, generally reac-



tive and do not advance the goal of violence prevention through linked and coordinated data systems.

- **States should require data/communications projects to have a plan for training system end users to use the system and showing managers in agencies using the system how to analyze data from the system in ways that will promote agency development. Many data systems fail because end users (the people who have to enter the data and who want to use it on a daily basis) never get the appropriate training.**

A key factor in effecting sustained system improvements would be ensuring that the people who have the most interest in using the system *want* to use it and *know how* to use it. Initial involvement and subsequent training are the keys to making this happen. Ideally, a system should not be developed without the participation of end users, because if the needs of end users are not met, they will not use the system and all system development will have been for nothing. Once the system is developed, all end users need to receive training in how to enter data and how to use the data once they are in the system. The positive reinforcement received by obtaining necessary results will help to ensure that the data in the system are of high quality.

- **States should require data/communications projects to have a plan for obtaining support for continued operation after the STOP-funded development phase ends. Unless support for the programs is incorporated into local, regional, and state operating budgets, the data systems will not be sustained.**

Another key factor in effecting sustained system improvements would be incorporating support for programs currently receiving STOP funds into local, regional, and state operational budgets. Less than half of the 36 STOP subgrantees providing detailed information about their data/communications projects have secured or are likely to secure permanent funding in their agencies' budgets. A few promising projects have been discontinued because funds were no longer available. Until the funding structure for these programs is secure, the progress gained as a result of these programs is not likely to continue.

- **VAWO should support the STOP TA Project to create a new section of its *Promising Practices Manual* focusing on the best options for pursuing data and communication projects.**

Most jurisdictions and agencies are at ground zero in developing sophisticated data and communication systems and would profit from informative examples showing what can be accomplished and how it can help agencies do their jobs better.



Notes

1. The National Center for State Courts (NCSC), which is evaluating the impact of data collection and communication systems projects funded by STOP grants, collected most of the information and wrote most of this chapter. The NCSC conducted three surveys, with each subsequent survey drilling deeper into the respondents' information. The first questionnaire asked the subgrantees to identify how subgrant funds were used (responses from 171 subgrantees using at least some part of the grant funds for creating new or improving current data collection and communication systems). From a sample of 80 1997–98 subgrantees, 36 completed a second questionnaire requesting more detailed information. Finally, NCSC project staff interviewed 27 of these subgrantees for further details about the projects. Urban Institute staff added the information obtained from SAPRs through November 15, 1999.

2. Computerized Criminal History, Uniform Crime Reporting, Department of Corrections inmate tracking system, Disposition Reporting System of the Justice of the Peace courts, and the Judicial Information Center, which serves the Courts of Common Pleas, Wilmington Municipal Court (phased out in 1998), and Family Courts.

Administration of the STOP Grants

The Office of Justice Programs' (OJP) Violence Against Women Office (VAWO) administers the STOP formula grant program. VAWO makes grant awards to states and territories, advises grantees in planning for and dispersing funds, interprets STOP-related regulations, and monitors grantees' performance. In addition, through its technical assistance, research, and evaluation efforts conducted in collaboration with other OJP offices, VAWO works to build system capacity and promote promising practices at the state and local level.

On February 26, 1999, VAWO awarded \$138.4 million to states and territories for their fiscal year (FY) 1999 STOP programs. VAWO again allowed states to use administrative funds (up to 5 percent of the total grant amount) to prepare implementation plans and then authorized spending the remaining funds once the implementation plans had been approved. This chapter describes VAWO's administration of these funds.

VAWA requires STOP administrators and subgrantees to report information to the attorney general about subgrant awards and performance. This information forms the basis of the Urban Institute's reports and is used to meet the requirements for an annual report to Congress describing how STOP funds have been spent and what they have accomplished. In addition, the database created from the information contained in subgrant reports is used by all evaluation grantees involved with the national STOP evaluation to select appropriate projects for more intensive examination, as well as by VAWO program managers for monitoring VAWO grants.

In FY 1999, VAWO continued to refine its processes for collecting information from applicants, making awards, and monitoring grantee performance. VAWO served as one of the pilot-test offices for OJP's automated Grants Management System (GMS), which uses the Internet to transmit information and is intended to streamline the receipt, review, and processing of grant applications. In FY 2000, all applicants to OJP grant programs will be required to submit information online through GMS.

Grant Application and Monitoring Requirements



VAWO's Cooperative Agreements for Technical Assistance

Through cooperative agreements with nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations, VAWO offers technical assistance to state STOP administrators and STOP subgrantees to help them develop coordinated community-based responses to violence against women reinforced by partnerships among law enforcement, the courts, prosecution, and advocates for victims.

In 1999, VAWO supported the following technical assistance activities:

- Sexual assault coalitions in Connecticut, Illinois, Minnesota, New York, and Washington state continued a project to provide technical assistance and resources to developing coalitions in other states, to serve as mentors to coalition leaders and key staff, and to develop strategies for improving the responses of communities and criminal justice systems to sexual assault. The project partners provided telephone consultation, resource materials, and on-site consultations and conducted regional multicoalition meetings.
- The American Prosecutors Research Institute (APRI) conducted seven workshops for prosecutors on state-of-the-art procedures for handling domestic violence and sexual assault cases. Five workshops focused on domestic violence and stalking cases; two workshops focused on sexual assault cases. The workshops taught prosecutors to approach and handle criminal cases involving violence against women in a manner that best promotes victim safety, offender accountability, and change in the community's climate toward zero tolerance for such violence.

The workshops were led by a multidisciplinary faculty and trained over 150 prosecutors nationwide. In addition, APRI developed an instructional videotape for prosecutors and law enforcement officers on the investigation and prosecution of Rohypnol- and GHB-related sexual assaults. To accompany the videotape, APRI produced a companion binder of resource materials.¹ APRI also offered advice and information to prosecutors on domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking cases.

- Through a cooperative agreement funded jointly by VAWO and the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) in cooperation with police chiefs and victim advocates from across the country developed a model policy in FY 1998 for police departments addressing the problem of police officers who commit domestic violence. In FY 1999, IACP continued to provide technical assistance to law enforcement agencies nationwide in adopting and implementing the policy.



IACP also developed a handbook for law enforcement officers on enforcing the full faith and credit provision of the 1994 VAWA, which requires states and territories to fully enforce orders of protection issued by other states and territories. The handbook includes a summary of the VAWA full faith and credit provision and a checklist for determining whether an order of protection is entitled to it. IACP is distributing the booklet to law enforcement agencies across the country and using it as the basis for training.²

- The National Organization for Women, Legal Defense and Education Fund, National Judicial Education Project (NJEP) continued to offer workshops for judges on *Understanding Sexual Violence: The Judicial Response to Stranger and Nonstranger Rape and Sexual Assault* and produced the workshop curriculum as a self-directed video and workbook training for judges to use individually or in small groups. The curriculum is relevant to both trial and appellate judges and covers such topics as the impact of rape and sexual assault on complainants, rape myths and stereotypes and how they can be surfaced during an effective *voir dire*, sex offenders and sex offender treatment, sentencing, and victim impact statements. NJEP is currently adapting the curriculum to a training program for prosecutors, emphasizing a victim-centered approach to sexual assault cases.
- The University of Minnesota continued to work collaboratively with VAWO to offer immediate access to information through *Violence Against Women Online Resources*, a Web site that provides advocacy, criminal justice, legal, and social service professionals with current information on interventions to stop violence against women.³ The Web site offers a range of training and resource materials developed by STOP-funded projects as well as other sources and houses a document library containing information on a variety of issues pertaining to violence against women: dynamics of domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault of women; enforcement of protection orders and full faith and credit; model legislation; batterer intervention programs; child maltreatment and domestic violence; and promising practices of model programs.
- The National Center for Rural Law Enforcement (NCRLE) trained 75 rural sheriffs and police chiefs on how to improve their responses to sexual assault crimes and enhance services for sexual assault victims. NCRLE maintains a managerial focus in the curriculum to encourage sheriffs and chiefs of police to evaluate their agencies' current practices. Having modified the curriculum to emphasize the dynamics of sexual assault in rural communities and promote community prevention strategies, NCLRE will train another 100 sheriffs and chiefs this year and start training for rural officers on investigating sexual assault cases.



The STOP TA Project's 1999 Technical Assistance Activities

Since 1995, VAWO has funded the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence STOP TA project to be the primary provider of technical assistance to STOP grantees and subgrantees. In FY 1999, the STOP TA project worked closely with state administrators through regional meetings, bimonthly memoranda, conference calls, and site visits to build the capacity of subgrantees to develop and implement initiatives that can change the way in which the criminal justice system addresses domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. This technical assistance has been well received and has played a key role in helping states and subgrantees meet the requirements and goals of VAWA.

Regional Meetings for State STOP Grant Administrators

The STOP TA Project continued in FY 1999 to convene regional meetings of state STOP administrators. The meetings focused on issues raised in the *1998 Report* of the Urban Institute's ongoing national evaluation of the STOP program and by participants. They were designed to facilitate cross-state learning and problem solving among administrators facing similar issues and challenges. Topics included how to reach out to underserved populations, how to address the needs of sexual assault survivors, how to build sustainable programs, and how to collect data for evaluation.

Outreach to State Administrators and Subgrantees

In addition to responding to requests for information and assistance, the STOP TA Project proactively shares information, strategies, and promising practices with state STOP administrators and subgrantees. As a means of introducing itself to newly appointed administrators and assisting with their orientation, the STOP TA Project provides each with an administrator's manual containing sections on complying with federal grant requirements, developing solicitation programs, and working with domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions. The manual also has a section providing answers to state STOP administrators' most frequently asked questions. The STOP TA Project also writes the bimonthly *Administrative Memoranda*, which covers a number of issues of interest to administrators and subgrantees.

In FY 1999, the STOP TA Project continued to organize monthly conference calls to provide technical assistance related to grant administration or program implementation. During these calls, state administrators and subgrantees heard about successful strategies from peers and technical consultants and discussed a wide range of topics including law enforcement training, judicial involvement, VAWA regulations, sexual assault nurse examiner programs, fatality reviews, older women, civil legal assistance, and battered immigrant women. Discussions are often continued in greater depth in *Administrative Memoranda*. The calls have proven to be very successful, with 15 to 20 states represented in each call.



Site Consultations

In 1999, the STOP TA Project hosted two site consultations to provide administrators and subgrantees with an opportunity to examine firsthand one community's coordinated response to violence against women. During these consultations, participants observed specific programs, heard presentations by those responsible for implementing these initiatives, and engaged in informal discussions and extended question-and-answer periods. Participants also had an opportunity to work with their state colleagues on plans for adapting strategies to their own communities.

The first consultation, held in March in Chicago, involved 27 participants from 13 states. Participants were able to meet face-to-face with experts from the field and visit the local program. The second took place in April in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and included 38 participants from 19 states. In response to administrators' requests, the STOP TA Project is planning to coordinate a site consultation in West Virginia in May 2000 that will focus on the needs of rural grantees.

Individualized Technical Assistance

Through its toll-free phone line, fax, and e-mail, the STOP TA Project continued to provide technical assistance on adapting model/promising programs and offered referrals to other specialized technical assistance providers. In addition, the STOP TA Project began to offer intensive, individualized technical assistance through on-site consultations with STOP administrators and subgrantees. The STOP TA Project also continues to work with VAWO in annually reviewing state implementation plans to identify technical assistance needs.

Sexual Assault Initiatives

In 1999, the STOP TA Project conducted a number of activities to assist grantees in addressing sexual assault. With the input of a sexual assault advisory group, project staff again held regional meetings and conference calls with state STOP administrators and focused the first two promising practices workshops on sexual assault issues. Additionally, STOP TA staff worked with other VAWO-funded sexual assault technical assistance providers, including the American Prosecutors Research Institute (prosecutor training), the Sexual Assault Resource Sharing Project (including an initiative to bring sexual assault and domestic violence state coalitions together), and the National Center for Women and Policing (law enforcement training).

Promising Practices Initiative

The Promising Practices Initiative, a series of activities undertaken to highlight innovative strategies that improve the criminal and civil justice system's response to violence against women, contin-



ued in FY 1999 with a series of workshops for STOP subgrantees. Each workshop examined in depth one issue related to violence against women (e.g., a Denver session looked at the role of multi-disciplinary response teams) and identified innovative approaches to resolving it. A key objective of the workshop discussions was to promote collaboration among law enforcement, prosecution, and victim services. In spring 1999, the STOP TA Project developed a promising programs guide for law enforcement, prosecution, and victim service providers. A comprehensive promising practices database from STOP-funded projects is under development.

Special Projects

In response to recommendations from the Urban Institute to promote projects from underserved communities, the STOP TA Project supported two initiatives focusing on rural areas: (1) training rural criminal justice systems to conduct safety audits and (2) developing advisory councils and providing training to rural criminal justice agencies to address the needs of domestic violence and sexual assault victims who are disabled, elderly, or women of color.

In April 1999, the STOP TA Project brought together researchers, state STOP administrators, and technical assistance providers to participate in an evaluation focus group to identify grantees' needs for technical assistance to collect data and carry out program evaluations. The STOP TA Project hopes to expand efforts in this area in 2000.

Collaborations

The STOP TA Project collaborates with other VAWO-funded technical assistance providers. For example, project staff worked with the Criminal Division of the Battered Women's Justice Project in developing a curriculum for a series of Advocacy Institutes designed to enhance the capacity of community-based domestic violence victim advocates to serve the needs of victims and participate in coordinated community responses.

Additionally, the STOP TA Project participated in the development and implementation of Judicial Institutes on domestic violence with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. It also worked with the American Bar Association to conduct a conference call and to plan an upcoming workshop on the needs of battered immigrant women.

STOP Technical Assistance and Evaluation Publications Supported by VAWO

The many research and technical assistance activities that VAWO supports have produced a number of publications and reports that may be useful to readers of this report and to others interested in developing projects to assist women victims of violence. Prior sections of this chapter have already described some of these materials and given contact information for obtaining them. Here we list other material, along with information about how to obtain it.



VAWO Stalking and Domestic Violence Report

VAWO regularly reports to Congress about the status of stalking and domestic violence. The third such annual report is available from that office.

- VAWO. 1998. *Third Annual Report to Congress on Stalking and Domestic Violence*. Washington, D.C.: Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

ILJ Reports and Web Links

The Institute for Law and Justice (ILJ) maintains Web links for domestic violence and sexual assault with support from VAWO. ILJ monitors Internet activity for new Web pages devoted to domestic violence and has now identified over 450 sites related to domestic violence. The information provided at these sites continues to be of three general types. First are sites providing general information about domestic violence for the public, including information about the incidence of domestic violence, its etiology, and warning symptoms. Second are sites providing information to practitioners, including police, prosecutors, physicians, and service advocates. The third type of domestic violence sites includes those directed at providing victims of domestic violence with information about where to obtain help. This includes addresses and phone numbers of advocacy organizations, shelters, police or prosecutor agencies' domestic violence unit staff, and hot lines. ILJ's link page to these 450+ sites is located at <http://www.ilj.org>.

ILJ has also created a link to sexual assault Web pages, identifying more than 250 Web pages with sexual assault content. This page follows a format similar to that for domestic violence: policy information, national organizations, and local providers. ILJ's link page to the sexual assault Web pages is also located at <http://www.ilj.org>.

ILJ has also reviewed state laws pertaining to domestic violence and sexual assault and conducted overview research on stalking. Several reports contain its findings, including:

- Institute for Law and Justice. 1998. *1998 Session Laws: Domestic Violence, Stalking, and Sexual Assault Legislation*. Alexandria, Va.: author.
- Institute for Law and Justice. 1997. *1997 Domestic Violence Legislation Review* (update of legislation reviewed in 1996). Alexandria, Va.: author.
- Institute for Law and Justice. 1996. *Domestic Violence Legislation Affecting Police and Prosecutor Responsibilities in the United States: Inferences from a 50-State Review of State Statutory Codes*. Alexandria, Va.: author.



- Institute for Law and Justice. 1997. *Review of State Sexual Assault Laws*. Alexandria, Va.: author.

University of Arizona Report

The Tribal Law Project of the Department of American Indian Studies at the University of Arizona has spent several years examining the ways in which the STOP set-aside for grants to Indian tribes has been affecting practices toward victims of violence among Indian women. Its final report is available from NIJ (grant number 96-WT-NX-0006) or from the first author at eluna@u.arizona.edu.

- Luna, Eileen M., Daniel B. Ferguson, Robert A. Williams, Jr., Robert A. Stafford, Agnes Attakai, Leah J. Carpenter, and Julie Hailer. 1999. *Impact Evaluation of STOP Grant Programs for Reducing Violence Against Women Among Indian Tribes*. Tucson, Ariz.: University of Arizona.

Justice Research and Statistics Association Report

VAWO supported the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA) efforts to review the availability of state databases that contained reports from law enforcement and/or prosecution agencies about domestic violence and/or sexual assault crimes and cases. The following is the most recent report of JRSA's findings, which replaces earlier reports. It is available on the JRSA Web site: <http://www.jrsa.org>.

- Orchowsky, Stan, with Candace Johnson. 1999. *Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Data Collection Systems in the States*. Washington, D.C.: Justice Research and Statistics Association.

The STOP TA Project's Promising Practices Manual

As noted earlier in this chapter, the STOP TA Project conducts a number of activities focused on identifying and disseminating promising practices for law enforcement, prosecution, victim services, and other agencies with respect to domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The project has written a manual describing these practices, which is available from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 800-851-3420 or by e-mail at askncjrs@ncjrs.org. The reference number for the manual is NCJ-172217.

- Kuriansky, J.A., ed. 1999. *Promising Practices: Improving the Criminal Justice System Response to Violence Against Women*. Washington, D.C.: STOP TA Project.

Urban Institute Publications

Over the five years of its national evaluation of the STOP program, the Urban Institute has published several reports and papers of its



findings. These are listed from most to least recent, and all are available on the Urban Institute's Web page: <http://www.urban.org>.

- Burt, M.R., A.V. Harrell, L.J. Raymond, B. Iwen, K. Schlichter, B. Katz, L. Bennett, and K. Thompson. 1999. *1999 Report: Evaluation of the STOP Block Grants to Combat Violence Against Women Under the Violence Against Women Act of 1994*. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.
- Bennett, L.E., and M.R. Burt. 1999. "Reaching Out to Women Victims of Violence in Underserved Communities: Progress and Pitfalls." Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.
- Schlichter, K.A., and K.M. Thompson. 1999. "Promoting System Change: An Evaluation of STOP Subgrantee Collaboration and Coordination of Services for Women Victims of Violence." Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.
- Burt, M.R., L. Newmark, L. Jacobs, and A.V. Harrell. 1998. *1998 Report: Evaluation of the STOP Block Grants to Combat Violence Against Women Under The Violence Against Women Act of 1994*. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.
- Aron, L., and L. Newmark. 1998. "The S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Grants: Program Implementation and Initial Funding Strategies." *Criminal Justice Policy Review* 9 (2): 233–59.
- Burt, M.R., A.V. Harrell, L. Newmark, L.Y. Aron, L. Jacobs, et al. 1997. *Evaluation Guidebook for Projects Funded by STOP Formula Grants Under the Violence Against Women Act*. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute. September.
- Burt, M.R., L. Newmark, K. Olson, L. Aron, and A.V. Harrell. 1997. *1997 Report: Evaluation of the STOP Block Grants to Combat Violence Against Women Under the Violence Against Women Act of 1994*. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.
- Burt, M.R. 1997. "The Effects of Victimization: What We Know, What Is Missing, and Implications for Assuring the Impact and Effectiveness of VOCA." In *A Report of the Victim Needs Strategic Planning Meeting*, Office for Victims of Crime and the National Institute of Justice, March 10. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.
- Burt, M.R., L. Newmark, M. Norris, D. Dyer, and A.V. Harrell. 1996. *The Violence Against Women Act of 1994: Evaluation of the STOP Block Grants to Combat Violence Against Women*. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.



State STOP Agency Subgrant Award Processes

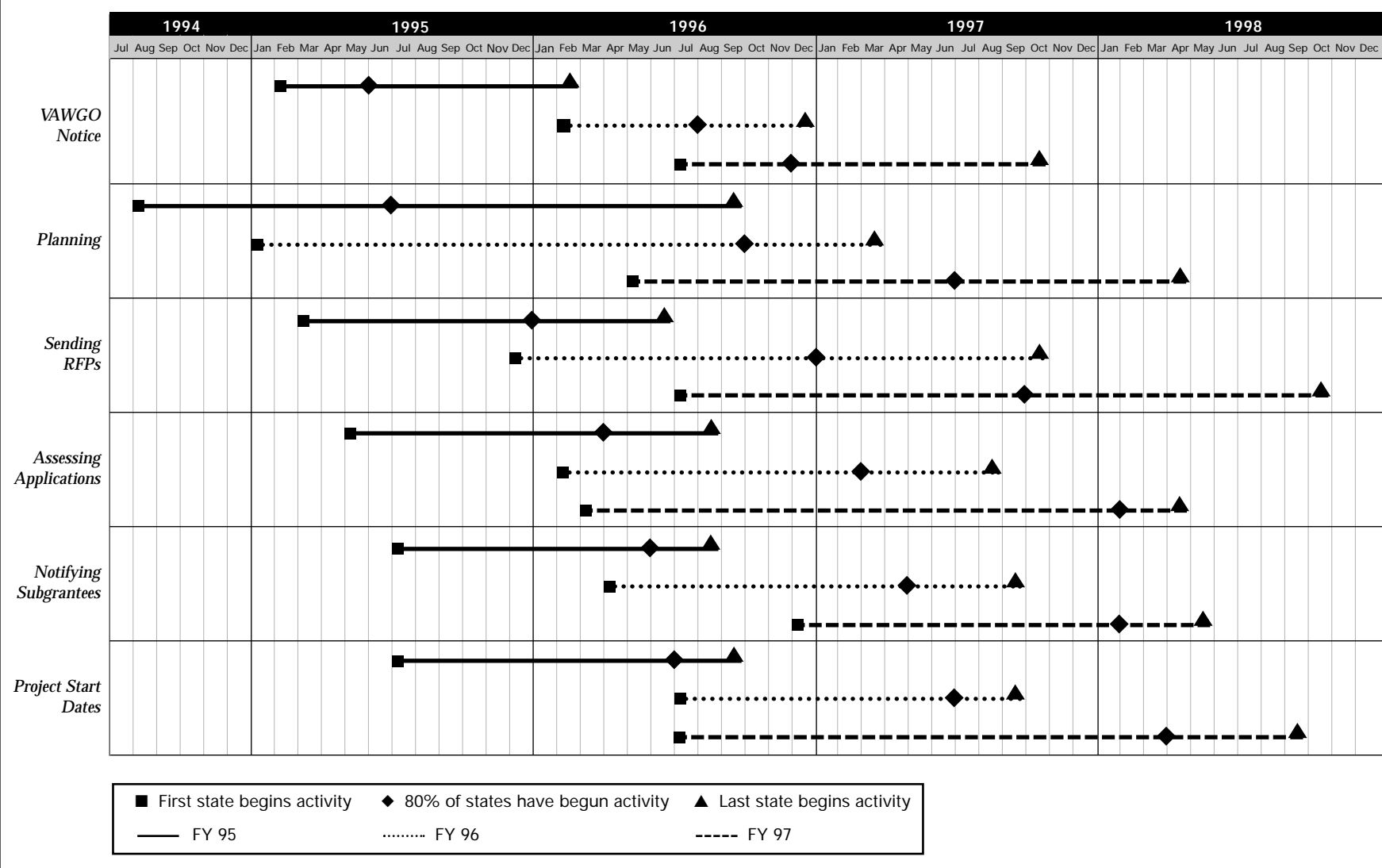
The *1999 Report* included an examination of state STOP agency subgrant award processes and timetables, based on a telephone survey of state STOP administrators conducted by the Urban Institute in summer 1998. Because the findings of this survey with respect to state timetables for awarding STOP funds are critical for understanding the pattern of reporting on the SAPRs that we have seen for several years now, we are repeating these findings in this report. Please note that we have not repeated the survey, and the data still pertain only to the first three fiscal years of the STOP program. However, there is every reason to believe that by the program's third year, state procedures and timetables were quite well established and unlikely to change in any significant way, so the findings of the 1998 survey are still valid today.

The State STOP Administrator Survey found that states generally follow similar processes for distributing STOP grants but vary a great deal in: (a) when they begin and end these activities; (b) how they carry them out; and (c) the time that it takes to complete them. For the most part, the award process in each state includes the same steps subsequent to receiving notice of the award from VAWO: planning, sending out requests for proposals (RFPs), assessing proposals, notifying applicants of awards, and disbursing funds. However, some states change the order of these activities, and there is a great deal of variance in the amount of time it takes for states to complete the awards process from beginning to end.

Figure 9.1 presents a time line covering the four and one-half years from July 1994 through December 1998 when states were engaged in activities related to the FY 1995, FY 1996, or FY 1997 STOP awards. Figure 9.1 highlights interstate differences in the timing of the various components of the awards process. Each of the six major blocks or rows in the figure represents a different part of the subgrant award process, as noted at the far left (from VAWO notice through the first subgrantee start date). Within each block are three lines representing the three fiscal years of interest (FY 1995, FY 1996, and FY 1997). At the left end of every line is a square (■) denoting the month in which the first state began the particular activity (e.g., the first state to receive VAWO notice of award for FY 1995 reports receiving that notice in February 1995). Somewhere along every line is a diamond (◆) representing the month in which 80 percent of the states had begun the activity (e.g., 80 percent of states had begun planning for their FY 1995 allocation by the end of June 1995). At the end of each line is a triangle (▲) representing the month in which the last state began the activity.

As can be seen, states are on very different time lines and have been from the beginning of STOP. For instance, the first state to begin planning for FY 1995 did so in August 1994 (even before the VAWA legislation passed), while the last state to begin planning for FY 1995 did so in September 1996—a span of two years and one month. The first state to begin each activity for FY 1997 did so

FIGURE 9.1 *State Time Lines for Distributing FY 95, FY 96, and FY 97 STOP Funds*



Source: Analysis of Urban Institute 1998 state STOP administrator telephone survey.
 N = 54 states and territories.





before all or even 80 percent of states had completed that same activity for FY 1996.

The variety in state time lines is especially apparent with regard to RFPs. The last state to send out RFPs for FY 1995 funding did so at the same time that the first state sent out RFPs for FY 1997 funds. Some of these timing anomalies can be explained by the almost simultaneous federal awarding of FY 1996 and FY 1997 funds (on average, in October and December of 1996, respectively), as discussed below. However, it appears that some states have become quite efficient at awarding funds while others are still struggling to make timely awards.

Recommendations

The first recommendation presented here with respect to VAWO activities is new, while the second and third are much the same as in years past. The need for continued technical assistance still exists, so these recommendations are repeated here.

- **VAWO should require all states to submit an annual report on their goals, activities, and achievements for the previous fiscal year at the same time they submit their grant applications and implementation plans for the coming fiscal year.**

Many state STOP administrators express their frustration that they never “get to show what they have accomplished.” At the same time, no source of information is available at the national level to reflect state administrators’ views on what they were trying to do, changes in their goals over time, the approaches they selected for moving toward their goals, their rationales for choosing those approaches, their efforts to monitor subgrantees and encourage them toward creative solutions to problems, and the extent to which they believe they have succeeded. Everyone involved in the STOP program (VAWO, the STOP TA Project, the evaluators, the state administrators, and subgrantees) would profit from having this information available.

- **VAWO should continue to provide more assistance to states and subgrantees in grants management issues.**

State STOP administrators routinely voice their desire for more direction, guidance, and skill building around grants management. Some states appear to use their funding more effectively than others. The expertise of the state STOP administrator in all aspects of grants management emerges as a major factor in how smoothly the funds are awarded, disbursed, and spent. When states are not distributing their full entitlements, it makes sense for VAWO to offer assistance in finding solutions that meet federal requirements and also allow all available funds to be spent. Subgrantees may also



benefit from outside assistance in identifying, procuring, and coordinating grants from multiple funding sources.

- **VAWO and state STOP administrators should promote more proactive cross-pollination and sharing of ideas, approaches, and materials among programs within and across states.**

Responsibility for this issue lies with both the state STOP administrators and VAWO. Even within states, and certainly between them, we often heard of more than one group “inventing” the same “wheel.” There is clearly a place for varied approaches and solutions that leave room for creative innovations, but all too often STOP seems to be funding very similar processes that could be streamlined by a simple sharing of ideas and procedures.

1. Copies of the videotape and binder are available from APRI (703-549-4253).
2. Copies of the handbook and the model policy are available from IACP at 1-800-THE-IACP or at the IACP Web site: www.theiacp.org.
3. *Violence Against Women Online Resources* can be accessed through VAWO’s Web site at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/VAWO.

Notes

Subgrant Activities and Performance

10 CHAPTER

This chapter examines the activities and performance of STOP subgrants as reported on Subgrant Award and Performance Reports (SAPRs). It also looks at the ways that subgrantees have met their requirement to match STOP funds with other funds to support the STOP project.

As explained in chapter 2, each time a subgrant award is made, either recipients or the state STOP agency files a SAPR reporting the size of the award and the intended nature of the project. The SAPR also contains a section for reporting what activities projects have undertaken and what they have accomplished with their STOP subgrants. This performance information is supposed to be reported at the end of the subgrant period, which is usually one year after award (although some subgrants are for shorter periods). Continuation funding from a different fiscal year's appropriation is treated as a new award and therefore requires a new SAPR, even though the *project* may view it as "next year's money." Thus the expectation is that every project should be submitting performance information every year.

As explained in chapters 2 and 9, a considerable amount of time elapses between congressional appropriation of each fiscal year's STOP funding and when projects actually receive notice that they can begin spending on their STOP activities. This lag time produces the general pattern of SAPR award reports at the time an annual report is sent to Congress, with very little information about the two most recent fiscal years and more information about earlier years.

Of necessity, performance data reported on the SAPRs have an even greater lag time. For the *1999 Report*, the SAPR database contained 4,433 reports of awards, but reports of performance for only 29 percent (1,282 subgrants). For this year, the SAPR database contains 6,527 award reports and performance information for 36 percent (2,369 subgrants).



STOP Subgrant Goals and Activities

This section reports information on project goals, as indicated on the award portion of the SAPR, and project activities for the same projects, reported a year later, on average. Project goals are assessed using award information about the types of service or activity the project expects to offer and the project's intention to address issues of full faith and credit for civil protection orders. The purpose area(s) under which the project was funded, which provides another indication of the project's intentions and goals, were described in chapter 2. Expected services and activities were reported under three general categories:

- *Direct services to the public*, including services to victims to help them through the justice or other systems or to help them with personal needs, such as counseling or safety; services to offenders; services to children or youth; and public education or awareness.
- *Activities to expand agency capacity*, including increased staffing; purchase of equipment or supplies; development of resource materials; development of data/communications systems within a given agency; and training, special units, or policy development for agencies other than law enforcement or prosecution.
- *Activities to enhance community capacity*, including needs or resource assessment or planning; provision of technical assistance; development of data/communications systems across agencies; coordinated community response and similar efforts; and evaluation activities.

Information on these goals was provided for 5,359 of the SAPRs in the database (82 percent). Thirty-seven percent (1,995) of the subgrants providing this information intended to address all three types of goals. Over one-third (1,819) intended to address two of the goals, and a final 29 percent (1,545) intended to address a single goal.

The majority of the projects (80 percent) intended to provide direct services, alone or in combination with other activities. Three-quarters (75 percent) planned to increase agency capacity (alone or in combination with other types of activities), and over half (54 percent) planned to increase community capacity.

Projects Addressing Full Faith and Credit Issues

The 1994 Safe Homes for Women Act requires that a civil protection order issued by a court of one state or Indian tribe shall be accorded full faith and credit by the courts of other states and tribes and be enforced as if it were the order of the enforcing authority, as long as the due process requirements of the issuing authority were met. While not a mandate specifically required of STOP subgrants, STOP funds may be directed toward meeting this provision of the act. Relevant activities can include training, establishing cross-



jurisdictional protection order registries, and resolving any legal barriers that may still exist at the state or local level.

As an indicator of the extent to which STOP funds are being used to promote compliance with Full Faith and Credit, the SAPR contains a question (Q15) to learn whether a project will address intrastate protection order enforcement, interstate protection order enforcement, or both. A total of 1,974 of the SAPRs in the database (30 percent) across 51 states and territories reported that they expected to address full faith and credit issues in some fashion. Of these, 1,940 projects (98 percent) said they intended to address enforcement of protection orders within their own state, 1,735 (88 percent) said they intended to address enforcement of protection orders across state lines, and 1,701 (86 percent) said they intended to do both.

The performance part of the SAPR is organized around the seven STOP purpose areas described in chapter 2. Any subgrant classified under a particular purpose area is asked to report activities and accomplishments pertinent to that purpose area. About one-third of all subgrants operate under more than one purpose area and are supposed to report activities related to each. This section reports the activities and accomplishments of subgrantees by purpose area.

STOP Subgrant Performance

Victim Service Projects

Of the 2,369 subgrants reporting performance data as of November 15, 1999, 69 percent (1,637) were classified as operating a project under the victim service purpose area. These programs reported providing a wide range of services (table 10.1), with many reporting various combinations of activities.

Looking first at subgrants offering direct services to victims, agencies reported a wide range of activities. The majority of these projects offered one or more of the following: crisis counseling (70 percent), an in-person information and referral system (53 percent), and follow-up contact with victims and criminal justice advocacy (51 percent each). Slightly under half of subgrants offered either telephone contacts or crisis hot line counseling (48 percent and 47 percent, respectively). Thirty-eight percent supported projects operating shelters or safe houses, 36 percent assisted victims in filing compensation claims, and 33 percent offered emergency legal advocacy. Twenty-nine percent provided group treatment or support, while 22 percent gave emergency financial assistance. Other activities offered by less than 20 percent of victim service subgrantees included therapy (12 percent) and services other than those listed above (9 percent).

The majority (55 percent) of victim service projects providing other victim service activities conducted some form of community education. Over a third (34 percent) provided planning, coordination, technical assistance, or training, while 20 percent of projects



TABLE 10.1 *Proportion of Victim Service Projects Offering Various Specific Services*

Service	Percentage of Victim Service Programs Offering Service (N=1,637)
Direct Services	
Crisis counseling	70
Information and referral (in person)	53
Follow-up contact	51
Criminal justice system support/advocacy	51
Telephone contacts	48
Crisis hot line counseling	47
Personal advocacy	41
Shelter/safe house	38
Assistance filing compensation claims	36
Emergency legal advocacy	33
Group support/treatment	29
Emergency financial assistance	22
Therapy	12
Other	9
Other Activities of Victim Service Agencies	
Community education	55
Planning, coordination, technical assistance, training	34
Systems change advocacy	20
Other	2

Source: Urban Institute analysis of FY 1995–FY 1999 SAPR data received by VAWO as of November 15, 1999.

were involved in systems change advocacy. Only 2 percent of victim service projects engaged in other activities that indirectly may have benefited victims.

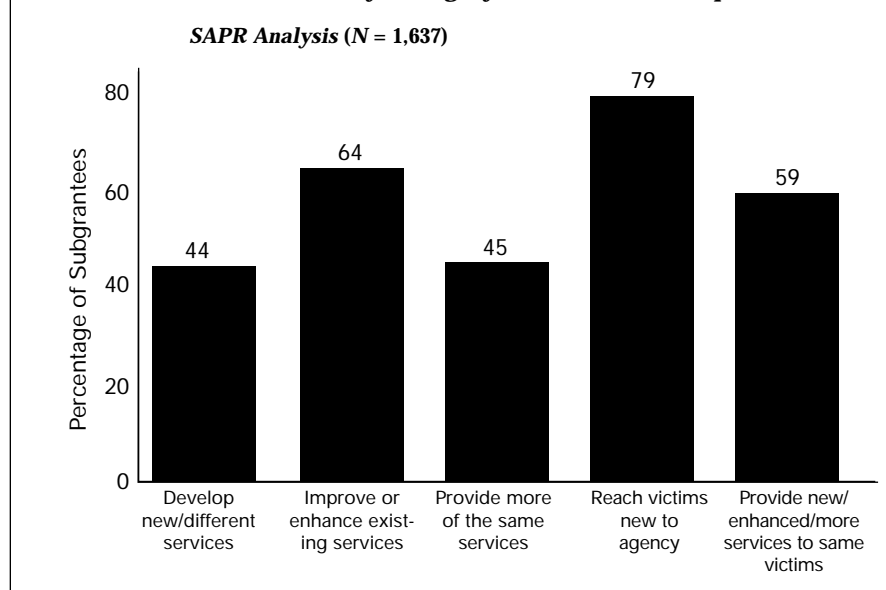
Also of interest is whether these services are new with STOP (that is, the program did not offer any service of this type before STOP), simply more of the same types of services that were available before STOP, or enhancements/improvements of existing services. In the same vein, it is important to know whether STOP-supported services are reaching women whom the program would never have been likely to see before (“new” women), whether STOP is letting the projects offer more and/or different services to their traditional clientele, or both. Figure 10.1 shows the results.

Forty-four percent of projects (715) in the victim service purpose area that supplied SAPR performance data said their STOP funding permits them to offer new types of services not previously available to victims, while 64 percent said they could now provide improved or enhanced services of a type they already offered. Forty-five percent are simply providing more of the same services that already existed. About half reported doing two or all three varieties of service expansion.

In terms of the population of victims these projects serve, 59 percent of the direct service projects helped the same groups of vic-



FIGURE 10.1 *Percentage of Direct Victim Service Projects Using STOP Funds, by Category of Service Development*



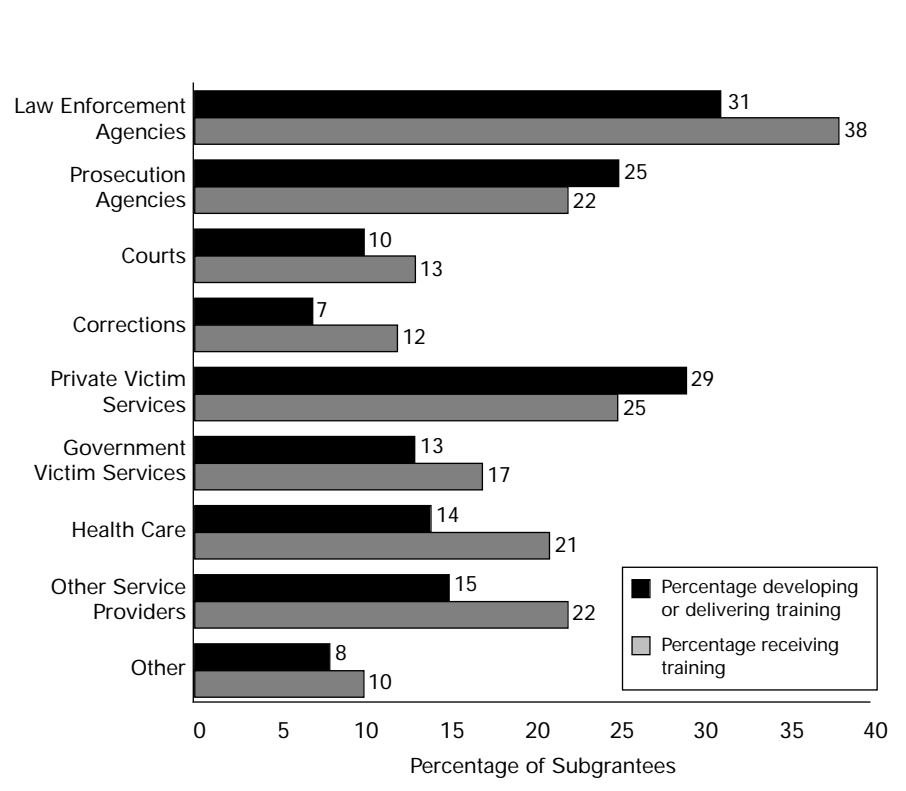
Source: Urban Institute analysis of FY 1995–FY 1999 SAPR data received by VAWO as of November 15, 1999.

tims who already received services, while 79 percent reported being able to serve victims who would not have come to the program without the STOP project. Responses to these questions make clear that the resources of the STOP program are being used to offer more services to more women. Further, STOP has enabled violence against women programs to expand the types of services offered and reach many women who in the past would never have received help to deal with battering or sexual assault.

Training Projects

Of subgrants with performance information, 54 percent (1,272 projects) conducted projects under the training purpose area. The SAPR asked these projects to describe the professions of those developing and receiving training, the total number of personnel trained by the project, the number of training sessions conducted, and any other training activities performed.

Law enforcement personnel developed or delivered training in 31 percent of the training projects (figure 10.2). Private, nonprofit victim service personnel and prosecution personnel developed or delivered training the next most frequently, in 29 percent and 25 percent of the training projects reported, respectively. Other service provider personnel were involved in training development or delivery in 15 percent of the training projects, health care provider personnel in 14 percent, public-sector victim service personnel in 13 percent, court personnel in 10 percent, and corrections personnel in 7 percent of the training projects reported. Other agencies were involved in training development or delivery of 8 percent of training projects.


FIGURE 10.2 *Percentage of Agencies Delivering and Receiving Training*
SAPR Analysis (N = 1,272)


Source: Urban Institute analysis of FY 1995–FY 1999 SAPR data received by VAWO as of November 15, 1999.

These projects reported training a total of 218,586 people in 10,668 training sessions or presentations. Law enforcement received training from these projects the most frequently, representing 38 percent of those receiving training (figure 10.2). Private, nonprofit victim service staff, other service providers, prosecution personnel, and health care providers followed as the next largest audiences, all with over 20 percent of training projects listing them as users (25, 22, 22, and 21 percent, respectively). Government victim service personnel made up 17 percent of those trained. Among all the agencies, courts, corrections, and other agencies received training from these STOP projects the least frequently (13, 12, and 10 percent, respectively).

Besides delivering or receiving training, 41 percent of training subgrants developed new materials and 38 percent revised or expanded existing training materials. Five percent of training projects employed new training methods. Other types of training activities were performed by 7 percent of training projects.

Special Unit Projects

Just over one-quarter (663) of subgrants reporting performance data supported special domestic violence or sexual assault units. Of



these special unit projects, 30 percent created new units, 38 percent supported or expanded an existing special unit, and 6 percent supported specialized functions for one or more members of agencies too small to justify a special unit. Only 3 percent reported other types of special unit activities. The remaining 23 percent did not specify exactly how STOP funds supported a special unit.

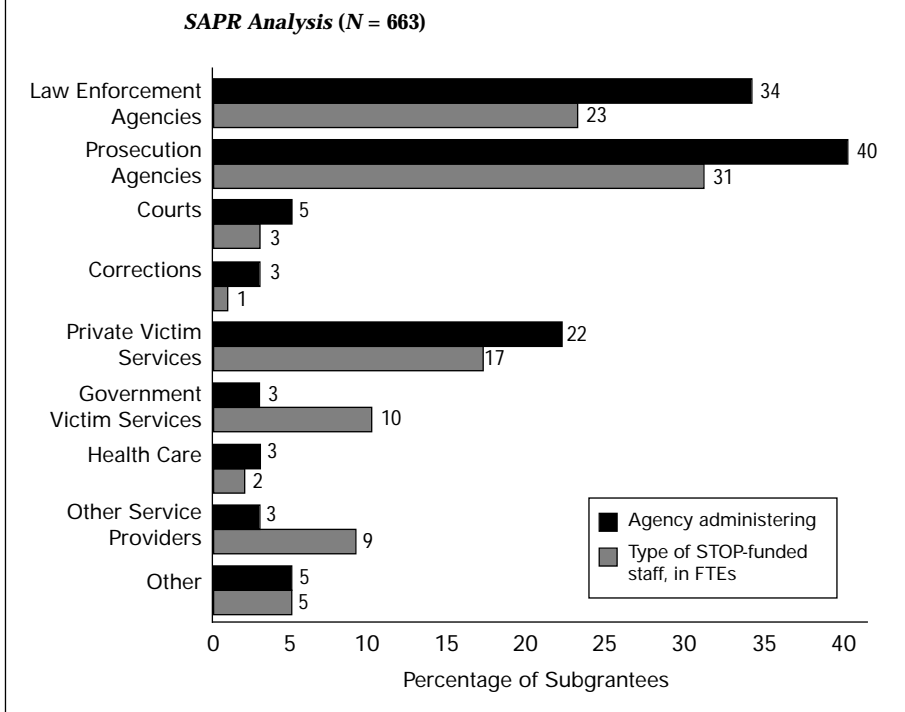
The STOP purpose area of special units is designated as special units in law enforcement or prosecution agencies. However, the SAPRs contain reports about special unit activity and performance from agencies other than law enforcement or prosecution. These may reflect several different circumstances, for instance, arrangements that team law enforcement and/or prosecution personnel have with victim service personnel, for which all or some of the grant money is in a victim service agency. Specific examples might be a victim service agency staff person outplaced to a prosecutor's office and working with special prosecutors assigned to violence against women cases, or the participation of victim service or health agency staff in first-response teams with law enforcement, for which their own agency receives a small grant or subgrant for being part of a special unit (the team). However, other arrangements appear to be operating without specific partnering with law enforcement or prosecution, such as when courts set up a special docket with a particular judge committed to it, or when a corrections department sets up a special unit to supervise convicted perpetrators on probation or parole.

Special units could have more than one administrative location, but very few do. Administration is located in prosecution agencies for 40 percent of the special unit projects, in law enforcement agencies for 34 percent of the special unit projects, and in private, nonprofit victim service agencies for 22 percent of the projects (respondents could check more than one response). Five percent of the special unit projects report the agency administering the unit is a court, while 3 percent of special unit projects report corrections agencies, public victim services, health care providers, and other service provider agencies as their administrators. Five percent said their special unit was located in some other agency (figure 10.3).

The total personnel staffing the special units reported in these subgrants is 2,153 full-time equivalents (FTEs). Of those, 62 percent (or 1,333 FTEs) are supported by STOP funds. Almost one-third of the STOP-funded FTEs in special units are prosecution agency staff (31 percent). Law enforcement FTEs represent 23 percent of STOP-funded FTEs, and private, nonprofit victim service staff represent 17 percent of STOP-funded FTEs in special units. The remaining 31 percent of STOP-funded FTEs in special units are distributed across public-sector victim service staff (10 percent), court personnel (3 percent), other service providers' staff (9 percent), health care providers' staff (2 percent), corrections staff (1 percent), and other agencies' personnel (5 percent).



FIGURE 10.3 *Special Unit Administration and STOP-Funded Full-Time Equivalents*



Source: Urban Institute analysis of FY 1995–FY 1999 SAPR data received by VAWO as of November 15, 1999.

Policy Projects

Twenty-eight percent of projects reporting performance data addressed policies, procedures, protocols, administrative orders, or service development. Fifty-eight percent of policy projects (389) used STOP money to develop a new policy, procedure, administrative order, or service, compared with 48 percent of projects that revised or expanded previous policies, procedures, etc. Seven percent of the policy projects also did other policy development activities.¹

These projects involved law enforcement and prosecution agencies most often in policy development or revision (45 percent and 40 percent of policy projects, respectively), followed by private, nonprofit victim service agencies (31 percent) (figure 10.4). Courts and health care providers developed or revised policies in 21 and 20 percent, respectively, of all policy projects reported, followed by public-sector victim services (18 percent), other service providers (17 percent), and corrections agencies (15 percent). Only 5 percent of subgrantees indicated that other agency types were involved in their work.

As one might expect, those agencies most involved in policy development were also quite often the agencies involved in implementing the changed policies, procedures, or protocols (figure 10.4). Sixty-six percent of projects focused on changing the practices of law enforcement, while 54 percent focused on changing prosecution practices. Thus law enforcement and prosecution were actual-



ly more often the focus of efforts to change practice than they were the people involved in planning these changes for their own agencies. On the other hand, victim service agency personnel, both private and governmental, were more likely to be involved in policy development for other agencies than to have to change their own practices.

Among subgrantees who cited the development of policies, protocols, or procedures for law enforcement, 82 percent cited improving victim and witness services as their focus, making this the most common area in which change was desired. Evidence collection and how to enforce applicable laws were the next most commonly identified subject areas (both representing 66 percent of policy projects). Almost half of law enforcement policy projects (46 percent) addressed how an officer should handle a domestic violence situation, and procedures to promote officer safety and training standards and regulations both comprised slightly more than a third of law enforcement policy projects (34 and 36 percent, respectively). Twelve percent of these subgrantees dealt with issues of cultural competence in their policy development, and 14 percent addressed other subject areas.

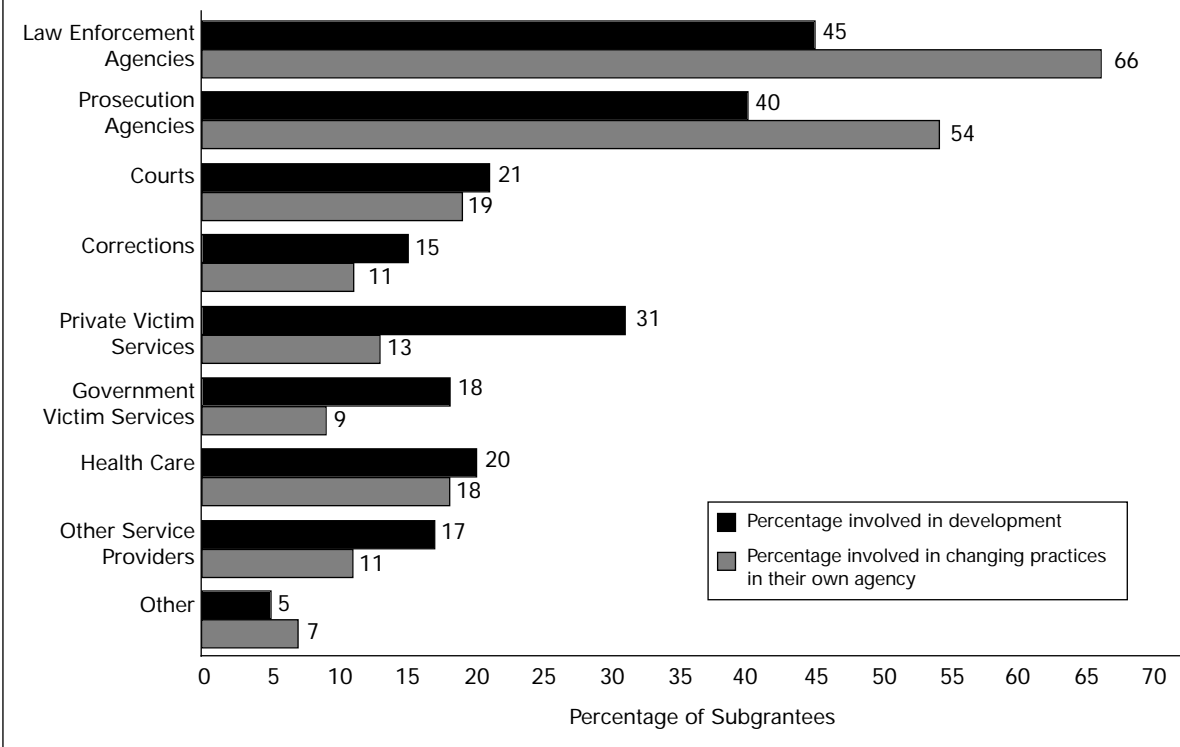
As with law enforcement policy, prosecution policy projects most commonly identified improving victim and witness services as their subject (75 percent of prosecution policy projects reporting). Just slightly fewer prosecution projects, 70 percent, targeted aggressive prosecution as the goal of their revised policies and procedures. Forty-four percent of these projects addressed methods of structuring prosecution offices and managing caseloads, 19 percent addressed how to make courts work better through special court structures or other arrangements, and 11 percent addressed issues of cultural competence. Seventeen percent of prosecution policies listed other subject areas.

Though private, nonprofit victim service agencies and government victim service agencies played an active role in revising and authoring policies, few policies were reported to apply to these agencies. Private victim services are the subject of only 13 percent of policies, and government victim services of only 9 percent (figure 10.4). Policies address issues of the courts and health care providers in roughly the same proportion as those agencies are involved in developing policies (19 percent and 18 percent, respectively). Policies concern corrections and other service providers in 11 percent of subgrantee reports; only 7 percent of policies deal with other agencies.



FIGURE 10.4 *Percentage of Projects Involving Various Agencies in Policy or Protocol Development or Implementation*

SAPR Analysis (N = 670)



Source: Urban Institute analysis of FY 1995–FY 1999 SAPR data received by VAWO as of November 15, 1999.

Respondents also specified the methods used to promote the adoption and implementation of the new or revised policies (respondents could indicate more than one method). The most common, reported by 37 percent of policy projects, was to enlist the support of top management for the policy development or revision effort (table 10.2). The next most popular response, used by 32 percent of policy projects, was to provide or facilitate staff training on the policy. Thirty-one percent of projects worked with other community agencies in the policy development or revision effort. Twenty-eight percent of policy projects formalized the policy in writing and obtained the official endorsement of the agency head, and 20 percent of policy projects publicized the policy by sending copies of it to other agencies. Three percent of policy projects effected changes in state, local, or tribal laws to support the policy. Finally, 4 percent of policy projects listed some other method to promote policy adoption and implementation.

Data Collection and Communications Projects

We do not report here on data and communication projects, because they are the subject of chapter 8, above. Chapter 8 includes the SAPR performance information about these projects, as well as the findings of the National Center on State Courts from its special evaluation of projects in this purpose area.



TABLE 10.2 *Approaches to Ensuring That New Policies Are Implemented*

Approach	Percentage of Policy Projects Using the Approach (N = 636)
Enlist support of top management	37
Provide or facilitate staff training on the policy	32
Work with other community agencies	31
Formalize policy in writing and get official endorsement of agency head	28
Publicize policy by sending copies to other agencies	20
Change state, local, or tribal laws to support policy	3
Other	37

Source: Urban Institute analysis of FY 1995–FY 1999 SAPR data received by VAWO as of November 15, 1999.

Stalking Projects

Only 19 percent (453) of all subgrants reporting performance information detailed their stalking-related activities, making stalking one of the least used of the seven purpose areas. Of these 453 stalking projects, 70 percent provided direct services to the public; 44 percent provided training, policy development, or other professional support services; and 12 percent reported some other project activity. The number of subgrants addressing stalking in relation to domestic violence and sexual assault has increased in the past few years. Fifty-five percent of the stalking projects addressed stalking related to domestic violence or sexual assault, while 13 percent addressed other types of stalking. Chapter 7 offers a lengthy discussion of STOP and other stalking projects, and issues encountered in developing a focus on stalking. Chapter 7 was prepared by the Institute for Law and Justice on the basis of several evaluation projects specifically examining stalking and related types of STOP-funded projects.

Indian Tribes Projects Funded Under STOP

Only 140 subgrants (6 percent of those with performance data) submitted performance information on programs funded under the Indian tribes purpose area. Forty-five percent of those projects offered direct services to Indians outside of reservations, while only 21 percent provided services to those on reservations.² Sixty percent provided training, policy development, or other professional support services, and 10 percent of Indian tribe projects reported other project activities.



Subgrantee Matching Requirement and Other Funding

The Violence Against Women Act requires that subgrantees other than private, nonprofit victim service agencies provide nonfederal matching funds of at least 25 percent of STOP funding. Compliance with the matching requirement was very high for the FY 1995–99 projects that reported this information. Of those reporting the status of matching funds, legislative mandates were met by 82 percent of the law enforcement agencies, 80 percent of the prosecution agencies, and 76 percent of other governmental agency subgrantees. These agencies reported a total of \$72,528,730 in matching funds, which is 24 percent of their total FY 1995–99 STOP award amounts. About 56 percent of matching funds were cash matches, about 43 percent were in-kind matches, and the nature of the other 1 percent is unknown.

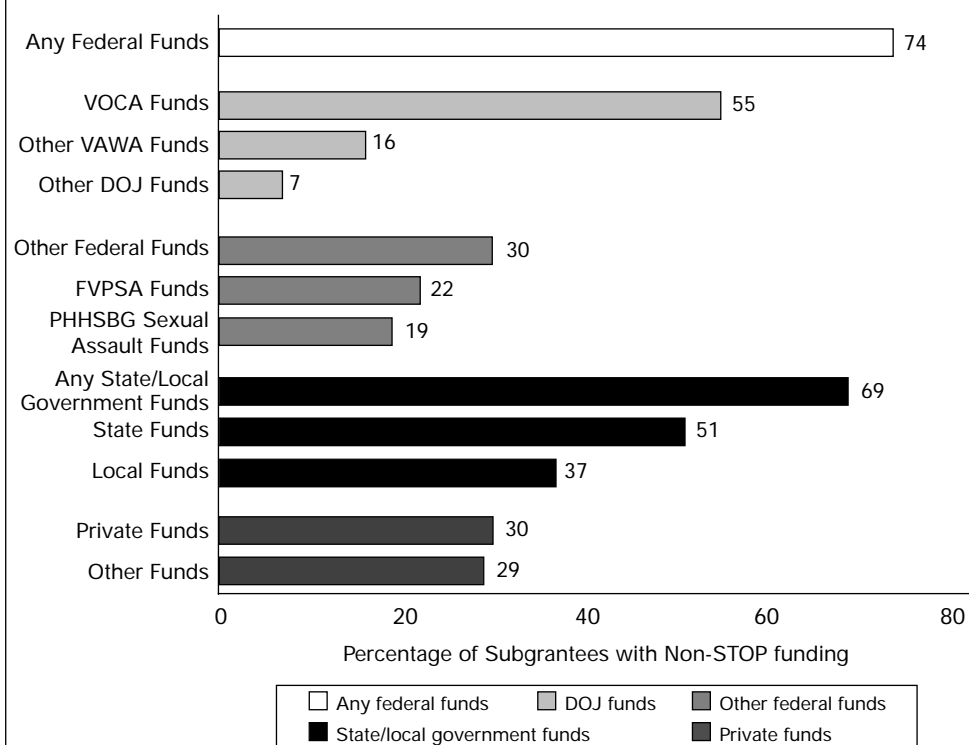
Although projects had a high matching rate, only 14 percent (916 projects) reported receiving funding outside of STOP and matching funds. This additional funding totaled \$331.1 million. Of these 916 subgrants, 74 percent reported that other federal funds also supported their project. These agencies received a total of \$175.5 million from one or more of other VAWA funds (such as rural projects or Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies), VOCA funds, FVPSA funds, other Department of Justice funds, PHHS Block Grant sexual assault funds, and federal funds other than those listed above.

Fewer projects (634) reported receiving money from local or state government. The 634 projects (69 percent of projects receiving any additional resources) receiving funds from either source reported \$132.4 million in supplemental funds from nonfederal government entities. Private organizations contributed support to far fewer STOP projects, with only 275 projects reporting any support from private sources, such as businesses or United Way agencies. In addition, it appears private organizations gave substantially smaller awards, with all reported private funds summing to only \$12,226,071. Twenty-nine percent of subgrants (265 of those with outside funds) supplemented their STOP projects with money from other types of organizations, for a total of \$10.9 million. Figure 10.5 shows the relative distribution of funding sources for subgrantees reporting additional money.



FIGURE 10.5 *Proportion of STOP Projects Supported by Funds Other Than STOP and Matching Funds*

SAPR Analysis (N = 916)



Source: Urban Institute analysis of FY 1995–FY 1999 SAPR data received by VAWO as of November 15, 1999.

The SAPR forms introduced in FY 1996 asked subgrantees to report any methods they planned to use to evaluate their projects. Nearly three-quarters of the subgrants (73 percent) answered these questions. Evaluation methods were grouped into three categories. One category includes standard project monitoring activities, such as site visits and progress reports. A second includes using statistical systems data (such as arrest records) to assess program impact. The third includes using questionnaires, interviews, surveys, or focus groups to solicit feedback from direct participants. Participants include law enforcement or prosecution staff attending training sessions, victims receiving direct services from STOP projects, and indirect beneficiaries, such as victims served by officers or prosecutors who have received training from STOP projects.

Thirty-seven percent of subgrants intended to use standard project monitoring as the sole evaluation method, while another 26 percent anticipated combining monitoring and statistical systems data. Almost one-quarter of projects (24 percent) planned to evaluate their activities based on participant feedback, 20 percent of projects intended to use feedback coupled with other forms of evaluation, and the remaining 4 percent planned to use feedback alone.

Subgrantee Evaluation Plans



Most (90 percent) of the projects that reported evaluation plans indicated who would be responsible for the evaluation. State administrative agency personnel were expected to be responsible for evaluating about three-quarters of the projects (72 percent), with subgrantee agency personnel expecting to perform evaluation tasks for another 63 percent. Only a very small percentage (8 percent) planned to use independent evaluators.

As the *1999 Report* suggested, these findings indicate that most evaluation activity will remain at the level of project monitoring and agency record keeping of clients served. For some projects, such as special units, whose job it is to expand the number of cases passing through the justice system and improve the handling of the cases, agency tracking data might be adequate to show project impact with respect to system variables. For example, if a prosecution office has a special unit for handling crimes of violence against women, and its data system allows tracking of all cases, the data system should be able to document increased numbers of cases and increased success in achieving convictions or other desirable outcomes. However, other projects will likely lack victim impact data. In many instances, the ability of STOP-funded projects to improve the long-term well-being of victims of violence may go unrecorded and undocumented.

Victims Served

Every STOP-funded project that serves victims should be reporting the numbers and characteristics of these women on the performance part of its SAPR. In general, we expect that all projects under the special units and victim service purpose areas should have information to report, as they are expected to serve victims. In addition, projects under the remaining five purpose areas may also serve victims and should report their characteristics. Over three-quarters of the subgrants (77 percent) did in fact report serving victims; a total of 766,174 victims received services through their STOP projects. Of these, at least 490,740 people were primary victims, and at least 78,487 people were secondary victims. SAPRs did not identify victim status for the remaining people reported.

General Description of Victims Served

Not surprisingly, the majority of victims for whom gender is reported were female (74 percent), while 9 percent were male. Reports omitted gender for the remaining 17 percent of victims.

Subgrantees had difficulty discerning a victim's age most of the time, not indicating an age group for 59 percent of victims. Of the remaining 41 percent, subgrantees reported serving victims 26 to 40 years old and 41 to 60 years old most often, each constituting 15 percent of all victims. Four percent of victims were 12 or younger, and subgrants served victims 13 to 17 years old and 61 or older the least (2 percent and 1 percent, respectively).



Victims suffered from domestic violence far more often than from any other type of crime (62 percent of those served). Only 11 percent were sexual assault victims, and under 2 percent were stalking victims. Because a victim could have suffered more than one type of crime, one cannot calculate the total number of cases where the crime type went unrecorded. However, at least 25 percent of the victims included in the reporting data did not have information on the type of crime.

For sexual assault victims, the SAPRs asked subgrantees to record the victim's approximate age at the time of the assault and also whether the victims were adults who were sexually assaulted as children or whether the victims were adults who were sexually assaulted as adults or adolescents. For 17 percent of sexual assault victims, the assault occurred during the victim's childhood, while 39 percent of assaults occurred during adolescence or adulthood. Again, because a project may count a victim in both categories, it is difficult to determine accurately the number of victims in each age group, but at least 44 percent of subgrants serving sexual assault victims did not include this information.

At least 69 percent of reports did not include any information on victim-offender relationships, but in cases where the project could identify a victim-offender relationship, the majority of victims knew their offenders well. Victims were related to their offender (by blood, marriage, or former marriage) in 16 percent of the cases reported. Victims were currently or formerly in other intimate relationships with offenders (boyfriend/girlfriend, cohabitation, have a child in common, etc.) in 12 percent of reported cases. A mere 2 percent of subgrants indicated that the victim-offender relationship was one of acquaintances, and less than 1 percent of victims did not know the offender.

Victims Who Are Members of Underserved Groups

Of the 2,369 subgrants with performance data, 44 percent reported serving women who are members of groups that may be considered underserved. Examining geographically underserved populations, projects served rural victims more often than victims from other areas (17 percent of victims served). Only 9 percent of victims came from underserved urban areas, and under one-half of 1 percent came from tribal areas. Three percent of victims served came from other geographically underserved populations.

African American victims represented 11 percent of victims served, Hispanic victims 10 percent, Native American victims 2 percent, Asian American victims less than 1 percent, and other ethnic groups 3 percent of victims. With respect to language minorities for whom communication in English was difficult or impossible, subgrantees reported only 3 percent of victims were Spanish speaking, and only 0.3 percent of victims (1,508) were speakers of an Asian lan-



guage. Other non-English-speaking victims made up 1 percent of victims served. Because only slightly more than one-third of projects have provided performance data to date, these figures may not accurately reflect the populations served by all subgrantees.

Of victims with special needs, women at risk (e.g., incarcerated women, prostitutes, substance abusers) were served most often (2 percent), followed by women with mental or emotional challenges and immigrant women (each representing 1 percent of victims). Other special needs populations that made up less than 1 percent of victims served included physically/medically challenged women, older women, migrant farmworkers, and lesbians.

Notes

1. Projects could indicate more than one form of policy development, so the total adds to more than 100 percent.
2. Again, because there is a separate program (STOP Violence Against Indian Women) under STOP to support projects run by Indian tribes for women on reservations, these percentages do not include any projects funded under that program.

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Appendix

This appendix provides a state-by-state analysis of the Subgrant Award and Performance Reports (SAPRs) in the database (that is, those received by VAWO as of November 15, 1999). Table A.1 shows, for each federal fiscal year, the number of subgrants for which the state has submitted SAPRs and the total amount of STOP funding accounted for by those subgrants. The lag time in state reporting described in chapter 9 (figure 9.1) is also evident in the state-by-state analysis. One state has not reported any awards for its FY 1995 funds, and several states and territories have not reported subgrant awards totaling all the funds they received for FY 1995. On the other hand, some states have reported awards totaling more, and sometimes *considerably* more, than they received in that year. A handful of states have not reported anything for their FY 1996 and FY 1997 funds, while many states have not yet reported the awards they made with FY 1998 and FY 1999 funds.

Some states tended to make mostly small awards, while other states awarded larger grants. In FY 1995 through FY 1999, state-by-state average subgrant sizes for the 55 states and territories reporting at least 10 awards ranged from \$1,335 to \$5,300,000. Project length for these subgrants averages 12.5 months and ranges from one day up to 3.5 years. Project length is not reported for 508 subgrants (about 8 percent).

TABLE A.1 *Subgrants Awarded, by State and Fiscal Year*

State	Number of Awards						Amount of Awards (\$)					
	FY 1995	FY 1996	FY 1997	FY 1998	FY 1999	Total	FY 1995	FY 1996	FY 1997	FY 1998	FY 1999	Total
Alabama	8	25	11	3		47	442,273	2,144,094	1,085,854	567,191		4,239,412
Alaska	5	5	3			13	381,318	675,500	2,103,300			3,160,118
American Samoa	5	5		8		18	246,381	337,982		512,120		1,096,483
Arizona	18	25		18		61	544,853	1,956,046		2,215,104		4,716,003
Arkansas	35	45				80	376,854	939,945				1,316,799
California	19	106	321	34	10	490	672,397	6,603,406	25,851,961	7,352,148	370,322	40,850,234
Colorado	18	49	53			120	386,372	1,691,925	1,246,236			3,324,533
Connecticut	10	10	7	3		30	611,567	1,511,015	1,329,796	1,522,869		4,975,247
District of Columbia	4	7				11	380,049	753,556				1,133,605
Delaware	10	16	22	2		50	405,046	780,880	1,019,315	84,937		2,290,178
Florida	23	32	35	49		139	589,096	4,454,764	2,961,880	4,855,256		12,860,996
Georgia	25	78	92	8		203	400,000	3,323,659	5,002,106	318,305		9,044,070
Guam	7	12				19	380,540	1,052,700				1,433,240
Hawaii	2	12				14	380,048	813,274				1,193,322
Idaho	23	15	14	2		54	392,446	850,250	581,857	24,840		1,849,393
Illinois	23	43	12	1		79	982,248	4,039,188	1,230,761	625,456		6,877,653
Indiana	15		7			22	375,755		367,360			743,115
Iowa	16	70	63	50		199	426,615	1,636,066	2,003,570	1,729,840		5,796,091
Kansas	5	21	13			39	361,923	526,254	612,484			1,500,661
Kentucky	15	38				53	410,642	1,130,690				1,541,332
Louisiana	52	26	22	5		105	485,141	579,699	663,544	121,792		1,850,176
Maine	6					6	114,729					114,729
Maryland	36	66	156	2			398,200	2,512,403	4,586,941	48,772		7,546,316
Massachusetts	32	189	31	81	93	426	781,560	6,509,365	1,089,772	2,485,849	3,690,698	14,557,244
Michigan	3		33			36	426,300		2,548,307			2,974,607
Minnesota	9	27				36	320,000	1,205,250				1,525,250
Mississippi	16	26	22	5		69	440,217	1,021,561	895,802	235,582		2,593,162
Missouri	22	84	58	27		191	395,565	2,847,150	2,323,578	875,340		6,441,633
Montana	20	27	23	2		72	401,518	768,119	813,471	24,105	789,607	2,796,820
Nebraska	15	23	21	19		78	398,752	1,012,670	1,114,036	1,006,750		3,532,208
Nevada	22	40	38			100	359,702	889,157	975,370			2,224,229
New Hampshire	26	29	38	2		95	392,534	862,735	825,555	15,000		2,095,824
New Jersey	10	49	11			70	1,152,931	3,567,082	695,934			5,415,947
New Mexico	14	25	49	42	31	161	383,536	687,174	559,429	454,600	759,486	2,844,225
New York	37	66	83	106		292	687,000	6,517,065	7,181,550	6,658,820		21,044,435



No. Mariana Islands	4	6			10		116,949	191,171				308,120
North Carolina	10	46	3	53		112	396,695	2,057,326	277,000	2,732,551		5,463,572
North Dakota	33	38	55	35	35	196	382,065	647,943	977,288	650,925	635,918	3,294,139
Ohio	3	77	40	53		173	504,778	3,705,024	2,615,451	4,078,032		10,903,285
Oklahoma	36	54	55			145	552,958	1,573,578	1,672,668			3,799,204
Oregon	36	45	7	58	56	202	367,285	1,475,293	222,347	1,206,777	1,841,747	5,113,449
Pennsylvania	3	29				32	300,000	4,849,994				5,149,994
Puerto Rico	10	7				17	1,881,645	342,166				2,223,811
Rhode Island	5	6	2			13	403,600	805,600	392,750			1,601,950
South Carolina	3	57	73	27		160	366,046	2,242,864	2,580,845	1,888,600		7,078,355
South Dakota		36	28	22	9	95		416,143	205,610	235,250	63,130	920,133
Tennessee	6	46	111	48	35	246	408,152	2,231,316	5,477,795	3,419,418	1,128,289	12,664,970
Texas	16	167	29	124	13	349	598,277	10,849,810	1,567,295	7,721,607	902,958	21,639,947
Utah	23	38				61	393,941	1,011,351	326,730			1,732,022
Vermont	12	3	1	10	3	29	899,432	40,150	5,010	682,841	160,154	1,787,587
Virgin Islands	11	4				15	472,330	239,126				711,456
Virginia	30	87	110			227	362,159	2,531,081	3,085,594			5,978,834
Washington	46	68	81	102		297	649,040	1,582,904	1,923,363	4,007,947		8,163,254
West Virginia	30	37	23			90	1,272,026	1,758,480	1,003,520			4,034,026
Wisconsin	11	55	47	26		139	281,119	2,470,184	1,651,905	1,483,079		5,886,287
Wyoming	9	33	4	51	21	118	393,545	1,549,527	95,343	650,940	155,382	2,844,737
Total	943	2,230	1,907	1,078	306	6,204	27,286,150	106,771,655	93,750,283	60,492,643	10,497,691	298,798,422
Total Amount Appropriated							21,280,000	117,330,000	127,660,000	135,890,000	138,400,000	540,560,000