

Sustaining Long-term Community-Academic Partnerships: Negotiating Power and Presence

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Abstract

Community based participatory research (CBPR) partnerships simultaneously increase knowledge and community well-being. Despite the growing number of long-term (as opposed to project-specific) CBPR partnerships, research has yet to sufficiently explore factors that contribute to their success and sustainability over time. This study investigated this question by exploring the perceived benefits, barriers, and facilitators of participation in one long-term CBPR partnership, with particular attention to the role of power. Fifteen members and non-members of a CBPR partnership were interviewed, and data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. Interviewees discussed the value of involvement in the partnership, including strong relationships, honest discussion of power dynamics, mutual learning, and capacity building. Barriers and facilitators to involvement included access factors (ability to be involved) and participation factors (desire to be involved.) Attention to power dynamics was an important benefit for members, yet culturally-specific organizations faced unique barriers to participation. The findings of this study suggest that future long-term CBPR partnerships should prioritize addressing inequitable logistical barriers to participation, discussing power dynamics and power-sharing, and “centering the margins” by focusing on the needs and interests of culturally-specific organizations.

Keywords: intimate partner violence, community-based participatory research, research practice partnerships, domestic violence, evaluation

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Recent years have seen a considerable rise in the number of community based participatory research (CBPR) partnerships in the field of domestic violence (DV; Maciak, Guzman, Santiago, Villalobos, & Israel, 1999; Thomas et al., 2018; Wennerstrom et al., 2018). This trend reflects researchers' and practitioners' increased commitment to overcoming the legacy of mutual mistrust that has hindered collaboration (Andrews, Pepler, & Motz, 2019; Ghanbarpour et al., 2018; Murray & Smith, 2009; Murray & Welch, 2010; NVAWPRC, 2001). The collaboration described here, called Project Collaboration for the purposes of confidentiality, is one such CBPR collaboration, comprised of DV practitioners and researchers who have been collaborating for almost ten years to improve DV survivors' lives through practice-based research and research-based practice. See Thomas et al. (2018) for a longer discussion of the nature of Project Collaboration. While Project Collaboration members have provided anecdotal descriptions of their experiences (e.g., Thomas et al., 2018), this study aims to provide a systematic account of the benefits, barriers, and facilitators of participation in this long-term collaboration, to inform our own development as well as offer guidance for similar long-term partnerships.

As we sought to understand what has made Project Collaboration work as a sustainable collaboration, we were also interested in understanding *for whom* Project Collaboration and similar CBPR collaborations may be most sustainable. We, therefore, wanted to hear from people who have chosen to participate (current Project Collaboration members) *and* people who have chosen not to (DV practitioners from non-member agencies.) This latter group includes potential stakeholders whose voices are rarely included in CBPR evaluations (Chavez, Duran, Baker, Avila, & Wallerstein, 2008; Vera & Polanin, 2013). We, therefore, included in the sample both current Project Collaboration members and DV practitioners from non-member agencies.

Literature review

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is an approach to research characterized by full collaboration between researchers and community members, with the goal of increasing knowledge and action to improve the wellbeing of communities (Collins et al., 2018; Drahota et al., 2016). Core values of CBPR include (a) transparent and trusting relationships, (b) building on each partner's resources, strengths and interests, (c) attending to and redistributing power, (d) equitable decision-making and accountability, (e) creative and flexible processes, and (f) dissemination of research products to those most affected (Goodman et al., 2018; Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 2008).

CBPR partnerships can take a variety of forms, from brief, time-limited collaborations between a single academic institution and community partner, to long-term, ongoing projects that involve a variety of academic and community collaborators. Although, historically, the vast majority of community-academic partnerships have been time-limited (with fewer than 10% lasting more than six years; Drahota et al., 2016), the number of long-term CBPR collaborations has increased in recent years, raising questions about how to define and measure success for this kind of ongoing partnership (e.g., Garland & Brookman-Frazee, 2015; Israel et al., 2020; Palinkas, Short, & Wong, 2015). Recent literature has begun to identify characteristics and processes of effective partnerships, such as shared leadership, trust, adaptability, and strong communication (Brush et al., 2020), and to investigate the role of CBPR values, such as power sharing, in successful long-term partnerships (Wallerstein et al., 2020). Different studies have focused on concepts such as "synergy" and "collective empowerment" to characterize partnerships with effective and equitable models of collaboration (Jagosh et al., 2015; Wallerstein et al., 2020). However, these recent studies still call for further research on what constitutes long-term success in CBPR partnerships and how best to share power and disrupt existing power hierarchies in these collaborations (Israel et al., 2020; Wallerstein et al., 2020).

Project Collaboration is an ongoing regional CBPR partnership, formed in 2011 to address difficulties in evaluating DV programs in the absence of clear conceptualizations of program success and ways of measuring

it. Following collaborative research to address these gaps, Project Collaboration members (including the third and fourth authors) have gone on to produce multiple scholarly publications and practice tools for the field (e.g. Goodman et al., 2014; 2015; 2016). Today, Project Collaboration consists of representatives from over 20 DV agencies in the region and researchers from approximately five research institutions, though exact numbers fluctuate, with approximately 10 consistent practitioner-members, and another 10 who have been less consistent, for reasons we wanted to understand better, in part through this study. The majority of Project Collaboration members are white women, a sobering reflection of the current dearth of people of Color in leadership positions in the state's DV practice community, along with other factors, to be discussed in the results section (Prabhu, 2017). However, a few members identify as Asian or Asian-American, Black, or mixed race, and a few identify as men. Members of Project Collaboration continued to gather for bimonthly meetings with discussions about shared interests and challenges, guest speakers, collaboration on current projects, and plans for future ones, until spring of 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Project Collaboration has been on an extended hiatus, while members juggle their pressing personal and professional demands; the hope and intention is to resume our regular meetings once the pandemic subsides.

In response to both internal interest within Project Collaboration to reflect on our first ten years of partnership and also calls within the field to examine factors that contribute to successful long-term CBPR partnerships (Israel et al., 2020), this study aims to explore both the successful and challenging elements of Project Collaboration's characteristics and processes. In particular, by drawing on the perspectives of both members and non-members of the partnership, we hope to illuminate factors that have made sustained involvement in Project Collaboration compelling and feasible for some practitioners but not others. Following an identified need in the field (Wallerstein et al., 2020), as well as our own curiosity about the demographics of Project Collaboration members and non-members, we aim to draw particular attention to the role of power dynamics and power sharing in long-term CBPR collaborations. The research questions are as follows: What factors hinder and facilitate ongoing participation in long-term CBPR partnerships, and what do participating members perceive the benefits to be?

Methods

We used a qualitative descriptive methodology, which is valuable for capturing relatively unknown phenomena, and relies on participants' own descriptions of the topics under investigation (Sandelowski, 2000; 2010). This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at Boston College. While Project Collaboration is itself a CBPR collaboration, the following study was not conducted using CBPR methodology. That is, although developing the idea for the study was a collaborative venture, practitioners-members appointed the researcher-members to conduct it, due to time constraints and greater interest in the results than the process. The researcher-members then collaborated with the first and second authors (non-members) to ensure integrity of the research process (i.e., non-member authors led data collection and analysis to minimize bias).

To be eligible to participate in the study, individuals had to be 1) a current, active Project Collaboration member (attends meetings on a regular basis); 2) a former (not involved in Project Collaboration for at least one year) or intermittently-involved (attended fewer than 25% of meetings in the past two years) member of Project Collaboration; or 3) a non-member (no prior Project Collaboration involvement) but a staff member at an agency that intentionally serves DV survivors. We used convenience and purposive sampling and recruited via email.

The final sample consisted of 15 adult women. Eight were active members, three were former/intermittent members, and four were non-members. Participants ranged in age from 33 to 63 (mean=50.1 years), with 13 participants identifying as white, one as Biracial, and one as Black. At the time of data collection, participants had an average of 19.5 years of DV-related work experience and represented 13 different DV programs. The racial and gender composition of this sample is consistent with Project Collaboration's membership and, more broadly, DV practitioners in the region in which this study was conducted (Russell, 2020; Goodman & Epstein, 2008; Koyama,

2006). The results section will further address additional factors that may influence the demographic composition of the group. Project Collaboration members typically have a general interest in and appreciation for research, and have learned about CBPR, in particular, through participation in the collaboration. In some cases, even non-members familiar with Project Collaboration, as it is well-known in the region and has been discussed at state and local DV practitioner meetings.

We conducted 30-45-minute interviews. All interviews were conducted by phone to facilitate convenience and ease of scheduling for participants. Two separate semi-structured interview protocols were used: one for active and former/intermittent members and one for non-members. (Please see interview protocols in appendix.) Both interview protocols centered on two domains: 1) barriers and facilitators to participation in Project Collaboration and 2) the perceived impact of Project Collaboration.

We used qualitative content analysis, a systematic approach to analysis that focuses on summarizing and describing (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Qualitative descriptive research derives from the naturalistic inquiry tradition, which seeks to study phenomena in their natural state as much as possible, employing whatever theories and techniques best capture the phenomena as they would appear outside of the research process (Sandelowski, 2000). While some interpretation is inevitable in all analysis, qualitative content analysis stays close to the data, imposing minimal interpretation and representing findings in everyday language that participants themselves would generally agree with (Sandelowski, 2000; 2010). This approach faithfully reflects participant voices in a manner that is consistent with naturalistic inquiry (Sandelowski, 2000). Consistent with qualitative content analysis, we used a three-step approach: open coding to generate an initial list of codes, closely representing participants' own words; grouping codes into broader categories of similar ideas; organizing categories into overarching clusters that represented themes. Codes, categories, and clusters were iteratively reviewed and refined as new data were collected and analyzed. Data collection and analysis took place simultaneously until theoretical saturation occurred.

Reflexivity among the research team was particularly critical for this study, given the researchers' proximity to the research subject. As founding members of Project Collaboration, the third and fourth authors challenged themselves and one another throughout the research process to question how their close involvement with the CBPR partnership could lead to blind spots in the questions we formulated and our analysis of findings, as well as how it might influence participants' openness in their interviews. To partially address these concerns, the first and second authors, graduate students with minimal prior involvement in Project Collaboration, both conducted the interviews and led the analysis.

Throughout the research process, we also reflected critically on the ways that our own identities as white women and academic researchers with race, class, and professional power might influence our understanding of the findings. In particular, we challenged each other to center marginalized voices from culturally-specific DV programs in our consideration of the implications of the study, even if they did not represent the perspectives of the majority of interviewees, so as to not replicate prior systemic harms to culturally-specific programs and marginalized groups of survivors.

Results

Two overarching clusters emerged: 1) the value of involvement in Project Collaboration and 2) barriers and facilitators to involvement. These are described next, with categories indicated in bold and codes in italics. The frequency with which participants spoke to each category or code is reported as "few" (less than 4), "many" (4 to 7), or "most" (8 or more). This approach enables us to identify patterns within the data, such as common or unusual themes, without suggesting quantitative generalizability (Sandelowski, 2001). We differentiate between "member" (i.e., active or former/intermittent) and "non-member" responses, to identify those based on experience of Project Collaboration versus speculation.

Cluster 1: The Value of Involvement in Project Collaboration

The value of relationship-building through Project Collaboration emerged as a major theme, with most members describing how Project Collaboration strengthens relationships both among practitioners and between practitioners and researchers. Members talked about the value of networking but also feeling close and comfortable with other members, looking forward to seeing them, and sharing interests. Members also reported valuing the rare opportunity to build real, reciprocal relationships with researchers. As one member said, “You don’t commit to projects like this unless you have trust and communication and a good rapport”.

Most members reported that Project Collaboration **pays close attention to power and inclusion**, which contributes to the strength of relationships. Most described feeling that, in Project Collaboration, *all voices matter, irrespective of professional status and social position, such that members feel comfortable speaking up*. As one member said, “You have a voice, a voice that gets heard, you’re valued, your input is also valued.” Another member explained, “We all get to talk. It’s not like [the researcher-members] are talking at us or even bringing a researcher to talk *at* us.” A few practitioner-members described feeling intimidated by researcher-members when they first joined Project Collaboration, but reported that this quickly dissipated. A few members reported that *involvement in Project Collaboration boosted their confidence to speak in other forums*.

Many members described Project Collaboration attending to power dynamics by *prioritizing ongoing conversation about power, diversity, and inclusion*. Members acknowledged desire for more diversity and a sense that the group was always working toward this. One member said:

What I truly appreciate about Project Collaboration is that we talk about those hard things, whether it’s race, class, or any of the issues... and we really try to look through those things through a lens of social justice... sometimes those conversations are hard to have but they’re happening.

Many members also appreciated that *roles within Project Collaboration are equitable rather than equal*. Members take on leadership roles commensurate with available time and capacity. Two researcher-members coordinate and plan meetings because they have more schedule flexibility than practitioner-members. Meanwhile, practitioner-members often drive the ideas that Project Collaboration pursues. Many practitioner-members explained that this current division of labor was a relief because, as one member said, “We are so overwhelmed and so busy in our day-to-day life putting out fires.”

Most members spoke about how Project Collaboration **facilitates mutual learning relevant to their work**. Many noted how Project Collaboration *members come from a variety of roles and organizations and so offer a wide variety of perspectives*. Most also described how Project Collaboration *promotes practice-informed research and research-informed practice*. For instance, practitioners help researchers keep abreast of what is happening in the field, while practitioners are exposed to various topics and tools for their work. They learn what is working in other places, so they do not have to “reinvent the wheel” and have empirical justification for their practices. One member referred to Project Collaboration as, “A true collaboration and a meeting place for both of these worlds,” and another explained, “I’m probably touching the, you know, the toe of the elephant and researchers are touching another part”.

Most members described how **Project Collaboration increases practitioners’ capacity to advocate for the needs of organizations and survivors, modify organizational practices, and evaluate their work**. Many members explained how *connection to research gives legitimacy to practitioners when dealing with outside stakeholders*. Members described mentioning their involvement with Project Collaboration to grant-funders and receiving more credibility for their organizational practices. Many members also spoke about how Project Collaboration *influences the community by bringing multiple agencies together for conversation and action*.

Cluster 2: Barriers and Facilitators to Involvement in Project Collaboration

Two categories of barriers and facilitators to involvement in Project Collaboration emerged: *Access* factors prevent or enable an individual or agency's *ability* to be involved in Project Collaboration. *Participation* factors prevent or enable an individual or agency's *desire* to be involved in Project Collaboration.

Most members and non-members identified **barriers to accessing** Project Collaboration. Most identified the *time commitment of Project Collaboration activities (including travel)* as a barrier. A few members and non-members noted *working for a smaller agency* (many of which were culturally specific) was a barrier to accessing Project Collaboration because employees juggle multiple roles, leaving little time. One member also said *high staff turnover makes Project Collaboration involvement inconsistent*. Many members and non-members identified **facilitators of accessing** Project Collaboration, which aligned closely with barriers. Many described *the ability to control one's schedule* as a facilitator of access. In addition, *public transit-accessible meetings* were critical for those without cars; for those with cars, it was *access to parking*.

A few non-members identified **barriers that affect their desire to participate in Project Collaboration**. One non-member from a culturally-specific organization was unfamiliar with Project Collaboration's previous work but presumed an *absence of research projects focusing on culturally-specific groups* would be a barrier to participation. Another non-member, who worked for a different culturally-specific organization, described *feeling split between the DV-specific and culturally-specific needs of survivors* and was therefore conflicted about whether to spend her limited time with DV-specific or with of culturally-specific collaborations.

Most members described a range of **facilitators that contributed to their desire to participate** in Project Collaboration. Many identified the *welcoming environment* as a facilitator. Many also described feeling *drawn to participate when their work was relevant to the meeting or project's focus, and they had knowledge to contribute*. A few members identified the *ability to choose one's level and type of participation* and Project Collaboration's *inclusiveness regardless of invitation or role* as facilitators of participation. Although these facilitators are related to the factors reported earlier that make participation worthwhile, they alone are not sufficient for sustaining participation.

Discussion

This study explored perceived factors that contribute to or hinder sustainable participation in a long-term DV-focused CBPR collaboration. Many of our findings about the benefits of involvement in Project Collaboration echo those from previous studies of CBPR processes and outcomes that have noted the value of trusting relationships, equitable leadership roles, and mutual learning (e.g. Garland & Brookman-Frazer, 2015; Brush et al., 2020). In particular, like other CBPR studies, we found that Project Collaboration's explicit attention to power dynamics within the partnership was a major benefit of involvement for practitioner-members (e.g. Wallerstein et al., 2020). Specifically, Project Collaboration redistributes academic power by increasing practitioner-members' credibility with funders and other stakeholders, who often view the perspectives of academics as more legitimate or credible than those of practitioners (Ghanbarpour et al., 2018).

These findings support the value of a CBPR approaches to long-term collaborations, which emphasize attending to and redistributing power (Goodman et al., 2018; Jagosh et al., 2015; Wallerstein et al., 2008). However, the findings of this study not only point to the benefits of CBPR but also the more systemic need to challenge and break down existing norms of credibility, whereby partnership with researchers boosts the credibility of practitioners, but not necessarily vice versa. Others have highlighted this credibility crisis, for instance in the way that academics often assert that "we don't know" something, despite substantial community knowledge, simply because it has not been studied by other academics (Burk, 2018), or the way that members of marginalized communities will be asked to cite sources to justify assertions about their own lived experiences (Starr, 2018). Redistributing the privileges of academic power through CBPR is a good step towards ensuring that voices of

survivors and practitioners carry authority as critical sources of knowledge. But in the final analysis, it does not address the root issue that non-academic collaborators have less credibility to begin with.

This study also echoed findings from previous research about logistical factors, such as time commitment, access to parking, and proximity to public transportation, as barriers to CBPR participation (Agans et al., 2020; Coburn & Penuel, 2016; Farrell et al., 2018; Garland & Brookman-Fraze, 2015; Garland et al., 2006). Discrepancies in access are not power-neutral: Culturally-specific organizations that serve communities of Color, immigrant communities, or LGBTQ communities are likely to be smaller and under-resourced (Star, 2018) and, therefore, have less capacity to participate. Thus, addressing these logistical barriers to participation is a critical equity issue for CBPR collaborations like Project Collaboration. The interviews for this study were conducted before the COVID-19 pandemic, which, along with many immense challenges and hardships for DV survivors and practitioners, has created small windows of innovation and opportunity. One such innovation is the use of virtual meetings to decrease logistical barriers to participation in meetings and organizations. While Project Collaboration has been less active during the pandemic as members focus on “putting out fires” in their own communities, virtual meetings are a promising option for increasing equitable access to participation in Project Collaboration and other similar CBPR collaborations in the future.

Along with issues of accessibility, this study also addressed factors that influence desire to participate in Project Collaboration. Notably, we included the perspectives of non-members of Project Collaboration and were challenged to acknowledge that, in pursuing research projects that focus on the interests of the mainstream DV organizations that comprise Project Collaboration’s membership, we have often failed to prioritize the needs and interests of culturally-specific programs. One interviewee from an organization serving a specific racial minority group discussed difficulty choosing between spending her time and energy on DV-specific vs. culturally-specific collaborations. Implicit in this statement is a recognition that the DV-specific research conducted by Project Collaboration is not truly for her and her organization; that it assumes a default lens of whiteness that can only ever partially address her needs and interests. Another interviewee from an organization serving predominantly people of Color expressed hesitation about trusting Project Collaboration members, who she perceived to lack experiences of marginalization, and skepticism that Project Collaboration’s research agenda would align with her agency’s needs. Her point is well-taken and reflects Project Collaboration’s past failure to invest resources in collaboration with programs and survivors with specific marginalized identities, such as LGBTQ, disabled, immigrant and BIPOC survivors. We are also left with the discomfort of wondering whether the welcoming, cozy environment described by Project Collaboration members reflects the relatively homogeneous identities of the group (Chavez et al., 2008). Though, as a notable exception, one longtime member of Project Collaboration who identifies as a Black woman denied concerns about race or power in her interview, and we would be remiss not to capture her perspective here as well.

Intersectional feminist scholars and leaders in the DV field have called for the interests of culturally-specific organizations to be moved from the margins to the center (hooks, 1984; Burk, 2018; Starr, 2018), and the findings of this study suggest that Project Collaboration has work to do in this arena. In order to truly center the margins, Project Collaboration and other similar CBPR collaborations must work to *earn* the trust of culturally specific programs: explicitly inviting them in as collaborators, listening to and prioritizing their interests, and continuing to reflect on and redistribute inequitable positions of power.

Limitations and Implications for Practice and Research

The current study has a number of notable limitations. First, the findings reflect only those current and former members of Project Collaboration who participated in the study and not all members (e.g., those who chose not to participate or could not be invited because we no longer had contact information for them). Second, as previously discussed, all four researchers and the majority of interviewees were white women. This likely limited who was interested in talking to us, what they shared, and how we related to and interpreted the findings.

Likewise, although interviews were conducted by non-members, their relationship with member authors might have influenced practitioner-members' willingness to be totally candid in their responses. These limitations point to the need for more research on diverse CBPR collaborations.

CBPR collaborations represent an important strategy for fostering research-informed practice and practice-informed research in the DV field and other fields. Like Project Collaboration, other collaborations should be prepared to explore ways to minimize barriers to equitable participation, including addressing logistical barriers to access and committing to centering the priorities of culturally-specific organizations in their communities of practice.

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Appendix

DVPERC Process Evaluation Interview Protocol

(Members)

Introductions

- **Introduce yourself / what your research interests are.**
- **Summarize the purpose of the study:**
- We are working with Lisa, Kristie, and [add names of other interested members] on a project designed to learn about what kinds of research DV programs value and what kinds of partnerships with researchers would be most useful. We are specifically interested in how you think about DVPERC. The project will involve interviewing three groups: active members of DVPERC; former or intermittent members of DVPERC; and non-members of DVPERC. For the purposes of the project, you are in the _____ group.
- Do you have any questions so far? [*If yes, address any questions*]. If not, and you are okay with continuing, we can review the consent form. [*Review consent form, including confidentiality, de-identified data, can discontinue the interview at any time*]. There will also be a short demographic questionnaire to fill out after the interview.
- Before we begin, we also want to acknowledge that we are very interested in all that you have to say, including both positives and negatives. Do you have any other questions before we begin?
- **Is there an alias that you would like to use?**
- **Could you please tell me about the type of work you do at [organization name]?**

Part 1: Research Needs/Wishes

- **How does research and evaluation fit into your current organizational priorities or other aspects of your organization's practice?**
- **How do you and/or your organization use research, if at all?**
- **What are you eager to learn more about in terms of research, if anything?**
 - *Probe: If they only talk about evaluation (does this work)...are there dimensions of you or your client's lives or experiences that you also wish you knew more about?*
- **Has your organization ever partnered with researchers in the past?**
 - *Probe: How do you decide whether or not to partner with a particular researcher or pursue a research collaboration?*
 - *Probe: One participant said that she asks a) will it be beneficial for the organization, (b) will it contribute something valuable to the field, and (c) do we have the capacity? Does this resonate with your experience at all?*

PART 2: DVPERC

We've been talking about research broadly, but now I'd like to shift to talk about a specific partnership, DVPERC.

PARTICIPATION

- **How would you describe DVPERC?**
 - *Probe: Are there parts of it that are particularly important for you?*
- **What makes participation in DVPERC easy/hard from a practical perspective?**
 - *Probe: Do you have any stories that highlight these challenges/ facilitators?*
- **What makes participation in DVPERC easy/hard from an interpersonal or structural/power perspective?**

- *Probe: Do you have any stories that highlight these challenges/ facilitators?*
- *Does it ever feel like there is an in-group? Or that it is clique-y?*
- *Do you feel free to disagree when we are talking about sensitive issues?*
- **Other researchers doing similar projects have found that things like race/racism, professional status, or access to resources can create tensions within research-practice collaborations. Have these factors ever come up for you?**
 - *Probe: What is it like for you that when you look around the room most people are White women and from a mainstream program?*
 - *Probe: Are there roles or identities (your own or other members'), or other sources of power that contribute to these barriers/facilitators?*
 - *Probe: Can you tell me a story that illustrates how differences in power or privilege have impacted your experiences in DVPERC?*

IMPACT

- **Can you share a little about what you/your organization gets out of individual DVPERC meetings, if anything?**
 - *Probe: Were there any speakers, discussions or topics that were particularly meaningful or influential? If so, which ones and how?*
- **Beyond individual meetings, how (if at all) has DVPERC influenced you and/or your organization?**
 - *Probe: What dimensions/aspects of DVPERC contribute to this?*
 - *Probe: Can you give me an example that highlights how DVPERC has influenced you personally or professionally? Your organization?*
 - *Probe: How are you sharing DVPERC information with the rest of your organization, if at all?*
- **Have you seen DVPERC's influence extend outside of your own or your organization's work?**
 - *Probe: What dimensions/aspects of DVPERC contribute to this?*
 - *Probe: Can you give me an example that highlights DVPERC's influence beyond your organization?*
- **What makes participation in DVPERC worthwhile / not worthwhile, in terms of logistical, interpersonal, and power-related factors?**

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- **Is there opportunity for DVPERC to be more inclusive?**
 - *Probe: Who is not being included now? Who should be?*
 - *Probe: In the face of very little to no funding, what specific steps could DVPERC take to be more inclusive? Practically? Interpersonally? Power-wise?*
- **When you think about DVPERC, is there anything more that you'd like to get out of it?**
 1. *Probe: Specific speakers, topics, or activities?*
 2. *Probe: Research topics?*
 3. *Probe: What would you like to see more of/less of?*
- **Of everything that we discussed today, what is the most important point that you want to stress or think would be helpful moving forward?**
- **Is there anything important that we have not asked about?**

DVPERC Process Evaluation Interview Protocol (NON-MEMBERS)

INTRODUCTIONS

- **Introduce yourself / what your research interests are.**
- **Summarize the purpose of the study:**
- Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. We really value your time and input. We are working with Lisa, Kristie, and [add names of other interested members] on a project designed to learn about what kinds of research DV programs value and what kinds of partnerships with researchers would be most useful. We are specifically interested in what you think about a research partnership called DVPERC. The project will involve interviewing three groups: active members of DVPERC; former or intermittent members of DVPERC; and non-members of DVPERC. For the purposes of the project, you are in the non-member group.
- Do you have any questions so far? [*If yes, address any questions*]. If not, and you are okay with continuing, we can review the consent form. [*Review consent form, including confidentiality, de-identified data, can discontinue the interview at any time*]. There will also be a short demographic questionnaire to fill out after the interview.
- Before we begin, we also want to acknowledge that we are very interested in all that you have to say, including both positives and negatives. Do you have any other questions before we begin?
- **Is there an alias that you would like to use?**
- **Could you please tell me about the type of work you do at [organization name]?**

PART 1: RESEARCH NEEDS/WISHES

- **How does research and evaluation fit into your current organizational priorities or other aspects of your organization's practice?**
- **How do you and/or your organization use research, if at all?**
- **What are you eager to learn more about in terms of research, if anything?**
 - *Probe: If they only talk about evaluation (does this work)...are there dimensions of you or your client's lives or experiences that you also wish you knew more about?*
- **Do you and/or your organization collaborate with any researchers already?**
- *Probe: If not, is coming together with researchers around your practice something that could be useful?*
- *Probe: How do you decide whether or not to partner with a particular researcher or pursue a research collaboration?*
- *Probe: One participant said that she asks a) will it be beneficial for the organization, (b) will it contribute something valuable to the field, and (c) do we have the capacity? Does this resonate with your experience at all?*
- **If barriers were not an issue, what would your ideal involvement in a research project look like?**

PART 2: DVPERC

We've been talking about research broadly, but now I'd like to shift to talk about a specific partnership, DVPERC.

- **Have you heard about it?**
 - **If so, what do you know or may have heard about DVPERC?**
 - *One of the things we are interested in learning about are reasons why people do/do not choose to become involved in DVPERC. With that in mind, we are curious to learn about the factors that led to your decision not to be involved.*

- *Probe: Are there any practical/logistical reasons?*
- *Probe: Are there any interpersonal or structural/power reasons?*
 - *Probe: Other researchers doing similar projects have found that things like race/racism, professional status, or access to resources can create tensions within research-practice collaborations. Have any of these factors come up in terms of not joining DVPERC?*
- **What are your impressions of the impact/influence of DVPERC on the DV community?**
 - **If not, let me tell you a bit about it:** *The Domestic Violence Program Evaluation and Research Collaborative (DVPERC), is an ongoing, regional, unfunded collaboration between DV practitioners and researchers committed to using CBPR to improve DV survivors' lives. We've been around since 2011, working to bridge research and practice and attend to both process (e.g., authentic, respectful relationships) and outcomes (e.g., rigorous research that is useful to survivors and programs).*
 - *Probe: Does this sound familiar?*
 - *What questions do you have?*
 - *Does it sound interesting or enticing? Why? Why not?*

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- **Is there opportunity for DVPERC to be more inclusive?**
 - *Probe: Are there specific logistical/practical challenges we could address?*
 - *Probe: Are there specific interpersonal or structural/power variables we could address? For example, race, professional status, access to resources.*
- **What would need to happen/how would DVPERC need to look for you to become interested in participating?**
 - *Probe: Specific speakers, topics, or activities?*
 - *Probe: Research topics?*
 - *Probe: What would you like to see more of/less of?*
- **Of everything that we discussed today, what is the most important point that you want to stress or think would be helpful moving forward?**
- **Is there anything important that we have not asked about?**