



**Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Minnesota Disability Law Center Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women**

MAPS

Minnesota Accessing Paths to Safety Strategic Plan (DRAFT)

January 31, 2013

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MAPS Mission, Vision and Values

VISION

We envision that throughout Minnesota, American Indian women and non-American Indian women survivors with disabilities who have been subjected to sexual and/or domestic violence will have authentic and meaningful access to sexual assault, domestic violence, and disability service providers who have expansive knowledge and skills; will feel welcomed and valued when accessing services; and their experiences and expertise will be honored and reflected in all aspects of service provision.

MISSION

The mission of MAPS is to increase the capacity of our partner agencies and pilot site agencies (service providers in Minnesota) to meet the needs of American Indian and non-American Indian women with disabilities who have been subjected to domestic violence and sexual assault.

VALUES

Minnesota Accessing Paths to Safety (MAPS) members embrace values that are important to the work of the collaborative and essential for meeting the needs of American Indian and non-American women with disabilities with the emphasis on accountability, sustainability, safety, confidentiality, respect, embracing change, increasing agency capacity, knowledge and skills, training and development, evaluating impact of services, cultural competency, internal agency work on accessibility and policy creation Increasing agency policies/procedures.

Introduction

Minnesota Accessing Paths to Safety (MAPS) has officially begun its strategic planning phase to prepare for implementation. MAPS has matured into a solid and unified collaboration that is ready to realize its mission and vision. The MAPS statewide partners have developed a strong collaborative process for working together, established a strong and committed Pilot Site partnership, and most recently completed a successful needs assessment process.

The key findings in the MAPS Needs Assessment Report directly address the goals that were developed in the Needs Assessment Plan. The goals guided the MAPS partners in gathering information necessary to ensure better access for Native and Non-Native survivors and women with disabilities to services that are welcoming, relevant and holistic as well as culturally sensitive and appropriate.

The Strategic Plan will focus on three initiatives that address the five key findings in the Needs Assessment Report. The three initiatives will: (1) foster collaboration among disability, domestic and sexual violence programs to create a holistic approach to service provision for Native and Non-Native survivors with disabilities; (2) ensure best practices response to Native women with disabilities by building accessibility and cultural competency of disability, domestic and sexual violence programs and; (3) increase awareness, knowledge, and competency, and skills of MAPS partners to better address the needs of Native and Non-Native survivors with disabilities. Using a cultural lens and engaging American Indian advisors throughout the strategic planning and implementation process are priorities for MAPS. In addition, the MAPS Pilot Site partners will be engaged throughout the strategic planning and implementation processes because their input is critical to its success.

MAPS Overview of Collaboration

Minnesota Accessing Paths to Safety (MAPS) is a collaborative project of four statewide organizations that have come together with the vision to ensure that: *Throughout Minnesota, American Indian women with disabilities who have been subjected to sexual and/or domestic violence will have authentic and meaningful access to sexual assault, domestic violence, and disability service providers who have expansive knowledge and skills; will feel welcomed and valued when accessing services; and, their experiences and expertise will be honored and reflected in all aspects of service provision.*

The MAPS collaboration began in 2009 with three-year funding from Grant No. 2009-FW-AX-K008 “Education, Training, and Enhanced Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women with Disabilities Grant Program” awarded by the Office of Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice.

The MAPS collaboration includes: the Minnesota Disability Law Center (MDLC) – a statewide project of Mid-Minnesota Legal Assistance and the Governor-designated Protection and Advocacy agency for Minnesotans with disabilities; the Minnesota Indian Women’s Sexual Assault Coalition (MIWSAC), a statewide tribal coalition with a membership of 30 programs from around the state working to end sexual violence against American Indian women and children; the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women (MCBW), also a statewide membership organization with 83 member programs who provide programming to advance women's safety and security; and the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MNCASA) a statewide organizations with 85 member programs that acts as a voice for victims and survivors, sexual assault programs, and allies committed to ending sexual violence. The MAPS member organizations and affiliations partner across disciplines. For many years they have worked collaboratively on various issues, initiatives, and projects. As a group, they’ve influenced public policy; created awareness in the public sector around issues of trafficking, tribal sovereignty and jurisdictional issues, forensic exams, SART, SANE, and child sexual abuse; and have provided cross training within their organizations on many other issues around domestic and sexual violence.

Since the MAPS project began in 2009, the statewide partners have developed the collaboration, selected a statewide Pilot Site, completed a needs assessment, and initiated a strategic planning process. Deliverables for the project include the MAPS Charter, Pilot Site Memo, Needs Assessment Plan, and Needs Assessment Report. But perhaps the most significant result of the groups coming together has been the development of this collaboration, which has resulted in a strengthened resolve to create systems change to improve services, resources, and access for Native and Non-Native women survivors with disabilities at the pilot site (and ultimately throughout the state).

MAPS Pilot Site Partnership

MAPS selected a pilot site area in northwest Minnesota that includes the White Earth reservation area (which is in Becker and Mahnommen counties), a domestic and sexual violence resource center in Detroit Lakes, and a disability advocacy office in Fertile. The White Earth Tribal Area in northwest Minnesota was chosen as the MAPS pilot site because this area provides an excellent opportunity to work at the intersection of disabilities, sexual assault, and domestic violence. The work in this area can have a sustained and measurable impact on Native and Non-Native survivors and women with disabilities.

Three local programs were identified for this pilot site project: the White Earth Reservation Tribal DOVE (Down On Violence Everyday) Program serves women who have been subjected to sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, dating violence, and elder abuse; the Minnesota Disability Law Center Fertile Office is a small satellite location that serves individuals with a range of disabilities; and Lakes Crisis and Resource Center (LCRC) provides direct services through its battered women, sexual assault, general crime, and child abuse programs. Both DOVE and LCRC provide shelter services for women and their children. The pilot site agencies all serve both American Indian and non-Indian women survivors of domestic and sexual violence and women with disabilities.

The MAPS statewide partners have made a commitment to engage with and include the pilot site organizations in all phases of the MAPS project. Over the past three years, MAPS has made seven trips to meet with the pilot site organizations. The pilot site partners were instrumental in setting up all the needs assessment activities in the White Earth area from April through June 2012, and most recently DOVE representatives took part in the MAPS strategic planning site visit with VERA January 2-3, 2013 in St. Paul. MAPS statewide partners will continue to keep the pilot site partners actively involved in all of the activities during the implementation phase.

Overview of Planning and Development Phase

The MAPS collaboration officially began with the joint development of a Charter that formalized its vision and mission, values, a communications strategy, conflict resolution, and a decision making process. The MAPS Charter has served the collaboration well in proceeding through the planning and development phases.

MAPS' next planning step was to develop its Pilot Site Memo, which outlined the process utilized to select its pilot site in White Earth. Once, the pilot site partners agreed to take part in the project, the MAPS collaborative moved into developing the Needs Assessment Plan.

The MAPS partners undertook an intensive process to develop the goals for the Needs Assessment Plan. The goals evolved over the course of many months and several iterations. Keeping in mind the mission and vision of the project, the MAPS partners agreed that among several priorities, central to the project and its goals were the needs of American Indian women with disabilities.

The Needs Assessment goals reflect MAPS' commitment to assessing information obtained from key stakeholders – Native and non-Native survivors and women with disabilities, as well as service providers on the local and state levels. The Needs Assessment goals, indeed, were instrumental in guiding the analysis and assessment of the information obtained during the needs assessment process and formed the basis for the five key findings in the MAPS Needs Assessment Report.

MAPS partners identified the following six goals to frame and guide the Needs Assessment process and activities:

1. Identify the unique experiences of and specific barriers encountered by American Indian women survivors with disabilities.
2. Identify the challenges experienced by non-Native programs when serving American Indian women survivors with disabilities.
3. Identify the challenges experienced by Native programs when serving Native women survivors with disabilities.
4. Identify the relationships and resources that programs need to bolster existing strengths and address the gaps in resources for American Indian women survivors with disabilities.
5. Identify ways in which the statewide partner organizations, individually and collectively as the MAPS organization, can increase the capacity of programs to serve American Indian women survivors with disabilities.
6. Identify what needs to happen to ensure ongoing accessibility and sustainability of programs to serve Native women survivors with disabilities.

The MAPS Needs Assessment Plan was approved in January 2012 and the needs assessment activities commenced immediately thereafter. The MAPS Needs Assessment process spanned four months of activities in the Twin Cities urban area (statewide partners) and the MAPS pilot site in White Earth. The MAPS needs assessment activities included four staff focus groups with MAPS statewide partners staff; four focus groups with Native and non-Native survivors at the MAPS pilot site; 11 individual interviews with executive directors and board members from the MAPS statewide partners; six individual interviews with MAPS pilot site Native and non-Native women with disabilities; and seven interviews with

pilot site executive directors, board members and MDLC's staff person in Fertile. MAPS' partners made two trips to the pilot site to complete the Needs Assessment, which included several thousand miles of travel.

MAPS completed its Needs Assessment Report, which outlined this process, methodology, key findings, assumptions, and possible solutions in October 2012, and it was approved by OVW in November 2012. The key findings provide the impetus for MAPS' strategic planning and implementation phases. The report's key findings, implications and possible solutions section contain proposals to improve access and safety for all women with disabilities and survivors in the MAPS pilot site area; enhance the statewide and pilot site partners' collaboration processes; and provide education and awareness around disability issues and methodologies for providing culturally appropriate and respectful services for American Indian survivors with disabilities.

Summary of MAPS Needs Assessment Findings

Data gathering for the needs assessment encompassed three stakeholder groups – the MAPS statewide partners, the MAPS pilot site partners, and consumers/constituents. The needs assessment process covered three months and thousands of geographical miles. It included eight focus groups and 24 individual interviews held in the Twin Cities and the pilot site area. The Needs Assessment Report yielded 75 pages of rich information that has informed the strategic planning process and has enriched MAPS' learning about the issues, barriers, and needs of American Indian and Non-Indian survivors and women with disabilities in rural Minnesota. It also identified gaps in information that the statewide and pilot site partners need in order to provide enhanced, effective and culturally appropriate services to women in the pilot site area.

Throughout the needs assessment process, MAPS heard from all of our stakeholders about a variety of issues. MAPS had discussions with consumers about what they needed to access services and what providers needed to do to offer

more effective and appropriate service. Discussions also focused on how to bring about changes in organizations to improve access and services. MAPS heard stories of isolation and lack of access to services, tremendous community support, the need for better collaboration among all providers to provide holistic services, and a desire to provide better services to more Native and non-Native women survivors with disabilities.

Throughout the needs assessment process, MAPS partners met on a regular basis to identify emerging key themes, issues and findings. These key themes and issues were incorporated into the report's Key Findings, Implications, and Possible Solutions section. With the completion of the needs assessment phase of the project, the following five key findings were identified:

1. At the pilot site gaining access to services is difficult for American Indian women with disabilities and survivors, and includes: (a.) difficulty finding which disability and crime victim services are immediately available; (b) lack of accessible transportation on both the reservation and in surrounding communities; (c) apprehension about accessing services off the reservation because of racism/prejudice, i.e. not feeling welcome; (d) serious concerns about privacy and confidentiality when they seek services; and (e) many Native women survivors and some of the non-Native women survivors won't report a crime and/or seek services for fear of losing their children; (f) service providers in the Detroit Lakes and surrounding counties and in Becker and Mahnomen counties (not including MAPS pilot site partners) do not work in a concerted, collaborative way to provide needed crime victim and other vital services for Native women with disabilities and survivors and non-Native with disabilities and survivors.
2. There is a need for increased education and awareness about the cultural norms, values and traditions of Minnesota's American Indian¹ communities in the MAPS partner organizations, pilot site partners, and other organizations and agencies in the pilot site and surrounding areas,
3. Although the majority of the MAPS statewide and pilot site partners provide accommodations for persons with disabilities in their workplace and at their events, they lack written policies and procedures for accommodations, which the majority agree might prove beneficial in providing these services in a consistent manner.

4. Disability issues remain under the surface in the pilot site area. Women experience oppression and loss of privacy because of their disabilities. Native and non-Native women with disabilities encounter some similar barriers as well as barriers that are different due to the complex overlay of disability, culture, history, and communities. Women whose disabilities impact communication cannot easily identify, seek, or obtain advocacy assistance; yet even strong communication skills do not guarantee that women will receive respectful and appropriate services. Partnerships, participation and inclusion are important to extending access for women with disabilities in this large, rural area.
5. There is a lack of information on invisible or hidden disabilities in the Native American community that directly impacts how service providers may respond to survivors who are seeking disability services and the kinds of services that survivors may access.

MAPS is looking forward to project implementation because of the opportunities it will provide for us to continue working with our pilot site partners and to realize our vision to enhance and, perhaps help, to create authentic, culturally appropriate, sensitive and responsive services for Native women survivors with disabilities that honor and respect their culture and promote their safety and healing.

Overview of Strategic Planning Process

The strategic planning process is Phase II of the MAPS project, in which the findings of the MAPS needs assessment are used to develop a strategic plan that fosters increased accessibility and responsiveness for Native and non-Native women with disabilities.

On January 2-3, 2013, MAPS held a two-day strategic planning retreat with Leslie Myers of the VERA Institute of Justice. Leslie used VERA's strategic planning format to guide the statewide and pilot site partners in the development of MAPS strategic plan. MAPS statewide and pilot site partners had in-depth discussions on the needs assessment findings to ensure that all voices were integrated into a strategic planning process responsive to a local context.

After the two-day planning session, MAPS continued discussions to ensure that the Strategic Plan would be consistent with its mission and vision, foster systems change, increase collaboration of all partners, enhance accessibility and service/program responsiveness, and respond to the key findings identified in the needs assessment. The initiatives and activities will focus on the statewide MAPS partner programs and the local pilot sites.

MAPS developed feasible short-term initiatives and activities, assigned responsibility for each, and created a strategically sequenced timeline. Each of these is key to positioning the MAPS collaboration for the long-term plans that will sustain this important work.

Overview of MAPS Strategic Short-Term Initiatives

In order to improve services to Native women survivors with disabilities, MAPS identified the following three short-term initiatives for implementation:

1. Foster collaboration among disability, domestic and sexual violence programs to create a holistic approach to providing services for Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities.
2. Ensure best practice response to Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities by building accessibility and cultural competency capacity of disability, domestic and sexual violence programs.
3. Increase awareness, knowledge, competencies and skills of MAPS' partner programs to better address the needs of Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities.

MAPS selected the three initiatives because we believe that they will have the largest and most sustainable impact on all its partners and programs. Addressing collaboration building where resources are scarce is a strong element of systems change; building program's capacities to better serve survivors with disabilities also contributes to systems change and program sustainability; and enhancing programs' competency and skill levels contributes to sustainability.

MAPS' **first strategic plan initiative** will address building and strengthening the pilot site and statewide partner collaborations and expanding the statewide partnership to include other OVW Minnesota grantees. The project will

provide training to the pilot site partners using tools to facilitate building an effective and sustainable working agreement and drawing upon the lessons and experiences of the development of the statewide partners' collaboration. Second, the project will provide the tools, time, and space to develop a formal working agreement between the statewide and pilot site partners, which will contribute to the sustainability of the project by creating opportunities for all to work together by sharing expertise and resources to better serve Native and non-Native women survivors with disabilities. Third, the project will expand the statewide collaboration by reaching out to and inviting other OVW grantees in Minnesota to the MAPS table to share resources, best practices, and information in order to have a broader impact and conduit for enhancing services for Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities.

MAPS' **second strategic plan initiative** will address strengthening the organizational capacity of the statewide and pilot site partners to better serve American Indian women with disabilities by developing a culturally sensitive assessment tool that will focus on each agency's policies and practices for accessibility and accommodations, creating a welcoming environment, communications strategies, service methodology, and cultural competency. We will seek the advice, guidance, and expertise of all of our partners, pilot site service users, and White Earth tribal programs to guide us in developing the assessment instrument. The assessment tool will assist the partner agencies to remove barriers for Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities and implement changes within their organizations to better respond to their needs. In addition, MAPS will address developing accommodations policies and procedures for all partners. This initiative addresses both systems change and sustainability by developing an organizational assessment process that can be used on an ongoing basis and developing assurances for access and accommodations in a systematic and formal way.

MAPS' **third strategic plan initiative** will address enhancing and increasing partner organization's competencies, skills, and cultural knowledge when working with Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities. MAPS will review areas for training identified by all stakeholders in the needs assessment process and will research and contract with training

presenters, develop webinars, and other media formats to facilitate education. During the short term, MAPS will be able to develop only several trainings, but will gather these and the other short-term initiative products (MAPS collaboration building materials and Assessment Instrument) into one tool kit that can be used in different formats with different groups over a longer period of time. This will contribute to systems change by allowing a broader audience (beyond MAPS) to have use of the tool kit to provide more responsive services to Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities.

MAPS' mission has core values that have guided the planning process and now guide our implementation phase. MAPS' mission is to increase the capacity of our partner agencies and pilot site agencies (service providers in Minnesota) to meet the needs of American Indian women with disabilities who have been subjected to domestic violence and sexual assault. We will accomplish this in collaboration with American Indian and non-Indian sexual assault, domestic violence, and disability service providers by:

- creating and sustaining relationships across and among American Indian and non-Indian sexual assault, domestic violence, and disability service providers;
- creating welcoming, inclusive and accessible services;
- prioritizing physical and emotional safety of survivors;
- eliminating physical, programmatic, communication and attitudinal barriers;
- expanding knowledge and skills through quality training;
- seeking guidance from American Indian women throughout all aspects of service provision; and
- untangling the complex interplay of systems, laws, culture, policies, practices and jurisdictions that impact survivor access to services and justice.

In-Depth Review of Short-Term Initiatives

Initiative One: Foster collaboration among disability, domestic and sexual violence programs to create a holistic approach to providing services for Native and Non-Native survivors with disabilities.

MAPS Initiative One will address the Needs Assessment Report key findings 1 and 4 by creating a collaborative building process for all MAPS partners that will better position them to be more responsive to the needs of Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities. This will allow all to share services, resources, training, and exchange information on common issues or areas of concern. In these findings, MAPS heard from both Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities that they did not feel that service providers (outside of the pilot site area) were working in concert with the pilot site disability and crime victims services to create a holistic approach to meeting their needs. We heard from statewide partners that there was strength in numbers and that collaborative endeavors contributed to project/program sustainability. Although agencies outside the pilot site partners are not included in the scope of the currently funded MAPS implementation project, Native and non-Native survivors need these additional services, i.e. housing, employment, health services, transportation, etc. as part of an overall plan to achieve safety and well-being. In the MAPS needs assessment process, it became clear that a more targeted and coordinated approach to collaborative work would yield better and more proactive responses to meeting the needs of Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities.

MAPS statewide partners will: provide technical assistance and support to strengthen and solidify the collaboration among MAPS pilot sites partners; develop a working agreement between MAPS statewide partners and pilot site partners; and expand collaborative opportunities with other OVW grantees in Minneapolis and statewide. MAPS will assist the pilot site to establish their collaboration in a strategic way by providing tools, support, and other assistance that will facilitate their

ability to better sustain their relationships and, perhaps, include other programs in their collaboration, i.e. city and county service providers and tribal programs.

Over the past three years, the MAPS statewide collaboration has developed into a strong and unified force whose impact is deepened by a shared vision and mission. The MAPS statewide collaboration will serve as a model for the pilot site organizations as a working agreement is developed between the two partner groups.

Activity 1: Establish & strengthen local pilot site collaborative that mirrors the statewide MAPS collaborative.

Based on possible solutions from key finding 4 in the Needs Assessment Report, the statewide partners will work with the pilot site partners to develop a working agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU) for their collaboration. The first step will be to convene a work group of representatives from the statewide and pilot site partners to develop a work plan and timeline for the initiative. The work plan and timeline will outline the steps for developing goals/objectives, division of responsibilities and meeting dates. The work group will determine what materials, tools and training are needed to develop the MOU. The MAPS statewide partners will assemble the materials into a toolkit format and provide training, mentoring and any other assistance requested by the pilot site partners. MAPS statewide partners will meet with the pilot site agencies in person on a regularly scheduled basis throughout this activity. Training tools may include: MAPS Charter, sample MOUs, decision-making models, relationship building techniques, problem solving and conflict resolution scenarios. Using the tools, the work group will decide on the format and elements of the Pilot Site MOU/working agreement. The MOU will be then be written and submitted to OVW for their approval. Please note: Lakes Crisis Resource Center and DOVE are already partner agencies sharing both geography and clients. They each provide crisis services, shelter, and advocacy for Native and non-Native survivors and women with disabilities. DOVE and LCRC already have an existing written working agreement, which can serve as a model for their collaboration.

Finally, the work group will assist the pilot site to develop an evaluation and sustainability plan for the collaboration.

Action Steps	Responsibility	Time								
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Activity 1: Establish & strengthen local pilot site collaborative that mirrors the statewide MAPS collaborative.

		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	
1. Convene work group (to develop Pilot Site working agreement or MOU)	MAPS Project Director & statewide and pilot site partners	X								
2. Assemble toolkit	MAPS Project Director & statewide partners		X							
3. Provide training on toolkit	MAPS Project Director and statewide partners			X						
4. Identify goals and develop MOU	MAPS Project Director & workgroup				X					
5. Submit MOU to OVW for approval	MAPS Project Director & workgroup				X					
6. Develop evaluation and sustainability plan	MAPS Project Director and statewide partners					X	X	X	X	

Activity 2: Establish a strong working relationship between MAPS statewide partners and pilot site partners.

Activity 2 will address the Needs Assessment Report's key findings 1 and 4 by strengthening the statewide and pilot site partners' working relationship, which may serve as a model for further collaboration opportunities at the pilot site and state level on how programs can work together in a respectful way that honors the assets and strengths that each group brings to the table. In key finding 4, MAPS proposed possible solutions to strengthen the relationship between the statewide and pilot site partners in order to have a more impact on the work of bringing disability issues to the surface and strengthening the impact of the work of each pilot site partner.

At the same time that the work group in Activity 1 is assisting the pilot site partners to develop their collaboration, an additional work group will be convened to draft a working agreement or MOU between the statewide and pilot site partners. Activity 2 will allow the MAPS statewide partners and Pilot Site partners to establish a formal working relationship whether it is in the form of an MOU or Working Agreement. The work group will initially meet to outline a work plan and timeline for regular meetings and activities. The group's members will identify a purpose and goals. This will be an opportunity to spell out the partners' expectations, organizational assets and opportunities to work together. They will develop a working agreement or MOU based on the above. When the MOU has been written, it will be submitted to OVW for approval along with the pilot site MOU.

Action Steps	Responsibility	Time							
Activity 2: Establish strong working relationship between statewide MAPS partners and local pilot site partners.									
		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept
1. Convene work group	MAPS Project Director and work group		X						
2. Develop working agreement or MOU	MAPS Project Director and work group			X					
3. Submit to OVW for approval	MAPS Project Director and work group				X				

Initiative Two: Ensure best practice response to Native women with disabilities by building accessibility and cultural competency capacity of disability, domestic and sexual violence programs

MAPS Initiative Two will address Key Finding 1 identified in the Needs Assessment Report. MAPS statewide and pilot site partners will research assessment tools to use as models to design a culturally appropriate/sensitive assessment tool for all MAPS partners to effectively assess their organizational policies and practices for welcoming environment, communications strategies, accessibility and accommodations, service methodology, and cultural competency. The purpose for the assessments will be to assist all partners in improving their organizational capacity to provide welcoming and accessible services to Native and non-Native women with disabilities and remove existing barriers.

Activity 2.1: Develop MAPS Accessibility Assessment Tool

The needs assessment process allowed Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities to tell MAPS what might keep them from accessing crime victim advocacy, disability, and other services and they responded that they needed to feel respected, welcomed, and safe when they sought assistance. Native women felt that many organizations were not welcoming to them because of their ethnicity. In addition, Native women with disabilities expressed apprehension about seeking disability services because they feared the intervention of child protection agencies. The majority of Native and non-Native survivors were concerned about their confidentiality and safety when seeking any type of services.

All of these accessibility issues can be viewed as organizational cultural policies and practices that may not be in writing, however organizations tend to operate within a certain framework because that is just the way they've always done things. MAPS is proposing to review these policies and practices in both the pilot site and statewide partners' organizations by developing an accessibility assessment tool, which can be used to enhance each organization's ability to provide improved and more responsive services to Native and Non-Native survivors with disabilities. Targeting ways to assess

each organization's attention and sensitivity to culturally appropriate policies and practices is critical in this initiative. So many of the Native women who were part of the MAPS needs assessment process were very clear that this factor was determinative in seeking services from any organization. Both Native and Non-Native women were clear that they expected a safe, confidential and respectful environment when they seek services from crime victim advocacy, disability and other service providers.

As the first step for this activity, the MAPS statewide and pilot site partners will convene a working group to develop the MAPS Needs Assessment Tool. The work group will include representatives from MAPS statewide and pilot site partners and representatives from White Earth tribal organizations. The pilot site partners will identify and recruit service users for work group participation to include Native and non-Native survivors and women with disabilities.

At its first convening, the work group will develop a work plan and timeline for its activities. The work group will also develop the elements and a framework for the MAPS assessment tool. The members will then begin a review of sample assessment tools from various sources. The group will determine which elements or aspects from the samples are appropriate for this MAPS initiative and begin the development of a MAPS Assessment Tool unique to this project. The assessment will look at the MAPS organizations' policies and practices, i.e. environment (Are they inviting Native and non-Native women into their organizations?); communications strategies (When Native women review written material, is it clear that the organization successfully serves them?); accommodations (Is the organization doing all it can do to serve women with disabilities?); and cultural competency (Is the organization sensitive to Native cultural norms, traditions, cultural considerations?). Each organization's intake process will be examined during the assessment review to ensure that they are adhering to legal requirements and that they are culturally appropriate.

The work group will write a sample MAPS Assessment Tool as the final step in this activity and submit it to OVW for their approval.

Action Steps	Responsibility	Time									
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Activity 2.1: Develop MAPS Accessibility Assessment Tool

		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept		
1. Convene work group	MAPS Project Director and MAPS statewide and pilot site partners		X								
2. Review sample assessment tools	MAPS Project Director and work group		X								
3. Select sample assessment tool(s) and develop MAPS Assessment Tool	MAPS Project Director and work group			X	X						
4. Complete MAPS Assessment Tool and submit to OVW for approval	MAPS Project Director and work group				X						

Activity 2.2: Conduct accessibility assessment of MAPS partner organizations

When the MAPS Assessment Tool has been developed and approved by OVW for application, review teams made up of the work group will be trained in its administration. The MAPS Assessment tool will be tested at the pilot site and statewide partner organizations. The statewide partners may also choose to test it in their membership organization(s).

After the initial assessment process has been completed, the work group will compile the information and analyze the results. From the results, the work group will identify common issue areas, gaps, and barriers to accessibility within each organization. The results will be shared with all of the partners.

Based on these results, the work group will then work with each partner program to develop a list of recommendations to improve each organization's capacity to provide more responsive and culturally sensitive/appropriate services for Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities. MAPS partners will also research additional resources to enhance services, i.e. models, training, etc.

Action Steps	Responsibility	Time								
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Activity 2.2: Conduct accessibility assessment of MAPS partner organizations

		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept
		1. (Once OVW approval has been received), train review teams to use the tool.	MAPS Project Director and work group				X		
2. Assess all MAPS partner organizations and analyze data.	MAPS Project Director and work group				X	X	X		
3. Compile assessment results	MAPS Project Director and work group							X	
4. Share and review information from assessment results with partners	MAPS Project Director and work group							X	
5. Identify opportunities for enhancing and improving services	MAPS Project Director and work group								X
6. Share results with all partners and assist in developing individual organizational work plans	MAPS Project Director and work group								X
7. Identify other resources to improve/enhance services	MAPS Project Director and work group								X

Activity 2.3: Conduct assessment of MAPS statewide and pilot sites organizations policy/procedures

One of the needs assessment questions posed to all MAPS partner organizations including staff, executive directors, and board members was whether they had a written policy and procedures for providing accommodations for persons with disabilities. All but one said that they did not have a written policy, but they provided accommodations when requested. The majority felt that a written policy with procedures would be a benefit to their agencies. One executive director felt that a written policy would be a statement that the organization was an open and safe place to access services for anyone.

This activity will address key finding 3 in the Needs Assessment Report by offering an opportunity for MAPS partners to assess their organization's policies and make improvements where needed. MAPS will provide assistance to both statewide and pilot site partner organizations to develop written accommodations policies and procedures for their agencies.

The first step will be to convene a work group comprised of statewide and pilot site partners, or perhaps, the work group for the previous activities will take this activity on, as well. The work group will develop a plan and timeline for the activity. The work group will begin by reviewing sample a policies and procedures. Using the samples as models, the work group will develop a template model for the MAPS programs' use. The next step will be to submit the model to OVW for approval.

Once the model has been approved, the work group will share it with each MAPS organization. The work group will provide technical assistance to each organization as they develop their own written policies and procedures to fit their organizational structure, services, and practices. The work group will identify additional resources for MAPS programs as they develop their individual policies and procedures, i.e. staff and board training materials, etc.

Action Steps	Responsibility	Time								
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Activity 2.3: Conduct assessment of MAPS statewide and pilot sites organizations policies and procedures.

		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	
1. Convene work group	MAPS Project Director and MAPS statewide and pilot site partners		X							
2. Review sample policies and practices models	MAPS Project Director and work group			X						
1. Develop working model for individual organization's accommodations policy and procedures	MAPS Project Director, work group, and statewide and pilot site partners, boards and staff				X					
2. Submit model to OVW for approval	MAPS Project Director and work group				X					
3. Provide assistance to each partner in adapting policies and procedures for their agency	MAPS Project Director and work group					X	X	X	X	
4. Identify additional resources	MAPS Project Director and work group					X				

Initiative Three: Increase awareness, knowledge, competencies and skills of MAPS partners to better address the needs of Native and Non-Native survivors with disabilities

In Initiative Three, MAPS will address key findings 2 and 5 identified in the Needs Assessment Report. During the needs assessment process, MAPS was informed by all of the statewide and pilot site partners that there was a need for education and awareness about American Indian history, culture, traditions, and appropriate ways to provide services to Native survivors with disabilities. MAPS will provide training to address areas outlined in the key findings by the statewide and pilot site partners, including Historic Trauma in American Indian communities, best practices methodology for service provision to Native survivors with disabilities, disability rights and issues, confidentiality and safety, child custody, invisible/hidden disabilities in the Native community, and tribal jurisdictional issues. The goal of education and training is to enhance knowledge and competencies of all MAPS partners to provide culturally appropriate and authentic services for Native (and non-Native) survivors with disabilities.

Activity 3.1: Develop and adapt training on topic specific issues as identified through needs assessment process

Because MAPS heard multiple times that there was a need for training that would enhance each organization's capacity to provide more responsive services to women with disabilities, training will focus on this topic. Every organization said that it would like to provide services that were culturally sensitive and appropriate to Native survivors with disabilities. Other training areas identified included disability laws, invisible/hidden disabilities in the American Indian community, and tribal jurisdictional issues. Because so many of the Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities were concerned about confidentiality, safety, and custody, we've included these areas as potential training topics, as well.

The first step for Activity 3 will be, again, to convene a work group, which will include MAPS statewide and pilot site partners and White Earth tribal organizations. The group will develop a work plan and timeline for the activity. The

group's members will begin by identifying the areas for training, appropriate training formats and providers, and schedule and sites for the trainings.

MAPS partners have already pre-selected Historic Trauma as an area for education and training for all stakeholders. Several training providers have been identified and may work collaboratively to develop the training. They are the Takini Network, which is headed by Dr. Maria Yellowhorse Braveheart who was the person who came up with the terms "historic trauma" and "intergenerational grief" as they apply to the American Indian community. The Takini Network has provided specially tailored place-based training in Historic Trauma since the mid 1990's. The other potential presenter/partner is the White Earth Tribal College, which has sponsored a Historic Trauma conference for the past several years. The college is very interested in helping to develop the MAPS Needs Assessment Tool and could provide invaluable assistance in shaping the cultural lens for this piece.

The work group will select methods for evaluating the effectiveness of education and training. These can include pre- and post-training surveys or focus groups. Finally, the work group will identify ways to sustain the trainings in a format that can be used over a period of time, perhaps through the development of a toolkit. The toolkit might include DVDs, webinar formats, presentation powerpoints on USB, etc.

Action Steps	Responsibility	Time									
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Activity 3.1: Develop and adapt training on topic specific issues as identified through needs assessment process

		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept		
1. Convene work group	MAPS Statewide Partners in consultation with Pilot Site Partners			X							
2. Select topics for training	MAPS Project Director and work group			X							
4. Schedule trainings	MAPS Project Director and work group			X	X	X	X	X			
5. Evaluate effectiveness of training	MAPS Project Director and work group			X	X	X	X	X	X		
6. Identify ways to sustain the impact of education and training initiatives of project	MAPS Project Director and work group									X	

Long-term Goals

Emerging from the three initiatives of MAPS Strategic Plan are longer-term goals for initiatives and activities. They are outside of the scope of the current funding for the project, but MAPS believe that they are critical to the sustainability of the MAPS Project and foresee achieving them via OVW continuation or other funding sources.

Following the completion of **Initiative One** are the following longer term goals. (1) MAPS will increase collaborations at the statewide and local level by inviting new partners, i.e. Self-Advocates and staff/consumers from Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and other programs; (2) The statewide partners will develop a new MOU with an annual date for review and renewal to formalize and update their agreement to continue joint efforts; (3) The MAPS pilot site partners will develop a new MOU with an annual date for review and renewal, to formalize and update their agreement to continue joint efforts; (4) Statewide partners will track their own cross training and joint resource development activities to ensure these activities are routinely incorporated into annual work plans beyond the grant period; (5) MAPS partners will identify and seek alternative, on-going funding; (6) MAPS will incorporate the Needs Assessment Report and collaboration tracking in other grant applications. (7) MAPS will expand its collaboration by involving the other OVW state grantees. The MAPS statewide partners will extend an invitation to both the Minneapolis and Duluth OVW grantees and arrange meeting to begin the conversation about conducting cross-trainings among the organizations, sharing key resources, public policy initiatives, etc. The groups may develop an annual schedule of meetings or teleconferences or select other ways to communicate regularly. This is a key opportunity to share best practices for providing improved services for Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities, and, perhaps, develop a statewide clearinghouse of information.

Goals under **Initiative Two** may develop into the following longer-term activities contributing to sustainability of the MAPS project: (1) The MAPS Assessment Tool and accommodations templates will be shared with MIWSAC, MCBW and MNCASA member programs and the statewide partners will provide training and customized technical assistance to coalition member programs in developing and implementing accommodations policies and procedures; (2) The MAPS statewide and pilot site partners will collaborate on at least two public policy initiatives annually to seek systemic improvements and enhanced services for Native and non-Native survivors with disabilities.

Long-term goals under **Initiative Three** include: (1) MAPS will finalize all training tools; (2) MAPS will develop a detailed plan to create a multi-media tool-kit to include DVDs, curriculum, guidebook, and handouts that incorporate MAPS' holistic and best practice approaches; (3) MAPS will identify and seek funding for the multi-media tool kit; (4) MAPS statewide partners will submit proposals to provide joint training for at least two statewide conferences annually.

Conclusion

MAPS overall goal in its Strategic Plan is to ensure that American Indian women with disabilities have access to services that meet their needs and honor and respect their experience and culture. MAPS will help to ensure better access, services, and resources for Native women by improving the collaborations at the statewide and pilot site level to provide holistic and culturally appropriate services; assess the organizational capacities of the MAPS' organizations to provide services that meet the needs of users; and provide education and training in issue areas identified by MAPS stakeholders that they feel will increase their capacity, skills, and knowledge to provide authentic and meaningful services to Native and non-Native women with disabilities.