

Using Community Assessment in Tribal Communities

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- **[Voiceover]** Hello everyone and welcome to this webinar on Assessing, Using Community Assessments in Tribal Communities transferred by Praxis International in partnership with the Auto Sun Violence Against Women. My name is Denise Eng and I am a program manager here at Praxis. And to get us started I would like to turn this over to my colleague Liz Carlson who will tell us about the technical aspects of this webinar. Liz?

- **[Voiceover]** Thank you Denise. Hi everybody, welcome today. So just briefly I want to review a few webinar tips in case there are any of you who have not participated in one of our sessions previously. There's a couple of things that will just smooth over the process for you. If anyone is participating just by telephone only, the lines will be muted. There won't be a way for you to interact directly with our speaker. So the best way for you to share your comments or your questions will be through email. You could send a note to liz@praxisinternational.org and I will do what I can to get your question integrated into the dialog between our speakers. For the rest of us, and there's kind of a small handful of us on the session right now, that are participating in the webinar, the way in which you will connect, interact with our speakers will be through the chat box. That's in the lower left hand portion of your screen. And just as for a moment of practice, If you could all chat in a little hello or let us know where you are calling from, participating from. If you have a coworker, colleague that's joining you. Just take a moment. There's a few hellos that are coming in now. Take a moment to share with the group. It's just always such a friendly way to get a webinar started. So thanks all of you for doing that. And keep in mind that you are welcome to utilize that chat throughout our session today. You'll also notice in that chat box that there is a tab that's greyed out that says private. If you have a question or a comment to make directly to one of our speakers, open that private tab and double click on one of the speakers listed there. And that will be just a private line, a private connection between you and that person so that if it's a question or perhaps a technology issue, you can just have that private conference behind the scenes with myself or our speakers today. Couple of other things and that is to let you know that on this webinar, it's being recorded so you will be able to call up this recording and share it with your colleagues if you happen to miss any of it today. If you do get disconnected, either through the telephone or the webinar platform, simply rejoin through your original process. It should get you back where you belong. So with that, I'm going to turn our session back to Denise for a little more introduction with today's topic. And she will introduce her speakers. Denise, are you there?

- **[Voiceover]** I'm here. Thanks Liz. As I said earlier, today's topic is Using Community Assessments in Tribal Communities. And we are very fortunate to have with us a couple of people who are gonna help us with today's webinar. You've already met my Praxis colleague Liz Carlson. In addition to Liz, we are fortunate to have with us Jeremy Nevelles-Sorell. Jeremy is the co-director of Mending the Sacred Hoop in Duluth Minnesota where he provides training and technical assistance all around the country on

issues related to domestic violence in families. Jeremy is a fighter for Jibway and he has had quite a bit of experience in working with communities doing community assessments. So I would like to welcome you Jeremy, and you wanna say hello?

- **[Voiceover]** Buju Hanin, nice to be here with everyone today.

- **[Voiceover]** Thanks Jeremy. And then I also have with us, my other Praxis colleague Jolene Ingle-King. Jolene is a fairly new staff member here at Praxis. She worked in our Advocacy and Marine Center. And Jolene has a long history of working in the area of Sexual Assault as an Advocate working the Rural Advocacy program and was Program Coordinator at the Anishinabi Equate Program where she developed some culturally specific services for native women. So I'd also like to welcome Jolene and give you an opportunity to say hello.

- **[Voiceover]** Hello everyone.

- **[Voiceover]** What I wanna do is spend a little bit of time first of all talking about the Safety and Accountability Audit. Some of you may not be familiar with that that is and so just as a little background in case we have some folks on the line who aren't familiar with audits. I wanna just kinda tell you a little bit about what that is. We also refer to the audit as community assessment or institutional analysis, we tend to use those words interchangeably here at Praxis. They may not have the same precise meaning but we tend to kind of use them interchangeably. The Safety and Accountability Audit or Community Assessment was developed by the Praxis Founding Director Dr. Ellen Penn. When she did her PHD work at the University of Toronto in their sociology department. Ellen found a way or created a way of using a sociological method of inquiry to look at how different agencies or institutions within a community do or do not account for the real life experiences of victims of violence. How they do or do not account for safety of victims or hold perpetrators accountable for their use of violence. What an audit or assessment does is it brings together an inter-agency team to engage in a process of looking for how gaps occur between what victims of violence need from an institution or an agency, for example a police department, and what that institution or agency actually does. And so the team sets out to do a number of activities in the community by interviewing people, watching people at work, talking with victims of violence, reading reports generated by those agencies or other documents that help them to understand how work is organized to produce a particular result. It doesn't look at performance of individual workers. It's really looking at the whole structure of how to work a curve. And so that method has been applied in probably over a hundred different projects around the country. Looking at how institutions respond to domestic violence, to sexual assault, to racial inequities and child welfare decisions. Family court custody decisions and a variety of other circumstances. There have been a number of tribal communities that have taken up this methodology in one way or another. And that's the focus of our webinar here today. So now I'd like to turn it over to Jolene to get us started about talking about how this work has been applied in tribal communities. Jolene?

- **[Voiceover]** Thank you Denise. Yes, so my first interaction with Praxis was before I came on staff. I actually was a member of an audit team. When I was working at a mainstream organization in Northern Minnesota, we served three different reservations and four different counties. And part of that, my job

included being a part of the Leech Lake Sexual Assault Reservation Response Team. And we decided that we were going to do an audit. So they brought in some lovely people from Praxis. And we started our audit process. We wanted to explore what the community's response was to sexual and domestic violence. So the every broad question that we asked, and I was there for the first maybe six months of the audit, and we were able to tackle some of the big pitch people interviews. We were starting to do some, gather some data. And we're trying to really explore what was really going on in the community and how that impacted the women who were being hurt. I found it to be a wonderful engaging process and it was something where people on the team, they were very, very willing to be a part of it. We had law enforcement. We had members of the Tribal Domestic and Sexual Violence Program there. We had county attorneys. Most of the true leg work was done by the advocates both from the mainstream program and from the Tribal program. Sadly I had to leave the program after about six months and I know that from my understanding, that audit is still going on. And I was wondering if Jeremy would be able, Jeremy was our Chair Consultant. And I was wondering if he'd be able to still in a little bit of the details about what happened once I left. Jeremy?

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah, sure. Well, Jolene. You are being a little humble in that that you all did a lot of work in that for six months of getting everything rolling. And then from that time on, we've been trickling through the data analysis from there. Some of the pieces that you typically start with, we're doing now. Like we wanna do the pieces where we're mapping out the case processing and the flow through all the different institutions. But yeah, the bulk of that was done during that time of all the systems people and then afterwards, we got into the community focus groups. And then that highlighted some things and then we have another focus group that brought the system and community members together to have this general conversation that was really eye-opening. So there is a number of things that's going on with this. And it's one of these areas, I think of the, or one of these examples were, the complications of working in native communities and trying to do a audit when you have four different counties, six different police departments, four different prosecutions offices and two different court systems. So that's been one of the big challenges of how do you then put this together and then being in a rural area where some have a large population base. So there's the city of Bamegee, they got a little bit more resources. And then Itasca, some other counties around there don't have the same resources so their policies don't even match up or blend well. So in getting some kind of consistent type of message or identifiers of like, okay here is a one singular issue that contributes to response, a good response or lack of response to native women on the Leech Lake Reservation is really hard to pinpoint. 'Cause you're not gonna have a consistent thing to compare your data to.

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah, and speaking of consistency, I also know that another problem in rural areas can be the high turnover. Especially among Avaproveran. I also know that among the law enforcement as well there are some turnover of some of the key people that were a part of this. Which I think can be an issue in many audits. It's when turnover happens throughout the process.

- **[Voiceover]** Yes, certainly that. (laughing) I think you have to almost start over again. But yeah, I think that's one of those things. If you plan to do one of these, if you get your window, plan it, get everything

done within that window. Or just decide that that's an area that needs to be an option that needs to be explored further afterwards. As something to do.

- **[Voiceover]** And I will say that even though I was only with the project for a short amount of time, it was one of those things that made me really rethink the advocacy that I was doing and how we interacted with the systems. And I saw some gaps that I didn't even know were there. And some were just a little bit bigger gaps than I had expected them to be. So I think that even though I was only a part of it for a short time, it was a wonderful experience and helped guide my advocacy ever since.

- **[Voiceover]** Jeremy, would you like to speak on the native women's research project out of Fon Du Lac? Or including Fon Du Lac, sorry.

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah, the Native Woman's Research Project, that's the short name when we had this really long name to it. Analysis of the US Criminal Justice System's Response to Domestic Violence Cases Involving Native American Women. Something like that. It just rolls right off the tongue. And so we just dubbed it Native Women's Research Project. So even the title's not even the actual full title is not even familiar. But those examples are online, you can find them out there. Praxis has them, BWJP. I don't think we have that one but we have the Safety Out of Sexual Assault Response on our website. Our Mending Sacred Hoops website. And that was our first project getting into this. And we were looking at the response involving a reservation. Fon Du Lac which is nearby. It's 20 miles away. But a lot of people come through the court system here in Duluth. And we also were looking at the response in the urban area. So that was that first combination where it's not just reservation based. So we had both the response to women on the reservation as well as the response in the urban area. So it was a mix. One of the things we did with that, because, you know, what native people and we have a way of responding to things or what way of being and living in our community, we had community members in on that audit. And community members that are involved. Not just any old person who was just like, hey, I'm not doing off on Thursday, I'll come to your meeting. And read some police reports with you. But people who are actively involved in something here or there. Lead ceremonies or be active in organizing events, pow-wows. Whatever dances. Some type of leadership thing where people are look to, or people go to these people for advice or involvement or help on whatever it may be. Which is typically a little different. Many audits, most severe community involvement is gonna be that focus group from Victims of Violence. Which we have that as well, but we had this merging together of the community people, the professional people who respond including Native Advocates. And then the court personnel. Prosecutors, police primarily. And that was a, it created, that was one that was like it was a learning process and a lot of things changed as the audit went on. So it wasn't one that everything happened right at the end. There was different changes in there. And one of the prosecutors, her way of investigating, I almost said interrogating. Interviewing witnesses or victims on the stand changed because of the way we talk about how we tell stories as native people. If you're gonna ask what happened, you're gonna get, it started way at the dawn of time type of story. Where you're talking about here's the couple that's been together since high school and there's violence that's occurring now. And someone's gonna ask so, you know, what's going on, what's happening in your relationship? Are they gonna go way back to probably the first time that it happened. What it started like, what he used to

be, really nice and then he started to do this and that and how that links still today. And so it's not one of these very structured formats where a prosecutor's mind, as she was explaining, as she went through it, says, these are the things I have to go through, this checklist to get my rules of evidence in the courtroom process. That's why I go through things that seem redundant like what's your name. Your date of birth, things like that. Because that just verifies that the person there on the stand is the person that matches on the police reports. But, you know, we don't know that kind of thing. As common people, everyday people off the street. We learn our stuff from Law and Order and television on. It's supposed to be dramatic and fancy. But really it's kind of like a checklist. It's kind of slow. But that's why they do it and so they just go to the specific points. And one of the discoveries with that process is that there's a lot of things that lots of times things are missing. And so just starting out and asking tell me what went on. And that changed and so women get to express all these other things because as victims, what the women were feeling is that they're not heard. And so having that chance to be heard while they're on the stand and to speak those things that they wanna say. And then if there's anything that they didn't cover, then the prosecutor went back and made sure those things were filled in. But those were some of the things that happened structurally. And one of the things that happened just for the relationship side of it. 'Cause all these native people, there was a lot of tension. Anyone who lives on a reservation with a border town knows that there's tension between border towns and reservations that go on. And so these things that were coming out and as you looked at it and talked about these things all this stuff started to come up. And so in the middle of it we decide to do a healing ceremony. And bring these people together. And that was the first time a lot of these non-native people experienced a ceremony like that. And so we had this native woman who led the ceremony. Talked about the different roles. Talked about our traditions, Ojibwai traditions about balance, about men and women. Men with the fire being the fire keepers. While they're there they start that fire. Women who bring the water for healing. Why we always have that balance in our traditions. And then taught them some things. Taught them how to do some letting go of some pieces. And also taught them an Ojibwai song. So it really help to mend. Those are those pieces that are beneficial. So not only do you find gaps in strings in your response but you also create lasting, working relationships with people on a personal level. As we continued forward, so that was the very first. And that was many years ago. And so when we look into the Sexual Assault Response of Native Women, those things just blend together very well. That's what made that easy. Having that rapport, having everyone come together and have a real easy open communication.

- **[Voiceover]** Sounds like a very wonderful experience to go through. And then, did you wanna speak a little bit on the Duluth? When they explored the Criminal Legal System Response to Native Women?

- **[Voiceover]** I actually blended those two together talking about how our relationship went.

- **[Voiceover]** Just making sure.

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah. It was almost like seamless though between doing the one and having all the stuff together and then having everyone involved afterwards. The willingness to come in. One of the things that we tried after the Sexual Assault response which we weren't able to get it but the county really, we spent several years afterwards looking at doing enhanced prosecution. And there was some

special project money that came out. And we really tried to get a Native-specific prosecutor to just look at prosecution of sexual assaults of Native women in off reservation in the Duluth area. Which would have been the first of its kind, a special prosecution. A Native prosecutor. And that they would be doing, having a community role. And being present so not just in the court's headline cases but having a community role, being active in the community. Being connected, talking with people and meeting so that there's a closer relationship.

- **[Voiceover]** Thank you for sharing that. Denise, would you like to talk a little bit more about a couple of the other audits that have been done in tribal communities?

- **[Voiceover]** I would, but first I wanted to say a couple of comments about the, sexual assault audits regarding the community response and Native women in Duluth. And just tell people that that is a really beautiful and deep and well developed example of how this methodology can be applied in any community let alone a tribal community. It's a really incredible project and they report it on the Praxis website. So I encourage people to look it up. I just wanna talk a little bit about some of the other examples of tribal communities that have taken up this work to a greater or lesser extent. And the first is the Umatilla tribe in Oregon. And our audit colleague Ronda Martinson who's on the call today has reminded me that the official name of the Umatilla tribe is actually the Confederated Tribe of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. And it's a union of three tribes. The Cayus Umatilla and Walla Walla. So thank you Rhonda for that clarification. Umatilla tribe had some folks come out and do some training of a potential audit team a couple of years back. I don't know if they have taken up other work in addition to that. But some communities are interested in kind of investigating this and trying to figure out if it's the right thing for them and for one reason or another may or may not be in position to actually advance the project. I don't know that the Umatilla tribe have done it or not. If anyone knows, it would be great to let us know because we kind of want it. We like to keep our own kind of records and documentation and kind of learning community of what it is that we're learning from audit projects around the country. Other examples comes from Winner, South Dakota where they looked at, it was looking at kind of a little small tribal housing community on the road by tribal land. It was sandwiched within a county, a larger county that was not tribal land. And so they were really looking at how, at how law enforcement response worked cross-jurisdictions when in that situation. So that was another example of a tribal community taking this work up. In White Earth Minnesota which is one of the reservations of the Chippewa tribe, there was an extensive text analysis project which we had a number of law enforcement respond to domestic violence cases including some from the tribal community. And then there was the Rural Alaskan Native Villages of project many years ago. It was before my time at Praxis so I don't have a lot of inside information about it. But it's really based on understanding how the village elders carry within themselves the living memory of non-violence and how that affected the community. So those are some other examples. There could be others that we don't know about. Again, if you know some things about other tribal communities or other communities that have taken this work up, let us know because we'd really like to add that to our collected learning about this work.

- **[Voiceover]** Thank you Denise, for that overview. Would you like to speak a little bit to two of the most recent audits completed in tribal communities. The ones that were done by USET?

- **[Voiceover]** Yes, I would be happy to do that. A couple of years ago, I think it was in 2013. Praxis was contacted by the United South and Eastern Tribe which was know as USET about the possibility of conducting one or more Safety and Accountability Audits in Indian Country. USET is an inter-tribal organization. It's located in Nashville Tennessee. There are 26 Federally recognized tribal nation members that are within the affiliation of USET. And they stretch from the northernmost tip of Maine all the way down the eastern seaboard and across into east Texas. USET exists to promote and to protect tribal sovereignty rights of all tribal nations and to look at opportunities that could enhance tribal nation rebuilding. One of the programs that USET has is the Tribal Health Program Support Department. And this program is one that USET uses to help tribes address issues related to poverty and improving health, education, social services and housing opportunities. So in , this department received a grant from the Health Information Outreach Project of the National Library of Medicine and they decided they wanted to use it to try to pursue a couple of different audit projects. So they decided to conduct two audits. They wanted to select a couple of different communities. One where there was a community that had a pretty well developed response to domestic violence. It's a little bit larger tribe than some of the others. And had pretty strong internal structure, infrastructure and support that the tribal government was able to use to address domestic violence. And then they wanted another smaller community. And so they selected the Jena Band of Choctaw in Louisiana and the Easter Band of Cherokee in North Carolina. Jeremy is gonna talk about the Jena Band of Choctaw because that was a little bit of a unique experience. And so we're gonna spend the bulk of today's webinar talking about that experience. But I wanna talk a little bit about the audit work that we did with the Eastern Band of Cherokee. The Cherokee band has about , members. And it has , acres of tribal land. It's a pretty big geographic area covered by things like parts of six counties. It has a lot of community resources. It has its own tribal police. Social and legal services. And they have a very strong, well-developed domestic violence program that includes shelter, crisis line and number of other legal services. And so it seems like they were pretty well positioned to take on this work because they had a pretty strongly developed infrastructure. They have a very strong program coordinator in the domestic violence program who's worked very hard to really establish a strong relationship within the community. So they were collected for that purpose. They decided to look at initial responders in their community. And so they were looking at primarily at law enforcement advocacy although we also spent time talking with legal services providers and prosecutors and others. Jeremy and I traveled there together to both of these locations to do some initial team training. And begin to do some initial kind of seeing the lay of the land and kind of mapping out how we thought the project ought to proceed, working with the local community there to figure all of that out. And then to do some initial data gathering. And so throughout the whole process of doing the audit, we conducted a number of interviews, did some focus groups, watched people at work. We read some police reports and 911 call transcripts. We had groups of women talking about their experience. And so we just, Jeremy, you have to tell us when it's your turn to talk again, how often you went there. But I was there once and Jeremy went back a couple of times to work with the community to kind of develop more information about the community's initial response to domestic violence. We also looked at the advocacy program as well. They provided us a lot of their documentation about their services. It's fairly extensive contact(mumbling) Essentially, what they found is that it would be important to increase attention to risk and danger and context and severity of violence. That although

the community was well positioned to have a pretty deep and robust response, the infrastructure had not yet developed those tools and that information for figuring out how best to account for that. And so that's essentially the backdrop of what happened in Cherokee. And so Jolene I think I'm turning this back to you to take us to the next step.

- **[Voiceover]** Yes, thank you for that Denise. And I am actually going to be turning it back over to Jeremy to describe a little bit more about the other audit that was done out of the USET. The Jena Band of Choctaw. Jeremy?

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah, this one's a really neat project to be part of. 'Cause here's within this, they really wanted to figure out how they can do a project for the whole USET contingency that can somehow be used. And as far as either recommendations or whatever we find to be shared in some ways used in the other places. So that was the reason for like the bookends of the tribes you have a well resourced, well-structured tribe of Cherokee. And then you have a tiny tribe of the Jena Band that has very little resources. And they were like, well, we have a couple that are like Cherokee. We have a bunch that are like Jena Band. So we wanna do something and, you know, try to do the two. And then maybe we can figure out something that's in the middle. And so with Jena Band, when we went there, on the very first trip, it's Denise and I driving looking for it and we like went right past their whole tribal headquarters, their healthcare and all this other stuff. We were like, we think we went too far. We turned around and just noticed a small little sign which had some native art on it. And we're like, hey, there it goes, right there. And there were just two tiny buildings. And so here's a pretty much, they have some land that's in federal trust but it's not a reservation based tribe. They have a bunch of scattered sites all over, but their whole area was like pretty much, anyone who has any rural farmland probably has double the size of what the tribe has for their headquarters. It's probably maybe an acre of land that has these two, three buildings on there. That's all of their structure. That's their institutional infrastructure right there. That's where all the stuff happens. And so they, they have a pretty small population. And that was the other thing we found surprising when they gave us they demographics is that half the people were under . And they were talking about the life expectancy somewhere around like 58 years old for the members. So when we talked about our traditions, our culture and our knowledge, we're like who are the carriers of that knowledge? And pretty much you're an elder at 40 within that tribe. And so it was a very unique place to look at things. And what the area that they're in, they were a part of Louisiana. And you go through the southeast in that, it's pretty wide open country. So a lot of people have similarities within the small tribes. Louisiana has a bunch of small tribes. And so the other county resources that come from the state weren't even that well-funded. There was some big issues that we had. Or that they had with the local services there. They have a shortage of funds so they had shut down, or they had dropped down to three shelters statewide. And that was their funding structure which came through the state. And they funded, I can't remember how many it was in the beginning but then they got cut down to just to three. So you can imagine the whole state of Louisiana being really huge. And now you only have three shelters. So one of the staff members or the advocate who was coming out, she was a native woman. And she was an outreach worker for a local program. And they cover this huge area of the county. And Jena Band just happened to be one of the places within the region that she went to. And so

that was who we had as our advocate on the audit team. And then they had the social service director and then the health care director who was a part of IHS. And that was the three members.

- **[Voiceover]** Sounds like a very different experience than in the Eastern Band of Cherokee audit.

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah. It was quite a unique difference. And over at Cherokee, when we went there, the reason that we ended up settling on the first responder focus was because there was so much to look at. They had a high number of cases. They had a domestic violence court. They had a very specific docket. The day with many court cases. They could have up to 40 domestic violence cases through civil court each week. So it was pretty huge. And within the window that we had to do the project, and then with the time, everyone else, all the people from these projects were doing it on a part-time basis. They could only commit a handful of days to this over this, we have a three month window to do this. All this, both audits and get them done. Yeah, it was really short.

- **[Voiceover]** So unlike Leech Lake which went on for three years.

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah it carried on. They took a little bit of planning. A little bit of implementation. Now we're like text who knows what's going on. And now they're like seeing exciting things and want to start over and now look at another area. I'm like whoa, hey, settle, focus.

- **[Voiceover]** Three months for a very intense audit. Interesting.

- **[Voiceover]** And so like with Jena Band, we did everything in one week. We just crammed it all in one week. Community audits, text analysis. Get the review and then come back and pull it together.

- **[Voiceover]** How did they get to their audit focus? Their question?

- **[Voiceover]** Theirs was a, when we went out and did the training, start talking with them, we realized pretty quick when we were there, there's a lot of stuff that's like, we talked about criminal justice response and they were kinda getting the look from people like ah, yeah, we ain't got none of that. (laughing) Then to hear it from the law enforcement or hearing about law enforcement and they say it's still good old boy system down there and if you know the cops and if you're white, you're gonna probably get off with stuff. If you're native, maybe the whole family is going to jail. You never know the response if native people's gonna be there. And there's such a mixed response. But there's no real objective. There's no organizing on institution. There's not a lot of policy work there. It seems like you go to an impoverished area or with a lower economy. And there's not a lot of resources in general so people really focused on just having services available. Crisis service, health service and whatever needs there are. The social service director administered six different programs. She was the school liaison. She was the equal worker. She was the domestic violence person. She did, I think she did, and I should head town if, But she did some other things, you're like, wow, she's just, whatever you had under social services, it was her for most people. And it was just the one person. And they were all small pools of money. They didn't get big money. They got like ,, ,. All this that she had to work with. Had her salary appropriated to each one. And so it was very tight. And so they were very deliberate in trying to get as much of their dollars to help people versus have more staff to do more work. That was what really

dictated it. And so we're thinking and talking with them so what is it that you think you'll be able to do? And they were like well, we're probably are not gonna get a whole lot more money. And we're probably not gonna hire a lot of people because sustainability is a problem. So we start talking, so what does, what would be helpful? How would you do it? And that's when we start looking at, start to look at the community and start to examine the community as an institution. So when we look at a court system, law enforcement, all these other things and the audit, the different audit trails of what dictates these ways of functioning. What's the mission of the organization that gives them, the owner, their purpose and function? And when you think of a family, what's the purpose of a family? What is the structure of a family. What is our, why do we have family, right? It's looking at those things, say what is the structure in there? 'Cause there's different roles, right? You have a big picture in every little people so we're trying to pull that out and try to develop that out of here and really get to some of those things when you'll say, how does the community respond to domestic violence? And pull some of those concrete things out there because we know long before we get into an institutional response, there's tons of community intervention. Failed community intervention. When domestic violence happens to a person, they tell someone. We all hear about it one way or another. It's gonna be on Facebook for one. And then someone's gonna tell their friend or whatever close friend, right? Something that's going on. We all complain about the problems we have with our boyfriends, girlfriends, wives, husbands along the way. People know about that, right? But then when some things get controlling you're like, okay he's a jerk. We don't want to invite so and so to our barbecue right? And just let's invite Sharon by herself. Let's leave Jake at home. We start to avoid that person. So we do weird things in response to it. But we're trying to categorize and put these things in to so how do we do it? How do we pass down our beliefs and values too? How do we structure things? Then we start creating policies and procedures as social ways of dealing with people or interacting, right? We have old native ways of shunning. Those are traditions. And we all know that stuff. People know when someone's done bad that people won't look at you. Every native community has that. And we just know that. And I've been on trips across the country where we do the shunning and then one place we're laughing 'cause we're riding along and it's Northern California, the small little town and the advocate's driving us, we're like. Oh there's so and so. Oh yeah, yeah, he just beat up on so and so this last weekend. And you know how everyone's all happy and they all wave to you as you're going through the streets when you're in small areas. And the guy just waves all nice and everything else and both women just turn their head and look the other way. And we start laughing because it was the drive by shunning. (laughing) They're totally like, no, we're not looking at you. And in a place in Washington, the same thing. The person comes into the, we're doing a training and he was in a area that had a gift shop. And the guy comes into the store and it was like all of the people who were local were in there, they're just kind of like, hmm, turn away, move to a farther part of the store. Even the clerk working there is just kind of, just acknowledge, gave a hello but there is none of the social stuff. And so we do have ways of responding that are built in but we haven't really named and identified those things. And that's really what we're trying to pull out over there. What are the other institutions, community based institutions. Church was a huge thing down in the south. So how do churches help? And that's where a lot of the resources came from. People really came together to get money to help this woman move to find her a safe place to stay. Trying to do like a safe home. Which going back to the s and s, definition of a safe home where it was a community member who was trained

on domestic violence and safety measures who opened up their home to have women and children stay with them. Versus nowadays, we call every shelter a safe home 'cause you know, somewhere the mission impossible theme and spy versus spy stuff is there. And now we think safehome is a safe hideout and we call that a shelter. But this is community based safe homes where community members are opening up and are actively participating in that safety in that network. And so that as the shelters were not being funded in Louisiana across the state, they're looking at ways of having more community members involved. So they accomplish two things. They have the safety when there's a time of crisis. And then they also inform more community members. So how do you get more education and training opportunities? Well, you look for people who are well-being people, good intentions. May not know a lot about domestic violence, but you bring them in, they all help out and they can be better informed.

- **[Voiceover]** I love the idea of thinking about the community as a whole as an institution. I think that's something that a lot of people forget 'cause we think about the more formalized codified institutions instead of the community itself. Especially in places that are lacking that large land base or anything like that. I think that is just so important. And I love the questions they did. And I think that it's perfect for what they needed to accomplish. Specially in such a short amount of time. Denise, was there anything else that you wanted to add? Just like basically about the audit before we go in all of it deeper?

- **[Voiceover]** Um, I guess I would just echo what Jeremy said. It was so interesting to get there and discover two things. One is that the community was so small. And the resources were so stretched. There just really wasn't the formal infrastructure. But as Jeremy said, we realized that when a woman's being battered, she's probably talking to somebody about it or somebody knows. And so Jeremy came up with this idea of really looking at the whole community which I really loved as well. And the other thing is that there just wasn't any real relationship that had been developed as a result between for example law enforcement and service provider. And as Jeremy pointed out, that kind of like was like a couple of people. And so it was really a challenge in a community to find, to figure out what can we do in the timeframe that we have and with the limited resources that we have and really try to learn about the community response to domestic violence that we can capture for this purpose? And as he said we had a really tight timeframe because the funding that often drives these projects, the funding had to be completed by the end of the calendar year including two reports written for each of the two sites. We were on a very, very tight timeline. But I think we're able to really come up with some, find some really interesting and helpful information.

- **[Voiceover]** Thank you Denise. Jeremy, do you wanna talk? So both based on the fact that you had a tight timeline and all so that it was such a very close-knit community, do you wanna talk about some of the strategies that you and the team had to use to conduct the audit?

- **[Voiceover]** As I'm looking at the slide, I'm thinking, jeez, you know. Pulling people together, that was one of the challenges 'cause people were like, it seems like real easy when we work with a lot of people and we're pretty fluid and we have a domestic violence specific program. It's like okay it's real easy to go and get people. And over in here, it was, we looked at the community. And it took them a minute to think of so how are we gonna find a victim from somewhere? And they're like, god, these women ain't gonna talk. People don't talk down here. That's just not what you do. You mind your own business. It's

very religious and privacy around the family and that Southern politeness too about putting your best face forward and all that. That really impacted that. And so as they went out and started talking and I watched the director start calling people that she's worked with in the past and put out notices, it really did go through just this whole, you know you can put things out there on the native grapevine, and it happens everywhere. You put something out there and all these people will hear about it or talk about it. And they were really, really happy to come out and get involved. One of the things that the outreach worker had been trying to do prior to this was to start a group and get people together. And they were kinda struggling to get that going. Because there was like, okay they'd have the one person at the time. So it wasn't, you know, there was violence and things happening in the home but it wasn't that big of area where there was a lot of people at once. So the outreach worker basically might have one or two people at a time. But they had a different goal of doing a group. But there was never enough people to make an actual group. So it was those kind of things that they had going on. But when they put the call out there they had a lot of people come in and respond. And that's you know, like a lot of communities when they look to do focus groups they start out with very existing systems of advocacy programs, support groups or whatever gathering places or services that they're planning or being connected with battered women. Some places have a battered women advisory committee. And so those people network and get their friends, their relatives to, you know let them know and come and participate.

- **[Voiceover]** And even with those structures in place, sometimes it can still be hard to pull people in for a focus group. So I'm just very impressed that they were able to with having such a smaller pool of people to begin with.

- **[Voiceover]** And this was the big thing though. When they came to a focus group, most the people were related in one focus group. We had the grandmother, daughter, granddaughter in one of the focus groups. So when you think of those, the kind of issues around confidentiality, that's one of these things that it's very, that's a high value that we have doing violence against women work. That we really wanna respect that woman's privacy and we know that there are safety issues, there's vulnerabilities. There's all kinds of things around confidentiality. And their community was so small. And even doing the focus groups feels like wow. So how is that gonna work out? And that was one of the biggest issues. And then they're like well it's me, it's the social service director and the outreach advocate who were conducting the focus group so if there was an issue during the focus group where someone needed to step out and needed someone to talk with, it was like, so, we had to plan for all these other things too. All these other contingencies. So there was some anxiety on their part. As we're going into it like how is this all gonna happen and have these people in a room and then knowing that there's issues with that family versus this family. And there may be women who have been assaulted but partners of opposite families, you know? Or relatives in opposite families. So it was a, it's those real life dynamics. But pulling that off and getting people together and having people share and be open and honest was, it was pretty impressive.

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah. I'm also very intrigued about this. Because of the fact that often in these audits, the data collection and text analysis is such a large component. And the idea that the data and the text is

basically the relationships within that community, I think that it's unique in the way that you're having to frame things. How everything is different to each tribal community.

- **[Voiceover]** Oh, did I do that?

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah. And you know when we look at this, the interviews and the community members. Some of the institutional things did start to come out. One woman was actually a clerk at the police department. She was a native woman, worked at the sheriff's department. And she had talked about all of the statements that would be made by the police that she would hear over the years. And she was like, they dismiss a lot of it. That cultural norm is still there. It was like almost from, not to be all bragging up Minnesota and everything but in Minnesota we've been doing this work for so long across the state. In general we have a higher level of understanding, a higher level or a longer timeframe of doing institutional work that our plateau, our baseline is quite a bit higher than a lot of other places. And so that's always the thing going out to other communities. If you bring your own, like, this is my reality perspective, your own, bringing your own eyes and looking at the community and say well something's messed up about this place except, without understanding or taking into context. They haven't been doing this for 30, 40 years with high levels, millions of dollars in state fund that's dedicated to this. They got, you know. They got a million dollars luckily funding all the state programs and all shelter stuff. Every year annually. And there's not the funds and all these other things to put these things in place. So there's not a widespread effort, like an ongoing thing. So the attitudes, hearing about the attitudes and people's viewpoints and then also taking in to the, the Christian belief system that are part of man's and women's roles and head of household and family things combined with that. There was, the cultural norm was that was the norm. There was a lot of the stuff that was still entrenched that way. That it wasn't their business. It wasn't the cops' business. If someone's getting out of line it should be more controlled for that woman to be in line and do her part, do her role. And if there's a problem in the household, it's mutual. If there's violence in the home and the guy was drinking and not working, they would lead more towards okay, he's being a problem. But if there's problem in the household, and there are complaints her not being a good mother, or housekeeper, those kind of things, or maybe she's needing to work too much because you know, things ain't happening financially between the couple. Then they start to lean fault over that way. And so that was one of those big things that came out. And how that impacted everyone. And that family that had the multiple generations, that was a big thing. And then the grandmother, the granddaughter never knew but the grandmother was sharing the story about her moving back down to the South and her getting down to the South, I can't remember which. Was all because of the controlling behavior. Her being isolated from her family in Michigan. And that's how she got there. So they start to look at these multi-generational links of what happens in those control things and over time. And then how systems end up being a backlash too. So for a lot of women, if they fought back, it's not okay to do that. But then they have a lot of attitudes of like, of all the women saying that they would fight back. Or that they would go after a perpetrator. Then we talked about those examples. They're like, we'll go after with a rolling pin. Or get out the shotgun or those kind of things. But it was just, it was wild. And one of their favorite things that was, we were talking about the violence overall there was, it was here's the authority in your life. It was dad, cop and god. So think of like structures, power structures, power dynamics in the community that affect the belief system is one of

these things of authority that says that's what it is. You respect your father, you respect the police and you follow God's word.

- **[Voiceover]** Interesting. How did the? So you mentioned a little bit about how the focus groups kinda came about. How they were able to recruit people. But what kind of questions are you asking to get these sort of answers from them? I mean I know it's kind of, it's a sensitive topic specially when you're having that inter-generational stuff within a group. As a group did you guys have set questions you were doing or did you kind of just go with the flow of the group? How did that work?

- **[Voiceover]** We wanted to start off to get people talking so we gave them a scenario. If there was like a, friends coming to you for help. She said that there's fights between her and her boyfriend and that's getting worse. And that things have been abusive with the name-calling and yelling and all that stuff. And then that escalate to a fight just last night. And then we ask them just from their perspective of how they would, what they would do, what kind of help is available to her, asking if they know what her needs are, how could they help, identifying the dynamics. And all those things helped us get an understanding of what was the community knowledge. What did they really understand about dynamics of domestic violence? And so it was pretty interesting. They had some good responses to that. And that's where a lot of their stories came out too. About trying not to judge, trying to be helpful. Trying to find other resources. But then at the same time, they had the conflicts too with the types of rigid internal structures that they had going on. And then there was still a lot about the silence, though, around that. So when they talked about how to reach out and everything else, they were mindful of not really wanting to like expose her too much or talk about it too much but you know kind of help keep that private. Try to help them be, try not to cause embarrassment. I should say that's probably the best way to describe it really. They don't wanna embarrass her or the family.

- **[Voiceover]** So you've had this very, very intense week of doing all this research in these focus groups. Denise, would you be willing to talk a little bit about some of the key findings and recommendations on how that came about?

- **[Voiceover]** Yes I'd be happy to. Despite the tight timeframe and the limited resources I think that the community really learned a lot about furthering its understanding of domestic violence and the response in their community. One of the things that they found that was interesting 'cause the woman who worked in social seems her name was Mona. And as Jeremy said she had about a thousand different jobs. She was quite an amazing woman. And some people did say when asked about who people can call, they said we can call Mona. And not a native woman which is also really interesting. And so it was really kind of gratifying that she was really seen as a key resource for a number of different reasons. But yet she herself knew that she didn't have a lot of training or understanding. Didn't know anything really about assessing risk or danger. And so what we really kind of identified is that it would be really helpful to her to have some kind of support or resources to help guide her in her work when victims came to her. Another kind of related to that is that it would be really helpful to help local authorities really develop a different understanding of this work. And I think the disadvantage is that there wasn't a lot of staffing available to help kind of educate that. Jeremy points out here in Minnesota we're pretty fortunate to have a deep infrastructure of advocacy groups working with law enforcement.

So I think without that key advocacy structure, it's difficult to find a way of bringing law enforcement along to help them to strengthen their response. Another thing I think was that, I understand that the community really liked the opportunity to come and gather and have these conversations. So we really encourage them to continue to do that. And then they access technical assistance from Jeremy's organization, Mending The Sacred Hoops. Or other TA providers to help them. Secondly, there really is a need to really strengthen advocacy resources and again deepen community understanding. There's one advocate who served a pretty large service area. And again she was really well respected and well regarded. And did have a pretty good working relationship and a pretty strong connection with Mona. But yet she's just one person. And so she was really stretched for time and I think for opportunities to really develop her skillset and connect with other advocates who would really recommend that she search for those kinds of opportunities. One of the things that inhibited folks like Mona and her counterpart in the health services was they didn't really have specific protocols for what to do. They weren't getting a lot of people coming and talking to them. And so, it's kind of a chicken or egg thing. You don't have a lot of people coming to you so you don't develop a lot of protocols. But you don't have a well established protocol so people don't figure out that they should come to you. So we really encourage them to develop some protocols about how to respond if someone did disclose domestic violence. Oh, one other thing I wanted to add about the earlier confidentiality issue is that we also learned that the tribe, well it didn't have a reservation, owned little packets of tribal land throughout the community. One of which was some small amount of housing. And I think it was a trailer or mobile home that they had at the tribe reserve for families that were in emergency situations. And so there was some time, we could put people there. But of course it was well known where it was. It wasn't a particularly safe place. So really trying to think about kind of that safe home structure that Jeremy mentioned. Find places that were actually safe and secure for victims. And then finally the continued of community education developed from brochures. Continue this kind of public forum saying that Jeremy started with the audit process. And then the last point that was really interesting was, that it was pretty clear that there was a fair amount of community mistrust of formal institutions to intervene effectively. And so I think that often leads to the kind of thing Jeremy described, where people felt like we gotta take this in our own hands, I'm gonna fight back. I'm gonna do something else on my own. Which of course in turn can lead to arrest of victims of violence for fighting back. And so we really, there was a recommendation to really continue these discussions with women in the community. To help them share experiences, identify problems, talk about possible solutions. And then you use that information from those victims of violence to inform some discussions with service providers, law enforcement and other interveners in the state.

- **[Voiceover]** Thank you Denise. Jeremy, is there anything else that you would like to add about some of the findings that came from that?

- **[Voiceover]** Yeah, I was gonna add that on the one, the recommendation around advocacy training. It wasn't just advocacy training for the staff but also doing advocacy training for the community members. 'Cause they all were willing to help. They all were willing to come out and figure out ways to help. Because each participant in that group had some contact or experience with someone who's been battered. And trying to encourage more community based organizing. So not developing, we weren't

gonna try to stress to them in the recommendations to add more programming 'cause we know that that's economically depressed area. But how can we do more organizing? And that was part of the thing around the training. How can you do more advocate training, skills based training for community members to work and think and know resources, can articulate dynamics of domestic violence like advocates do explain safety needs, all of that stuff. And then that could help put pressure elsewhere on systems for people not being responsive. The institutional mistrust and those kind of things. And so lot of the recommendations were on education and the organizing was to build things that were not under programs or the Tribal Institutions that they would need to support other than smaller pockets of money. Or by the advocate who could do the training herself and do ongoing training.

- **[Voiceover]** So we talked a little bit about several of the audits that have been done in tribal or native specific communities. Is there any kind of advice or considerations that you think that people should think about if they're considering doing an audit on a tribal community or what are some strategies they might want to employ?

- **[Voiceover]** I think the biggest one is really thinking through when you start out what area of focus you wanna get and how deep to go into. When we've done those, even though they're native-specific projects here in Duluth, it was pretty easy to look at one institution. Well, two technically, when you look at it. It's City Court and District Court which is State Court. And then you have City Police and County Police. So the Sheriffs. That was as complex as it got. But you have on reservation based lands, you still have that county jurisdictions within those. Like Denise had mentioned, Cherokee had like six different counties that it covered. Those are six different county sheriffs departments and within those there are several cities, small cities in there. So you have three different municipalities. And so the volume of people in procedures and access to data, access to case files and all that becomes really huge. So I think it's much more complex for tribes doing audits than it is for any other city or any other program that we've heard of or that we know of who does. 'Cause they don't go, they don't have to filter through this layer of depth. You should see the flowchart for even the one for Leech Lake. We started out at Leech Lake and the flowcharts of all the different county programs it starts to go to. When we got to services, I got like, colored markers twisting and turning all over the place. (laughing) It looks like a twister board and just start connecting lines between colored dots. There's the tribal map. So mapping out caseload in that one. So that's a challenge in, so you gotta think of those institutions and then you gotta think of the internal things of the community. So what are the networks, what are the services? Services aren't just what's funded in there. People go to ceremonies and spiritual healers. Those people are part of a response. There's things that happen there too that you have to deal with and challenges as well. So how do you include that? And so that's where, I think we tend, in native communities, tend to get just a general group of community members involved a bit more because there's much more going on than the community in the way that we operate that's not based in some type of service, human service program or law enforcement program. And really getting the perspectives of people to come in that way. Thinking also, in our tribal response and in our traditional ways of doing things, What's gonna be an appropriate thing? And so how do we fix the problems and close the gaps that we identify using our traditions and our beliefs and our practices? How do we come back to those things? We have a belief that each person, each man in the community is responsible for

protecting them. Or the adults in the community, when you look at a different medicine wheel in a different four colors, the four directions and that represents infant, child, adult and elder. The adults and we look at adultism, it's the adult class who has the power and authority and resources, right? In general society, it's the same thing in native society, we have the same context. So the people who have the most power and authority should protect the other three. And when we don't do that, we see the problems that affect elders, children and youth nowadays. And those are symptoms of the violence that we have in society. And it's us adults that have a responsibility to change it. So that's how we can pull those things in. Put them into a traditional context, tie them back into our teaching. And you know, parallel our organizing to fix all of our social problems.

- **[Voiceover]** Super easy to do.

- **[Voiceover]** Just like that.

- **[Voiceover]** Well, thank you so much, Jeremy. I'm gonna turn over to Liz for any last minute notes she might have for us.

- **[Voiceover]** Thank you Jolene. Thank you so much, Jeremy. It was really, really interesting to hear the specifics about the communities. It just really enriches the reports which I encourage you all to take some time and check them out from our website. The institutional analysis TA webpage. If you go to the program pages, Praxisinternational.org, under IATA you will see an option for resources. In the bottom link of the bottom page, when you scroll over that is to the audit reports. And in the number of years that Praxis has been helping communities do audits, we have quite a list. But you will see the two specific references to the Native Women's Resource Project on it that happened locally here near Duluth in Minnesota. And the report on Sexual Assault on Native women. Both of those are posted and we hope you will take some time to read them over. Denise, thank you to you also and always as you facilitate our sessions. And to the rest of you, two closing pieces. Our next session is Institutional Analysis TA webinar will be November rd. Tuesday November 3rd is the date. So watch for publicity to come out. For registration and information. And then also when you close out of the webinar today you'll be routed to an evaluation for this session. If you would please share your thoughts and your experiences about today's session, it's really helpful to us in how we design future webinars. So of course we wanna make sure that you are getting what you want. So tell us what that is. So, with that I will close this out. And everybody, thanks again and happy fall. Take care, and we'll talk to you soon. So long.

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