NON PROFIT IMPACT TEAM
SHORT-TERM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
EVALUATION REPORT

- **Formerly, Capacity Technical Assistance & Training Workshops**

- **Funded by the Los Angeles County Department of Probation**

April - December

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Center for Nonprofit Management

NONPROFIT IMPACT TEAM

OVP OFFICE OF VIOLENCE PREVENTION

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I.   INTRODUCTION

This report provides the results of evaluation conducted by the Center for Nonprofit Management (CNM) on behalf of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Office of Violence Prevention (OVP) for its Short-Term Training and Technical Assistance Program ("TTA Program), formerly known as Capacity Building Technical Assistance & Training Workshops ("CBTAT"). The TTA Program was designed and implemented by the Nonprofit Impact Team (NIT) as part of OVP's Trauma Prevention Initiative. This final report provides an overview of the program and evaluation, a discussion of the findings, and recommendations for future implementation.

II.   PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A. Background

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) partners with community residents and stakeholders to reduce violence related injuries and deaths. The Trauma Prevention Initiative (TPI) serves to align Los Angeles County services and initiatives. TPI applies a comprehensive, place-based approach through innovative programs, policies, and partnerships. TPI's approach is both place-based and public health focused and builds on the core values of community empowerment and systems change to implement a model that targets three strategies and their corresponding programs:

- **Intervention**
    - Hospital Based Violence Intervention
    - Street Outreach Community Violence Intervention Services

- **Capacity Building**
    - Capacity Building Training and Technical Assistance
    - Peer to Peer Violence Prevention Learning Academy

- **Prevention**
    - Community Identified Strategies
    - Community Engagement and Empowerment

From 2017 to 2018, TPI implemented a Training and Technical Assistance Pilot Project ("the pilot project") in four South Los Angeles communities – Westmont West Athens, Willowbrook, Florence-Firestone, and unincorporated Compton – to provide training and technical assistance to small community-based organizations working to prevent violence and trauma within their communities. Four consultants – with expertise in the areas of organizational planning and operations, resource development and philanthropy, data management and evaluation, and rebranding and marketing – offered one-on-one meetings and consultations to a select group of thirty agencies. In addition, several capacity building workshops welcomed a larger group of nonprofits and the general public. The pilot project's success and impact are highlighted in the report *Trauma Prevention Initiative Training and*

Technical Assistance Pilot Project: Findings and Recommendations which is available through the Office of Violence Prevention.[1]

B. Responding to the COVID Crisis

Based on the pilot project's success, the Office of Violence Prevention, Trauma Prevention Initiative tasked its Training and Technical Assistance Team (TTA Team) to design a training and technical assistance program to launch in Spring 2020. The TTA Team designed a series of capacity-building workshops to build the operational capacity of grassroots nonprofit organizations involved in community violence prevention. The TTA Team called this original program Capacity Building Technical Assistance & Training Workshops (CBTAT). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the TTA rapidly evolved the program design to address the newfound challenges nonprofit organizations were facing. Within two weeks of the onset of the "Safer-at-Home" orders, all types of businesses were shuttering in compliance, including nonprofit organizations who encountered severe interruptions to revenue streams, service models, and management systems and structures.

The TTA Team rebranded itself as the Nonprofit Impact Team ("NIT") and reconceptualized the capacity building program as *COVID-19 Short-Term Technical Assistance Program,* to provide immediate, targeted one-on-one consultations to nonprofit organizations around their most elevated needs, especially the needs that directly stemmed from the financial and programmatic challenges induced by the COVID-19 public health crisis.

> *"When COVID hit, we realized that everyone was doing workshops online. We thought we could do something more responsive. We thought it would be great to provide 1:1 services to nonprofits. In online workshops, you really don't get a lot of individualized consultation; you don't get any tailored support." – NIT Member*

One-on-one consultations provided by NIT addressed these areas of organizational capacity:

Fund Development & Grant Resources

Organizational & Operational Development

Marketing & Communications

Data & Evaluation

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[1] Daniel Healy, MPH, Robert Lewis, MSW, Lisa Odigie, MPH, Robbin Randolph, MA, *Trauma Prevention Initiative Training and Technical Assistance Pilot Project: Findings and Recommendations*, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health – Injury and Violence Prevention Program, Trauma Prevention Initiative, Training and Technical Assistance Team, September 2018, http://ph.lacounty.gov/ovp/docs/TPI%20Documents/Capacity%20Building/TPI%20TTA%20Final%20Report%20with%20attachments%2012-11-18.pdf

This COVID-19 Short-Term Technical Assistance program ("TTA program") launched in April 2020 while the "Stay-at-Home" orders were enforced in Los Angeles City, Los Angeles County, and the entire state of California. Notwithstanding similar curfews and "Stay at Home" orders being reissued in November 2020, the NIT continued to deliver short-term technical assistance via one-on-one consultations through December 2020.

Ten consultants, working as the Nonprofit Impact Team (NIT), offered free, short-term technical assistance to community-based organizations experiencing organizational challenges resulting from the impact of COVID-19. NIT provided 108 one-on-one consulting projects to 100 organizations that requested assistance.

Intended Audience
The TTA Program was designed to provide support to at least 100 organizations in need of immediate assistance across all Los Angeles County Service Planning Areas ("SPAs") over the period of April 2020 to December 2020. Funded by the Los Angeles County Department of Probation, the TTA program's intended audience was Los Angeles County community-based organizations that serve juvenile justice-involved or violence- and trauma-impacted youth and families.

Data Tracking Methods

The NIT developed a number of client data and case management tracking tools to aid in program delivery and evaluation. Tracking and monitoring tools included Requests for Assistance, Plans of Actions, Case Notes, and Satisfaction Surveys. These tools captured demographic data, organizational needs, and descriptions of each organization's plan. Moreover, the NIT designed tracking system documents clients' progression through the TTA Program. NIT recorded participants' agency type and tracked consultation schedules, client interactions, and referral sources throughout the program implementation.

III.   EVALUATION OVERVIEW

A. The Intent of the Evaluation

This final report summarizes evaluation findings in the design, process, and implementation of the Nonprofit Impact Team's TTA Program. Specifically, it provides an analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data collected by NIT and CNM as well as an assessment of the TTA Program's reach, successes, and overall value to participating organizations. This report contextualizes the challenges the NIT faced when implementing the TTA Program and acknowledges the unprecedented and urgent needs faced by the NIT's clients. Finally, this report offers recommendations for future implementation of the TTA Program as it continues under the Los Angeles County Probation Department.

B. Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation process was designed to capture and describe the evolution of program implementation as well as the successes and challenges in program delivery. The evaluation process sought to delineate the needs presented by the nonprofit participants, the extent to which the TTA Program met those needs, and the strategies the NIT employed to overcome challenges identified in the interim report.

This report synthesizes data from key informant interviews, focus groups with NIT staff and program participants who worked with NIT consultants, and the NIT project tracking tools.

Data collection carried out by CNM staff includes:

- Key informant interviews conducted with all program personnel

- A series of five focus groups conducted from July 2020 to April 2021 with a total of twenty-five individuals representing twenty-four organizations that completed the TTA Program. Each of the Los Angeles County Supervisorial Districts and Service Planning Areas was represented in these sessions. (See table in Appendix 4)

The data collected through these methods were used to inform Monthly Progress Reports published throughout the duration of the TTA Program as well as this final report.

IV.   KEY FINDINGS

A. The TTA Program Provided Technical Assistance to 100 Community-Based Organizations Serving Justice-Involved or Trauma- and Violence-Impacted Youth and Families.

The NIT Outreach and Recruitment Process Yielded Requests for Assistance from 104 organizations.

The outreach and recruitment process evolved over the first half of the program's implementation as some strategies that did not yield the intended results were discontinued and other approaches tested. CBOs received notification of the program via email, direct communication, or in some cases, via partner websites. Email messages with an informational flyer with links to a promotional video describing the program served as the primary mode of direct outreach. Other methods of reaching eligible organizations were posting NIT information on partner program websites and newsletters whenever possible. Partners included the Probation Department, the Center for Nonprofit Management, First5 LA, The Nonprofit Partnership, Liberty Hill Foundation, former DPH grantees, previous TTA contacts, small business associations, and other Los Angeles County offices and political entities including the Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs.

Institutional stakeholders were asked to promote the project among their unique mailing lists of nonprofit organization contacts through marketing materials, bilingual flyers, and web links to the DPH landing pages with a link to the Request for Assistance. Stakeholders included the Los Angeles County Office of Violence Prevention as well as local community partners and their respective distribution lists. Project staff also researched, especially at the launch of the project, organizations within different SPAs (particularly SPA 1 & 2) who could potentially participate in the TTA Program.

Interested organizations were invited to submit applications for the short-term consultations by completing a RFA form stating the immediate organizational challenge(s) for which they needed assistance. This was later modified to include a ranking of the organizational challenges resulting from COVID-19. Nonprofit organizations across Los Angeles County submitted RFAs. The following map illustrates the geographic reach of this Training and Technical Assistance program.

Some staff commented that they felt that the outreach plan heavily relied on connections with county departments and partner agencies, and thus were not targeted enough to engage historically marginalized CBOs and their leaders. Focus group participants also highlighted that they became aware of the program primarily through email and/or a professional contact who shared the TTA program's promotional materials. Though other methods of outreach were suggested – such as on-the-ground advertising in community spaces and making telephone calls – these ideas were not ultimately fully implemented. Moreover, staff raised that diversity in the leadership team could help in recognizing the need for more responsive outreach and tailored approaches within SPAs and various communities.

In terms of outreach and clarity of materials, the materials, notably, were only available in English and Spanish. The outreach and recruitment materials, however, were useful in making clear to English- and Spanish-speaking CBO leaders how to apply for free technical assistance. Focus group participants found that the promotional materials were helpful and effectively communicated the steps that interested organizations needed to take to quality. Those who accessed the NIT website and viewed the informational video found the video to be very helpful in explaining the assistance offered through the TTA program.

Contact made by a NIT member following the RFA was sufficient to get CBOs to commit to participating and engaging in the TTA Program. Once connected, however, CBOs expressed a general lack of clarity around what the TTA program and process entailed. Focus group participants revealed that they understood the type of technical assistance offered by the TTA program but were unsure about what to expect in terms of TA delivery. Some participants shared that they did not understand what the process entailed until mid-way through their participation.
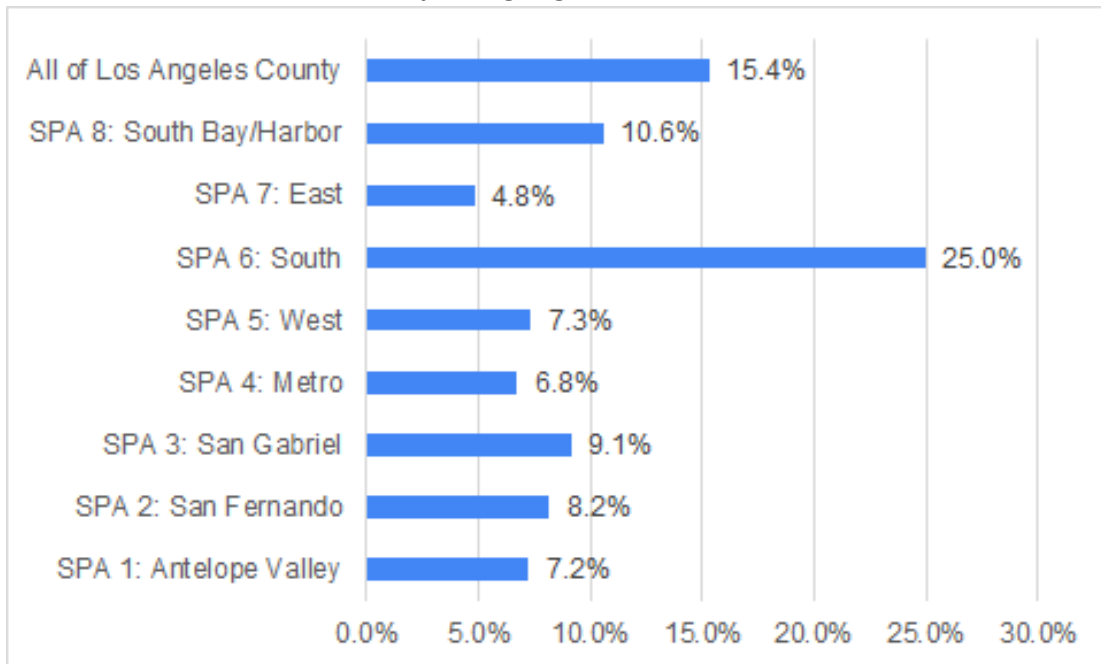
The NIT delivered tailored technical assistance to 100 small, grassroots CBOs across all Supervisorial Districts and SPAs

The ten consultants working as the Nonprofit Impact Team created Action Plans for 100 organizations) that provide services across all Supervisorial Districts and Service Planning Areas. (Four organizations

that submitted RFAs determined that the services offered through the program were not appropriate for their needs). A total of 96 organizations completed the plans of action created by the NIT, with 12 organizations receiving multiple technical assistance projects. In all, 108 short-term technical assistance projects were delivered through the project.
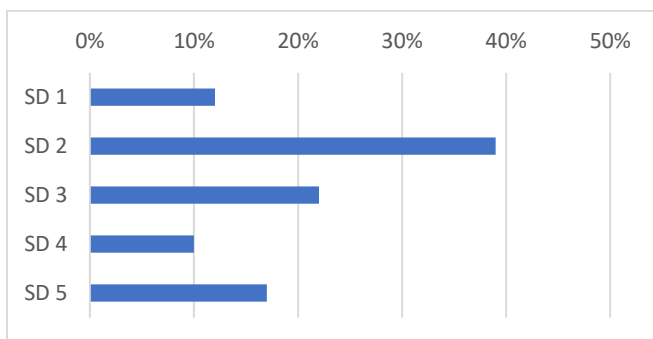
The TTA Program served client organizations providing services across all Supervisorial Districts and SPAs in Los Angeles County. Organizations that sought assistance were primarily serving Metro Los Angeles, South Los Angeles, and the South Bay/Harbor areas with a particular concentration from South and Central Los Angeles.

SPAs in which Requesting Organizations Provided Services

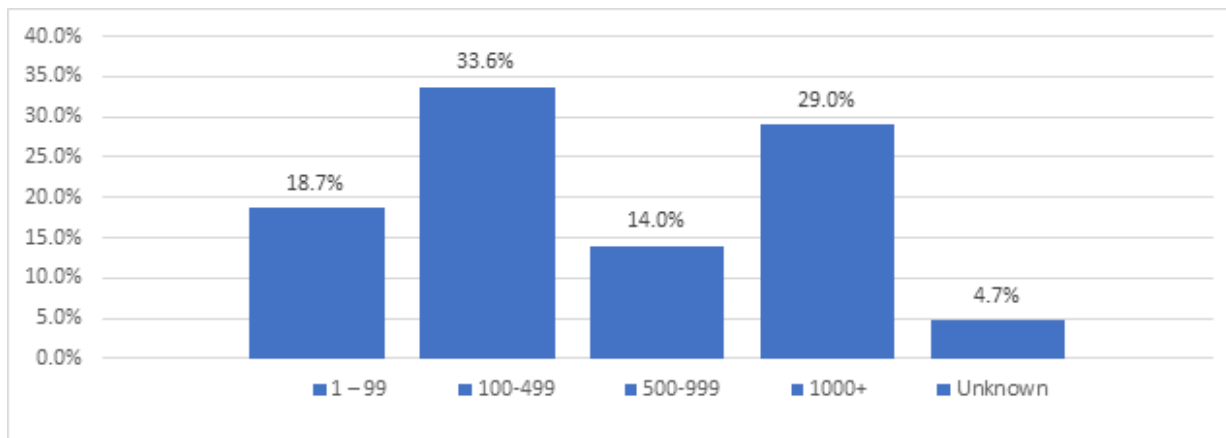| SPA	Percentage
All of Los Angeles County	15.4%
SPA 8: South Bay/Harbor	10.6%
SPA 7: East	4.8%
SPA 6: South	25.0%
SPA 5: West	7.3%
SPA 4: Metro	6.8%
SPA 3: San Gabriel	9.1%
SPA 2: San Fernando	8.2%
SPA 1: Antelope Valley	7.2%

Organizations requesting and receiving services represented all of the five Supervisorial Districts with the largest number from SD 2 and SD 3.

SDs in which Requesting Organizations Provided Services

SD	
SD 1	
SD 2	
SD 3	
SD 4	
SD 5	

More than half of requesting organizations served fewer than 500 clients per year, illustrating that the project provided capacity building services to small, grassroots organizations (compared to nonprofit organizations who serve thousands of clients a year).

Constituents/Community Members Served Yearly by Requesting Organizations

B. Technical Assistance provided to 100 CBOs That Serve Justice-Involved and/or Trauma- and Violence-Impacted

Funded by the Los Angeles County Probation Department, the TTA Program sought to provide technical assistance to CBOs in Los Angeles County that serve youth and/or families who have been involved in the juvenile justice system, at-risk of being involved in the juvenile justice system, or impacted by violence and trauma. Of the 100 CBOs served through the TTA Program, 99 CBOs worked with and provided services to justice-impacted and/or violence- or trauma-impacted youth and families.

All client organizations provide programming or other services that support juvenile justice-involved- or violence and trauma-impacted youth and families in Los Angeles County. The most common services provided by CBOs requesting to participate in the TTA Program included youth tutoring/mentoring services, counseling, food assistance and arts programs. Over 55% of client organizations provide youth mentoring and/or counseling services. Over 75% of the client organizations serve youth 6 to 18 years old, and/or individuals impacted by trauma.

The TTA program provided consultation services and support that may have been inaccessible without the program.

The TTA Program model of rapid delivery of technical assistance allowed CBOs to access a subject matter specialist that they otherwise would not have the resources to engage on their own. Even without the pressures of a global pandemic, organizations at all stages of development are often stretched by the organizational commitment of staff and financial resources that accompanies a capacity building process that can stretch over several months. The NIT developed a process to quickly
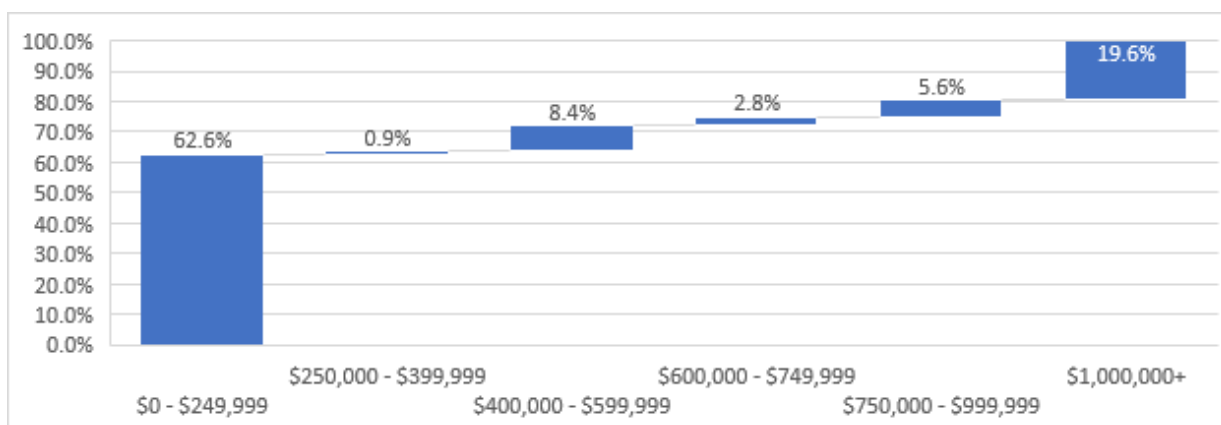
and efficiently meet the dire needs of nonprofits that lacked the organizational capacity and safety net necessary to withstand the challenges posed by COVID.

> *"If we don't have funds to bring somebody on to do fund development, thought partnership – whether it's to increase capacity or advocate in the community – is valuable. We need somebody to do this work with us."* – TTA Program Participant

The TTA program served community-based organizations throughout all Supervisorial Districts and SPAs in Los Angeles County. Those CBOs who accessed technical assistance through the TTA Program were primarily 3-5 years old or newer; about 31% were established between 2016 and 2020. These organizations reported a small staff – 80% reporting less than 10 people – typically comprised of an Executive Director (as a part time opportunity with full-time employment elsewhere) and volunteers. NIT staff noted that some organizations were staffed by the Executive Director acting as a "one man or one-woman army" especially in terms of engaging and completing the technical assistance program. Notably, many Executive Directors had personal experience in trauma and violence.

The annual operational budgets among client organizations varied, with a majority (62%) operating with a budget of less than $250,000. Another 19.6% had budgets over $1 million.

Annual Budget of Requesting Organizations

All Participating Organizations Received Technical Assistance in Their Top Three Requested Content Area.

The NIT delivered a total of 108 one-on-one consultations in the following topics: Fund Development & Grant Resources, Organizational & Operational Development, Marketing & Communications, and Data & Evaluation.

Technical Assistance Provided by Content Area	Total # of TA Consultations	% of Total
Data and Evaluation	18	17 %
Fund Development and Grant Writing	44	41 %
Marketing and Communication	24	22 %
Operations and Organizational Development	22	20 %

During the RFA stage, CBOs were asked to rank their top three choices of content area in which they wished to receive technical assistance; 66% of CBOs received technical assistance in their number one ranked choice of content area and 100% of CBOs received technical assistance in a content area within their top three choices. While most CBOs received technical assistance in only one content area, 12 CBOs were able to receive consultation and guidance in two content areas.

> *"A lot of comments were about how thorough the services were. Organizations felt like they had a connection with the content specialists. They took time to sit down with each organization and develop an individual plan for them and provide them steps. It was more like a hands-on approach."* – NIT Member

Rather than delivering a general form of technical assistance to the CBOs, Content Area Specialists dedicated the necessary time to form relationships with the clients, uncover the unique situation and needs the client organizations faced, and develop a tailored Plan of Action. This approach ensured that the client would have an opportunity to meet with a CAS and develop a personalized action plan and deliverables. Notably, due to the diversity of clients and the integrated, individualized approach of the consultations, no two clients were the same. Out of the 100 CBOs that received technical assistance through the TTA Program, 100 % received an action plan specifically tailored to their situation and needs.

The organizations were typically (1) small, some funding themselves out of pocket; (2) inexperienced in nonprofit management (e.g., the Executive Director was also acting as a board member); and (3) operating with a start-up infrastructure. For instance, some CBOs had outdated websites and the TTA Program provided them with an opportunity to reassess and evaluate their online presence.

Many CBOs lacked knowledge around IRS rules, funder guidelines and the significance surrounding being a public charity. Some (5.6%) CBOs requesting assistance were nonprofit organizations without 501(c)(3) status.

> *"Out of the 45 nonprofits that my content area serviced, probably 40 of them didn't have an annual budget. In addition, probably the majority didn't have what the IRS considered a seasoned board."* – NIT Member

Because organizations without basic elements such as an organizational website or banking system face difficulty in raising funds through traditional channels of nonprofit funding, technical assistance offered in the fund development category in many cases aimed to get CBOs "funder ready". This customized approach centered on providing organizations with a strong foundation rather focusing prematurely on the mechanics and strategy of fund development.

C. High Levels of Program Satisfaction and Desire for Additional Technical Assistance

Participants reported a very high level of satisfaction with the technical assistance they received through the TTA Program. The following figure presents client satisfaction data from a survey of clients who completed their technical assistance consultation by November 2020.

Satisfaction Ratings of Participating Organizations*

*Total number of organizations = 65

"*I think as a whole, they were satisfied. They were appreciative. 90% of case reviews brought back showed that the client was appreciative. There was a benefit. They secured funding; they secured new funding; they took away something.*" – NIT Member

The rapid nature of the TTA program meant that there was not always adequate time to fully implement all recommendations offered by the CAS. In some cases, ambitious goals were set for clients in early phases of the project that prevented them from implementing later steps in the action plan. For instance, some clients were given data goals and questions, but needed much more time to collect the data or think through the type of data that could and should be collected. In addition, the Executive Directors with whom the NIT worked faced competing priorities and compounding challenges which meant that their technical assistance activities were not always carried out as planned.

NIT staff also observed that the program structure did not allows CAS to address all the needs that participating organizations had.

"*For every one solution that I may have been able to create or present, they probably had 15 more that needed to be resolved.*" – NIT Member

Despite challenges, participants report that the technical assistance helped to strengthen their organization.

"*[My organization] is much more stable today only because of the coaching I received.*" – TTA Program Participant

"*The work done was absolutely amazing. The consultant really helped me understand the power of visuals in grant writing. The coach was able to translate our conversations into a visual model that help me execute my projects and programs.*" – TTA Program Participant

During the focus groups, participating organizations expressed a desire to receive more technical assistance.

> *"For the future, there should be a follow-up. Technical assistance is just the initial step. A follow-up can be what steps have you taken and suggest next steps. The initial technical assistance just scratches the surface."* – TTA Program Participant

> *"I recommend that we pair with our consultant within a year, analyze trends to expand capacity building and technical assistance."* – TTA Program Participant

> *"Quarterly check-ins would motivate accountability on our end."* – TTA Program Participant

D. NIT's responsiveness to emerging needs was key to program success

Changes in the program delivery model altered staff roles and responsibilities.

The TTA Program was originally designed as a series of in-person capacity building workshops. At the launch of the TTA Program in April 2020, CBOs were grappling with the rapid shifts in demand and operational challenges resulting from a worldwide pandemic. In response to the challenges faced by CBOs, the program model evolved into providing rapid delivery of one-on-one consultations to CBOs instead.

The NIT consisted of six part-time staff (contracted for 24 hours per week), two CAS per content area, one part-time Administrative Analyst, and one Workshop Coordinator, managed by a co-lead from the Trauma Prevention Initiative. The staff hired to provide training and technical assistance consisted of one member of the pilot program staff plus additional CAS who came on board gradually as the training and technical assistance program was evolving to the rapid response model.

With the new model of rapid delivery of one-on-one consultations, roles and responsibilities of NIT staff shifted to include marketing, facilitating the entry and intake process for organizations requesting to participate in the TTA Program, providing training and technical assistance through 1:1 consultation, and/or making referrals when appropriate. Additional tasks related to creating a tracking system, case management and case review meetings were added later as the project evolved.

The development of the program model in response to the emerging demands of the pandemic required staff flexibility and ability to adapt to changing circumstances on an almost daily basis. The rapid shift did pose some challenges related to staff roles and responsibilities. Staff had to navigate being placed in content areas that were not their area of expertise or specialization and learn on the job. Tight timelines and resource constraints meant that staff were not able to access more formal, structured opportunities for learning.

> *"It was like setting off on an adventure without a map."* – NIT Member

Part time staff also had to navigate time restraints. Some NIT members felt rushed in assisting clients, providing services with limited information, and adjusting plans of action as they were learning about the client organizations and their needs.

NIT staff interviewed shared that, at times, each staff person's role and the overall staff structure lacked transparency and clarity. Team members experienced differing levels of clarity and investment in program and process decisions, influenced by their experiences working within the constraints of limited staff capacity, a limited budget, and a rapid timeline to develop a cohesive program model. Moreover, the NIT were not immune to the stressors of the job intensified by the pandemic, as illustrated in a staff reflection below.

> *"Just really realizing that my role wasn't really to fix the nonprofit. I had to shift, and I was getting worn out. Working 16-hour days…I had to figure out what I could do that made a difference to my nonprofits and not have me crawl into a ball on the floor."* – NIT Member

Throughout the planning and service delivery process, effective and uniform implementation of the program required staff to engage in ongoing learning, reflection, collaboration, and joint decision-making. In order for the one-on-one consultations to work effectively, CAS teams needed to communicate and work together.

NIT staff dedicated significant amount of time to data tracking.

Because the NIT lacked a designated client management system, NIT members were asked to develop tracking tools and processes to collect client and programmatic data as well as manage each individual case, which diverted staff time away from direct delivery of services.

> *"The goals of streamlining our personnel process and our client tracking were to ensure a uniform client experience supported by diligent documentation while also maximizing client engagement; however, that also added a new challenge around added administration."* – NIT Member

The tracking and case management system was seen as arduous and time consuming. Each NIT member spent approximately 3 hours per week on case review, a laborious effort that diverted staff bandwidth away from providing more access and services to clients. The tracking system caused staff to spend a significant number of hours inputting data into Excel spreadsheets which inadvertently led to silos in information and non-relational documentation.

The challenge was finding a structure that balanced the need to manage the team, track clients and document program activities and ensure a uniform client experience, while also maximizing client engagement hours.

By early August 2020, after a series of iterative modifications to the intake process and a more comprehensive plan of action related to client management protocols, the team arrived at a smoother programmatic process given the limitations and tools they had to work with. Moreover, CAS and other NIT members learned to maneuver and adjust their approach to case reviews completing some case management tasks with the clients and streamlining the review process.

The administrative processes and standardization of program delivery ensured that information was no longer siloed and remained accessible for both clients and content area specialists. The triage tracking system and case management tools created by the NIT fulfilled a necessary function and ensured the overall success of the TTA Program. The tracking system provided data on key questions about the project: Who are we serving? What did we provide? And How satisfied were clients with services provided?

> *"I think the tracking was a really good tool. The plans of action were also a strong point for the project because it laid out all of the information for the content specialists but also for their clients as well."* – NIT Member

> *"The tracking system was a centralized place to keep those things and update status for the client."* – NIT Member

Case review process was instituted to ensure consistent quality service.

A Case Review Process was introduced as part of the NIT's management processes to provide more structure for the opening and closing of all cases and uniform documentation of case information, and to ensure a consistent level of service, including a multi-disciplinary case review, for all clients. The case review was also intended to provide a mechanism to support peer learning among staff and to allow for sharing creative and innovative ideas to strengthen plans for client while balancing creativity and standardization.

Some NIT staff shared concerns about the efficacy of Case Review meetings for sharing learning and collaborating to generate effective approaches to client needs. At times, the case review meetings entailed staff merely reporting out and moving to the next case without devoting time to collaborative decision-making or other support for staff in need of guidance.

In an effort to keep things uniform, CAS had to limit their creativity and some argued that the evolution of the process carried them away from the original intent of the program.

> *"It would have been great to have more chances to experiment and work with clients in our own way, but because things had to be tracked and measured, it limited us in respect to organic relationships. It was good because it did help get clients through the process. But I think that as a consultant myself, it's more fun and rewarding to be in a more organic, creative space."* – NIT Member

V. LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Lessons Learned

The TTA program demonstrates TPI's commitment to community empowerment as part of a public health approach to advancing violence prevention in Los Angeles County. While the original program design integrated the insights from the pilot project, COVID-19 restrictions required a swift pivot to a revised program model, while at the same time, key staff were also assigned to the COVID-19 Response Team. This transition to delivering services through a one-on-consultation meant that the NIT team had

to, at times, "learn by doing" in their role of capacity builders to organizations trying to adjust to new realities on the ground.

Lessons learned emerged within the following domains:

- **Learning and adjusting TA approach to address increased urgency of needs and vulnerability of grassroots CBOs:**
  The TTA model of rapid delivery of customized support was intended to prevent closures and maintain essential services. To accomplish this, staff had to address crisis situations while also ensuring that the tasks involved could be implemented by organizational staff stretched by competing priorities.

- **Creating strategies and processes to respond to needs of organizations at different stages of development:**
  Even before the pandemic, participating organizations had varying levels of existing capacity and knowledge which influence how much time and resources they can commit to capacity building activities. The level of existing capacity of organizations requesting assistance, in some instances, meant that the CAS had to re-orient their assumptions about the true needs of organizations. To be responsive to varying levels of organizational development, consultants had to use an empathetic approach to work side by side with these organizations, in keeping with the community empowerment approach.

- **Developing management tools and processes that balanced responsiveness to community needs with data collection and other administrative requirements:**
  The shift in the program model resulted in the need for a client tracking system that would allow staff to collect and share information about participating organizations. As a result, NIT members took on the added responsibility of creating and refining a client tracking system in real-time at the same time that they were providing consulting services. The case review process, intended to share learning across team members was also instituted. These tools and processes required an unanticipated share of team resources.

B. Recommendations

Based on the perspectives of staff and participants and data documented through the evaluation process, CNM presents the following recommendations for consideration for future implementation of the technical assistance model outlined in this report. These recommendations are offered with the assumption that future iterations of this program model will operate without the heightened pressures and urgency created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Refine outreach and recruitment strategies to reach historically marginalized CBOs and their leaders

- Consider outreach strategies that can be customized to reach specific historically and institutionally marginalized communities and to account for local conditions within SPAs.
- Employ outreach methods that are more relational and localized including phone calls, on the ground outreach, advertising in community spaces, etc.

- Create outreach materials in languages other than English and Spanish.
- Make strategic use of partner organizations and Los Angeles County departments to expand outreach.
- Ensure that contact list is updated regularly, and includes language preference information.

Clarify program eligibility and process, and language accessibility, and include information in outreach and recruitment efforts

- Provide appropriate level of detailed information on the steps involved in the technical assistance process, the anticipated time and resources required to engage in the program, and the roles of CAS/consultants and organizational staff.
- Ensure clarity and transparency of criteria for acceptance and exclusion from the TTA program.
- Make technical assistance available in more languages to reach marginalized CBO leaders that are typically not targeted for capacity building services.
- Analyze how program eligibility impacts marginalized groups, and take appropriate measures to redress exclusion of marginalized CBOs and their leaders.

Adjust program model to align with needs and resources of organizations

- Consider offering various levels of service tailored to organizations at differing stages of development (including those operating under a fiscal sponsor) to allow for varying lengths of engagement, the option to address multiple priority areas, and ensure realistic and appropriate recommendations and deliverables.
- Allow for a longer engagement with more time for technical assistance sessions and follow-up when Technical Assistance plan includes implementation of longer-term recommendations.
- Provide technical assistance in a format which allows multiple members of the organization to be involved in the Technical Assistance process, including meetings with the CAS.

Improve project management and data collections systems

- Investigate and identify project management solution that supports project management needs, allows for efficient client tracking and provides data needed for case review and evaluation.
- Adjust data collection requirements for smaller or shorter-term Technical Assistance engagements, to minimize administrative burden on staff and participants.
- Create a process for a smooth handoff of clients and cases between and among CAS.
- Adjust case management and review process to allow staff to leverage findings between work done in the priority area and other content areas yet to be addressed as part of the TA plan.
- Increase opportunities for reflection and learning as part of the case review, for example include key debrief questions related to balance of effort to outcomes with participating organizations.

Strengthen supports for staff development and team capacity building

- Establish transparency and clarity about team roles and structures as early as possible within the program timeline.
- Increase staff capacity in order to provide participants with technical assistance and one-on-one consultation within their self-identified organizational priority areas.
- Allow for training and formalized learning opportunities to maintain and increase NIT members' skills and knowledge.

- Designate time for peer-to-peer learning and mentorship opportunities for staff, especially spaces in which less experienced staff may learn from their more experienced peers.
- Share knowledge across NIT team members through easily accessible and searchable repository of commonly used information and documents to achieve efficiencies.

VI.   SUMMARY

In Los Angeles County, as elsewhere in the US, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed the true level of vulnerabilities that individuals and organizations in marginalized communities experience.

> *"The nonprofit sector, the third largest employer in the United States is in a state of uncertainty and flux in the wake of the pandemic and economic instability. Not surprisingly, POC-led nonprofits, which tend to be smaller, less resourced, and community-based, face an even more challenging set of circumstances. Their very survival—and that of the communities who rely on them—is at stake".*[2]

The TTA program mobilized the resources of the Trauma Prevention Initiative to help strengthen Los Angeles County community-based organizations and respond to the needs of small CBOs serving juvenile justice-involved- or violence and trauma-impacted youth and families throughout all the Service Planning Areas. During a time of upheaval and heightened need that was challenging for even well-established large nonprofit organizations, the rapid delivery of one-on-one consultations provided crucial support for many small CBOS to increase their capacity and avoid crises and closures that would impact the provision of essential services to marginalized communities.

High levels of satisfaction reported on the client survey reveal that organizations did value the support they received through the program. While many factors influenced the ultimate outcome of each organization's technical assistance engagement, participants clearly stated that their participation strengthened their organizations. While a full accounting of the long-term outcomes of this project is beyond the scope of this report, a look at the number and size of organizations served reveals that the

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[2] On the Frontlines: Nonprofits Led by People of Color Confront COVID-19 and Structural Racism

project reached and addressed the needs of vulnerable organizations, who. In turn provided critical services to its community.

This is an important accomplishment in keeping with TPI's community empowerment approach and support for community identified solutions to prevent violence. DPH's investment in the capacity of community-based organizations that serve impacted youth and families is a key contribution to the vitality of smaller and younger organizations, an important but under-resourced segment of the social service ecosystem. The lessons learned from this project can inform future LA County efforts to work with community- based organizations in a way that enhances their ability to serve marginalized groups.

As described by the Center for Nonprofit Management's 2021 Sector Snapshot[3], Southern California nonprofit organizations that weathered the crises of 2020 continue to face challenging conditions, with 56% of responding organizations indicating that they are experiencing increased demands for services, while 75% expected to undergo budget reductions. In light of these circumstances, programs such as the Short-term Technical Assistance Program and other on-going efforts to improve County structures and processes to more efficiently and equitably support organizations serving those most in need are vital to sustain the civic infrastructure that safeguards the safety and well-being of all Los Angeles County residents.
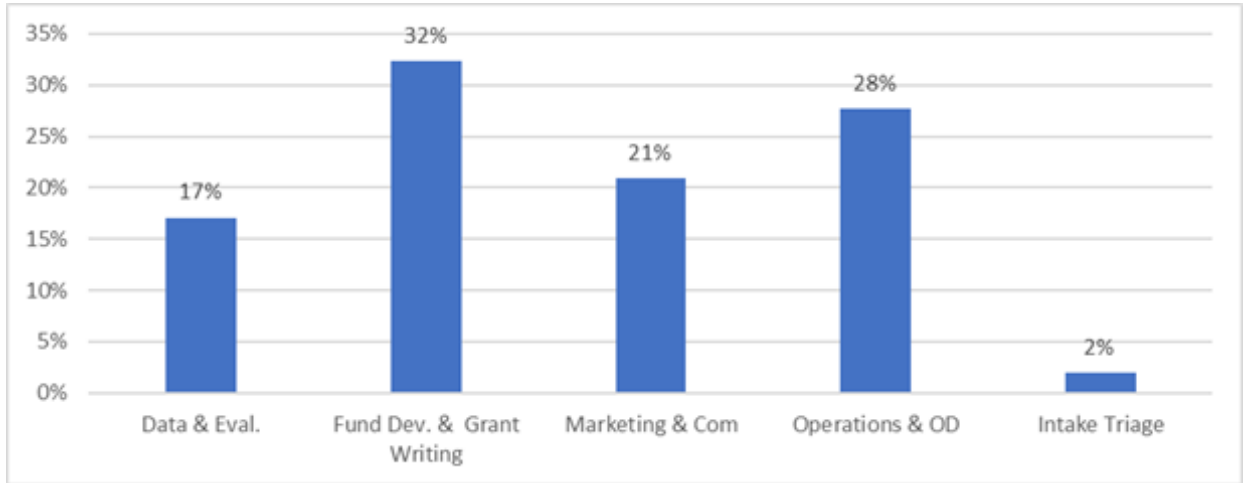
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[3] [Center for Nonprofit Management 2021 Sector Snapshot](#)

APPENDICES

1. **Technical Assistance Provided by Content Area**

2. **List of Participating Agencies**

3. **Case Management Process**

4. **Evaluation Methodology**

APPENDIX 1

Technical Assistance Hours Allocated by Specialty

APPENDIX 2

List of Organizations that Received Technical Assistance

Supervisorial District 1

- Amanecer Community Counseling Services
- Asian Pacific American Dispute Resolution Center
- Breaking Through Barriers to Success
- California Mental Health Connection
- Center for Health Justice
- Changes
- Heritage Group Homes Inc.
- iDREAM for Racial Health Equity (a project of Community Partners)
- Latino and Latina Roundtable of San Gabriel and Pomona Valley
- Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services
- RISE Reaching and Improving Society with Education
- Rogue Artists Ensemble

Supervisorial District 2

- Al Wooten Jr. Youth Center
- Allies for Every Child NR
- Anchor of Hope International Ministries, Inc.
- Back to the Basics Community Empowerment
- Black Women Rally for Action Los Angeles County
- California Black Women's Health Project
- Collective REMAKE
- COLORS LGBTQ Youth Counseling Service
- D.B. Foundation
- Educational Student Tours
- Ezrach Brain Trust Association
- Friends and Neighbors Community Association
- Girls Club of Los Angeles
- Giving Youth Opportunities
- Helping Hands Community Resource Center
- Homeless Services Foundation
- Jamaica Cultural Alliance
- Journey to a Start, Inc.
- Lasting Impressions
- Lifting the Veil
- Ms. Bibby's Table – Janga
- Neighborhood Knowledge Academy, Inc.

- New Star Family Center
- Our Little Helpers
- People for Community Improvement
- RACE Reclaiming Americas Communities Through Empowerment
- Resilient Agency
- Rizilient, Inc.
- Sol Adventurers Foundation
- Soldiers of the Lord Productions, Inc.
- Southern California Area National Council of Negro Women
- Swim Up Hill Foundation
- Tamani & Associates
- Transitions 2 Success
- Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Education Program, Inc.
- Urban Saddles
- Veteran Social Services, Inc.
- Willowbrook Inclusion Network

Supervisorial District 3

- ACE Alliance for Community Empowerment
- Alitash Kebede Arts
- Arts Bridging the Gap
- AWOKE
- Center for Living and Learning
- Film2Future
- Fostering Dreams Project
- Haven Hills, Inc.
- Hollywood Police Activities League
- Housing Works
- InsideOUT Writers
- Keeperz Corporation
- Living Advantage, Inc.
- My Friend's Place
- North Valley Caring Services
- Pukuu Cultural Community Services
- Sisters on the Streets
- Students Run America (dba Students Run LA)
- Teen Line
- Viver Brasil Dance Company
- Westmont Counseling Center
- Women Crowned in Glory, Inc. (Safe Passage)

Supervisorial District 4

- CRUSH Community Resources United Sharing Hope
- Caribbean American and Heritage Foundation, Inc.
- Community Partners: Building Forever Families Initiative
- Justice for Murdered Children
- Miracles Counseling Center
- SAAHAS for Cause
- South Asian Helpline and Referral Agency
- Women Shelter of Long Beach
- You Run This Town Foundation Los Angeles

Supervisorial District 5

- Awesomely Autistic United (FAME)
- Camp Laurel Foundation
- Change Lanes Youth Support Services, Inc.
- CherishedLA
- City of Lancaster Community Center
- Door of Hope
- Fire Service Psychology Association
- Grace Mercy and Hope
- Green Thumb AV Youth Program
- Live Above the Hype
- Lost Angeles Children's Project
- Shepard's Door Domestic Violence Resource and Education
- Sinness Education Foundation (dba Innovation Education)
- St. Elizabeth Parish School
- Stopping Pressure on Teens
- Tia Chucha's Centro Cultura
- Western Justice Center

APPENDIX 3

Case Management Process

Requests for Assistance

Nonprofit organizations were invited to submit applications for the short-term consultations via email, direct communication, and in some cases, partner websites. Using Survey Monkey, the NIT created a survey that functioned as a Request for Assistance Form (RFA) in which community-based nonprofit organizations (CBOs) could apply for free, short-term technical assistance provided by the TTA Program. The RFA stated that the NIT offered "FREE, SHORT-TERM, technical assistance to community-based nonprofits who need help addressing organizational challenges, including those resulting from COVID-19." It also set forth the eligibility criteria for participating CBOs: "To be eligible to receive this free assistance, your organization must be located in Los Angeles County and serve youth and/or families who have been either: Involved in the juvenile justice system; At-risk of being involved in the juvenile justice system; or Impacted by violence and trauma."

CBOs were required to input their contact information and demographic information (e.g., 501(c)(3)) status, staff size, operating budget, populations served, number of clients served, services provided, SPAs served), as well as how the CBOs learned of the opportunity. CBOs were prompted to rank their top three organizational challenges from the list of the four content areas: Fund Development and Grant Resources (formerly Grant Writing), Organizational & Operational Development, Marketing & Communications, and Data & Evaluation. Requests were reviewed by members of the NIT staff, who then referred the request to an appropriate content area.

Assessments, Plans of Actions, and Case Notes

Upon receipt of the RFAs, the NIT assigned CBOs tracking numbers and tracked them according to the content areas for which each organization would receive technical assistance. Within 48 hours of receipt of request, a Content Area Specialist ("CAS") contacted the requesting organization to conduct a targeted assessment via a "deeper dive" conversation. Content Area Specialists populated Plan of Action and Case Notes templates in Microsoft Word to memorialize the content area for which the CAS provided technical assistance, outlined the challenges identified by the CBO, and unearthed any additional challenges. The assigned CAS used the templates to notate the action steps taken by the CAS and CBO throughout the provision of technical assistance as well as the deliverables and resources the CBO would receive by the end of the process. With the co-signing of the Plan of Action, the team worked with the organization via one-on-one consultation to complete the targeted technical assistance activity within a short time frame.

Tracking Systems

To facilitate the process of delivering responsive yet rapid technical assistance, the NIT created a master triage tracking system on Microsoft Excel in which the NIT logged all data from the RFA and related client case notes and plans of actions. In a separate Excel document, the NIT tracked client progress including (1) initial Requests for Assistance, (2) completion of RFAs (e.g., a Plan of Action was created and shared with the client), and (2) completion of the client's Satisfaction Survey at the close of the technical assistance provision. A third Excel document tracked the closure of client cases. In addition, the NIT tracked the time spent with each CBO client including which tasks were performed and when.

Evaluation Methodology

The COVID-19 Rapid Response outcomes evaluation focused on the degree to which the technical assistance consultations resolved immediate, short-term needs of organizations impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

Guiding Questions

The outcomes evaluation was designed to capture the outcomes of marketing and implementation including attendance and yield, number of participants by SPA, number of consultations completed vs. unresolved, number of workshops completed according to curriculum topic, prevalent organizational needs, fit of program design to needs, challenges encountered and response, participant learning and growth and participant satisfaction.

Recruitment
- What was the yield of successfully initiated projects?

Provision of Service
- What were the prevalent needs?
- To what extent were the needs that presented addressed by the program design and resources?
- Type and duration of services provided by organization type and/or need.
- What challenges were encountered and how were they addressed?
- What needs were not addressed?
- To what extent were participants satisfied with consultations and the process as a whole?

Lessons Learned
- How relevant were the services offered to the needs at hand?
- What are the remaining needs after the consultation/workshop?
- How did /do the needs vary across the organizations served (consider type of populations served, geography, size of organization, length of operation) and what was the impact on organization's ability to take advantage of the TA?
- What can be learned about the impact of the COVID-19 situation in terms of short-and long-term effect on the sustainability of the organization and ability to effectively serve its communities?

- KI Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Satisfaction Survey
- Tracking System (Intake and Plan of Action Tracking Systems) Review

Methods

Document Review

CNM reviewed Outreach materials, Intake Forms, Case Notes and the NIT Tracking system documents.

Satisfaction Surveys

At the close of the technical assistance provision, CBOs were asked to complete a satisfaction survey on SurveyMonkey. The survey included questions on (1) the usefulness and helpfulness of the NIT and of the technical assistance provided, (2) the clarity of the process, (3) likelihood of future participation in Office of Violence Prevention programs, and (4) action steps taken as a result of the technical assistance received.

Key Informant Interview Methods

CNM conducted Key Informant interviews in two rounds by phone. The first round was conducted from June 29, 2020 through July 7, 2020 with all program personnel (n=11). The second round we conducted from December 14, 2020 to December 18, 2020 with eight program personnel (n=8).

Interviews took between 45 minutes to 1.5 hours to complete and were not recorded. Instead, the interviewers documented clients' responses using Google or Microsoft Word document.

Focus Group Data Collection Methods

CNM conducted five focus groups. The first focus group was comprised of six individuals who completed the TTA Program by July 1, 2020. The second, third and fourth focus groups, conducted in November 2020, February 2021 and April 2021 respectively, included a total of 17 individuals who completed the TTA Program by December 18, 2020. All focus group participants represented distinct organizations with the exception of one organization that was represented by two individuals. One NIT client offered feedback during a one-on-one interview in February 2020 due to a scheduling conflict with the February focus group.

*Supervisorial District (SD)**	# of Focus Group or Interview Participants by SD	# of Organizations Participating in a Focus Group or Interview by SD
1	9	8
2	9	9
3	6	6
4	3	3
5	5	4

*Note: Some zip codes are assigned to multiple supervisorial districts, therefore one participant or organization could be represented within multiple supervisorial district.

The focus groups were conducted using the online video conferencing platform Zoom, and notes were "charted" in a separate Google or Word document during the meeting. One interview was conducted by phone using the same data collection procedure as the focus group sessions.