



Praxis International

"Integrating Theory and Practice"

Strengthening Rural Advocacy: Focus Groups for Social Change

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"Integrating Theory and Practice"

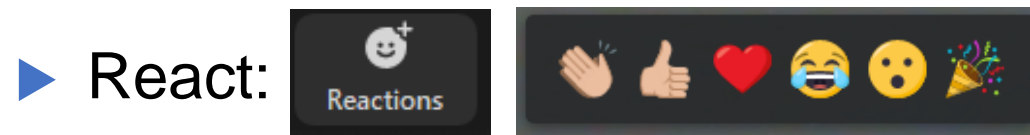


Tech Reminders

- ▶ Mute/Unmute camera and microphone



- ▶ On phone: Dial *6 to unmute/mute



- ▶ Tech help email: shelly@praxisinternational.org

Our Time Together

- ▶ Definitions
 - ▶ Social Change Advocacy
 - ▶ Focus groups
- ▶ Why focus groups?
- ▶ Common questions
- ▶ Creating change
- ▶ Focus group demonstration
- ▶ Breakout discussions



Working Agreements

- ▶ We are here to learn together: to exchange ideas, to think critically, ask questions, dialogue and pose solutions respectfully.
- ▶ We acknowledge that all forms of oppression exist and are likely to surface from time to time.

Working Agreements

- ▶ We acknowledge that one aspect of institutionalized oppression is that we have systematically been taught misinformation about our own group and about members of other groups.
- ▶ We agree to actively pursue opportunities to learn new information that questions what we have been taught and to listen respectfully to unfamiliar perspectives.

Working Agreements

- ▶ We agree not to blame ourselves or others for the misinformation we have learned, but to accept responsibility for not repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.
- ▶ We agree not to blame those that experience oppression for the condition of their lives.

Working Agreements

- ▶ We assume that everyone is doing the best they can.
- ▶ We agree that we will not demean, devalue, or in any way “put down” people for their experiences.

Working Agreements

- ▶ We agree to actively challenge the myths and stereotypes about our own groups and other groups so that we can build our connections while also breaking down the walls that separate us.

Working Agreements

- ▶ We want to create a comfortable atmosphere for open discussion. Anyone is welcome to ask that their comments not be repeated; please share other's personal information and/or comments only with their explicit consent.

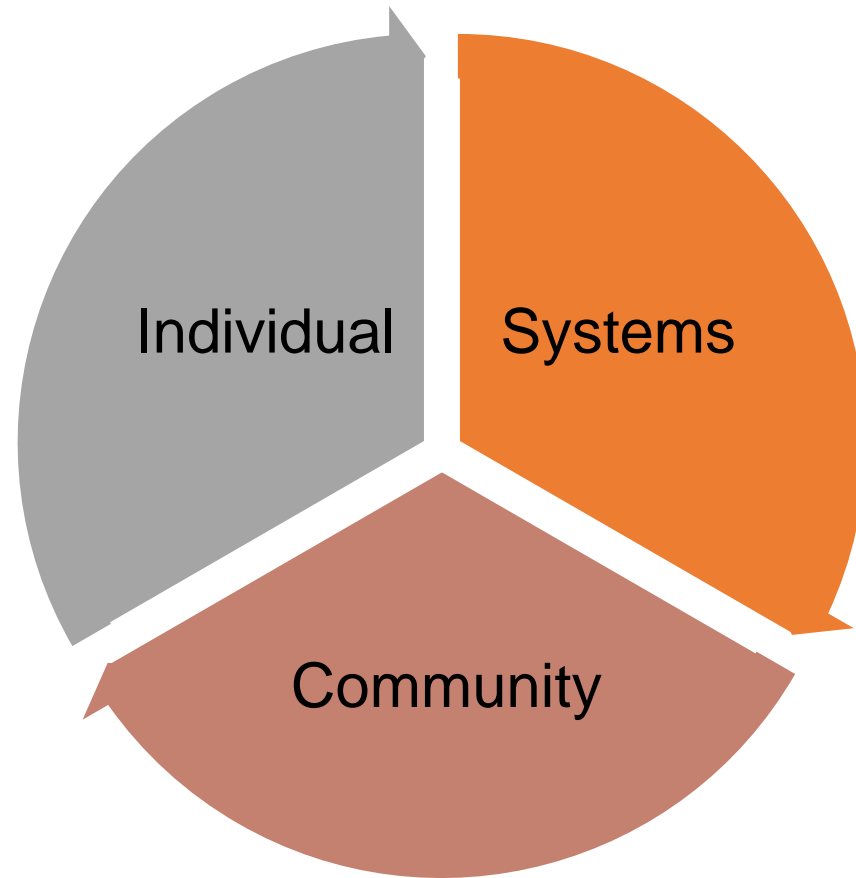
Working Agreements

- ▶ We embrace the differences and similarities among us, encouraging everyone to self-monitor to ensure all have equitable opportunity to participate. We challenge ourselves to communicate in new ways, including making time for silence, reflection, and processing.
- ▶ We agree to attend to our needs by nurturing ourselves mind, body and spirit.



Defining Social Change Advocacy

Social Change Advocacy



Distinct but interconnected levels of advocacy



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Individual:

Helping one woman/survivor at a time

Distinct but interconnected levels of advocacy



Community advocacy:

Identify the community

Come together to engage community

Ensure those most affected are at the center

Advocating with, within, for community

Distinct but interconnected levels of advocacy



Institutional (systems) advocacy:

Seeking change on behalf of all women/survivors as a group

Harnessing our collective power requires:



Understanding the violence as oppression



Changing the root causes of oppression

Harnessing our collective power requires:



Working collectively with survivors who experience violence



Focusing on survivors' experiences & needs, not on institutions' needs



What is a Focus Group?

Distinctions

**MARKET
RESEARCH**

**ACADEMIC
RESEARCH**

**SUPPORT
GROUPS**

**SOCIAL
CHANGE**

What is a focus group?



**GROUP
INTERVIEW**



**TOPIC-SPECIFIC
DISCUSSION**



PURPOSE

Types of focus groups

Advocacy program staff

- Advocacy
- Social services
- Etc.

Community members

- Survivors*
- Those who cause harm
- Family members
- Leaders/experts
- Public

System practitioners

- Law enforcement
- Child protection
- Forensic nurses

Program Considerations: Focus Groups with Survivors

- ▶ Address general topics
- ▶ Focus on survivors' experiences with programming, interventions, needs from the community
- ▶ Attend to and recognize how culture plays a role in experience
- ▶ Attention to intersecting social problems

Social Change Advocacy: Focus Group Participants

- ▶ Share their experiences and the impact of that experience on their lives
- ▶ Are free to share what matters the most to them
- ▶ Develop awareness and knowledge of others' experiences



Why Focus Groups for Social Change?

**Focus groups can be
transformative for participants**



**Focus groups can be
transformative for communities**

For participants...

- ▶ Liberating experience
- ▶ Engaged dialogue and reflection
- ▶ Recognize intersection and complexity
- ▶ Center their realities and needs
- ▶ Engage with social networks
- ▶ Approach gender-based violence as a social problem

For communities...

- ▶ Build relationships
- ▶ Center survivors' voices
- ▶ Identify gaps between what survivors need and the community offers
- ▶ Evaluation of programs, services, and interventions

Rural realities

Vast and dynamic landscapes

Long-held traditions & customs

Everybody knows everybody

Limited resources

Rural realities

Strong connections

Expertise at “making do”

Resourcefulness



Where to begin?

Common questions

Recruitment

Funding

Accessibility

Roles and
responsibilities

How to
implement

Recruitment

3-5 people is ideal

Who: depends on focus, community demographics

Examples: those who have used the system, those who have avoided the system, culturally-specific groups, etc.

Include those traditionally marginalized

Outreach options

Costs

Participants' time

Travel and childcare

Food

Interpreters

Translation of materials

Accessibility

▶ Virtual Accessibility

- ▶ Captioning
- ▶ Virtual Interpretation

▶ In-Person Accessibility

- ▶ Room Setup
- ▶ Wheelchair accessible

▶ Language Access

- ▶ Translated materials
- ▶ Qualified interpreters

Roles and responsibilities



Other considerations:

Participant safety and wellbeing

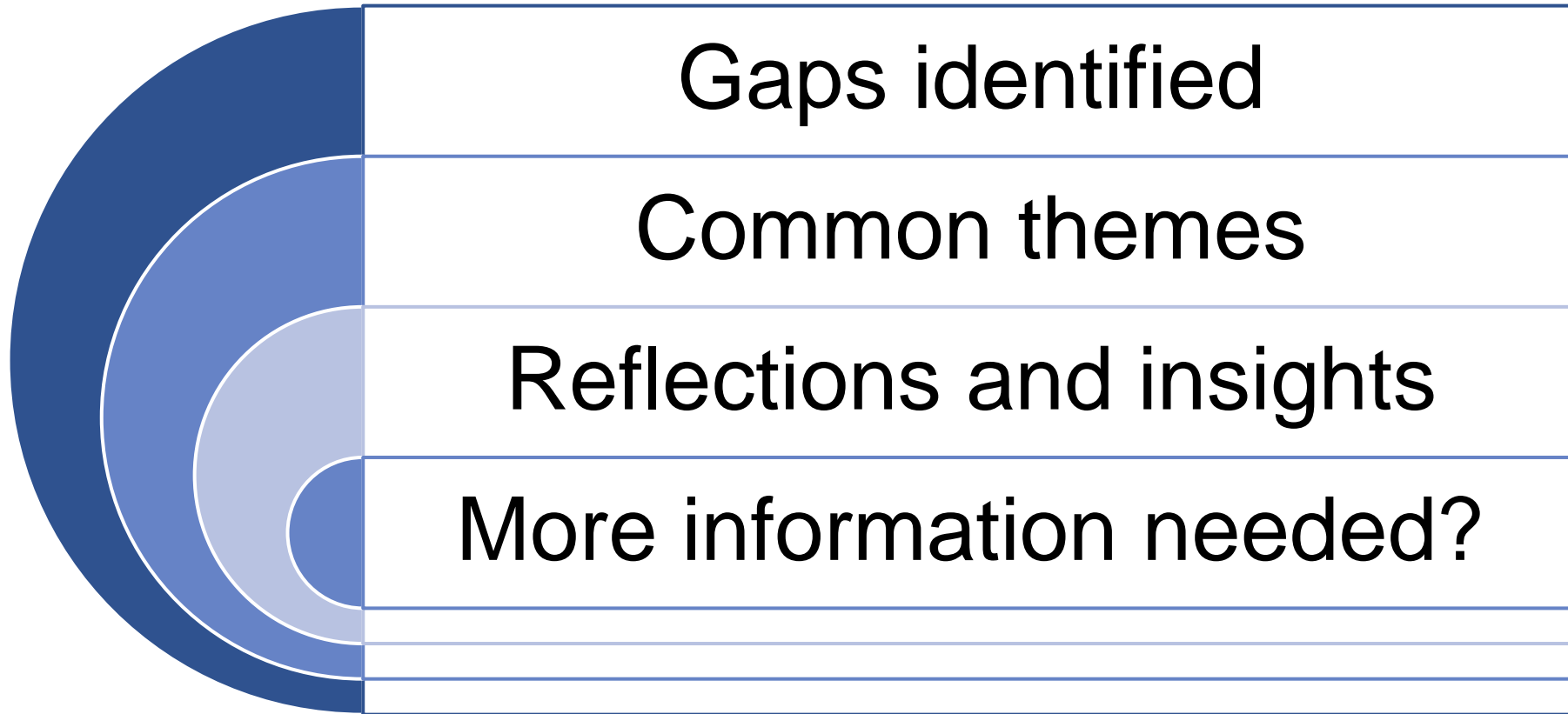
Location

Time



Creating Change

Debriefing the focus group



What's next?

Develop summary

Who

How

Strategize for change

Support survivor involvement



- Stay connected
- Share with them how their insights contributed to change
- Share opportunities for creating change

Activism can be a path to justice, meaning, healing.



Focus Group Demonstration

Focus of discussion

Not about individual experience of violence

What worked well and didn't work well

What survivors wanted or needed compared with what they experienced

Possible impact of services, policies, practices

How can we strengthen our engagement of survivors in the work to end gender-based violence?

Survivor Focus Group Demonstration



Breakout Discussion

Questions to explore:

- What are some themes from the focus group discussion that you noticed?
- What are your questions about how you might do a focus group in your home community?
- What might you want to keep in mind to help with facilitation of a focus group like this in your community?
- If you're considering conducting a focus group like this in your community, what might support this activity and what might be some challenges to strategize about?

Praxis Resources

- ▶ ***The Praxis Safety and Accountability Audit Toolkit***, n.d. Available from <http://praxisinternational.org/product/praxis-safety-accountability-audit-tool-kit/>
- ▶ ***The Audit Coordinator's Logistics Guide***, n.d., Retrieved August 22, 2018, from <http://praxisinternational.org/institutional-analysiscommunity-assessment-2/the-logistics-guide/>

Thank you!

- ▶ To join email list:
info@praxisinternational.org
- ▶ Online resources:
praxisinternational.org

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