Formative Evaluation of the Demonstration Grants to Strengthen the Response to Victims of Human Trafficking in Native Communities (VHT-NC) Program

SITE VISIT INTERVIEW: Partners

Overview

- **Purpose:** Conduct a 75-minute, semi-structured interview to learn about the partners of the VHT-NC projects.
- **Respondents:** Staff from the VHT-NC projects' primary partner organizations.
- **Pre-interview activities:**
  - The evaluation's point of contact at the VHT-NC project will assist the site liaison team in identifying appropriate project staff to invite to participate in an interview. Based on the point of contact's preference, they will coordinate with partners to schedule interviews, or they will provide contact information to the site team to schedule interviews.
  - The site liaison team will review the project profile, the project logic model (if applicable), and projects' progress reports to inform the interview and prefill information.
  - INTERVIEWERS NOTE: We are not expecting that every respondent will speak to every question and every prompt. Move on to the next question/section if the respondent doesn't seem to have input to provide on a certain topic. Use your knowledge of the project to help guide the interview. If needed, the site team may review the guide beforehand to identify priority questions for each respondent.
  - The site liaison team will email information about the interview (see **Introduction** information below) to respondents before. The team will also bring copies to provide respondents, if needed.

Site:			Date:	
Respondent:				
Interviewer:		Notetaker:		

Introduction

Thank you for talking with us today about your involvement in [Grant Recipient's] Demonstration Grant to Strengthen the Response to Victims of Human Trafficking in Native Communities (VHT-NC) as a project partner. Throughout our discussion, we'll refer to it as the "VHT-NC project" or "project."

[The site team will send the information below to the respondent before the interview. Before starting the interview, review it with the respondent and answer any questions.]

This interview is part of the data collection for the VHT-NC Program formative evaluation that aims to:
(1) document how projects approach and accomplish the VHT-NC Program goals;
(2) inform the Administration for Children and Families' (ACF's) efforts to address human trafficking in Native communities;
(3) inform future evaluation; and
(4) engage with and solicit input from local American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities and people who have experienced human trafficking by creating a Community Expert Group.

The evaluation is being conducted by RTI International, a non-profit, independent research institute, and its partner, American Indian Development Associates. It is overseen by ACF's Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) in collaboration with ACF's Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP).

We are visiting the VHT-NC projects to talk with project staff, partners, and participants. The purpose of our interview today is to learn more about your involvement in [Grant Recipient's] VHT-NC project. We will ask questions about your community, the project goals, partnerships, outreach approaches, service delivery, and community training. We are interested in hearing your perspectives on project successes and challenges, and the lessons you have learned throughout project implementation. We developed a semi-structured interview protocol to ask partners a similar set of questions. If there are questions that you do not know the answer to, that is fine; just let us know, and we can skip those questions.

We emailed you information about your participation in the interview that we'd like to review. *[Review privacy information below]*

- Participation in this interview is voluntary. You may choose not to answer specific questions or not to take part in the interview at any time.
- The information we collect from you is private to the extent permitted by law. We keep your interview answers on a secure computer. After the evaluation ends, the interview data will be stored securely through 2027, and then deleted.
- Your name will never be connected to what you tell us today, and we will not tell anyone associated with [PROJECT NAME] what you share with us in a way that can identify you. Information generally will be reported in the aggregate, meaning your responses will be combined with other responses and will not be linked to you. Reporting and dissemination products will not use your name or other identifying information. We may also combine the information you provide with information we learn about [Grant Recipient's] project through other sources, such as the progress reports they submit.
- As part of our reporting, we may present quotes from this interview and will make all efforts to remove all identifying information in the quote. Quotes will not include your name, any staff names identified during the interview, or your organization's name. We may describe interviewees in general terms, like "project director" or "partner staff." If there is information that you would prefer that we not quote, please let us know, and we will exclude it from our notes and not include it in any reporting.
- We expect this interview to take about 75 minutes.
- With your permission, we will audio record the interview. This recording is a backup to our typed notes, and we will only share it within the RTI and AIDA evaluation team. After we clean up our notes, we will delete the audio.
- Finally, I need to let you know that an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number for this information collection is 0970-XXXX and the expiration date is XX/XX/XXXX.

Do you have any questions about any of this information?

Do I have your permission to record the interview?
[If yes, begin audio recording the interview.]

EQ1: What is important to know about the community context (e.g., geographical, historical, cultural, governance, legal)? How does this affect the planning and development of VHT-NC projects?
EQ3: What are the characteristics of the VHT-NC grant recipients, primary partners, and project clients?

We want to start by learning about your organization and your work with Native communities.

Please briefly tell us about your organization, [Partner Organization].
- *[If not addressed]* About how many staff are in your organization overall?

[If not addressed]
Please describe what kind of experience your organization or staff has related to human trafficking in Tribal communities or with Native people.

What are some of the barriers, if any, your organization faces in addressing human trafficking in Tribal communities or with Native people?
- *[If not addressed]* **Has your organization faced any cultural barriers in addressing human trafficking in Tribal communities or with Native people?**

EQ4: How do VHT-NC projects develop and maintain partnerships and intergovernmental relationships?

Now we'd like to learn more about your role in the VHT-NC project.

How did your organization become involved with [Grant Recipient] for the VHT-NC project?
- *[If not addressed]* When did your organization become involved?

How many people from your organization participate in the VHT-NC project?

Please describe your organization's role in the VHT-NC project.
  Prompts:
- Culture-related Services and Supports
- Other Service Delivery (e.g., referral, shelter, crisis intervention, legal advocacy, case management, prevention, mental/behavioral health)
- Outreach (e.g., community events, information materials)
- Education or Training)
- Advisory (e.g., planning & implementation, taskforce, etc.)
- Evaluation

[If not addressed] **What type of agreement do you have with [Grant Recipient], if any?**
- Does your organization receive funding under the VHT-NC project?
- Formal agreement (MOUs, MOAs, IGAs). Is it specific to the VHT-NC project?
- Informal agreement (no written agreement). Are there any plans to formalize the agreement?

When we spoke last fall, you shared that your organization's primary role(s) in the VHT-NC project are *[review information].* **Is this still accurate? Has anything changed?**

What is your organization's goal or purpose in working with Native clients or communities under the VHT-NC partnership?

In your view, are the VHT-NC project goals well defined and communicated?
> *Prompts:*
> - What are your shared goals? How do they interface with your organization's goals?
> - Have project goals changed or shifted? If so, how?
> - How is the partnership making progress in accomplishing the shared goals?
> - What shared policies and procedures guide the partnership? Are any culture-based?

What strengths or gifts do you and your organization's staff bring to the partnership? (E.g., cultural knowledge, skills, experience, local connections)
> *Prompts:*
> - How are your strengths or gifts used in the partnership?
> - Community outreach and awareness, i.e., using language, local connections, cultural experts, etc.

How often are you meeting with the VHT-NC project staff? (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly, no set schedule)
> *[If not addressed]*
> - In what other ways do you communicate or coordinate?

What are the main challenges, including culturally-based challenges, the partnership has faced, if any?
> - How have you addressed those challenges?

What strategies are most effective in making sure that the partnership is successful?
> *Prompts:*
> - What cultural values or practices support the partnership, if any? E.g., reciprocity, knowledge transfer, cultural humility.
> - What are some partnership strategies that keep you engaged?
> - Do you feel you can freely offer feedback about the partnership? Why or why not?
> - In what ways are your contributions acknowledged by the partner agency, community, and others?

Do you communicate or interact with any other VHT-NC project partners? If so, how? *[If needed, list the project's other primary partners.]*
> *Prompts:*
> - How often do you meet with the other VHT-NC project partners?
> - What happens during partner meetings?
> - What are the most helpful takeaways from these meetings for your partnership?

Are there ways [Grant Recipient's] VHT-NC staff can better meet your organization's needs to help the partnership thrive? If yes, how?
> *Prompts:*

- What culturally-specific support, if any, would be helpful to support the partnership?
- What are some partner development strategies in place? (E.g., training, clear goals, agreements)

What other partnerships do you think are necessary to develop for the VHT-NC project? (e.g., tribal, non-profits, state, local, federal)

EQ5: What are the outreach approaches VHT-NC projects use to identify Native American victims of human trafficking?

[If partner provides referrals or service delivery, otherwise skip to Community Training]

Now we're going to ask you some questions about the services your organization provides for the VHT-NC project. When you think of your answers, please focus on what you do specifically for the VHT-NC project clients.

Please tell us about the types of Native clients you are serving for the VHT-NC project.
   Prompts:
- Clients who have experienced sex or labor trafficking, or a mix of both?
- Specific industries or market sectors? (<u>sex:</u> illicit massage, brothel, street, online, etc.; <u>labor:</u> agriculture, construction, health care, domestic work, etc.)
- Any other demographic trends? (ages, genders)

How are the VHT-NC clients identified and enrolled in your organization's services?
   Prompts:
- Do the VHT-NC project staff provide referrals to your organization? If so, how?
   o Have clients faced any barriers when referred for services? Please describe.
- Does your organization provide referrals to the VHT-NC project? If so, how?
   o Do you think the referral process is working? Why or why not?
   o Do you think there is adequate case management and follow-up? Why or why not?

What are the primary service needs you or your organization have identified for VHT-NC clients?
   Prompts:
- Are their needs being met through the VHT-NC project?
- What gaps, if any, exist?

How is working with VHT-NC clients different from other clients you assist, if at all?
   Prompts
- Are there differences working in Native communities?
- Are there differences due to the focus on human trafficking?
- Are outreach, identification, or case management procedures different?
- Are client needs or goals different?
- Is service provision different?

[If not addressed]
What culture-based challenges, if any, have you experienced working with VHT-NC clients? E.g., related to referral, enrollment, service accessibility, service provision.

How would you explain the term <u>trauma-informed</u>? What does that mean to you?

What trauma-informed approaches is your organization using to work with VHT-NC clients?
Prompts:
- How are concerns with historical trauma included, if at all?
- What are the challenges or barriers to incorporating trauma-informed approaches, if any?
- What is working well?

How would you explain the term <u>culturally responsive</u>? What does that mean to you?

What culturally responsive approaches or services does your organization provide when working with VHT-NC clients?
Prompts:
- What are the challenges or barriers, if any?
- What is working well? What are some successes?

[If not addressed]
What cultural approaches or elements should be included in the way that the VHT-NC project provides support or services to the [tribe/target population]? E.g., the [tribe or target population's] language, community or family strengths.

EQ8: How is community training provided?

The following questions are about training activities under the VHT-NC partnership.

Please describe how you inform the community about the services you provide under the VHT-NC partnership.
Prompts:
- What specific outreach occurs with Native communities?
- What culture-based strategies do you include in your outreach efforts, if any?

How has your organization been involved in community training under the VHT-NC partnership?
Prompts:
- Have you participated in training?
- Have you helped develop training(s)?
- Have you provided culturally-specific training?
- Have you hosted or sponsored community training events or activities?
- Have you provided informational materials? *[If yes]* How do you make them appealing to Native people? E.g., through language, art, cultural services offerings.

What was the most useful training or technical assistance, including culturally-specific TTA, you received through your partnership with [Grant Recipient's] VHT-NC project?

Since you started working with the VHT-NC project, what are the most important things you've learned about human trafficking in Native communities?

What kinds of training or technical assistance does your organization need to improve your VHT-NC partnership?
Prompts:
- Culturally-specific training
- Native-specific guidelines
- From the National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center

We're almost finished. These are our final questions for you.

What are the main benefits of having [Grant Recipient's] VHT-NC project in your community?
Prompts
- Have you noticed any culturally-specific benefits?
- What does the project add to your community?
- What improvements have you noticed?

What has the VHT-NC project accomplished?
Prompts
- What are the project's main successes, including culturally-specific successes?
- What are you most proud of?

We'd like you think about what you envision this project looking like in 3–5 years. What components of the project do you hope continue, if any?
Prompts
- Which cultural aspects would you continue? Which would you change?
- What else would you change?
- What would support or help with sustainability? E.g., funding, established policies/procedures, continued partnerships, new partnerships, organizational support, tribal support, community support, data showing positive outcomes.

Is there anything you would like to add that we did not cover?

What do you hope to learn from this evaluation process?