

Designing Your Needs Assessment Process

Bridging Our Movements, Closing the Gaps

San Jose, CA

May 25, 2010

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Workshop Objectives

- > Outline basic guidelines for the needs assessment part of the planning phase
- > Review the required elements of the needs assessment plan
- > Highlight important issues for you to consider as you design your needs assessment and look ahead to writing your needs assessment report

Needs Assessment: Overview & Key Considerations

Purpose

> Short-term

- > Provide **practical** information on services for survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors, and how to improve them
- > Inform your selection of implementation activities
- > Increase buy-in and support for your collaboration's work

> Long-term

- > Collect data to use in future grant proposals

The Needs Assessment is Not...

- > A study of the incidence and prevalence of violence against women with disabilities
- > A study of how people with disabilities experience violence and abuse in their lives
- > An opportunity to publish your findings in a scholarly journal



Scope

- > Focus on the geographic areas your collaboration has decided to work within.
- > Focus on the organizations you have selected within those communities.
- > Focus on gathering information that will help you achieve systems change (i.e. improving cultures, attitudes, policies, practices, inter-agency relationships, etc.).

Basic Goals

- > Identify organizational strengths
- > Identify organizational barriers
- > Assess connections between organizations
- > Identify opportunities to enhance the capacity of individual organizations and improve the connections among them

Goals cont'd...

The specific goals of your needs assessment depend on your collaboration's mission, vision, and areas of interest.

Example 1 (Local Collaboration)

- > Goal 1: Identify the policy/procedures/practices that exist at domestic violence/sexual assault and disability organizations that address the needs of persons with disabilities experiencing violence and abuse.
- > Goal 2: Identify the gaps and barriers; and strengths and assets experienced by survivors with disabilities in accessing and receiving services at domestic violence/sexual assault and disability organizations.
- > Goal 3: Identify the gaps and barriers; and strengths and assets of domestic violence/sexual assault and disability organizations in addressing the issues of and providing services to survivors with disabilities.
- > Goal 4: Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the existing relationships between domestic violence/sexual assault and disability organizations.
- > Goal 5: Identify opportunities for change and/or solutions for improving services to survivors with disabilities.

Example 2 (Local Collaboration)

- > What is working well within and among our collaborating organizations in support of women with cognitive disabilities and mental health issues who are survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence?
- > What are the gaps or barriers that survivors with cognitive disabilities and mental health issues encounter when they use anti-DV/SA supports in and among our member organizations?
- > What policies and practices does each of our collaborating organizations have to address issues of domestic and sexual violence and/or support survivors who have cognitive or mental health disabilities? What policies and practices do we need?
- > What are the elements that can contribute to enhancing effective co-advocacy among the organizations collaborating in our system?
- > What support or assistance will each of our collaborating organizations need to continue our collaboration and sustain the changes we undertake after OVW funding ends?

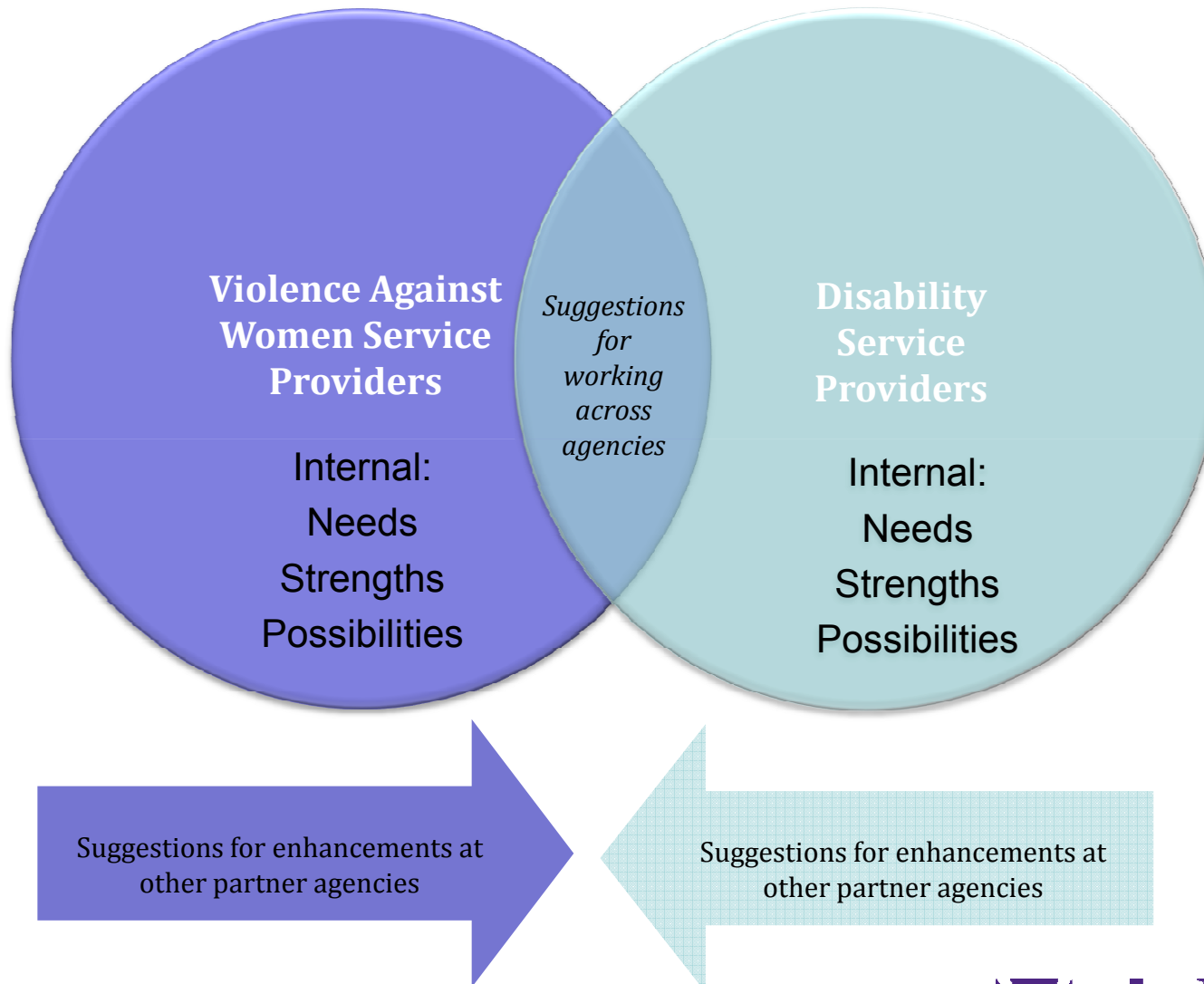
Example 3 (Multi-Jurisdictional Collab.)

- > What are the strengths and barriers that victims/survivors with disabilities experience within victims' services and disability service providers when seeking safety?
- > What do persons with disabilities and victims/survivors need from victims' services and disability providers to experience welcoming, comfortable and responsive environments? What exists and what is still needed? How do persons with disabilities know an organization is welcoming and comfortable?
- > What are the strengths, challenges and barriers experienced by disability and victims' services providers when serving victims/survivors with disabilities?
- > What are organizations' understanding (including the state-wide partners) of access and safety and how is this incorporated into policy, practice, training, budgets, community connections etc.? How can it be improved upon?
- > To what extent do relationships among organizations exist and how do they function together?

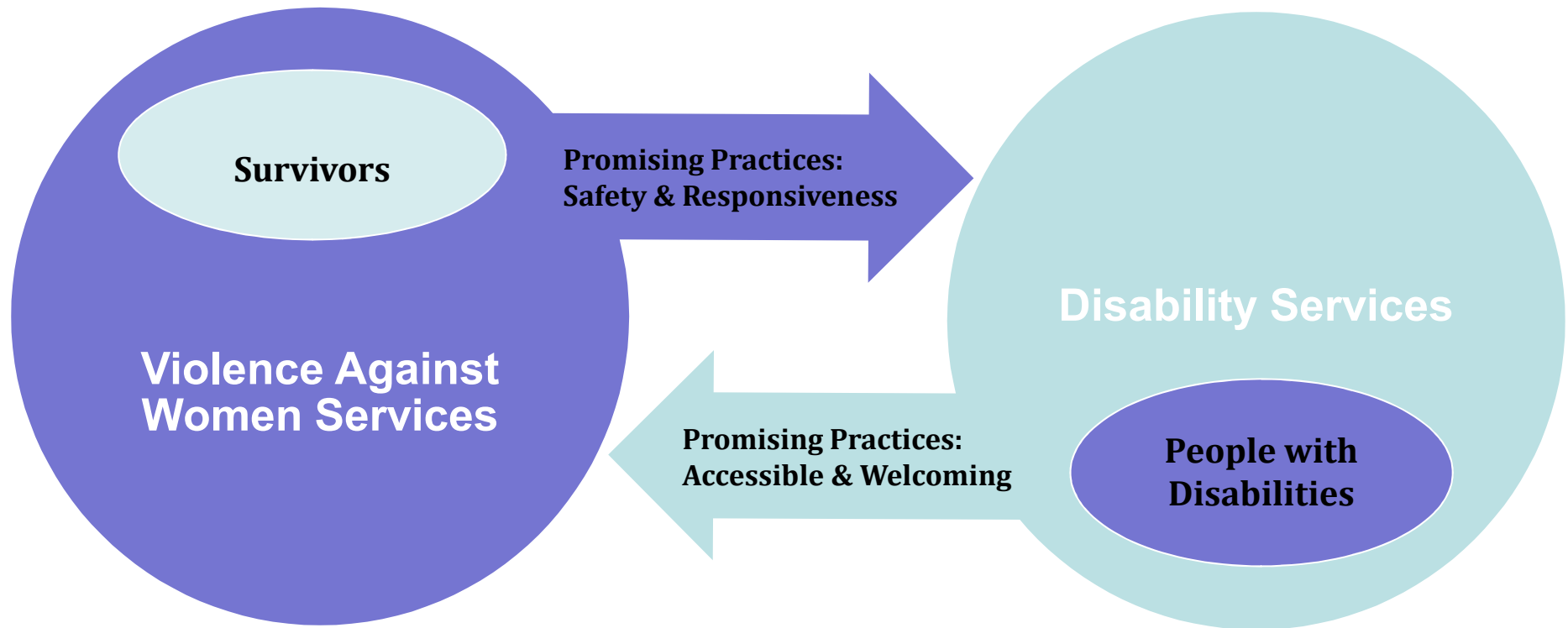
Engaging Key Stakeholders

- > Agency staff and volunteers
 - > Board
 - > Leadership and management
 - > Front line staff
 - > Volunteers
 - > Other stakeholders
- > People with disabilities
- > Survivors of domestic and sexual violence

Engaging Staff & Volunteers



Engaging People with Disabilities & Survivors



Engaging Survivors with Disabilities & Deaf Survivors

- > OVW has not routinely approved the specific recruitment of survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors in the needs assessment.
 1. Engaging this population may reveal individuals in need of services and service providers may not yet be prepared to meet their needs, potentially retraumatizing them.
 2. Given the lack of services, focus groups and interviews involving this population have a high likelihood of turning into support groups, which will not yield the type of information you need to develop your strategic plan.
 3. Recruiting specifically for this population and subsequent engagement of them can trigger mandatory reporting requirements in some states, which limits a person's control of the telling of their story.
 4. Recruiting this population specifically may limit the number of people you engage, as they may not identify as either a survivor or a person with a disability.

Survivors with Disabilities & Deaf Survivors cont'd...

- > OVW has granted a few exceptions.
- > Collaborations receiving those exceptions:
 - > Have a long history of providing services and support to survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors;
 - > Demonstrate that they meet base-line accessibility and responsiveness standards in their organizations;
 - > Engage survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors on a limited basis and in a way that built upon the services and supports already existing in the community.
- > Collaborations that do not engage survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors have gathered in-depth information about how to create safe and responsive environments from survivors and about how to create welcoming and accessible environments from people with disabilities.
- > Combining this information has given them a more complete picture of their service system and equipped them to identify numerous areas for change.

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Collecting Information

- > Emphasis on qualitative data
 - > Focus groups
 - > Interviews

- > Use of quantitative data is supplementary
 - > Pre-focus group questionnaires
 - > Surveys

Collecting Information cont'd...

Size depends on:

- > Availability of existing, relevant information
- > Size, structure, and staffing of organizations
- > Resource allocation (time, staffing, etc.)



Key Considerations

- > Accessibility
- > Safety
- > Other

Success Factors

- > Orient needs assessment towards systems change
- > Proactively address safety and accessibility throughout the needs assessment
- > Balance a cross-section of voices with feasibility & manageability
- > Engage all levels of organization
- > Meaningful representation of people with disabilities and survivors

Success Factors cont'd...

- > Thoroughly trained key personnel in the needs assessment plan and related issues.
- > Mechanisms in place to identify and organize themes on on-going basis after start of data collection
- > Balance confidentiality of agency specific data with knowing agency specific needs in report

Needs Assessment Plan

Purpose
Key Components

Key Components

> Introduction

> Goals

> Information Sources

- Existing
- New

> Overview of Methods

- Purpose
- Audience
- Number (engagements/people)
- Recruitment Strategies
- Incentives
- Consent & Confidentiality
- Safety Considerations
- Access Considerations

> Training Plans

> Work Plan

> RSVP Forms

> Scripts

> Tools

> Consent Forms (if applicable)

> Other Written Materials

Purpose

- > Fosters a thorough and thoughtful process to determine needs among your agencies and/or pilot site organizations.
- > Allows your collaboration to proactively identify and determine all of the aspects that will go into your needs assessment process.
- > Documents agreements among collaborative members about resource allocation (including individual roles, responsibilities, and timeframes).
- > Ensures consistency in conducting the needs assessment process.
- > Communicates plan to OVW.

Designing Your Needs Assessment

Next Steps

Next Steps

1. Determine your goals.
2. Identify who you will engage in the process.
3. Select the way(s) you will engage them.
4. Create the questions you will ask them.
5. Develop your protocols.
 - Recruitment
 - Safety
 - Accessibility
 - Consent and Confidentiality
 - Other
6. Develop other written materials.
 - Scripts
 - Recruitment/RSVP materials
 - Other
7. Assemble the plan and get approval (from agencies and OVW).

Documenting Your Findings

The Needs Assessment Report

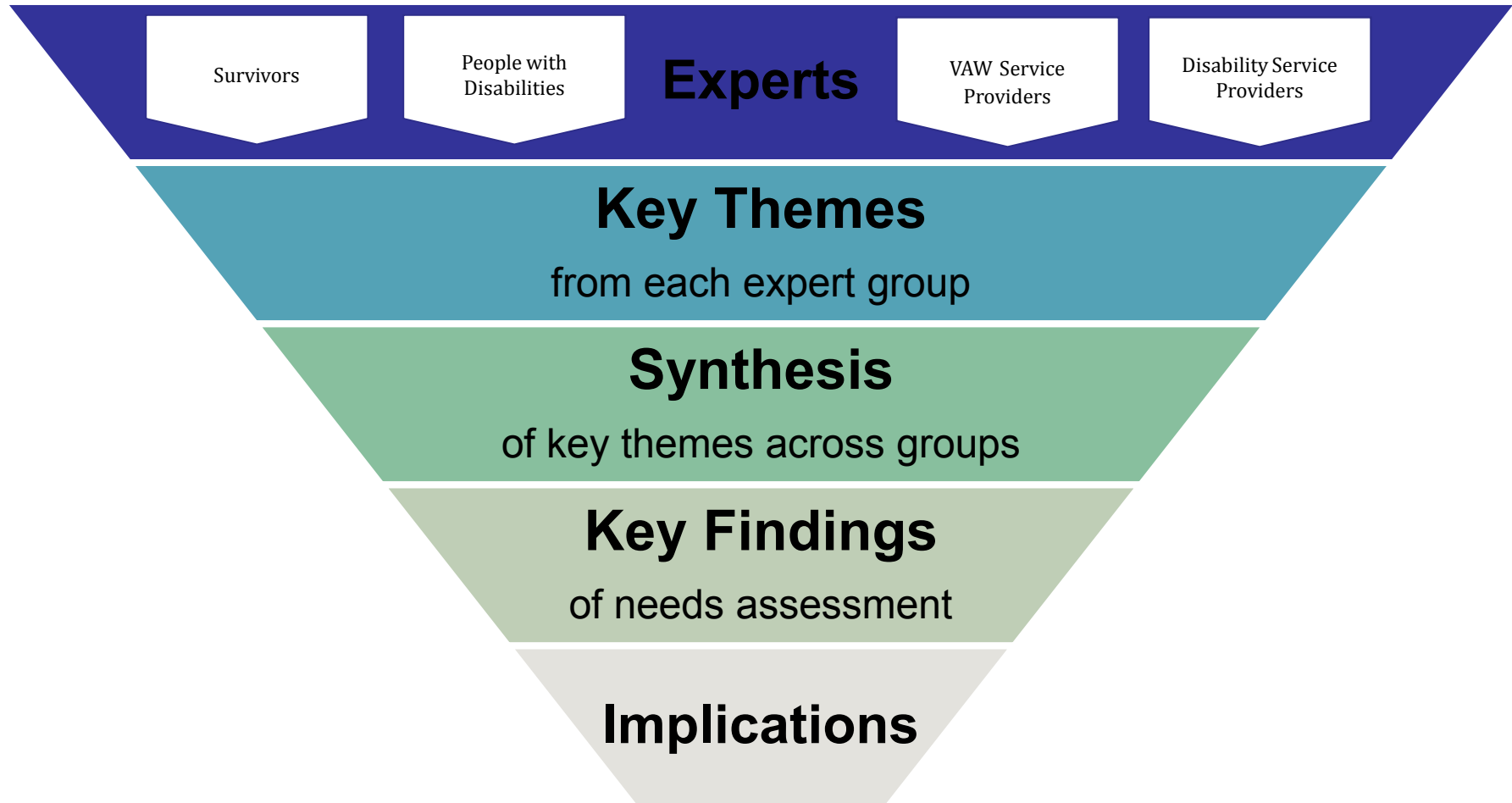
Key Components

- > Overview of Collaboration
- > Overview of Planning Phase
- > Purpose/Goals of Needs Assessment
- > Brief Summary of Methodology
- > Key Findings & Implications
- > Conclusion

Analyzing Your Data

- > Identify key themes from each engagement (i.e., focus groups, interviews, etc.).
- > Identify key themes for each key expert group (i.e., people with disabilities, survivors, violence against women providers, disability providers, etc.).
- > Determine the key findings.
 - > Synthesize information to paint a picture of that finding.
 - > Compare and contrast the key themes across expert groups to identify similarities and differences of perspectives around the finding.
 - > Collect quotes to further support the finding.
- > Discuss implications of key findings, including what they mean for survivors and providers.
- > Identify potential solutions.

From Needs Assessment to Strategic Plan



Initiatives