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**IMPACT EVALUATION OF VICTIM SERVICES PROGRAMS:
STOP GRANTS FUNDED BY THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT**

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION'S FUND FOR JUSTICE AND EDUCATION

On behalf of

THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SECTION

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Laura B. Nickles**

January 20, 2000

DISCLAIMER

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REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Victims of sexual assault and domestic violence frequently suffer intense emotional distress following the crime and experience the need for a multiplicity of victim services. The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 1994 and the STOP Violence Against Women grants program funded with VAWA funds are important federal initiatives to help these victims. Our project investigated the effects of VAWA STOP funds with respect to the provision of victim services by criminal justice based agencies to domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault victims.

In this section, we present a brief overview of the impact of sexual assault and domestic violence crimes on victims, their subsequent need for, and use of, victim services, and the history of VAWA and STOP grants.

The Aftermath of Sexual Assault

Recent innovations in survey measurement techniques have disclosed that sexual assault is far more common than previously thought, affecting as many as half of adult North American women (e.g., Randall and Haskell, 1995). Moreover, sexual assault is one of the most difficult crimes for victims and their families to deal with emotionally. Early studies found that most sexual assault victims suffered severe emotional trauma (e.g., Burgess and Holmstrom, 1979; Veronen and Kilpatrick, 1983; Calhoun, Atkeson, and Resick, 1982). While acute effects decline sharply over the first few months (Valentiner, Foa and Riggs, 1996), long-term effects have been found to last for years (e.g., Kilpatrick and Veronen, 1983). When responses of sexual assault victims have been directly compared to those of robbery or non-sexual assault victims, sexual assault victims consistently have been shown to suffer greater distress (Smith, Cook, and Harrell, 1985; Resick, 1990).

Researchers have documented that most sexual assault victims suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD (e.g., Rothbaum, et. al., 1992) and between one in three and one in two suffer from depression (Kilpatrick, et. al., 1992). Other psychological problems reported in research studies include anxiety, fear, phobias, and lowered self-esteem (see Resick and Nishith, 1997 for a recent review). Sexual assault has also been linked to behavioral problems including substance abuse (Kilpatrick, et. al., 1992), sexual dysfunction (Becker, et. al., 1984), and impaired social relations (Ellis, et. al., 1981). Some victims also experience sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, or other medical problems (Beebe, 1991; Koss, et. al., 1991).

The consensus seems to be that, although many symptoms in sexual assault victims diminish over the months following the assault, therapy is important to a full recovery. That the average length of time that victims wait to seek help is seven years (Resick and Schnicke, 1993) attests to the fact that symptoms do not necessarily disappear by themselves in time. For victims of many crimes, one or two sessions of crisis counseling may help to resolve problems. For sexual assault victims, however, cognitive/behavioral therapies administered by trained psychologists appear the most efficacious form of treatment (Resick and Nishith, 1997). There is evidence as well that participation in the criminal justice process may have positive effects for sexual assault victims. Some studies have found that victims whose cases are prosecuted report enhanced self esteem and reduced distress compared to victims who do not report the crime or whose cases are not prosecuted (Sales, et. al., 1984; Resick, 1988).

With the help of VAWA STOP funds, many more sexual assault victims should receive the counseling and other assistance they need to deal with the aftermath of the assault. VAWA STOP grants should also increase the availability of victim advocates to support victims who participate in the criminal justice process.

The Aftermath of Domestic Violence

The scars caused by physical injuries to domestic violence victims may heal long before the emotional scars. Research has made it clear that domestic violence victims suffer a range of psychological symptoms that parallel many of the symptoms seen in sexual assault victims (Holtzworth-Munroe, et. al., 1997). A number of investigators have found evidence that PTSD occurs in one-third to one-half of battered women (Houskamp and Foy, 1991; Astin, et. al., 1993; Kemp, et. al., 1995). Studies have also indicated that a majority of battered women exhibit symptoms of clinical depression (e.g., Cascardi and O'Leary, 1992; Gleason, 1993). And most researchers have found lower self esteem among battered women than among non-battered comparison groups (e.g., Mitchell and Hodson, 1983; Perilla, et. al., 1994).

Many of the studies of psychological effects of battering are based upon clinical samples (e.g., victims in counseling programs or shelters), and therefore one could argue whether the results are applicable to the general population. However, data from more recent community samples have not substantially contradicted the earlier conclusions. For example, in a longitudinal study of women in inner-city London, Andrews (1995) found that 61% of women who suffered abuse had experienced depression compared to 25% of women who had not. Mills (1984), using Straus' 1975 National Family Violence Survey, found that female victims of severe spousal violence had significantly lower self-esteem than women in non-violent marriages. In a recent review, Holtzworth-Munroe, et. al. (1997: 184) concluded that "it is clear that battered women are at high risk for several psychological problems, including PTSD, depression, and low self-esteem. Indeed, the findings reviewed suggest that one- to two-thirds of battered women may evidence these problems."

The psychological distress suffered by battered women contributes to a number of adjustment problems, such as the inability to sleep, concentrate at work, maintain a social life, handle family problems, and so on (Smith, 1983; Smith, Cook, and Harrell, 1985). Other studies have documented that the emotional trauma experienced by victims is associated with high rates of medical complaints, psychological and behavior problems. Victims are five times at greater risk than other women to be raped, to miscarry, to have abortions, to become addicted to alcohol and drugs, to develop mental illness, and to attempt suicide (Buzawa and Buzawa, 1996).

Experts now understand that children of domestic violence victims also are victims themselves. They may witness the violence or be injured. It is estimated that approximately 3.3 million children witness domestic violence each year (Buzawa and Buzawa, 1996). Children who witness violence have been found to be lower in social competency and higher in depression, anxiety, aggression, shyness, and other school problems (Wolfe, Jaffe, Wilson and Zak, 1985). One study found that sixty-five percent of children who have attempted suicide had witnessed domestic violence (Kosky, 1983). The effects of witnessing violence may extend into later life. In one study on violent families and youth violence it was found that 70% of the youth surveyed who grew up in a home

with partner violence self-reported violent delinquent behavior compared to 49% of the youth who grew up in families without partner violence (Thornberry, 1994). Straus et al. (1980) found that boys who observe violence committed by their father are ten times more likely than boys from nonviolent homes to use violence against an intimate partner in the future. It has been found that girls who grow up in homes with domestic violence are at greater risk for experiencing violence in their own teenage relationships during high school dating (APA, 1996). There is also some evidence to suggest that wives are less likely to expect safety from a violent husband if they had observed their own mothers as victims of domestic violence (Lerman, 1981).

Victims of domestic violence may endure years of repeated abuse before they admit that they are in a domestic violence situation. Feelings of self-blame, shame, fear of retaliation and safety, concerns about withdrawal of financial support, and learned helplessness may all contribute to the victim's reluctance to have the abuser arrested or prosecuted (Hart, 1996). Given the dynamics of domestic violence and its impact on victims *and* their children, it has been argued that victims often need a range of services from crisis intervention to residential shelters to support and advocacy in the criminal justice system (Hart, 1996). The VAWA legislation, with its requirement that at least 25% of STOP grant funds be allocated to victims services, clearly recognizes the need for special support.

Stalking

Extreme cases of domestic violence may result in the perpetrator stalking the victim, even after he has been removed from her household. Once thought to be a problem faced primarily by celebrities, stalking has recently begun to receive attention from lawmakers and researchers (see, for example, Emerson, Ferris, and Kerry, 1998). Epidemiological research has shown that 8% of women and 2% of men have been stalked in their lifetimes (Tjaden and Thoennes, 1998). Two in three stalking cases involve perpetrators known to the victims. The majority of victims are female, while the offenders are usually male.

Stalking is an especially disturbing crime because perpetrators are often obsessional and have documented mental disturbances (Abrams and Robinson, 1998). Regardless of whether victims are actually assaulted, the effects of being watched, followed, and harassed can be very distressing (Westrup and Fremouw, 1998). Victims frequently change phone numbers, routines, and even residences in an effort to seek relief. Victims may experience anxiety, depression, guilt, helplessness, and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (Abrams and Robinson, 1998).

Victim Needs and Use of Services

There is scant information on victims needs and experience with service programs. One of the earliest investigations to address these issues was the work of Friedman, Bischoff, Davis, and Person (1982). They examined post-crime adjustment among 274 victims of reported burglaries, robberies, and assaults (sexual assault victims were not included, but a proportion of the assault victims were domestic violence victims). Friedman, et. al. found that improving security (repairing or upgrading locks and doors) and borrowing money were the types of help needed by most victims. Similar findings on victim needs came from later studies. In a study of English crime victims,

Maguire and Corbett (1987) reported that improving security and making ends meet were the needs victims were most unlikely to have met by friends and family and the most likely to need help from victim service programs. Skogan, Davis, and Lurigio (1990) reported that talking about feelings and security issues were the most common concerns of victims of assault, robbery, and burglary. Among assault victims (about half of whom were victims of domestic violence), talking about feelings was the single most common need.

Friedman, et. al. also reported that, while nearly all victims received assistance from friends and family, only one in five received assistance from social service programs. In the study by Skogan, et. al. (1990) the proportion of victims who received services was about one in three. The most important predictors of who received help from service programs were number of needs and being told about the availability of help by the police. The latter finding has especially important findings for training police to refer victims to service programs so that their needs will not go unaddressed.

There is even less evidence about the effectiveness of services in helping victims to recover. The literature is most comprehensive and encouraging for therapy for sexual assault victims, where at least a dozen studies have been reported. Generally, these studies have concluded that both exposure therapy and cognitive therapy are effective in reducing PTSD symptoms (e.g., Nishith, et. al., 1995; Foa, et. al., 1994).

Evidence for the effectiveness of services in recovery for crimes other than sexual assault is very thin. Davis (1987) found no apparent effects of crisis counseling on psychological or material adjustment of victims of assault, robbery, and burglary four months after victimization. Similarly, Davis, et. al. (1990) reported no measurable effects of contact with service programs. Smith, et. al., (1985) also failed to find discernable effects of crisis counseling on victims' psychological recovery (Smith, et. al., 1985). However, all three studies found that victims highly appreciated the services and expressed positive views of the perceived helpfulness of the services provided. This suggests two possibilities. First, that the measures used to assess the impact of services may be missing some subtle differences attributable to services. Second, that the trauma caused by sexual assault and domestic violence victims is so great that even intervention strategies that victims *perceive* as helpful do not equate to discernable changes in scales designed to measure emotional distress.

As society has realized the need to respond to domestic violence, there has been an increased the recognition that domestic violence is a complex problem that does not have simple solutions. Arrest, prosecution, batterer education, social services for victims, and medical assistance each address different parts of the problem, but none in themselves provide an effective solution. Therefore, coordination between agencies has become more and more common. Coordinated community responses typically involve working groups consisting of staff from police, prosecution, probation, and child welfare agencies as well as representatives from counseling organizations, shelters, hospitals, substance abuse services, and the clergy (Clark, et. al., 1996). The working groups meet regularly to discuss policy and discuss specific cases. Evaluations of coordinated responses have provided limited evidence that the approach is effective in reducing violence (e.g., Syers and Edelson, 1992; Steinman, 1991).

The Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and the STOP Grants

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), Title IV of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (P.L. 103-322), is the result of years of advocating for the federal government to help stop violence against women and assist victims who experience such violence. It addresses legal protection to women who are victims of violent crimes in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and protection against gender-motivated violence. The Act addresses reform in the areas of legislation, rules of evidence, and in the operations and policies of law enforcement and the courts. It specified new offenses and tougher penalties for offenders, mandated victim restitution, and incorporated a number of systems reforms. It also supports efforts to prevent, educate, train, and develop record maintenance system on the number of violent incidents against women and to improve communication within the justice system (Burt, 1996).

As part of the VAWA legislation, the Justice Department created the Violence Against Women Grants Office (VAWGO) within the Office of Justice Programs (OJP). That office assisted states in applying for STOP ("Services, Training, Officers, Prosecutors") Violence Against Women grants that are intended "to assist states, Indian tribal governments, and units of local government to develop and strengthen effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies to combat violent crimes against women, and to develop and strengthen victim services in cases involving violent crimes against women". Domestic violence and sexual assault were identified as primary targets for the STOP grants along with support for underserved victim population. VAWA mandates that STOP subgrantees spend at least 25% of their STOP funds in three areas: (1) law enforcement, (2) prosecution, and (3) victim services while the remaining 25% is left largely to the discretion of the grantees.

During 1995, OJP developed the STOP program rules, solicited applications from states and territories, provided technical assistance to applicants, and helped states and territories develop their implementation plans due within 120 days after the award was made. During subsequent years, OJP instituted a timetable for grant applications, awards, and implementation plan submission.

METHOD

We surveyed two samples of program representatives to obtain information about STOP grant programs. The first was a sample of representatives of STOP subgrantee programs. The second was a sample of representatives of programs that worked in close cooperation with STOP subgrantees to serve victims. The latter sample was gathered to gain an additional perspective on the STOP subgrantee and the program's impact on the local service community.

Sampling Procedures

The sampling frame for our project was defined as STOP subgrantees awarded to criminal justice agencies for delivery of services to domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking victims. We had originally proposed to select non-profit as well as governmental victim service programs. We had also intended to survey victims who received STOP funded services. Following a series of discussions with representatives of NIJ, it was decided to limit our study to governmental victim

service agencies and agencies they work collaboratively with. It was planned that NIJ would subsequently fund another study to examine non-profit victim service agencies and to survey victims.

A search of the Urban Institute's database of 1996 and 1997 Subgrant Award Report (SARs) was conducted looking for STOP subgrantees that had been awarded to law enforcement, prosecution, and court organizations to provide services for victims. The search identified 182 SARs that met our criteria and that had a contact person and phone number listed.

Based on the distribution of the 182 SARs across states, we determined an interview quota for each state. That is, the interview quota for each state was proportional to the number of eligible STOP grants that each state had. Within each state, we ordered the eligible STOP subgrant programs using a random algorithm. For example, if a state had six eligible programs, we assigned each of the six a number between one and six. Then we began calling program contact persons starting with those with the lowest ranks. We continued calling programs in the order of their ranking until our quota was filled for that state. We had no refusals and were generally successful with each program we attempted to interview. The few exceptions were instances in which the program director was away for a protracted period or programs that were found to be other than direct service programs. (For example, we encountered some programs that were exclusively law enforcement training or law enforcement enhancement programs and did not provide any services to victims.)

In all, 62 interviews were completed with STOP subgrantee program representatives. An additional 96 interviews were completed with representatives of programs that worked in coordination with the 62 STOP programs.

Interviews with STOP Subgrantees

When we reached the contact person for a sampled STOP subgrantee, we asked to speak to the person most knowledgeable about the STOP grant. When that person was contacted, we identified the purpose of our call and asked to schedule a time when they would be available to participate in a twenty-thirty minute survey. In about half of the cases, an interview was conducted on the spot and, in the other half of the cases, an appointment was made. Interviews consisted of primarily closed-ended questions. Interview topics included:

Information About Subgrantee Activities

- Amount of STOP grant
- General purpose for which grant funds are being used
- Specific activities, equipment, or staff which STOP funds are supporting
- Number of additional clients served as a result of STOP grant
- If, and how, funds were used to reach underserved victims

Program Context Within Which STOP Funds Are Used

- Services areas in which program is involved (e.g. hotline, rape crisis, shelter, etc.)
- Number of victims served annually within each program area

- Types and amounts of non-STOP funds received by program
- Staff size and training

Community Context Within Which STOP Funds Are Used

- Other services for victims in locale
- The extent to which the STOP subgrantee program complements/overlaps with other services available to victims in the community
- Principal organizations which refer clients to program
- Other services to which program routinely refers clients
- Existence of a coordinated response to violence against women in jurisdiction

Advantages/Disadvantages of Program Aegis

- Advantages/disadvantages to locating victim services within criminal justice agencies
- How program staff handle conflicting interests of criminal justice officials and victims

Impact of STOP funds on victims

- Increases in number of victims served
- Change in types of victims served
- Increase in services to traditionally underserved populations
- Effects of funds on victim empowerment and psychological adjustment
- Effect of funds on children of victims

Impact of STOP funds on criminal justice system

- Effects on victim willingness to cooperate with authorities
- Effects on case outcomes in criminal justice system

Impact of STOP funds on community

- Did STOP funds help to complete range of services available in community?
- Did STOP funds broker changes in service delivery or criminal justice systems?
- Did STOP funds increase awareness of violence against women in community?

A copy of the questionnaire for STOP subgrantee program directors is contained in Appendix A.

Interviews with Representatives of Programs STOP Subgrantees Collaborate With

During the interviews with the STOP subgrantee program representatives, we asked for information on programs that worked closely with the STOP subgrantee. We contacted the named staff person of the programs they coordinate with and administered a brief interview that included the following topic areas:

- How the coordinating program worked with the STOP subgrant recipient
- Effects of STOP funding on victims, the criminal justice system, and the community
- Whether the STOP funds could have been spent in better ways in the community
- Advantages and disadvantages of victim programs located within criminal justice agencies

Appendix B contains a copy of the questionnaire for representatives of coordinating programs.

SURVEY RESULTS

Location and tenure of victim programs. We began the survey of the 62 STOP funded subgrantee criminal justice based programs with basic questions about their program. Almost half (44%) of the programs are located within the prosecutor's office. The next most common location (39%) was in a law enforcement department. Only 2% were court-based programs. Seventeen percent were based elsewhere, including in bar associations; human service programs; SANE (sexual assault nurse examiners); and other agencies that worked as a team with some component of the criminal justice system. Overall, these are fairly new programs: 26% have been in existence for two years or less (most of these were started with STOP funds); 39% are 3-5 years old; 20% are 6-10 years old; 6% are 11-15 years old; and 9% have been in operation for over 15 years (Table 1).

Advantages and disadvantages of being housed in the criminal justice system. There has been considerable discussion in the victim's field as to the advantages and disadvantages of service providers being based internally within the criminal justice system versus externally in other agencies. The criminal justice based STOP subgrantee program representatives interviewed had very thoughtful responses regarding this issue. The most frequently mentioned advantage was that being a part of the system gave them direct access to law enforcement, prosecutors, and the courts. Their access to personnel, and their files, placed them in a unique position to learn what was occurring in victims' cases. Thus, the victim witness staff could keep victims well informed. Equally important, the victim witness staff could consult with criminal justice officials to relay the victims' wishes and concerns and advocate for victims. The day-to-day contact between victim witness and police/prosecutors can facilitate close working relationships that can be helpful in advocating for the victim. Further, they believe they understand the legal process in a way an outsider cannot and thus can tell when the victim is getting the run around or is being misled with excuses such as "that's what happens in cases like yours" or "there is nothing I can do about; it's just the way it is".

Ironically, the biggest advantage can also be the biggest disadvantage. The service providers are employed by the system, usually by law enforcement or the prosecutor, and can only push for the victim so far before jeopardizing their job. Ultimately, the victim providers must do what their boss decides is best for the system. Familiarity with the system may also breed cynicism and acceptance of "the way things are" and discourage challenging the system to "change the way they do business" or think creatively. Victims may see the provider as working exclusively for the police or prosecutor and not serving their needs. Distrust of the police or the prosecutor's office may translate into distrust of the victim witness staff and a lack of interest in using those services. A related significant problem is that the information victims share with providers employed by law enforcement and prosecutors is not subject to the same confidentiality protections as that shared

TABLE 1
CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEYED STOP SUBGRANTEE PROGRAMS

Victim program is based in a...

Court	2%
Law enforcement department	39%
Prosecutor's office	44%
"Other" place	17%
	(n=62)

Number of years program has been operating

1-2 years	26%
3-5 years	39%
6-10 years	20%
11-15 years	6%
over 15 years	9%
	(n=54)

Type of victims served

All crime victims	54%
Domestic violence victims	23%
Sexual assault victims	3%
Both domestic violence and sexual assault victims	20%
	(n=60)

Number of victims served

Range = 10 to 5,000
Average = 1,228
(n=41)

Number of domestic violence victims served

Range = 6 to 1,200
Average = 420
(n=34)

Number of sexual assault victims served

Range = 2 to 316
Average = 61
(n=22)

TABLE 1 (Continued)
CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEYED STOP SUBGRANTEE PROGRAMS

Types of services provided

Crisis counseling	58%
Emergency repairs/financial help	21%
Transportation to court	58%
Waiting room for victims in court	36%
Daycare for victims' children while in court	24%
Court advocacy	81%
Court notification	69%
Long term counseling	26%
Referrals to counseling	82%
Assistance with protection orders	77%
Assistance with compensation forms	70%
Shelter	16%
Hotlines	23%
Public awareness campaigns	53%
"Other" services	18%
	(n=62)

Services are provided...

Only during crisis period	3%
While case remains with law enforcement	7%
From law enforcement phase through disposition in court	26%
While case is in the prosecutor's office	21%
From crisis period until victim no longer wants services	27%
"Other"	15%
	(n=61)

with victim advocates outside the criminal justice system. Law enforcement and prosecution victim service staff are obligated to reveal conversations related to evidentiary issues to law enforcement and prosecutors.

The relative advantages and disadvantages of the victim service provider being based in the criminal justice system will to a large extent depend on the philosophy and actions of their boss. If the chief of police, or the head prosecutor, sends a clear message that victim witness staff have the victim's interest as their first priority and allows them to challenge the system to do better for victims, there are significant advantages. On the other hand, if a message is sent that the victim witness staff have as their first priority to serve law enforcement officers, and assistant prosecutors, and conform to the system, there are significant disadvantages. Comments from those interviewed included:

Advantages

- *"I know what the prosecutor is doing and can tell the victim. It is easy to pull the file. We help with victim impact statements also."*
- *"We have access to information and work closely with the district attorneys. We have a lot of input into how the district attorneys handle the case."*
- *"We have direct contact with victims. We need that to have successful prosecutions. Advocates need independence and our boss has made it clear that we work for the victims. If victims don't get the help they need from law enforcement, we can intervene and the police will listen."*

Disadvantages

- *"I advocate for the victim but the victim may battle against the system that pays my salary."*
- *"Sometimes the victim wants a different outcome than the prosecutor—the prosecutor prevails."*
- *"Victims see us as part of the police department and they may not trust the police."*

Number and type of victims served. Over half of the stop subgrantee programs (54%) serve all types of crime victims but 23% exclusively serve domestic violence victims and 3% sexual assault victims. Twenty percent of the programs serve both domestic violence and sexual assault victims. There is a tremendous range in number of crime victims served from a very low of 10 victims to a high of 5,000 victims, with an average of 1,228. As would be expected given the greater number of domestic violence versus sexual assault victims, more domestic violence victims were served by the program. The largest number of domestic violence victims served by the programs in our sample was 1,200 compared to 316 sexual assault victims. On average, programs served 420 domestic violence victims and 61 sexual assault victims (Table 1).

Services provided. The one service most often provided by the programs (82%) was referring victims to counseling. Since only criminal justice based programs were surveyed, it is not surprising that respondents reported providing more court related services than anything else. In order of frequency, 81% said they provided court advocacy; 77% assisted victims with protection orders; 70% assisted with compensations forms; 69% provided court notification; 58% provided transportation to court; 36% maintained a waiting room for victims in the courthouse; and 24% arranged for daycare for victims' children. Crisis counseling was available in 58% of the programs surveyed but long-term counseling in only 26%. This is not to say that victims who needed long term counseling were abandoned. Recall that most programs referred victims to other agencies for counseling. Relatively few programs ran shelters (16%); provided emergency repairs or financial help (21%); or had hotlines (23%). However, over half (53%) of the program representatives surveyed stated their program runs public awareness campaigns. In addition to the list of services queried about, 16% of the programs volunteered "other" services they offer. These included running restraining order clinics; conducting forensic examinations for sexual assault victims; participating in first response teams; hosting support groups for victims; and advocating for and monitoring the collection of restitution for victims (Table 1).

Point at which services are provided. Programs differed as to when they provide services. Only 3% exclusively provide crisis services; 7% serve victims while the case remains in the law enforcement arena prior to its closure by arrest or other means; 21% serve victims whose cases are in the prosecution stage. Over one-quarter (26%) serve victims in a more comprehensive fashion working with victims when an arrest is made and continuing through to the final disposition in court. In addition, 27% start helping victims during the crisis period and continue providing assistance until the victim no longer wants services regardless if an arrest is made; a prosecution undertaken; or the case is resolved in the court. Fifteen percent of the programs offered a different way in which they provide services than the ones stated above (Table 1). For example, there were programs that are only involved during the investigative stage of the process; programs that conduct follow-up with the victim for a specified period (for example, one program follows up for up to two years after the victim terminates services); and programs that provide services for sexual assault victims at the hospital.

Program funding. Almost a third of the programs (32%), rely on STOP funds as their primary funding source. Federal dollars from VOCA were identified as the primary source for 17% of the programs and 2% named other federal money as their primary source. County or city money was the major source of support for 27% of the programs and state money for 17%. We also asked about secondary funding sources. Again, federal dollars are significant. Among surveyed programs, 86% reported receiving VOCA funds; 44% STOP funds; and 7% other federal money as a secondary source of funding. County or city money was a secondary source for 29% of the programs and state money for 13% (Table 2).

STOP funding. There was great diversity in the amount of STOP money received from a low of \$1,300 to a high of \$200,000. The average grant award was \$47,626. Almost a third of the programs (31%) started as a result of STOP. The remaining 69% used the funds to expand their programs. In what ways? Over half, 57%, added staff; 34% provided training for their staff or trained staff in other agencies on victims' issues; and 7% expanded their hours of operation (Table 2).

TABLE 2
FUNDING ISSUES FOR STOP SUBGRANTEE PROGRAMS

Primary funding source

Federal VOCA money	17%
Federal STOP money	32%
"Other" federal money	2%
State money	17%
County or city money	27%
"Other" money	7%
	(n=60)

Secondary funding sources

Federal VOCA money	86%
Federal STOP money	44%
"Other" federal money	7%
State money	13%
County or city money	29%
"Other" money	8%
	(n=60)

STOP FUNDING

Amount of last year's STOP grant

Range = \$1,300 to \$200,000
Average = \$47,626
(n=61)

Was STOP money used to start the program or to expand services?

To start the program	31%
To expand services	69%
	(n=62)

If STOP used to expand services, was it used to...

	Yes	No
Expand the program's hours?	7%	93%
Add more staff?	57%	43%
Provide training?	34%	66%
		(n=62)

Community context. Respondents were asked what types of services, other than what they provide, are available to assist domestic violence and sexual assault victims in their community. The numbers are reassuring and disturbing at the same time. Many services are available but there are significant gaps in the type of services available in some communities. The service most often available is long term counseling (83%). The number is high but it means that 17% of the communities have no place where victims can receive long term counseling. Given the dynamics of domestic violence and sexual assault cases, we know that many of these victims need long term counseling. Therefore, this gap is a very serious one. And the numbers are worse for other services. In descending order, the following services were identified as being provided by some agency in the community in which the STOP subgrantee program operates: 79% have crisis counseling, 77% have shelters; 71% have hotlines; 62% have assistance with protection orders, 61% have programs to refer victims to for counseling; 58% have public awareness campaigns regarding violence against women issues; 53% have court advocacy; 47% have transportation to court; 44% have emergency or financial services; 44% provide court notification; 27% have daycare for victims' children while they are in court; and 26% have a waiting room for victims (Table 3). Ideally, all of these numbers should be 100%. In addition to the gap in long term services discussed above, a couple of other numbers are particularly troubling. Hotlines are not available in 29% of the communities and a shelter is not present in 23% of the communities. These basic, vital services are missing in far too many communities.

When questioned whether STOP funds complement or overlap other services in the community, a resounding 97% of respondents said they complement other services. Perhaps, this is because there is a coordinated approach to these cases to avoid duplication of services. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being no coordination and 5 being very well coordinated, how did respondents rate their community? The mean response was 3.7 (Table 3). There was a recognition by many that they have a ways to go as evidenced by the following comments:

- *"We have made great strides but there is a long way to go."*
- *"We are still struggling; some agencies in the community have come on board but others have not."*
- *"I'm proud of how far we have come but there is certainly room for improvement."*
- *"It is vastly improved but negative attitudes towards domestic violence and sexual assault victims are difficult to change. We will get there!"*

Program changes brought about by STOP funds. Did the STOP grant change the way the program deliver services? Yes, in 83% of the programs (Table 4). How? Many reported that they hired additional staff. As a result, they are able to spend more time with victims and offer more services. Others talked about the advantages of a team approach made possible with STOP funds. Teams have increased the range and coordination of services to victims. Still others pointed to the positive results brought about by having their staff and law enforcement trained to be culturally sensitive to different populations of victims.

TABLE 3
COMMUNITY CONTEXT IN WHICH STOP SUBGRANTEE PROGRAM OPERATES

Types of services available in community

Crisis counseling	79%
Emergency repairs/financial help	44%
Transportation to court	47%
Waiting room for victims in court	26%
Daycare for victims' children while in court	27%
Court advocacy	53%
Court notification	44%
Long term counseling	83%
Referrals to counseling	61%
Assistance with protection orders	62%
Assistance with compensation forms	55%
Shelter	77%
Hotlines	71%
Public awareness campaigns	58%
"Other" services	16%
	(n=60)

**Do services provided by the STOP funded program complement or overlap
other services in the community?**

Complement	97%
Overlap	3%
	(n=59)

**Extent of coordination among community programs regarding violence against women issues
(Scale: 1 is no coordination and 5 is very well coordinated)**

Mean = 3.7
(n=61)

TABLE 4
PROGRAM CHANGES BROUGHT ABOUT BY STOP FUNDS

Did the STOP funds change the way the program delivers services?

Yes	83%
No	17%
	(n=42)

Did the STOP funds change the relationships with other agencies in the community?

Yes	23%
No	77%
	(n=43)

Did the STOP funds increase the program's visibility in the community?

Yes	9%
No	91%
	(n=46)

Did the STOP funds impact on the stability of the program?

Yes	32%
No	68%
	(n=44)

Were the STOP funds used to help underserved populations?

Yes	29%
No	71%
	(n=62)

Less than one-in-ten program representatives reported that STOP funds increased their visibility to the public in the community. However, STOP funding changed the nature of relationships between the STOP program and other agencies in the community according to nearly one-quarter of the respondents (Table 4). What types of changes occurred? For some, STOP funds gave them the time to find out about services in their community that they never knew about. For others, they now have the ability to send staff to task forces and coordinating councils to work with other members of

The community on violence against women issues. In some instances, the STOP funded director was actually able to start and chair a task force or council. This was not possible for many programs prior to STOP, because there was no program (STOP funds started the program). In other cases, the victim program was so short staffed that they were not able to meet the immediate needs of victims much less take the time to attend meetings to talk about adding and improving services for victims.

Almost one-third (32%) of those surveyed, noted that the STOP grant impacted positively on their program's stability, primarily by providing the funds to start or expand their program (Table 4). One of the intents of STOP funds was to reach underserved victims, such as non-English speaking, rural, minority, and elderly victims. Less than one-third (29%) of the program representatives we interviewed stated that they used STOP funds to help underserved populations (Table 4). Thus, for at least these STOP programs, there was not a lot of outreach to the underserved.

Perceived impact on victims' well being. A series of questions were posed regarding how STOP funds impacted victims according to the STOP subgrantee program representatives surveyed. The first set of questions focused upon the perceived impact on victims' well being. There were two impacts that were noted the most. Sixty-nine percent felt the services provided with STOP dollars improved the victims' psychological well being. Nearly as many respondents, 68%, thought the STOP funded activities resulted in a greater empowerment of victims (Table 5). The primary reason given for this response is that the STOP subgrantee program provider is able to spend time with the victim to explain her options and discuss safety plans. As a result, victims are able to make informed choices.

Far fewer respondents, 27%, perceived that STOP funds provided help to children whose mothers were victimized (Table 5). Among those who felt this way, we heard about outreach efforts to schools; play and individual therapy groups; and work with shelter providers to identify children in need of services. Helping victims with financial losses through STOP program activities was reported by just 18% of the representatives interviewed (Table 5). The most common form of assistance was help in completing VOCA compensation forms for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Perceived impact on victims and the criminal justice system. Another group of questions centered on whether the STOP grant impacted on victims in relation to the criminal justice system. As depicted on Table 5, over three-fifths of those we spoke with believed that STOP funds improved the treatment of victims by the criminal justice system (66%) and that victims were kept better informed of criminal justice actions taken in their cases (60%). Nearly half (48%) also perceived that STOP funds resulted in more successful prosecutions and resulted in fewer victims withdrawing their support for prosecution (47%). Impacts that were less often named included: more victims are willing to report crimes (24% felt this way) and the types of sentences imposed

TABLE 5
PERCEIVED IMPACT ON VICTIMS
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF STOP SUBGRANTEE PROGRAM RESPONDENTS

Did STOP funds have an impact on victims' well being? Did it...

	Yes	No
Result in empowering victims?	68%	32%
Improve the victims' psychosocial well-being?	69%	31%
Help victims with financial losses?	18%	82%
Provide help to children whose mothers were victimized?	27%	73%

(n=62)

Did STOP funds have an impact on victims and the criminal justice system? Did it...

	Yes	No
Increase crime reporting?	24%	76%
Result in fewer victims withdrawing their support from the prosecution?	47%	53%
Result in more successful prosecutions?	48%	52%
Result in tougher sentences?	18%	82%
Keep victims better informed of criminal justice actions taken in their case?	60%	40%
Improve the treatment of victims by the criminal justice system?	66%	34%

(n=60)

Did STOP funds have an impact on victims and the community? Did it...

	Yes	No
Increase types and quality of services provided?	71%	29%
Extend the range of services provided?	58%	42%
Increase the coordination of victim services?	61%	39%
Increase awareness of victim issues?	55%	45%
Decrease amount of violence inflicted on victims?	8%	92%

(n=60)

Have the STOP funds had any unexpected (either good or bad) impacts?

Yes	48%
No	52%

(n=59)

became tougher (18% gave this response) (Table 5). In terms of the criminal justice system, the single most important change cited was the improvement in how law enforcement and prosecutors treat victims. Improvements cited included greater sensitivity to victims; greater consideration of victims' needs; and improved communication between officials and victims. These improvements were primarily attributed to training and the advocacy provided with STOP funds.

Perceived impact on victims and the community. What about other effects of the STOP subgrantee programs? Nearly three-quarters (71%) of those we spoke with thought that STOP funds had increased the types and quality of services provided. Nearly two-thirds (61%) felt STOP had increased the coordination of victim services in their community. Over half (55%) perceived it had increased awareness of violence against women issues in the community. Only 8% credited STOP funds with decreasing the amount of violence inflicted on women, many noting STOP grants were too new to have accomplished that goal (Table 5).

STOP program impact examples. To illustrate the impact of STOP, we present three case examples from our respondents.

- A prosecution-based program was started in 1996 with a STOP award of \$16,690. The grant is the sole funding source for the program. There is one part-time staff assisted by ten volunteers who served an estimated 100 victims last year. They are available to help victims with the completion of orders of protection and compensations forms; advocate for restitution for the victims; make referrals to counseling, provide court notification, court advocacy, transportation to court, and daycare and a waiting room at the courthouse. The program director believes victims are better off as a result of STOP funding. Victims have someone to call when they have questions and are informed of case actions. The director perceives that community awareness of the program has resulted in a greater willingness for victims to come forward. Less victims are withdrawing from prosecution. They have a no-drop policy but have never forced a victim to testify. It is an effective plea bargaining tool especially when batterer treatment is indicated. Many victims do not want jail time but want treatment ordered. VOCA and restitution help pay for counseling for victims who want it. As the director stated: "victims now have a person to turn to in the system who cares about them—they are no longer just a case number".
- STOP funds were used to establish a restraining order program in a law enforcement department. In 1996, they received a \$50,000 STOP grant. The grant is their only source of funding. One full time program staff has helped 2,078 victims in 1996 by explaining the restraining order process, the reasons for obtaining an order, who is eligible, and so forth. She assists victims who wish to obtain an order by helping them complete the required application forms. There is the only county in the state with a full time restraining order program. The program accepts walk-in clients. In addition, the program director culls through the sheriff department's domestic violence incident reports every day and contacts victims to explain restraining orders and to offer help if they want it. The STOP staff person believes they are providing an important service to victims. She explained that many women are too emotional to complete the form, or

cannot understand what needs to be filled out (the form is 18 pages long!). By providing victims with information and help, it empowers them to make informed choices and get the orders they are entitled to. Further, the STOP staff person helps victims fill out VOCA compensation forms to obtain money for needed repairs, reimbursement for damaged property, medical bills, lost wages, etc. as well money for counseling. Thus, victims' financial well being is also helped with the STOP funds.

- STOP funded a prosecution-based victim assistance program through a grant of \$30,000 in 1997. The program has been in existence for six years and also receives assessment monies collected from defendants and federal VOCA funds. The STOP funds were used to hire a bilingual domestic violence detective and to support clerical staff. The detective is part of a first response team, along with non-profit victim advocates, to respond to cases of domestic violence deemed the most "serious", i.e., those in which there is a long history of violence; those with severe violence; and/or those in which children were also physically injured or used as a shield. The team was sent to 200 households last year. Because the county is 30-40% Hispanic, many of whom do not speak English, a bilingual detective was seen as critical to the success of the team. They have also translated pamphlets for victims into Spanish. They believe victims' well being has been improved through the provision of services such as help with safety plans, restraining orders, no contact orders, and stalking orders. Because they get involved early on, and in a culturally sensitive way, they perceive that more victims are coming forth to report crimes. Further their successful prosecution rate has increased from 25% to 75-80% and the imposition of jail sentences has increased. The director of the prosecutor's victim witness program reported that there is "less of the them (victims) versus us (prosecutors)" mentality. Prior to the STOP program, she would arrive at the office in the morning and be greeted with a line of victims outside her door demanding that charges be dropped. Since, STOP, she hasn't been faced with that. In her mind, the key is a combination of (1) services, (2) safety plans, (3) prosecution, (4) batterer treatment, and (5) holding offenders accountable for their criminal acts. Without all of these tools, their STOP program "could not work".

Unexpected impacts of STOP funding. A final question posed was if STOP funds had brought about any unexpected, either good or bad, impacts. Nearly half, 48%, responded in the affirmative (Table 5). This is what some respondents had to say.

- *"We were surprised how many victims came in for services. We were not prepared for the size of the caseload."*
- *"Coordination with officials in the criminal justice system was easier than we anticipated."*
- *"The paperwork requirements of the STOP grant is tremendous. It takes so much time that it inhibits our ability to recruit volunteers or to serve clients."*
- *"It took longer to start the program than anticipated. There was a lot of intra-agency squabbling."*

Coordinating programs surveyed. We asked the STOP subgrantee representative interviewed to name 2-3 programs they work closely with in serving victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Some could name only 1-2 (especially in small rural areas). We attempted interviews with all named “coordinating” program representatives. We completed 96 of these interviews.

We first queried coordinating program respondents about their type of program. The vast majority of coordinating programs, 84%, were located in the private sector. Less common were those located in the criminal justice system, 14% and those located in a non-criminal justice governmental program, 2% (Table 6). Over half (54%) of the programs were shelters. Services provided among those interviewed were diverse and many. Most commonly named were: crisis counseling (76%); referrals to counseling (72%); public awareness campaigns about violence against women (71%); court advocacy (67%); assistance with protection orders (65%); long term counseling (63%); running hotlines (57%); assistance with compensation forms (56%); transportation to court (46%); daycare help for victims’ children while victim is in court (24%); emergency repairs and financial help (24%); and providing a waiting room for victims while in the courthouse (14%). In addition to the services we asked about, 59% of those interviewed named “other” services they provide. These included running batterer treatment programs; providing legal aid; running drug addiction programs; conducting medical advocacy; running support groups for children of domestic violence; providing life skills training; developing dating violence curriculum for schools; and providing training for law enforcement and health professionals.

The primary reason we conducted interviews with coordinating program representatives was to have a knowledgeable “outsider” share their perceptions of the impact of STOP funds to compare with what we were told by the STOP subgrantee program representative. The latter would understandably want to present their program and its accomplishments in the best light. We directly asked the respondent in the coordinating program if the STOP subgrantee program addressed the most urgent needs of domestic violence and sexual assault victims within the context of the criminal justice system. An overwhelming majority, 93%, responded positively.

Four areas in which the STOP funds might have had an impact were probed. These included whether the STOP funds had a major, minor, or no impact upon:

- the activities of the STOP subgrantee program and type of services provided
- victims’ well being
- victims’ interactions with the criminal justice system
- the response of the community to victims

The results are in Table 7. It is important to highlight that many of the representatives of coordinating programs responded “don’t know” to the impact questions. Depending on the particular question, 22-58% of those surveyed were unable to assess if the STOP subgrantee program had such an impact. Almost all were aware of the STOP funded activities but did not feel they were in a position to rate the impact. This should be kept firmly in mind when viewing Table 7.

TABLE 6
CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEYED COORDINATING PROGRAMS

Program is...

A private sector program	84%
A criminal justice program	14%
A non-criminal justice governmental program	2%
	(n=96)

Type of services provided by coordinating programs

Crisis counseling	76%
Emergency repairs/financial help	24%
Transportation to court	46%
Waiting room for victims in court	14%
Daycare for victims' children while in court	24%
Court advocacy	67%
Court notification	40%
Long term counseling	63%
Referrals to counseling	72%
Assistance with protection orders	65%
Assistance with compensation forms	56%
Shelter	54%
Hotlines	57%
Public awareness campaigns	71%
"Other" services	59%
	(n=96)

TABLE 7
PERCEIVED IMPACT OF STOP PROGRAM
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE COORDINATING PROGRAM RESPONDENTS

Did the STOP subgrantee program have a major, minor, or no impact on...

<i>The activities of the STOP subgrantee? It...</i>	<i>Major Impact</i>	<i>Minor Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>	<i>(n)</i>
Increased the visibility of the STOP subgrantee	5%	31%	4%	(69)
Increased the type of services provided by the STOP subgrantee	62%	29%	9%	(75)
Increased the number of victims served by the STOP subgrantee	73%	21%	6%	(75)
Increased the number of underserved victims served by the STOP subgrantee	53%	34%	13%	(59)
 <i>The well being of victims? It...</i>				
Increased victims' empowerment	70%	25%	5%	(73)
Improved victims' psychosocial well being	69%	24%	7%	(61)
Improved victims' financial well being	24%	39%	37%	(41)
 <i>Victims' interaction with the CJS? It...</i>				
Increased the number of crimes reported	52%	35%	13%	(41)
Reduced the number of victims withdrawing their support from the criminal justice system (CJS)	64%	24%	12%	(58)
Increased the number of successful prosecutions	72%	22%	5%	(58)
Resulted in tougher sentences	39%	41%	20%	(46)
Kept victims better informed of CJS actions taken in their case	86%	9%	5%	(70)
Improved the treatment of victims in CJS	68%	25%	8%	(74)
 <i>The response of the community? It...</i>				
Increased the range of services provided by the community to victims	64%	25%	11%	(74)
Increased coordination of services within the community for victims	70%	22%	8%	(77)
Increasing public awareness about violence against women issues	64%	28%	8%	(75)

The first potential impact examined was on the victim program itself. Did the STOP funded activities increase the visibility of the program that received the funds? Sixty-five percent said it had a "major" impact; 31% a "minor" impact; and 4% "no" impact. The vast majority thought the STOP funds increased the type of services provided by the STOP subgrantee program—62% said it had a "major" impact and 29% a "minor" impact in this regard. Likewise, they saw an effect of the number of victims served. Seventy-three percent rated the impact on numbers served as "major" and 21% as "minor". However, impact on reaching underserved victims was not given as high marks. Fifty-three percent believed it had a "major" impact on reaching out to underserved victims and 34% said it had a "minor" impact (Table 7).

The second type of impact queried was whether STOP funds had an effect on victims' well being. Did it result in increasing the empowerment of victims? Ratings were very high. Seventy percent said the impact was "major" and 25% said it was "minor". Further, 69% thought it had a "major" impact and 24% a "minor" impact on improving victims' psychosocial well being. Fewer results were noted on the financial front. Only 24% reported that STOP funds improved victims' financial well being in a "major" way and 39% in a "minor" way (Table 7).

The third area of inquiry looked at the impact of STOP funding on victims' interactions with the criminal justice system. Did it increase the number of domestic violence and sexual assault incidents reported to the police? Fifty-two percent believed it did in a "major" way and 35% in a "minor" way. In addition, 64% thought it had a "major" and 24% a "minor" impact of reducing the number of victims who withdrew their support from the prosecution of their cases. They had very strong feelings that STOP funds were instrumental in keeping victims better informed about the actions taken in their case by criminal justice officials with 86% noting a "major" impact and 9% a "minor" impact. And many thought victims were treated better by the criminal justice system because of STOP. Sixty-eight percent said it had a "major" impact and 25% said it had a "minor" impact on victims' treatment. Ratings were much lower regarding sentences. Only 39% believed STOP produced a "major" impact in terms of tougher sentences; 41% rated it as "minor" and 20% said it had "no impact" in producing tougher sentences (Table 7).

The final set of questions on impact focused on community issues. Did STOP funds have an impact on the range of services provided to the victim by the community? Sixty-four percent rated this impact as "major" and 25% as "minor". In the majority's opinion, coordination improved as a result of STOP funds. Seventy percent reported that STOP funds had a "major" and 22% said it had a "minor" impact on increasing the coordination of services for victims within the community. Finally, they perceived that public awareness about violence against women increased due to STOP. Sixty-four percent noted a "major" and 28% a "minor" change in public awareness (Table 7).

A comparison of the STOP subgrantee program and coordinating program representatives on the impact of STOP funds. On the STOP subgrantee program interview, we asked if the funds had a particular impact with a "yes" and "no" response. On the coordinating program interview, we asked if the funds had a "major", "minor", or "no" impact. We collapsed the "major" and "minor" categories into a "yes" category (i.e., it had the queried impact) on the coordinating interview in order to compare it to the "yes" category on the STOP subgrantee program interview. Table 8 contains the results.

**TABLE 8
PERCEIVED IMPACT ON VICTIMS
A COMPARISON OF THE PERSPECTIVES OF
STOP SUBGRANTEE AND COORDINATING PROGRAM RESPONDENTS**

STOP funds impact on victims' well being

	STOP Subgrantee Respondent	Coordinating Respondent
Resulted in empowering victims	68%	95%
Improved victims' psychosocial well being	69%	93%
Helped victims with financial losses	18%	63%

STOP funds impact on victims and the criminal justice system

	STOP Subgrantee Respondent	Coordinating Respondent
Increased crime reporting	24%	88%
Resulted in fewer victims withdrawing their support from the prosecution	47%	84%
Resulted in more successful prosecutions	48%	94%
Resulted in tougher sentences	18%	80%
Kept victims better informed of criminal justice actions taken in their case	60%	95%
Improved the treatment of victims by the criminal justice system	66%	84%

STOP funds impact on victims and the community

	STOP Subgrantee Respondent	Coordinating Respondent
Extended the range of services provided	58%	89%
Increased the coordination of victim services	61%	92%
Increased awareness of violence against women	55%	94%

Without exception, the coordinating program respondents thought the STOP funds had more (and usually a lot more) impact on 12 areas inquired about than did the STOP subgrantee program respondents. It is impossible to say which perception is most accurate. The data do not support a conclusion that STOP subgrantee program representatives exaggerated the effects of STOP funds. Quite the opposite. If the coordinating program representatives' perceptions are accurate, the STOP subgrantees are considerably underestimating positive effects of STOP funds. The very high ratings by the coordinating program representatives are striking. As to STOP funding impact on victims' well being, consider the following. Sixty-eight percent of STOP subgrantee respondents said STOP resulted in empowering victims but fully 95% of the coordinating respondents gave that answer. Sixty-nine percent of STOP subgrantees thought STOP funds improved victims' psychosocial well being compared with 93% of the coordinating programs. Only 18% of STOP subgrantees said the funds had helped victims with financial losses while 63% of the coordinating programs provided that response.

Coordinating program respondents gave very high marks regarding the impact of the STOP subgrantee program on victims and the criminal justice system as well. Eighty-eight percent said STOP funds increased crime reporting compared to 24% of the STOP subgrantees. Eighty-four percent of the coordinating program representatives thought STOP funds had resulted in fewer victims withdrawing their support from the prosecution but only 47% of STOP subgrantee respondents gave that answer. Ninety-four percent of coordinating program respondents believed STOP funds had resulted in more successful prosecutions compared to 48% of the STOP subgrantee representatives. Further, 80% of coordinating programs perceived that STOP funds had resulted in tougher sentences in contrast to only 18% of the STOP subgrantees. Were victims kept better informed of criminal justice actions taken in their case? Ninety-five percent of the coordinating programs and 60% of the STOP subgrantee programs responded favorably. Improved treatment of victims by the criminal justice system was noted by 84% of coordinating programs compared with 66% of STOP subgrantee programs.

STOP funds were viewed as having several positive effects on victims and the community. According to 89% of the coordinating program representatives, STOP funds extended the range of services provided; 58% of the STOP subgrantees noted this impact. Ninety-two percent of coordinating respondents, compared to 61% of STOP subgrantee respondents, perceived that STOP funds had increased the coordination of victim services in the community. In keeping with the pattern of the responses, 94% of the coordinating programs, contrasted with 55% of the STOP subgrantee respondents, stated that STOP funds had increased awareness of violence against women issues.

CONCLUSIONS

The 62 STOP funded subgrantee programs surveyed were either based in, or affiliated with, the criminal justice system. Most were prosecution or law enforcement victim programs. The majority were fairly new programs and over one-third began with the receipt of STOP funds. The average amount of their STOP subgrantee award was \$47,626. Given the relatively small amount of their

grants and their newness to victim services, it is impressive that these programs provided such a wide variety of services to sexual assault and domestic violence victims at many stages of the process. Even more impressive are the program changes and impacts reported by the STOP subgrantee program representatives, and the 96 representatives of coordinating programs surveyed who work with the STOP subgrantee programs, on:

- **Service delivery to violence against women victims.** The majority of surveyed programs reported that they were able to serve more victims, expand the type of services, and provide more comprehensive services *as a direct result* of the STOP funding.
- **Victims' well being.** A majority of STOP subgrantee respondents surveyed, and the vast majority of the coordinating programs respondents surveyed, believed that *STOP grants resulted* in empowering victims and improving victims' psychosocial well being. Improvement in victim's financial circumstances was also noted but by fewer program respondents than cited improvements in the areas of empowerment and psychosocial functioning.
- **Victims and the criminal justice system.** According to the majority of those surveyed, STOP grants had a direct impact on (a) keeping victims better informed about criminal justice actions taken in their cases; (b) improving the treatment of victims by the criminal justice system; (c) yielding more successful prosecutions; and (d) reducing the number of victims withdrawing their support from the prosecution. Some respondents also perceived that STOP funding increased the number of domestic violence and sexual assault incidents reported to law enforcement and resulted in the imposition of tougher sentences.
- **Victims and the community.** The majority of STOP subgrantee program respondents surveyed, and the vast majority of coordinating program respondents, reported STOP funds impacted on the way domestic violence and sexual assault victims were treated by the community. STOP funds extended the range of services provided by community programs; increased the coordination of victim services; and increased awareness of violence against women issues.

In the opinion of those surveyed, STOP subgrantee grant awards yielded many positive results for victims. STOP funds substantially improved the lives of victims and their treatment by the criminal justice system.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Our research provides a preliminary picture of the impact of VAWA STOP funding. Based on the testimony of STOP subgrantee staff and staff of other programs with whom they work with to serve victims, STOP funding is positively changing the ways in which the criminal justice system and community programs respond to violence against women victims. But, while the interviews we have conducted suggest, they do not conclusively demonstrate the impact of STOP funds. Further research is needed. We suggest three possibilities.

One strategy could be to conduct community level analysis of key violence against women indicators to assess the impact of STOP funds. The National Academy of Sciences argues that it is difficult to evaluate individual family violence programs because particular interventions take place within a community context (Chalk and King, 1998). That context includes local arrest and prosecution policies, public health programs, and services for victims of violence. The Academy's prescription for remedying this problem is to examine community-level indicators. This approach seems particularly appropriate for evaluation of VAWA STOP programs. Many of these grants are small and many used the funds to expand or support existing services rather than to create new ones. Violence against women programs need to be viewed within the context of the community's coordinate response to such violence. Under the approach we are proposing, investigators would sample a large number of communities across the country. They would examine the correlation between VAWA STOP grant spending and a range of violence against women indicators, including number of calls to law enforcement, arrests, prosecutions, convictions, domestic homicides, emergency room admissions, and so forth.

Another approach would be to collect data on victims served as a result of STOP grants. To determine how STOP subgrantee awards have affected services for victims, a representative sample of grantees could be drawn and site visits conducted. During the site visits, researchers could examine case records to calculate how many additional victims were served after the STOP grant was received compared with before STOP funding. The investigation could also examine the types of additional victims served as a result of the STOP subgrantee awards. That is, did the characteristics of victims served change after the STOP subgrantee award was made. Were there relatively more Latino victims or more disadvantaged victims served, for example? Accumulating data from a wide sample of grantees would provide a good indication of how the STOP funds translated not only into intangibles such as improved coordination and greater awareness of violence against women, but also into tangibles such as number and types of victims served.

A final suggestion for future impact study is the use of randomized experiments. Many evaluation issues with respect to STOP subgrantee awards do not lend themselves to experimentation, but some do. For example, we encountered numerous programs that had used STOP funds to hire crisis counselors to respond to the scene with law enforcement officers. To test the benefits of this concept, a sample of cases could be randomly assigned to either receive on-scene intervention or a less expensive control condition in which outreach is handled via telephone or letter. The two groups of cases could be compared in terms of the proportion of victims who received services and in terms of the extent to which psychological and material needs were met. Because limited resources often precluded programs from responding to the scene for every case, randomization could be carried out without withholding available services from victims.

Our research indicates that STOP funds are having many positive impacts. Additional impact evaluations with a variety of methods are encouraged to further document the results of VAWA STOP subgrantee awards.

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APPENDIX A
SURVEY FOR STOP PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS

**AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION
SURVEY OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE STOP SUBGRANTEES**

ID # _____ DATE _____

RESPONDENT _____

AGENCY _____

CITY/COUNTY _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

INTERVIEWER _____

I am with the American Bar Association. We are conducting research for the National Institute of Justice about the impact of the Violence Against Women STOP grants on victim services. Your program has been selected for the study. Could you please tell me who in your program is the most knowledgeable about your STOP grant? _____ May I speak with that person? (Interviewer--try to conduct the survey now or schedule a time with the designated person for the interview. Tell the respondent that the survey will take about 20-30 minutes and that all answers will be treated confidentially.)

To begin, I would like to ask you some general questions about your program and the functions you provide then turn to the specific activities supported with STOP funds.

1. Where is your victim program based? Is it a...

- (1) Court-based program,
- (2) Law enforcement-based program,
- (3) Prosecutor-based program, or a
- (4) Non-profit program--what is your connection to the criminal justice system?

- (5) Other: _____

2. What type of victims do you serve?

- (1) All crime victims
- (2) Domestic violence victims only
- (3) Sexual assault victims only
- (4) Domestic violence and sexual assault victims
- (5) Other--specify: _____

3. How many years has your program been in existence?

_____ years

4. What type of services do you provide? (Circle all that apply)

- (1) Crisis counseling
- (2) Emergency repairs/financial assistance
- (3) Transportation to court
- (4) Waiting room for victims while at court
- (5) Daycare for victims' children while in court
- (6) Court advocacy
- (7) Court notification
- (8) Long term Counseling
- (9) Referrals to counseling

- (10) Assistance with orders of protection
- (11) Assistance in filling out compensation forms
- (12) Shelter
- (13) Hotlines
- (14) Public awareness campaigns
- (15) Other: Specify _____

5. At what stages do you provide services?

- (1) Only during crisis period
- (2) From the time of the police report until the case goes to the prosecutor (or the police close the case)
- (3) From the time of the police report until the disposition of the case in court
- (4) From the time the case is filed by the prosecutor until the disposition of the case
- (5) From the beginning to the end, (ie, from the time of the victim's crisis period until recovery)
- (6) Other--explain:

6. How many victims were served by your program last year?

_____ victims --of these, how many were DV victims? _____

 --how many were adult sexual assault victims? _____

7. What was your program's operating budget last year?

\$ _____

8. What is your primary funding source?

- (1) Federal VOCA money
- (2) Federal STOP money
- (3) Other federal money--specify _____
- (4) State money--specify _____
- (5) County/city money
- (6) Foundation support
- (7) Private/corporate donations
- (8) Other--specify _____

9. What are your secondary funding sources? (Circle all that apply)?

- (1) Federal VOCA money
- (2) Federal STOP money
- (3) Other federal money--specify _____
- (4) State money--specify _____
- (5) County/city money
- (6) Foundation support
- (7) Private/corporate donations
- (8) Other--specify _____

10. In serving victims, what are the advantages and disadvantages being located within a criminal justice agency?

Advantages: _____

Disadvantages: _____

11. Being located within a criminal justice agency can sometimes result in a conflict between what the victim needs, or wants, and what the criminal justice system needs, or wants. Can you describe 2-3 cases in which this happened and how the conflicting interests were resolved?

I'd like to ask a few questions about the community in which your program operates.

12. What other services for domestic violence and/or sexual assault victims exist in your community?

- (1) Crisis counseling
- (2) Emergency repairs/financial assistance
- (3) Transportation to court
- (4) Waiting room for victims while at court
- (5) Daycare for victims' children while in court
- (6) Court advocacy
- (7) Court notification
- (8) Long term Counseling
- (9) Referrals to counseling
- (10) Assistance with orders of protection
- (11) Assistance in filling out compensation forms
- (12) Shelter
- (13) Hotlines
- (14) Public awareness campaigns
- (15) Other: Specify _____

13. Do the services provided by your program complement those provided by other programs, or overlap?

(1) complement--how? _____

(2) overlap--how? _____

14. To what programs do you routinely refer clients? (Interviewer--get the name of a contact person at the named agencies and their phone number)

15. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being no coordinated response and 5 being a very well coordinated response to violence against women, how would you rate your community's coordinated response?

1 2 3 4 5

What leads you to that rating? _____

Now I would like to focus on activities supported by your _____ (1995, 1996, or 1997) STOP grant (Interviewer--choose the year for which we sampled the program).

16. What was the amount of your STOP grant for (insert year)?

\$ _____

17. What was the STOP money used for? (Circle all that apply)

(1) To start your program--SKIP TO QUESTION 29

(2) To expand services--what was added or expanded?

- (1) Crisis counseling
- (2) Emergency repairs/financial assistance
- (3) Transportation to court
- (4) Waiting room for victims while at court
- (5) Daycare for victims' children while in court
- (6) Court advocacy
- (7) Court notification
- (8) Long term Counseling
- (9) Referrals to counseling
- (10) Assistance with orders of protection
- (11) Assistance in filling out compensation forms
- (12) Shelter
- (13) Hotlines
- (14) Public awareness campaigns
- (15) Other: Specify _____

(3) To expand the hours the program's open--from what to what?

(4) To add more staff (or make PT staff FT staff)--how many?

(5) To purchase equipment--what equipment?

(6) To provided training:

(a) Who was trained? _____

(b) Who provided the training? _____

(c) What topics were covered? _____

(d) How long was the training? _____

(7) To serve more clients *within or outside* the service area in which you were already working--how many more clients?

_____ clients within service area

_____ clients outside service area

18. Did the STOP funds change the way you deliver services?

(1) No

(2) Yes--how? _____

19. Did the STOP funds change your linkages, or relationships with, other agencies in the community?

(1) No

(2) Yes:
which agencies? how?

20. Did the STOP funds increase your visibility in the community (ie, do more of the general public or other agency staff know about your program)?

(1) No

(2) Yes--how? _____

21. Did the STOP funds impact upon the stability of your program (ie, does STOP enhance the likelihood that you can maintain or extend services provided to victims)?

(1) No

(2) Yes--how? _____

22. Were your STOP funds intended to provide (or extend) services to the underserved, such as rural, minority, or special needs victims?

(1) No--SKIP TO QUESTION 29

(2) Yes:

(a) Which underserved victims are you serving through your STOP funded grant?

- (1) Rural victims
- (2) Non-English speaking victims
- (3) Handicapped victims
- (4) Minority victims (who? _____)
- (5) Elderly victims
- (6) Other: _____

(b) How was it determined to use the funds to target this particular population (instead of others)?

(c) What type of services are being provided (eg, training, language access, developing resource materials specific to the population of interest, etc.)?

(1) training--describe: _____

(2) language access--describe: _____

(3) developing resource materials specific to the population of interest
--describe

(4) other:

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(d) To provide culturally appropriate services (ie., services consistent with the language, norms, and practices of culturally diverse victims), was it necessary for you to change the way you traditionally provided services to victims?

___ No--treat same way traditionally-served victims are

___ Yes--What changes were made?

____ NA--were already providing culturally sensitive services prior to the STOP grant

- (8) Are there any other ways you spent your 1996 STOP funds?
If yes, how?

23. What was the impact of the STOP grant on empowering victims, improving their emotional, financial or other well-being, and/or providing services to children of victims?

(INTERVIEWER NOTE: USE CHECKLIST BELOW TO CHECK RESPONSES GIVEN OR FOR PROBES AS NEEDED)

____ resulted in greater empowerment of victims

How? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

____ improved the victims' psychosocial well-being

How? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

____ helped victims with financial losses suffered as a result of the crime

How? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

_____ provided help to children whose mothers were victimized

How? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

24. What was the impact of the STOP grant on victims and their cases in the criminal justice system in terms of their willingness to report and prosecute cases; case outcomes and sentences; extent to which victims are kept informed of case decisions; and/or victim's satisfaction with the system?

(INTERVIEWER NOTE: USE CHECKLIST BELOW TO CHECK RESPONSES GIVEN OR FOR PROBES AS NEEDED)

_____ increased crime reporting by victims

Why? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

_____ fewer victims are dropping out of the criminal justice process

Why? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

_____ prosecutions are more successful

How? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

_____ changed the type of sentences imposed

How? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

_____ victims are better informed of the actions taken in their cases

How? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

_____ improved the treatment of victims by the criminal justice system

How? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

25. What was the impact of the STOP grant on domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault victims throughout your community in terms of the types and quality of services provided; range of services provided; coordination of services; awareness of victims issues; and/or level of violence directed at these victims?

(INTERVIEWER NOTE: USE CHECKLIST BELOW TO CHECK RESPONSES GIVEN OR FOR PROBES AS NEEDED)

_____ increased types and quality of services provided

How? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

_____ extended the range of services available to victims

How? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

_____ increased the coordination of victim services

How? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

_____ increased awareness about victim issues

How? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

_____ decreased the level of violence directed at victims

How? _____

What data or case examples illustrate the impact?

Unexpected Impacts of STOP

26. Were there any unexpected impacts--good or bad--of the STOP grant on your program, the criminal justice system, victims, or your community that we have not already discussed?

(1) No

(2) Yes--what were they? _____

APPENDIX B
SURVEY FOR COORDINATING PROGRAMS

**AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION
SURVEY OF COORDINATING PROGRAMS**

COORDINATING PROGRAM ID# _____

Information about sampled STOP program

STOP PROGRAM NAME _____ STOP PROGRAM ID # _____

STOP \$\$ USED FOR _____

STOP PROGRAM INTERVIEWEE _____

Information about this respondent (coordinating program)

RESPONDENT _____ PHONE _____

ORGANIZATION _____

INTERVIEWER _____ DATE _____

I am calling from the American Bar Association. We are conducting research for the National Institute of Justice about the impact of the STOP Violence Against Women grants on victim service programs located within the criminal justice system. [STOP PROGRAM NAME] in your area has received one of these grants, and [STOP PROGRAM CONTACT NAME] told us that your organization works closely with them. Do you have about ten minutes to talk to me about [STOP PROGRAM NAME]? (Interviewer -- try to conduct the survey now or schedule a time to conduct the interview.)

1. What type of services do you provide? (Circle all that apply)

- (1) Crisis counseling
- (2) Emergency repairs/financial assistance
- (3) Transportation to court
- (4) Waiting room for victims while at court
- (5) Daycare for victims' children while in court
- (6) Court advocacy
- (7) Court notification
- (8) Long term Counseling
- (9) Referrals to counseling
- (10) Assistance with orders of protection
- (11) Assistance in filling out compensation forms
- (12) Shelter
- (13) Hotlines
- (14) Public awareness campaigns
- (15) Other: Specify _____

a. Is your organization part of the....

1. Private sector or the
2. criminal justice system?

Specify: _____

2. Please describe how your organization works with [STOP PROGRAM NAME].

3. Were you aware that [STOP PROGRAM NAME] received a federal STOP grant to [FILL IN PURPOSE OF STOP GRANT]?

1. No ==> (Interviewer note, if respondent says no, explain what the STOP grant was for)
2. Yes

4. Are you aware of any changes that have occurred as a result of [STOP PROGRAM NAME] in the manner in which victims of domestic violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault are served or treated (Interviewer: probe for both positive and negative results)?

9. Don't know/no opinion

5. From your perspective, is the [STOP PROGRAM NAME] using the funds to address the most urgent needs of domestic violence and sexual assault victims within the criminal justice system in your community?

1. Yes
2. No ==> Why do you say that? _____

9. Don't know/no opinion

6. Now, I'd like to ask you about specific ways in which the federal STOP grant given to [STOP PROGRAM NAME] may have changed things in your community. For each potential impact that I list, would you tell me whether you think that the STOP grant has had a major impact, minor impact, or no impact. If you don't know, please feel free to say don't know.

	Major Impact	Minor Impact	No Impact	Don't Know
1. Increased visibility of [STOP PROGRAM NAME] in the community	—	—	—	—
2. Increased the type of services for victims by [STOP PROGRAM NAME]	—	—	—	—
3. More victims served by [STOP PROGRAM NAME]	—	—	—	—
4. Underserved victims victims served by [STOP PROGRAM NAME]	—	—	—	—
5. Increased safety of victims	—	—	—	—
6. Greater empowerment of victims	—	—	—	—
7. Improved psychosocial well-being of victims	—	—	—	—

	Major Impact	Minor Impact	No Impact	Don't Know
8. Improved financial well-being of victims	—	—	—	—
10. Increased crime reporting	—	—	—	—
11. Fewer victims dropping out of criminal justice system	—	—	—	—
12. More successful prosecutions	—	—	—	—
13. Tougher sentencing	—	—	—	—
14. Victims better informed of actions in their cases	—	—	—	—
15. Better treatment by victims in CJS	—	—	—	—
16. Increased range of services for victims in the community	—	—	—	—
17. Increased coordination of domestic violence and/or sexual assault services in community	—	—	—	—
18. Increased awareness by public of violence against women	—	—	—	—

7. There has been a lot of discussion about whether programs that help victims should be located within the criminal justice system or should be located within the private sector. What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of giving this federal grant to a criminal justice agency?

Advantages: _____

Disadvantages: _____

Thank you very much for speaking with me.