

Improving Responses to the Sexual Assault of Native Women

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with Rebecca St. George, Attorney

January 8, 2014

Please stand by for realtime captions. >> [Music] >> Hello everybody and welcome to this webinar on institutional analysis presented by Praxis International in partnership with the office against on violence against women. Today's topic is Improving Responses to the Sexual Assault of Native Women. Developing and fomenting emendations of community assessment. My name is Martin was and I manage practices, institutional analysis team project and I will be monitoring the chat during today's webinar and my coworker, lives, will be managing the technical details so I am going to pass this over to her now to go over some important participate patient tips.

Hello everybody. Welcome today. Just briefly I want to touch upon a couple of things for house this session will work today. A phone lines will be muted. This is a webinar. We will be able to interact a check of the webinar system but for any of you who might be participating through just the phone only, we want to incorporate your thinking at any time through e-mailing me so if you have any sort of questions or a technology issue that you want to pass my way, feel free to send a note to liz@praxisinternational.org. And I will do my very best to respond in a timely fashion.

[Indiscernible -- multiple speakers].

We do not -- one moment. I am going to mute the phone lines. Also, for the rest of you who are participating in the webinar session, I would like to just call to your attention that, in this chat feature in the lower left-hand version of your screen, that is your opportunity to throughout our session today dialogue with our speakers and with each other and so, when you look kind of in that lower left-hand portion, you will see the bottom of your screen a little opportunity for your cursor and your comments. So right now, I am going to ask you, if you Woodcock to type in a quick hello or let us know where you are participating from or if there are any of you that are participating as a team, especially if you would let us know if there are multiple of you participating from the same computer, just chat in a little comment. A hello. Or it is us, from a [Indiscernible]. There are three of us. Something like that. Take an opportunity if you would to please tell us a little bit about who you are or perhaps how many of you are in your program participating on this session today. And that will just help you get comfortable with the technology so that you can use it throughout our session today. You will also notice that there is a little tab that says private. Next to the tab that says public. Of course, when you click on that private tab, that opens up a list of the leaders of today's session so that, if you have any comments or a technology issue that you would like to chat individually with our speakers today, you can feel free to do so at any time. Just a couple of other quick details. If you happen to lose your connection, to either the webinar or to the phone -- just simply rejoin through whatever process got you into that place initially and you should fairly promptly reconnect and hopefully not too much time will have passed. Also know that you can always send an e-mail to liz@praxisinternational.org. If you are struggling with some sort of technology issue. Finally, this session is being recorded and will be available on the Praxis website. So after a couple of days, you can

look for it on the institutional analysis webpages of the Praxis International website. So I will stay tuned for the rest of our session. If there is anything that I can be of help with, of course, let me know. Otherwise, I am going to turn the call back to you.

Thank you. I apologize for any audio technical difficulties or feedback we are getting for me earlier. I hope you can hear me fine now. Before he began, I just wanted to mention that if you did not receive the materials for today's session from me via the e-mail you yesterday or today, please let me know in the chat. Or you can message me privately in the chat to let me know that you need those materials and I will send them off to you as quickly as I can after I do introductions here. I also wanted to let you know that immediately following the webinar, if you close out, you will be referred to a short evaluation of today's session. Please take just a few monads -- moments. There are just five questions and we use this information to help improve our training read events. Now I would like to welcome our trainers to the call. Jane Sadusky, I am pleased to announce, here on this -- for the 2014 webinar has recently come onto staff at Praxis as Praxis is senior research and program specialist. Her work on vested violence spans 30 years at the local, state, and national levels with shelter and apathy programs, coordinating community response projects, state coalitions, agencies, you name it. She has worked for them. It includes evaluations access the curriculum developer and straining and papers that synthesize research findings and practice. She has been working with Praxis since 2000 but probably even before then as writing with that. And now is -- as Praxis staff will continue to work with communities to support their analysis of institutional responses to violence against women. Welcome.

Thank you, Maren. I am delighted.

We are also fortunate to have Rebecca St. George with us. She was the coordinator of an audit -- a safety and accountability audit in Duluth Minnesota and I will let you -- let her tell you more about the role and her follow-up study and which is currently doing. So Rebecca, would you take a moment to introduce yourself?

I will. I will be talking about the audit throughout. That is what we are here to talk about. I am currently working as an attorney, largely because of the work that I did on this audit, which is one of my favorite things I have ever done in my entire adult life. I ended up going to law school and I am now working for the [Indiscernible] in northeastern Minnesota. Which is really fun and exciting. The audit itself came after a number of years of working for mending the sacred hoop which is a training and technical assistance organization in northeastern Minnesota that was with tribes around the nation, addressing sexual and domestic violence. I worked primarily with domestic violence for a number of years. I worked with batterers intervention and I worked as an advocate and a did a lot of training. I also worked as a volunteer throughout that time with the sexual assault program, locally in Duluth. It is not a tribally-based program. It is through that work, mending the sacred hoop and [Indiscernible] sexual assault program created a strong partnership that led to this safety audit that we will be talking about today. One of the things I did

after the audit, while I was in law school, also involve looking at racial injustice initiatives in the criminal justice system in northeastern Minnesota. Not directly related, but I am finding that every thing I didn't since then is pretty related to the things I learned through the audit. I think that is all I have right now for me. And the reason that Maren did not have a bio for me is that I just started this job a few months ago so I have not updated yet. So I apologize.

That is completely reasonable that you would not have that into us yeah.

[Laughter].

No worries. We are so happy to have you with us today. With that introduction, I'm going to pass this over to Jane. To dive in and I will be monitoring the chat. If you do have any questions or comments throughout the webinar today call please feel free to chat that in and I will help to Bob in and out with the discussion to get your questions address. So hi Jane, I'm going to pass it over to you.

Thank you, Maren. It is delightful to have everyone around our virtual table this afternoon. Most of the country seems to be falling out today -- find out today. Finally. At last. It is really terrific to have Rebecca here talking about the work that they did in this institutional analysis and safety and accountability audit. We have a lot of examples of different reports on the Praxis website. And the one for this project is one that lately I find myself sending people to. If you want to get a good picture of what goes into this type of analysis and this work in a community, and then also the kinds of things that you can discover and learn. About the response to violence against women. And what is really happening in women's lives. We are going to talk today more about what they learned and then how they implemented changes -- change as a result of that. We will start first with a little bit of contacts. In the e-mail that you got from Maren also referenced the video that we have online that provides a more detailed overview of institutional analysis and -- the Praxis safety and accountability audit. But for the benefit of folks who might not be familiar with that or who have not had a chance to look at it, very briefly, the Praxis safety and accountability audit is an application, a form of institutional analysis. So it is a way of looking how community systems are organized to meet people's needs. And to take up the realities of people's lives in that response. And it is looking at the ways in which all of those everyday car routines and practices of, affords ample, a 911 operator or a detective or a patrol officer or a prosecutor -- if we are looking at the criminal legal system -- the ways in which their work is put together to be aware of and recognize what is happening, to see the violence, and then respond to it in ways that account for what people's needs. Kind of the real simple, reducing it to -- it is a way of looking at how our work in community institutions and systems makes it better or makes it worse for people. And a couple of other things that I think are important to keep in mind as we hear about this work that took ways in Duluth are that this was not about looking at individual performance or effectiveness. It was

not going out to say -- the problem is this prosecutor over here. The problem is this investigator. It was advocates and people working within the criminal legal system, working together to set down and take a look at -- how are we doing? What is our response to the sexual assault of native women? What have we learned? What do we do about it? And how do we implement the conclusions and the findings that we've reached? So we are going to dig into that -- what you do and how do you make change using this tool of community assessment or safety and accountability audit. We kind of go back with those -- back and forth with those terms. It is often where communities can kind of struggle. They come out of the process with a lot of excitement and a range of recommendations, some small, some big science, some simple or complex. We will dig in today with Rebecca and find out more about how the changes actually got rolling. Once this work was complete. But before we do that, I am going to turn to you can't Rebecca, and ask for a little bit of context, kind of setting the stage about who do this work and the little bit of history behind it and then we will move on to looking at a couple of those specific recommendations.

Okay. I am guessing that a lot of you on the line have heard of the Duluth model, looking at domestic violence. So we started with a little bit about -- a little bit of a leg up. We had a long history of working between the mastic advocacy, criminal justice, prosecution, probation, all those areas looking at domestic violence so when we said we wanted to do this audit looking at sexual violence, we had some barriers but we already had a lot of doors that were somewhat open. What we were not really expecting was just how different the response was. We had a lots of anecdotal evidence from advocates and from native women and from women in general that sexual assault was not addressed quite as well as to mastic violence into the Duluth, which needs improvement as advocates as we know. But when we started looking more closely at sexual violence cut one of the first things that we found at [Indiscernible] was that we were given stories from these women saying nobody is responding to me. Nobody is doing anything. I have been raped. I have been to the please. Nobody's doing anything. This was mostly native women because -- they are -- we were a native organization. We started asking for numbers. We started asking for statistics because we knew from our work and domestic violence that and making institutional change, one way to get moving is to show up with some numbers instead of just the anecdotes. It is really easy for people in positions of power to sort of put off advocates who say this horrible stuff is going on and it is awful and terrible and everyone is being treated badly and then all of the people in positions of power say oh my goodness. They are hysterical. I know there was a bad situation but mostly we are doing great work. Without having some of that data to back up what you are talking about, it is hard to even start the conversation. Nobody had any numbers for us. Nobody was keeping any data, nobody seemed to be able to help us with that. So we started working more closely with [Indiscernible] which is the name of the sexual assault program in town who were very open to working with us and to figuring out what to do. There was a special project grant that came up through the state. We went after it with [Indiscernible] and were a little bit surprised when we got it. Almost disappointed because it looked like a huge amount of work. Looking back

now, it was a huge amount of work and extremely significant and kind of life-changing for a lot of people involved with it. We started looking at cases. Jane will talk a little bit more about how audits in general work and I cannot over emphasize -- I think everyone in the country should do an audit on their community, looking at domestic violence and sexual assault. And I think you should work with Praxis because they are incredibly helpful and incredibly -- they are good at holding your hand through the hard parts. So we went through this training, one of the things we wanted to do was to track a few cases from the time that a woman went to the police to say, I have been raped, through prosecution. What works? What didn't? Knowing that most kids were not being prosecuted we just wanted to see generally what was working. And what we found, we had three -- we had 2004, 2005, 2006 cases -- all of the cases the police had. That not one of them had even been referred for charging. That not one single perpetrator, alleged perpetrator, accused perpetrator, had even been charged with anything. I do not think any of them had even been interviewed. There might have been a couple that were interviewed. There were around 50 cases. It was pretty shocking. And it was something that when we talk about statistics and we talk about not using statistics because sometimes the qualitative analysis that Praxis talks about is ultimately what the audit does, but you do need some numbers and that particular number was really helpful in moving around -- that number being zero. There were none. We could not even start a conversation with the products -- prosecutor's office about what they were doing wrong because they weren't even seeing the cases. The reason that we really focused -- one of the reasons. There were a lot of reasons. One of the reasons we really focused only on native women was a fear that I think would have played out that if we did not, we would not look at native women at all because the cases seemed to disappear. Instead of just comparing, instead of the saying native women and -- we just looked at native women. And what we found through the course of our analysis which took a couple of years, was that native women certainly did report. We did have a lot of evidence that there were a lot of women who don't, like anyone who gets raped. There -- the vast majority never tell anyone but there were a lot who did. So we had all of these cases. We did all of these focus groups, which were incredibly helpful. They gave us the same stories as the police reports did. But from that first person perspective and that is part of what was so great about the focus groups was because they did not contradict what we saw in the police reports or what we saw in any of the other tracking we were doing, the interviews with the police officers, the ride a longs we did, they just used different language to tell us the same thing, which was that a native women would go to the police, they had been raped, there would be a police report, and nothing else would happen.

It was shocking. And it was shocking to the police who were involved. It was shocking to the prosecutor. Because nobody had noticed. Except for the women to whom it was happening. Part of what worked really well for our audit was that our audit team was composed not just of the criminal justice folks. And a few advocates. But it was specifically native women who were advocates. We had the people from the system who, interlude, in northeastern Minnesota, are predominantly and, in this case can't completely white people. Mostly men. And then we had a full

half of our team was native women. Mostly advocates, some just community members who we had identified as smart people who might be able to be helpful. Who were able to then really hear the stories that we heard in focus groups and translate essentially those stories -- not translate. I do not know if I like that word. But help the other people in the room understand. It did not happen immediately. It took a lot of work. In fact, in the first -- I would say the first six months of the audit, it was pretty testy a lot of the time. People not really wanting to talk or go there. People feeling defensive. At one point, we actually stopped the whole process because we were so stuck. And we approached traditional person in our community and she did a ceremony with us. It took us a month. Everyone participated. Cops, the parsing -- prosecutor's, they all participated. And it really got us moving. From that moment forward, we were really careful. We had been careful the whole time but this really gave us a -- another tool I guess to move together and to trust each other. And to really look fully and not just at the linear ways that the criminal justice system looks at things but in a more whole way that anyone who has been a victim of this kind of crime experiences and particularly native women and native people that we have sort of an understanding that it is not just about this point of contact that it is about how it is impacting your whole life and how the criminal justice system here -- here's that and response to it.

Rebecca, did that point at which you got stuck? Was that at the point there was this recognition that native women's experiences are in it invisible? They disappear? That not a single case had been referred for charging. Or was that a little before you got to that?

I think we had already sort of found that, but what was happening -- for instance, there were a series of things that happened. One of the pigs -- the ones that success to me was we wanted to start looking at police reports fairly early on. That is a pretty significant piece of what you are looking at. So we had redacted all of these police reports. Micro coordinator and I picked one, not by reading them but we kind of blindly chose one, brought it to the meeting, and it was a report where a woman had been in detox. And while she was there, she was assaulted twice. In rooms -- with cameras were people [Indiscernible] and she had gone to the police. With the help of an advocate and this happened to me. I was raped while I was in detox. And the entire police report on this was one page. And there was nothing. There was no follow-up. There was nothing. And we started trying to analyze this case and the law enforcement that was involved with it flat out said -- that is not possible. Something else must have happened. You just do not have the right information. And the advocates were there, which we found later. We did not know at the time. At one point we found out that the advocate who have actually worked with this woman was in the room working with us. Nothing had happened. There had been no follow-up. It turned into a useful twill as far as seeing how that happened but in that moment, what happened was that everyone in the room was passed. Either because they were being accused of something that they were sure was not possible, because that just seemed to were thick, were because they knew it was true and it made them really angry that someone could see it. So it was things like that where we just kind of knew that we needed more basis

to move but the dialogue got stunted because of how we felt. I remember going back from that meeting and Vicki a pianist who had been our practice TA provider at the time happened to be in Duluth at the time in my office for some other work and I sat down and cried. I just cried. And I said, I'm going to quit. This is not going to work. There is no way this going to work. Everybody sucks. And she talked me through it. She held my hand. We talked about why it was going on that way. And we started -- we just backed off a little bit. Go ahead.

One of the reasons I think it is so helpful to think about and actually read the report -- sit down with a cup of coffee and read the report cut it -- that captures some of this story is that you did stay with it. And you continued to hold that standpoint of native women in their experience. And through the integration and the combination of all of those deferred tools of institutional analysis, from mapping the case to the reading the reports come to doing focus groups and interviews can't you kind of brought all that together and carried it through to this point where you were able to sit down together. And you developed these recommendations. And I think I am going to move us along now so that we can look at a couple of those in more detail and then kind of loop act again to this discussion about how you set things up and how you move it along -- helped to lead to some successful implementation. Of several of the gaps that you had discovered in the process. So the first one that we pulled out is related to improving responses to advocacy. So you are not only looking at the piece of the way the police and the prosecutor get involved. You also decided to look at the role of advocacy in this. What were some of those recommendations? What were some of the changes that came out of the work?

Sure. A big thing that was going on with the advocacy program at that time was that the only native advocate they had in either their on staff or volunteers at the time -- for [Indiscernible] was me. I was the only one and I was a volunteer and I did not volunteer that often. So a lot of the time this lack of follow-up for native women was happening, not only with the police, but with the advocates. And it was much like with a lot of the police response, the advocate response was not necessarily -- I do not like her, I do not like her, I do not believe her, I do not trust you but it was more a matter of, I do not know how to follow-up. I do not know how to ache that work. And a lot of that was just a lack of diversity in the staff. They did not know how to work within dilute Indian community very well. It was not -- it was next. The response to the advocates, frankly, was kind of mixed. There was nobody got back to me. Nobody followed up. I felt like I had to explain who I was in a -- in a way that I would not have if there was another data person. There were also the stories of it -- that was the only place I could go where someone believed to me. So that was a little bit more mixed than the law enforcement response but there were still some fairly serious issues and it was -- to be really Frank, it was something that over at mending the sacred hoop, we have been seeing for a while that again it would be useful to have this audit and data to move forward with it, to say that you really need to hire some native women. You really need to do something to get more native women certified up set sexual assault advocates here in [Indiscernible] you have to have 40 hours of training. There needs to be more native women

involved, not just tokens but hired. We need more volunteers. You need board members. You need all that kind of stuff. You also need to be looking -- we, as advocates, whatever language you're using -- need to be looking at tracking these cases. Much the same way we do with domestic violence. It is really hard to have a conversation with law enforcement about how they are doing if you do not have concrete numbers about how they are how they are doing. So it was not only hiring and recruiting and working with more native programs and native women, women of color in general, which, I have to say, that [Indiscernible] is done in the last number of years. Their staff is only about 40% white right now which is a change from 100%. But they have also developed some tracking and monitoring. They have an advocate now working in the police department. With the Sergeant, tracking and monitoring these cases and being involved in how they are responded to so that is the systems advocate. So they have made a lot of changes that seem to be making a difference.

And it illustrates also the kinds of changes that the institutional analysis and the safety audit assessment is shaped around, which is looking in the and, recommendations for changing administrative practices, for instance, tracking and monitoring data, the shift in resources, so really making that concerted effort to higher native women and train them as advocates, maybe a little bit of shift in mission and role within an organization. So that you can then address this gap that you discovered in the work that you did together.

Rebecca, this is Maren. If I can jump in. There is a question to clarify whether the 40 hour training for advocates was just for sexual assault or was it for both DB and sexual assault?

It is just for sexual assault. We have no requirements for domestic violence in Minnesota.

Thank you.

Yeah. And I would like to jump in with the changes that [Indiscernible] made. There were some institutional things that have happened as well and stop me if I am jumping ahead too much -- mending the sacred hoop also made as a result of the audit. They were not necessarily recommendations of the audit. But there has been a lot more involvement with addressing sexual assault. They have got -- a number of grants looking at cultural he and we quizzically specific services. Looking at trafficking. Came out as a really strong scene. We were not looking in it and we did not go into it thinking about it, but with our focus groups, an awful lot of the women we talked to had been trafficked or enough of them had been trafficked. It was a strong NFC and that [Indiscernible] ended up hiring someone who worked with the American Indian community housing and is a really strong trafficking response that is being developed in Duluth because of that. Not only because of the audit but that gave voice to something that people also knew was going on. So there were a lot of extraneous things.

I think that is a great example of the way of thinking about things. How that can shift when you start to use these tools and this method

of asking questions about the work. Begin to see other areas and ask new questions about -- what is exactly going on for women in the community?

Yes. I think one of the most useful skills I learned through the audit -- at least I like to think I learned -- was how I listen to people. How to ask questions. Because so much of the interviewing, when you are interviewing professionals in the place and you are doing right along and you are doing all of these data collection things of people's experience, including the focus groups, you really learn to last -- ask the questions that you do not know the answer to and to really listen deeply and to find out all of the things you do not know.

That is an added challenge. [Laughter].

I have been doing this work for a while Eric I know this and I know that. But stepping back to listen. And watch and pay attention.

And as an advocate, you know, so quick for so many years, to be really -- frankly, to be really angry at what is not being done right and so to sit down with someone who you know is not doing it right and you just let them tell their story. Right? The number of police who said, at the time, things like -- no. We do not follow up with them and do the guys who rate them because do you know how many women do that? They get out -- they go out and get drunk and have sex with somebody and they are afraid their boyfriend is going to find out so they accuse the guy afraid. More than one law enforcement professional said that. And learning to be able to step back from that and say -- tell me more about that. Tell me how you know this. Tell me what you do with that. Without letting them -- you might be having this stuff going on in the back of your head -- holy crap . Did he just say that out loud?

[Laughter].

Take a deep breath. Tell me more copies.

Which really has served me well since then. Honestly can't you learn so much about people. And it gives you the tools not to punish

I because that guy who said that -- it was generally guys can't to be fair. Is working the system that supports that added to. So being angry with that person in that moment is not helpful.

And reflecting back -- larger community attitudes and assumptions about what is going on. Right.

If you can take something about that and say -- okay. You think that is what women do. Great. But that should not matter that that is what you think. How are you set up to respond to this woman who came in and told you that she went out and got drunk and somebody raped her? How are you set up to respond? That does not deal with your attitude that she probably didn't.

That is a perfect segue into talking about the law enforcement changes and some of those that were implemented and trying to put together the work of an law enforcement officer in ways that counter some of those assumptions. If not necessarily get rid of them, shaped the work in ways that they are not going to get in the way.

Yes. Sterling -- micro coordinator at the time was really fond of saying -- you can be the biggest [NULL] most racist, sexist at full in the world if you are working a system that does not allow those attitudes to express themselves, it does not matter. In a global sense, it does matter. In the way that we want everyone to love her one and be nice and all that stuff, it absolutely matters but in the realm of this person who is going and reporting this crime to this guys who might be that I can't he is not going to be allowed to be that behave that way if he is set up well. And one of the things that we found was that praxis told us a lot when we were getting trained to do this. People are really quick to focus in on training and say they need training. It is all about training. What we find is that training, while it can be helpful and you lose -- useful, without all the other things in place, it is totally pointless. We had a couple of investigators that told us they had never been trained on sexual response -- sexual us on assault response. Dave Ray. And I was in on one of those interviews and it was so interesting because I had actually been somewhat involved. I was peripherally involved with a really big training that was put together just a year before. They put a ton of work and money into it and got all of the investigators to come to the train. And he had been there. I had C I. At that training. [Laughter].

Did you remind him or did you just go along? And hear what he had to say.

I listen to him and heard what he had to say. He is a nice enough guy. He said no. We have never had any train.

I said well. I asked a couple of questions. I said so what about that training? Didn't I see you at that one? And he said -- you could see him think. Yeah. But that was not really training. That was a conference.

Interesting.

And I said -- I said that is interesting. What is the infer to friends? What is the conference versus the training? That is exactly what he had done. I remember him sitting and chatting with his body while the conference was going on.

Is training something -- I am looking at the changes that were implemented and I'm thinking -- as we shape those definitions of what is a conference and what is a training -- training intersex -- intersex -- perhaps in his mind more specifically with agency policy, the general order, and supervision of cases.

There was and accountability piece that was completely lacking that has changed since. It has changed -- you have the general order. The Duluth

police officer who was on our [Indiscernible] team was at the time the deputy chief of police and he went from being a bit of an apologist to come by the end of the audit, refusing to retire until some changes were made. Literally that was why he did not retire a year earlier. And at his retirement party, he said, the most important thing he felt like he had done in his 30 years as a police officer was the safety audit. And he now trains on it with some other people and talks about sexual assault and whatever. So they got rid of their general old order on dealing with sexual assault in general and rewrote it based on the safety audit recommendations. Piece by piece. And a big part of that was that there was no accountability and there was -- some piece of supervision that just was not happening. So you can train until you are blue in the face and if your attitude about it is -- I am just going there to Bush it with my friend -- excuse me. To chat with my friends. Then nothing is going to happen. But if your attitude is -- no. You are going to follow all of these other things and you might as well go to this training and learn how to do it right, then that is going to make a difference. Training is important but short of all these other things it is not going to do any good.

How do you think the specific tools and process and method of analysis that you used made a difference? For him. In his role as an administrator and a leader. Because clearly then he saw something. That he had never seen it all of the see his years.

I think that -- John would have to speak himself. But I think what happened was it was sort of that doggedly bringing him more and more information. I have to give him credit. He kept showing up. Right? Even in the face of people saying -- there is all the stuff going on, he kept showing up and he would read it and he would look at it. And it was data. It was just report after report after interview after focus group. The focus groups had a profound impact on the systems people there. I wonder sometimes if they would have if there had been -- how I am I going to say this. If they had actually known than the good names of the women in the focus groups. Frankly dilutes was a small enough town that you think they know that women and they already see her as XYZ. But when they just heard her voice and what her experience was, it was pretty telling to them. Maybe they needed to make some changes.

So often when we work in those roles, we are so incident focused. We set this task. We go to a call. We read a report. There is often very little opportunity to really hear those voices. In any setting. Other than that very narrowly defined -- here is a case I need to move from point A to point B.

Actually I glanced down at the little notes here.

[Laughter]. Those notes we made?

Not even those funds. I have got a question from Burma talking about native advocates working better than non-native advocates who have been raped.

One of the things -- I think this goes back to the composition of our audit team and also what happens with native women. The statistics of so many native women being raped -- we did not set out to fill our team with native women who had been raped to look at this. That was not any of the criteria. Tell us if you are raped.

[Indiscernible -- multiple speakers].

Exactly. Right? So it was like some here is somebody who is working in this program or I know her from this community and she smart. Right? One of the things that got us stuck in the audit process was realizing that in a lot of the native women on the team had their own experience, whether through themselves or family members. Sexual assault against native women is so prevalent that, as a native advocates, there is a really good chance you are going to have been raped, whether you have talked to anybody about it or not. I do not know many native women, if any, who have not been raped. So that question that you have about whether you can understand better as a native women, I think yes. Even if what you are as a native women has never been raped, you have a sister who was or a mother who was or and and who was. It is so prevalent. There is going to be a piece of understanding the sexual assault piece that is going to inherently come in much like understanding the cultural [Indiscernible] is going to come in. That is going to be tied together. As I'm saying that, I need to clarify or should I am not saying that rape is a culture [Indiscernible] versus native people. It absolutely is not. In fact, it goes against most native culture that I know. It has become a really prevalent piece. The majority of native women who are being raped according to a lot of statistics are being raped by non-natives. But it is a prevalent thing that happens to native women so having advocates not only as a challenge because of our own reaction if we have not had a chance to deal in some public way -- not public -- but in a way that helps us work with someone else and work with the issue of rape, it is hard to become an advocate until you have gotten to a certain place with your own healing. But at this point, there are more native women who are willing to come forward and do that but it is somewhat having that recognition that we have our own stories that are going to come into play. That comes into play when we talk back to law enforcement and help them see what is going on. I forget sometimes when I'm talking to people that, as a rape survivor myself, there is sort of -- I just think it is almost not worth mentioning. Of course I was raped. Whatever. Haven't we all? And every once in a while you will say that and people will say oh my God. You were right? That is terrible. It was terrible for everyone else. Let's do something to fix it. People forget that that is a piece of it.

I am wondering, in that reality, I just read a piece this week where a woman was talking about -- a native woman was talking about her experience being called for a jury pool. And as the questioning went, it turned out that pretty much every woman there had been raped and it was that recognition of the magnitude of what is going on for native women and then now bringing that forward. And I am wondering -- in that tension between a personal experience as a survivor and then in this process of analysis, this safety audit, confronting what is happening

in law enforcement and in prosecution, it seems like one of the things that might be helpful is this framing that happens in the process of looking at how it is organized. So trying to step into -- I am hearing this from this officer but I really want to understand what kind of policy is guiding him. What kind of supervision. What kind of protocols for interviews and what kind of training. How they see their role. Is that helpful? Or not as helpful as we hope it is.

I am not sure I understand your question.

I am not sure I do either. [Laughter]. It is thinking about the ways in which -- when we start to look at the harm that happens to women from rape, from battering, it is so easy to then not be able to really look at -- how is this put together? So that there is this response in from the police or the prosecutor or the child welfare system. We want to go right to that person doesn't care and does not understand. And the more that harm is in front of us can't sometimes the harder it can be. I am going to loop back to what you had mentioned earlier about the team getting stuck. Getting stuck in seeing the magnitude of the harm and the lack of recognition of that and the lack of response.

Are you saying -- how do not take it personally?

How do not bring that personal -- yeah. How do not take it personally? How do not bring that into the process? Or when do you bring in and?

Right.

We are kind of wandering here but I think that is a really -- I think that is an important discussion because I have seen a number of communities get really stuck there. Where they cannot move beyond it in the way that you have been describing.

I think there is two pieces. One is dominant culture way of doing things is that you do not ring that in. It is separate. I think the power of our audit was largely that the reason we had so many native women there was because we could speak to that experience and, yes. We got stuck. When we got stuck and I went to Roxanne and asked her to do a ceremony to us cop my thought was that native women in the room were stuck because we have got our own crap that we are dealing with can you help us with some healing? Her immediate response and here is this woman who I have never known her to do ceremonies with any non-native people. She has actually talked about why she doesn't. Her immediate response was -- yes. But we need your entire team there. You need to move through it together. And it was through that. I honestly think it was through that process that we developed the trust. That we were able to look at different pieces. It was sort of a see healing ceremony and I cannot talk a lot about it but the ceremony itself was not exactly -- at least the way express excelled was not exactly about the audit but it was about each of the individuals and the pieces we have to work on healing. That was not about anything like it. But it was about coming together in that way of recognizing our humanity I think and finding a way to have some really beautiful compassion for each other. That did a lot. It bonded some lifelong friendships. And real affection for each

other which is not necessary [Indiscernible] true for every person involved but it opened up a way for us to be people who had had some of these things happen to us sometimes by the people -- I do not being raped by the people in the room but certainly not responded to by people who were like the other people in the room in those kinds of positions and to be able to see each other as people who are working in a system that we all want to change and make better.

Was there any one who said no? I will not do this. This is not my job. As part of this [Indiscernible]?

You know what was funny about it? The non-native people on the audit, every single one of them showed up and were excited about it and talked about it. I think most of them will say that it was one of the more significant things that they have done. A couple of the native women did not come. And in fact one of the native women on the team ended up dropping out from the process completely. We have talked since then and she said it did get to be too overwhelming. One of the other ones who did not come, I think she had the flu that day or something. But pretty much everyone came and we did it at one of our audit team members houses, one of the native women who is on the team. It just -- I would say it was pretty much 100% a positive thing. I do not know how to translate that necessarily for other communities. I do think there needs to be some level of -- how do you develop trust? With each other that is fairly authentic and real and not just about doing -- I don't know. Free falls into their arms or whatever.

[Laughter].

Trust building stuff.

I am a big believer in -- you have to have permission to cry in this process.

[Laughter].

It really brings you up -- particularly keeping that standpoint of real people's experiences. And the harm that they experienced.

There is another question in the chat about the tribal response. To sexual assault. She is asking if there were tribal courts or tribal law enforcement. Rebecca, can you talk about how they were or were not involved and why?

Yeah. For this audit can't we specifically only worked in Duluth in the Duluth system. We looked a little bit outside into the county but the closest reservation to Duluth is Fond du Lac which is where I am working now. It is about 30 miles outside of Duluth. Fond du Lac Minnesota -- most of the reservations in Minnesota do not do much with sexual assault from a criminal justice standpoint. There is a lot of limitations. There are tribal courts. But we do not do any sexual assault and domestic violence. We do not do that. We do have tribal law enforcement and I am looking at your other question there. We did not work with them for this because they are all out on the

reservation. Initially when we started the audit can't we intended to work with Fond du Lac as much as we could particularly with our law enforcement and their advocates. But what we found was -- I think anyone who has done an audit will find that it is really easy to get to bed. It is really easy to big. It is really easy to look at things and try to fix everything because there is so many problems. So we spent the first two months narrowing. We just narrow. It started with -- we wanted to find out why more native women did not report and so let's talk to all the native women who have been raped and let's talk to all the cops who did not accept report. It just got really huge. So at some point it was more -- we need to just narrow. And we wanted to look at -- advocacy and probation and 911 and the police and prosecution and all of this. In the end we looked at law enforcement inefficacy. And even with that it was a huge project. But there are different ways of marrying your scope but if you do not narrow it, it is going to be overwhelming and it will never get done. I believe that. Jane, you can probably speak to that.

I am raising both of my hands and saying absolutely.

I will say it might take you five or six years to get AlterNet.

[Laughter].

Your information and your data has change.

Some communities do plan it out that way. If they decide they want to look at this using the criminal legal system as an example, if they want to look at the whole range of response from that first entry through 911 to what happens at probation and sentencing, they will kind of lay it out over a period of years. But somehow you do. You absolutely have to be thinking about that scope of things and keeping it focused in a way that you can work together and you can learn things and not kind of collapse under the weight of taking on too much.

Right. If I can use as an example the project I did after I left [Indiscernible] was the county looking at racial disparities in the criminal justice system. Our county got a grant to look at that probably. That was the grand. Right? Good luck.

[Laughter].

Small question.

[Laughter].

And I am really grateful to the sexual assault audit because looking at the numbers of what we have to work with with background and with that particular group of people it was easier for me to be able to speak intelligently to the fact that we had to just ask a very small question with that. What we ended up asking was -- what is happening with racial disparities in the pretrial realm? Of the criminal justice. In St. Louis County with felonies. Right?

Yes.

And we were able to make some fairly significant changes and find significant things and then this grant that we got through the American Bar Association we kind of became the darlings of them and I think essentially that that was because of our ability to narrow the question. To say we are not going to take the whole thing on because we just cannot.

But we are going to see where and how things are happening here.

Yeah.

At this early point.

Yeah.

That me magnify all along the way.

Yes. Understanding how somebody is treated pretrial is going to have exponential effects throughout the rest of their life but let's just look very narrowly at this piece. And it was a pretty successful thing. Back well, >> I am going to move us along a bit. I think we have covered a number of the things that we wanted to address but I want to check in before we wrap up in this, looking at the ways in which you develop recommendations and you move from recommendations to implementing change. Anything else that you want to add to these questions of the whose and the what's? How you brought people's together and who was involved and what they did together?

I do not think you can overemphasize the importance of relationship building with this. Much as we want to have almost a scientific look at it, you have to be able to develop the relationships with people. With that, and understanding that, no matter how important the audit is to you, it is still only a small piece of everyone else's job. And so that is part of that relationship building, T membership, there needs to be -- the voices of the people who are being impacted -- if you do not keep that primary, you are just going to lose out on so much but also if you do not really, frankly, suck up to the people who can actually make changes, who have a powerful place in the criminal justice system, you are not going to make the changes anyway. Even if you have strong voices. So finding that intersection of people with real institutional power and people with the power of experience. And finding out how to meld those can be -- it is challenging.

But it seems that that would relate to the scope point that you just made as well. That if your scope is so big and involve so many points and players, that is a lot harder to build relationships.

That is true.

And to identify who those movers and shakers are and develop a relationship that will help both support participation in the audit and assessment as well as move the change on.

Yes. One of the -- not to go off on too much of a tangent but the native women on the team -- there are a couple of them who said going into it, they felt like they did not belong there. Because we had the deputy chief of police and we started out this meeting with the county attorney and they said -- I felt like I was nobody and here I am sitting with these powerful people and I was afraid to say any things. By the end of the audit, those same people would say -- I finally had a voice in the system and now they will call me with questions. Right? On the other hand, you have these systems practitioners, white systems practitioners, who almost their whole experience with native people was when they were in trouble. So they had the opportunity to sit down with native people who were not in trouble and who were in fact very successful in what they were doing and really smart and were bringing them along into places that they only thought drugs and all, Hall and violence and to find out that our communities are much more than that was really important for the whole picture.

And how did you put things together and support a space where the native women who were participating felt like they could speak and kind of get beyond that sense of -- that person is the deputy chief and I do not know if I can really say truthfully what I am seeing and hearing and thinking.

Right. I think it was just -- we had an amazing group of people is what I want to say. I am sure -- maybe it was just the facility -- I think the coordinators were just amazing. I am just kidding.

They were.

I think part of it was -- starting out with the praxis training, part of what we did was some training on institutional racism that really was really well done. In a way that I had not seen before. So training with people who are ready to hear it. With that, we were really are full to bring in some cultural pieces. We started all of our audit meetings with a small talking circle and a little -- we would pass around the stage and we would just stop and be present for a minute and we gave everyone a chance to have their voice heard. The native women who were there were incredibly smart and strong and that ended up shining through. The systems people who were there were also smart and strong and very respectful. And they were willing to hear that as well. So part of it really was personalities and who was on the team. Part of that was by happenstance and part of that was by design. I think we got really lucky Frank we. We had a great team.

Well, and I will add for -- from the standing aside point, it sounds like you also build on that. So there was thought about who was going to be doing the work but then also on ongoing way of -- and space for people to speak and to work together.

Yes. And the way -- the way the audit structure is developed, the way that praxis has developed a structure, which is, when you are doing interviews to figure out who is doing what well, you train people on doing the interviews and you make sure that the person who is

interviewing does not know anything about the other person's job. In a way, that developed a trust. You have got these native advocates who kind of hate cops, some of them. Going and intervene cop sensing -- actually I do not know anything about your job. Teach me how it works. Teach me why you do things this way. It really opens things up and then the cop going over to the advocates office and say -- let's be clear. I actually do not know what you do or why. Tell me about it. Tell me what is working for you. Tell me what is not. So it develops a mutual respect I think.

And then, anything else you want to add about how you presented the problem? Why you decided to write a report? That often comes up. Do we have to write a report? Should we? What do we want to do with that? How are we going to share what we learned in ways that kind of set that stage for implementing the recommendations and making some change?

Yes. Well, I will be perfectly honest with you as far as deciding to write a report, it was part of our grand that we had to. And it was really hard and it took a lot of work. [Laughter]. But we also had a lot of support and I think, if we had not written report, most of the changes we made would not have happened. I cannot remember if we talked about it but when I was in law school, I did -- I did not talk about this yet.

The follow-up.

I did a follow-up study of the safety audit to see how things were going. As my seminar. What I found when I went back and looked at the generally poor that had been written and I was sitting down with the Sergeant. who had written it and I said -- wow. It looks like you really made some of the changes from the safety audit. This is great. And she said -- yeah. That is actually how I wrote a. I sat down with the safety audit report and I went through it point by point and that is how I wrote the new general order. Right? She would not have done that without a report because how could she have? She could have taken 17 different peoples voices and tried to put something together based on eight different filters or she could take this report that took forever and was really hard to write because we were not going to publish anything without everyone's okay so everyone on that audit team okayed everything in their report.

That is amazing.

Yeah.

It speaks to the implementation piece too. That there were not any sandbags dropped on people's heads or surprises. This was a very transparent process. Setting the stage.

Honestly, I have not really thought about it until just this minute, but that was the next place we got stuck was when we were writing the report in sterling and I came out with our first couple of drafts and we had people saying absolutely not. You are not putting that in there. But they would say , this is what we think. They would say no. Rethink

how you say. That is not how it goes. And going back and forth and coming to a place of consensus, being able to say that this is what everyone agrees with. We got mad at each other again but by then we were strong enough as a team that that was okay.

And was part of that -- people wanting to see more proof were saying things in a different way or a combination of those things?

I think it was more saying things in a different way and looking back at it. I cannot give you a specific example because I do not remember. It was five years ago now. More than that. But I what I remember is -- I just remember Leslie saying you need to say it differently. You just are making us sound that. Right? That is just -- it is not completely accurate and you need to change the tone of it. And she was not wrong. If everything you put down is just a accusatory and angry, people are not going to hear it except for the people who are already on your same page.

That is where I think those -- what we call the eight audit trails -- can really be your friend. Because you step back and you start thinking about -- is this a policy change that needs to happen? Is it a practice or the way a documentation or for more data collection needs to take place? Is this a resource thing? Is this a training? And I do think it can help kind of deal with some of that -- how are you saying this?

Yeah.

Challenge.

And that was when we wrote the report. We basically printed out a bunch of other audit reports from praxis is website and picked out what we like. And based hours on that. There was no -- there was not a lot of original thought that went into it.

There is really only about five key thoughts in the whole universe.

Right.

[Laughter].

Re-channeling them. But that is exactly what we would encourage people to do. Do not think that you have to try to do all this from scratch but go out -- now I would say, look at their report that amending the sacred hoop and the program to aid victims of sexual assault did interludes and have a really good roadmap for how to bring that together.

And you have those roadmaps. And they are inherent in those audit trails. They are inherent in the whole audit framework. It is just there. It is that you have to be able to see it and sometimes it takes a while to see it but it is all there. And it is all visible.

Which is exciting.

Rebecca, every time we talk about this I feel like we just get started.

I know.

And then it is time -- to say farewell. But we are getting close to the quarter hour. And I know that --

Let me say one thing before you go.

Yes. I am going to turn to for some final say towards.

I do not know about Sage words but -- about a year ago maybe -- I do not have it in front of me right now but, after I had done the follow-up reports that found that they made changes and were making some differences, our police department in Duluth ended up winning and international chief of police award for the work they did on the audit.

That is right. I forgot about that. I am glad you mentioned that.

Yeah. And this was -- they were not real excited about doing it with us. They did it kind of because we talked them into it even though opening yourself up to criticism from an advocacy agency is hard to do. They did it. They worked with us. And they got international recognition for it.

That is terrific. And to use an approach, particularly for police agencies who have an orientation towards community policing and problem oriented policing, it really fits. So when you can get the on that -- front end hesitation or reluctance, you have a perfect example with Duluth of how that pays off.

Yeah.

So thank you so much car Rebecca, for sharing this experience and providing a lot of food for thought about how to use this tool of institutional analysis and the -- praxis safety and accountability audit in your own backyard and I am going to turn it over to Maren who will tell us about a few things that are coming up in where to find more information.

Inc. you so much to both of you. I wanted to highlight for those of you who are in the middle maybe were thinking about writing a grant to the office on violence against women, because solicitations are rolling out right now. As we speak. The community assessment or the safety and accountability audit is something that the office of violence against women really support. If you are interested in learning more about how to write a grant to OVW that would include some funds to support and audit such as this call please contact us at the next slide. We will have our contact information. We have worked with a lot of communities to help write grants to include this. I also wanted to highlight that in our rural technical assistance projects how many of whom -- many of you might be world grantees, we have a rural leadership Institute in Phoenix Arizona March 26 -- many of you might be world grantees, we have a rural leadership Institute in Phoenix Arizona March

26-28. Registration is open for that and I will send up a follow-up e-mail that will have some links to more information about that. Also for a fuller training, a full immersion training on the community assessment or the safety and accountability audit, we will be hosting an Institute -- a training Institute here in St. Paul April 29 through May 2. Registration through that will be opening shortly, probably in the next few weeks. So check your e-mail for more information about that. One other program -- we support the advocacy learning center which is actually supported by the office on violence against women and we are accepting applications for a new class. It will be the 10th class of the advocacy learning Center and applications for that are excepted until Friday, January 17. And I will send a link about how to apply. And finally, same time, same date, same channel, next month, February 12 have we will be talking about [Indiscernible] who is the coordinator for the [Indiscernible] project in New Orleans Louisiana on using the community assessment to improve responses to African American and women who through abused violence and that is going to be a very compelling discussion just like today between Jane and Rebecca. So I will send an e-mail that will include all of that information so you can have that ready at your fingertips. If you have any follow-up questions or anything's you want to talk about, please e-mail me or call me directly or Jane as well. We are happy to take your calls. With that come I will just say that Monday representing the second year of losing our 11 director Ellen pence and she would always close out these audio conferences and webinars by saying -- just remember somebody or something out there probably loves you. If it is not your mother get over it. [Laughter].

[Laughter].

Thanks Maren. I know my delivery is not as good answers. I am working on it. But I appreciate you.

I appreciate you humoring me and letting me say that in her memory. Thank you everybody. Have a great week.

Stay warm.

Stay warm. Yes. >> Are we still on?

Yes. We are. People are disconnect

This is the operator. I am moving you over now. Just one moment.

Thank you.

[Event Concluded]