



Evaluation of Dlo'ayazhi Project Safe Neighborhoods

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January 2013

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I: Introduction

Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) is a nationwide crime reduction initiative sponsored by the Department of Justice (DOJ). It has been in operation for over a decade. It began with a focus on firearm crimes, and in 2006, expanded to include gang crimes. This initiative is typically implemented in urban areas; however, in 2008 the DOJ invited the Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety to apply for the program. The successful application outlined a plan for implementing PSN in and around the Crownpoint area of the Navajo Nation. In 2011, DOJ provided supplemental funding to continue PSN efforts in Crownpoint and expand into the Shiprock area, which is in the northwestern part of New Mexico. This report summarizes a process evaluation of these expansion efforts, as well as ongoing PSN efforts in the Crownpoint area.

There are three primary principles that guide the PSN model: it is meant to be community based, coordinated and comprehensive. PSN is designed to be centered on the community in which it is being implemented, recognizing and reacting to community needs and the local resources available to address those needs (<http://www.psn.gov/about/index.html>). For example, while PSN focuses on gun and gang crime, the Navajo Nation PSN program has been expanded to include a domestic violence component. This addition represents a Task Force response to concerns about domestic violence voiced by representatives of the Navajo Nation.

Across the country, United States Attorney's Offices (USAO) coordinate PSN efforts in their respective districts. The USAO designates a Task Force Coordinator whose charge is to convene a PSN Task Force that brings together representatives from law enforcement and prosecution at all jurisdictional levels (local, tribal, state and federal), as well as community leaders, research partners, and others. This Task Force then meets regularly to develop collaborative strategies to address PSN program goals. The Task Force meetings are a venue for planning, reporting on and refining PSN activities and initiatives. In addition to managing these efforts, the PSN Task Force Coordinator reports back to the Department of Justice regarding local PSN efforts.

Finally, PSN is meant to be comprehensive. The Navajo Nation PSN focuses on intervention, prevention, and prosecution of gun crimes, gang related/motivated offenses, juvenile violence and domestic violence offenses occurring on the Navajo Nation. Intervention involves violence

suppression through targeted law enforcement operations. Prevention includes educational programming, outreach and support services. For example, the educational component involves a program called Project Sentry which targets at-risk youth, and is designed to prevent their involvement in gun and gang crime. Other prevention efforts occur as well. Outreach includes family advocacy and support for domestic violence issues and related problems, such as substance abuse. Finally, prosecution of targeted crimes occurs at the tribal and federal levels.

The Navajo Nation PSN program is unique among PSN programs. It is among the first to be implemented on tribal lands, and must address challenges that differ from those typically seen in urban areas. First, the geography of the area differs from that of a typical urban PSN site. It is a very large geographical area, with many undeveloped roads and many areas that are sparsely populated. Second, there are fewer law enforcement officers per square mile relative to that seen in an urban area. In addition, this PSN initiative must take into account tribal law, and be able to work with tribal government in addition to negotiating municipal, state and federal laws.

Finally, there are cultural differences and sovereignty issues that PSN must be sensitive to and take into account when implementing the initiative. However, the area is also similar to other PSN sites in that the community leaders have identified violence and gangs as a problem. They note that these problems are associated with substance abuse and poverty issues, like other PSN locales. Further, there is concern that particular housing structures on the Navajo Nation have become crime magnets, similar to urban dwellings.

The USAO for the District of New Mexico (USAO NM) requested evaluation services in support of the Navajo PSN initiative from the New Mexico Statistical Analysis Center at the University of New Mexico's Institute for Social Research. The USAO NM outlined two primary evaluation goals. First, the USAO NM expressed particular interest in determining how well the Task Force was coordinating activities and forging connections between disparate groups. Second, they were interested in better understanding the challenges to PSN implementation on the Navajo Nation so that they could best meet these challenges.

There are five questions guiding this evaluation:

1. What portions of PSN are being implemented?

2. How well are PSN Task Force partners coordinating activities to implement the program goals?
3. What are Task Force members' perceptions of PSN's impact and success?
4. What are the facilitators to PSN implementation in the target areas?
5. What are the barriers to PSN implementation in the target areas?

The purpose of this evaluation, then, is to determine whether the initiative is being implemented in the way that it is intended, to understand the perceived success of the initiative, and to pinpoint facilitators and barriers to implementation, focusing especially on coordination of activities. The results are meant to be used to make decisions about whether and how to refine the program activities and to provide feedback to the funders regarding program compliance.

Methods

This evaluation is a process evaluation. The purpose of a process evaluation is to answer questions about how a program is being implemented. The focus of the current evaluation is to understand how PSN is being implemented on the Navajo Nation, the challenges encountered in implementing it, and how partners are working together to coordinate activities. The results of this evaluation can be used to make decisions about whether and how to improve the initiative, which is a second purpose of a process evaluation. A program evaluation can also be used in conjunction with an outcomes evaluation, which looks at whether a specific program is achieving its objectives. The process evaluation can inform which aspects of the program to focus on for an outcomes evaluation (for example, you would not want to conduct an outcomes evaluation on a component of the program that has not been implemented) and can also help contextualize and explain outcome evaluation findings.

The current evaluation of the PSN initiative on the Navajo Nation uses a participatory approach, which is one common approach to evaluation (Russ-Eft and Preskill, 2009). The goal of this evaluation is to understand how this initiative is being implemented from the perspective of those implementing it. The findings are meant to be used by the Department of Justice and Task Force members, some of whom are community members in the Navajo Nation, to determine whether changes need to be made in order to improve the initiative. As the evaluators, we developed the

key evaluation questions to reflect the information needs relayed to us by the coordinator from the USAO.

Data

We rely on three sources of data for this evaluation. First, we completed a total of 19 semi-structured interviews with Task Force members representing each of the agencies on the Task Force. Determining who to interview included two steps. First, we used the sign in sheet from the Task Force meetings. Next we asked the USAO Task Force coordinator to identify those people on the list who were key to the initiative and to identify any other individuals who were not in attendance but were important to PSN. Many, but not all, of the people we interviewed make decisions about implementation and program development.

We determined which questions to ask participants based on discussions with the USAO Task Force Coordinator. The interview guide was submitted to the USAO Task Force Coordinator for review and comments. It was then submitted to DPS Navajo Nation for approval. Questions focused on how PSN works to address crime in the target areas, how Task Force members work together to reach project goals, facilitators and hindrances they have encountered in coordination and in implementing the project, and the extent to which they feel the initiative has helped to address crime. A copy of the interview guide is provided in Appendix A.

Two NM SAC staff members conducted a total of 19 interviews beginning on July 31, 2012 and ending on October 15, 2012. Most (N=17) of the interviews occurred between July 31 and August 9. Each interview lasted between one-half to one and one-half hours. Most interviews occurred at a location chosen by the interviewee: their office, a neutral location, or our office. While some interviews occurred in Albuquerque, most occurred in either the Gallup/Crownpoint/Thoreau area or Shiprock/Farmington area. Two interviews were conducted over the phone. We contacted five additional people whom we did not interview. The reasons that these interviews did not occur varied. In most cases, the potential interviewee ultimately chose not to participate or seemed as if they did not want to participate, so we chose not to keep pursuing them. In two cases, an interview was scheduled but did not occur. In one of those cases, the potential participant cancelled ahead of time; in the other, the potential participant was in another meeting at the time we were scheduled to meet and was never available after that.

The second source of data comes from our observations of Task Force meetings. The purpose of observing these meetings was to assess the interaction and cooperation between team members, document the problems that they identify and how they propose to resolve those problems, document the activities they were engaged in, and document how activities are coordinated. These observations were also used to help refine questions for the interviews of Task Force members described above. Task Force meetings occur monthly, typically in Crownpoint, Thoreau or Shiprock. Due to the distance of meetings and limited budget, we were not able to attend all of the meetings. We did attend meetings on March 2, June 28, August 28, September 20, October 22, and November 8 all in 2012. A team member took notes during each Task Force meeting. These notes were scanned or typed for analysis.

Finally, we used the record of program activities provided to us by the PSN program coordinator, who collects reports that document program activities. Task Force members submit these reports to the program coordinator at the same time that they submit invoices for reimbursement. The coordinator uses these member reports to generate quarterly progress reports that are submitted to the funding agency (Department of Justice). These progress reports address key points of the model, document activities and outputs, and ask participants to identify any problems they encountered in implementing project activities. The purpose of analyzing this data was to document which activities occurred, to validate information that we obtained from interviews as well as provide additional information about what sorts of problems have been identified. We were provided with progress reports that included October 2009 through December 2011.

Besides the data collected, we also examined the 2011 Dlo'ayazhi Project Safe Neighborhoods grant proposal. We used this proposal to generate a list of proposed activities. In addition, we asked one of the project coordinators for information about additional activities that occurred in 2012 since those progress reports were not provided to us. Finally, we asked individual members to clarify information as we were analyzing the results and writing the findings.

Analysis of data

We submitted interviews for transcription as they were completed. The transcriptionist returned the interviews in groups, at which time we prepared the data for analysis. We coded and analyzed the data using Atlis.TI software. We looked for information within particular

categories based on the questions we asked (e.g., facilitators to collaboration). Within these categories, themes emerged. While the information we gathered from interviews reflects the perspective of individual interviewees regarding the PSN initiative, we look for information common to most or all of the interviews. In addition, we looked for conflicting information, called “negative cases.” When negative cases occur, we note these differences in our summary of the analysis findings.

Throughout the report we include direct quotes from the interviews. This is common in qualitative work and is done to enhance understanding of a particular idea. These quotes are carefully chosen to either reflect the general theme or exemplify a negative case.

Qualitative research of this type allows us to explore issues in depth, often providing a much richer understanding of a problem than would be possible with quantitative research. With any qualitative study, certain criteria should be met in order to ensure that the research is sound. We have paid careful attention to these criteria and have used appropriate methods to ensure the trustworthiness of our analysis. One method used to ensure accuracy and credibility in qualitative research is triangulation (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Thus, we purposefully used other sources of data to verify and supplement the results found in the interviews. In order to ensure that we correctly interpreted the information provided to us, we used corroboration. After compiling the results, we presented the findings at a Task Force meeting on January 17, 2013. At this time, members were offered the opportunity to provide any additional information or feedback. Any novel comments provided were included in the findings. In addition, by using more than one researcher to conduct interviews, we attempted to limit the effects of researcher induced bias into the interviews themselves. These methods were used to ensure credibility of the data and analysis.

There are some important limitations to the data. One is that it is a point in time study. Because the initiative is ongoing, some things may change over time. Areas that were pointed to as problematic may have been addressed, and others may have arisen. Further, changes in the activities themselves may have occurred such that those activities we identify as occurring or not occurring could change or those deemed successful may no longer be so while others may have since become more successful. The second limitation is that while we made an effort to talk with all key individuals, we were not able to interview all of them. We feel confident that the

responses we received were similar enough to reach saturation (when repetition occurs to the point that new data does not yield new insights), and therefore others were likely to hold similar views in many regards. However, there were some key people who it would have been beneficial to talk with to determine whether their views would have deviated from those expressed to us in some areas (“negative cases”) or if they could have further elaborated on certain aspects of the project.

Contents of report

The report begins with a description of the setting where this PSN initiative has been implemented. We then discuss what PSN is doing to address the crime problem in this area, focusing on the activities listed in the proposal and whether those have been implemented. Next, we describe the collaboration efforts, the facilitators and barriers to collaboration. Finally, we describe the perceived impact of the initiative to date, along with facilitators and barriers to program implementation overall.

We refer to those who were interviewed primarily as “participants,” but also occasionally as “interviewees.” On occasion, we refer to the interviewee specifically in the text (he, she, him or her). Note that we have randomly chose gender designations for the interviewees to ensure anonymity (thus, males are sometimes referred to as females, or males may be referred to as males, etc.).

Finally, we would like to thank those who participated in the evaluation. They graciously agreed to take time out of their very busy schedules to talk with us. We appreciate their cooperation, insight and candor.

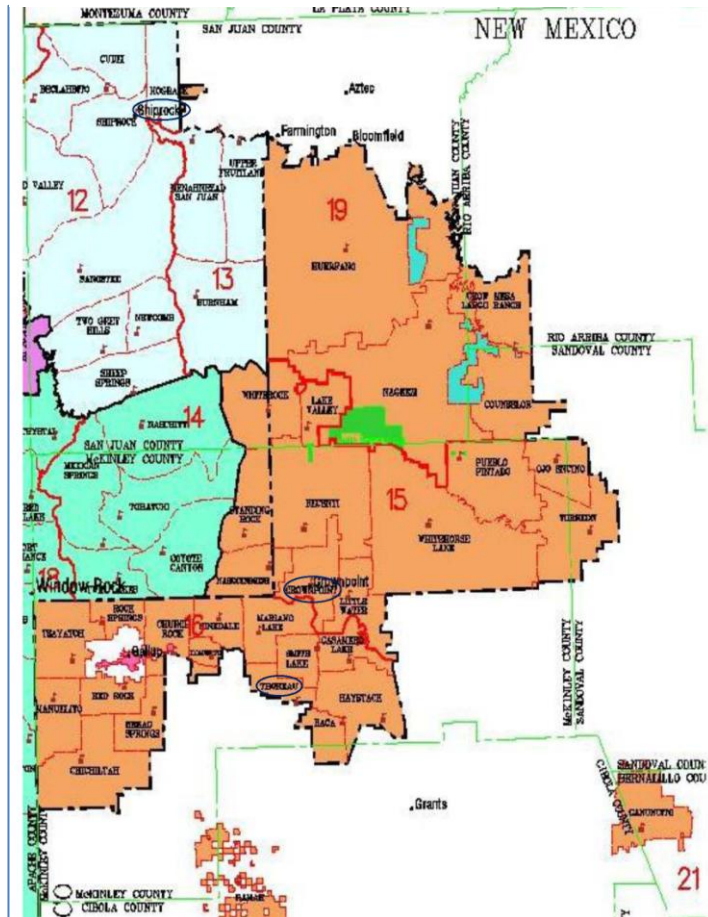
II: Background/setting

The PSN Navajo 2011 project has three target areas: Thoreau, Crownpoint and Shiprock, New Mexico (see Figure 1). These are all in the Eastern portion of the Navajo Nation. Thoreau is approximately 30 miles east of Gallup near the West Central border of New Mexico.

Crownpoint is about 25 miles north of Thoreau. Shiprock, the newest addition to the PSN initiative, is over 100 miles northeast of Crownpoint, near Farmington in the Northwest corner of the State. These areas are rich in culture and natural beauty.

While the typical PSN model focuses intervention and prevention efforts within a few specific city blocks, here it is implemented in an area that covers over a one hundred mile radius. The density of the population within the target area varies. The major population centers in the target site, Crownpoint, Shiprock and Thoreau, have populations of 2,500, 9,000, and 1,300 respectively according to 2011 census estimates. The remainder of the area is typical of a rural locale, with homes located far from one another. The Federal Reserve System along with the Brookings Institution (2010) estimate the population density for the Crownpoint district, encompassing not only Crownpoint itself but also surrounding areas, as four people per square mile.

Figure 1: PSN target areas



There is a lack of infrastructure outside of these more populated areas, with unpaved roads and limited utilities including water and electricity. St. Bonaventure's, a local faith-based non-profit, provides needed services to the area. Some of their services include providing water to those who do not have water. There is a spigot on the property where community members can fill up water jugs for drinking. They also provide water delivery to homes where there is no running water. They construct outhouses for those lacking indoor plumbing. For a nominal fee, community members can also utilize the local chapter houses to shower.

This lack of infrastructure is compounded by high rates of individual and community level disadvantage. These areas are characterized by higher than average poverty rates. According to the U.S. Census, the estimated percentage of the population living below the poverty level in Crownpoint for the years 2006-2010 was 26.3% (Crownpoint CDP, New Mexico, Table 21701, 2007-2011 American Community Survey). The estimated rate in Shiprock for the same years

was 39.1% (Shiprock CDP, New Mexico, Table 21701, 2007-2011 American Community Survey). The estimated rate in Thoreau for the same years was 25.9 % (Thoreau CDP, New Mexico, Table 21701, 2007-2011 American Community Survey). These estimates may be somewhat low, as they are reported to be as high as 45% by other sources (<http://www.frbsf.org/cpreport>). For comparison, the state of New Mexico and the U.S. as a whole in 2011 had an estimated poverty rate of 21.5% and 15% respectively (Table 21701, 2007-2011 American Community Survey).¹

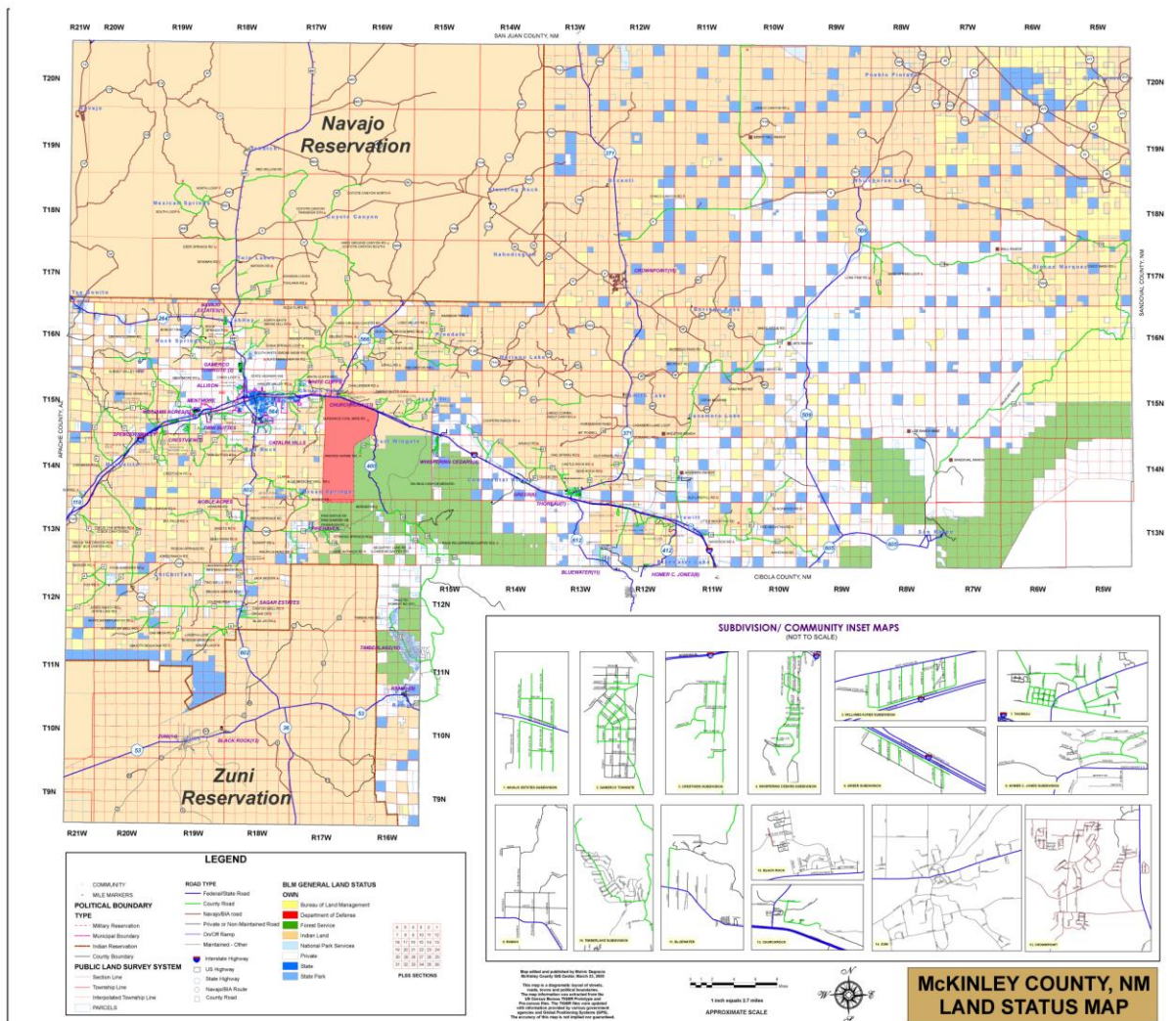
Though there are some social services available in these areas, including short term detoxification centers, behavioral health, AA programs, and parenting programs, other services are lacking. There are no long-term alcohol/drug treatment centers, and only limited options for domestic violence shelters. St. Bonaventure's provides temporary shelter for domestic violence victims in Thoreau and Shiprock has one domestic violence shelter. More extensive resources are available in the nearby metropolitan areas like Gallup, Grants, and Farmington. However, many people do not have vehicles and there is no public transportation. Indeed, when driving through this area one notices the pedestrians along the major roads and highways.

The area is described as a checkerboard due to the ownership of the land. Within a small area, there are multiple land statuses: state land, fee land, Navajo land, Bureau of Land Management, allotments and private property. This is illustrated in Figure 2 below, which depicts McKinley County (where Crownpoint and Thoreau are located). Land ownership is depicted by each block color. The checkerboard nature of the area complicates the development of and access to key infrastructure needs across these communities. As one participant noted:

"They just don't give you power; they just don't give you water and people wonder why a lot of people don't have, you know, the infrastructure that is needed to live a daily life. It's because of the land issue."

¹ Five-year estimates were not available for State and national poverty levels.

Figure 2: Land ownership in McKinley County



The checkerboard nature of the area also impacts economic development. In 2010, the Federal Reserve System along with the Brookings Institution published a report entitled: *The Enduring Challenge of Concentrated Poverty in America: Case Studies from Communities Across the U.S.* (<http://www.frbsf.org/cpreport/>). In this report, sixteen locales were chosen to represent high-poverty areas, including Crownpoint, NM. The report highlights the challenges that those in and around Crownpoint encounter: high unemployment, high poverty, lack of infrastructure, a mismatch between the jobs available and education and experience of the residents, limited access to services and distance to access services outside the area, and geographic isolation. The report also highlights the difficulty the checkerboard presents for economic development. In particular, because of the way land is passed on from generation to generation, the parcels of

owned land are so small that they lack economic utility. In addition, due to multiple entities owning land, negotiating right of way is complex and costly as is purchasing land; in addition, codes and regulations regarding land vary by jurisdiction.

Jurisdictional issues also cause problems for law enforcement. Legal jurisdiction over an offense is determined not just by where the offense is committed and what the offense is, but also by who the offender is (whether the offender is Native American or not) and who the victim is (whether Native American or not). Any offense that includes a violation of one of the thirteen crimes delineated in the Major Crimes Act committed in Indian Country is under federal jurisdiction.² If an offense is not one of these crimes, it could be State or tribal. For example, the tribal government has jurisdiction over a Native American offender who commits a crime against either a Native American or non-Native American victim. However, if the offender is not Native American, and the victim is, the federal government has jurisdiction. If neither are Native American, but it occurs in Indian Country, the State has jurisdiction (IHS/BIA Handbook, 2005). For some offenses, multiple entities could potentially have jurisdiction (for example, both tribal and federal) each who have their own rules of procedure. While the Navajo Nation can prosecute offenses that the federal government chooses not prosecute, they have limited punitive response. As one participant noted, their laws “lack teeth” and provide only a maximum of one year of incarceration.

Moreover, because there are different rules under the different jurisdictions, individuals who might be arrested in one jurisdiction could be released in another. Participants described a recent case in which a crime was committed, but the offenders were not held responsible for those crimes. In this case, some property was stolen from state land and the offenders along with the stolen property were traced to Navajo Nation land. Note that this crime was not dealt with under PSN.

“The MCSO called the Navajo Nation, the police officer came and he didn’t think there was enough probable cause to arrest but they gave us our stuff back they had, but they had them red handed.... The MCSO was mad, but there’s nothing he can do.”

² The major crimes are: murder, manslaughter, kidnapping, maiming, sexual abuse, incest, assault with a dangerous weapon, assault resulting in serious bodily injury, assault on a person less than 16 years old, arson, burglary, robbery, theft as defined in 18 USC §661. Additional information can be found in 18 USC § 1153.

Challenges law enforcement faces on the Navajo Nation

Many participants explained that there is a lack of manpower among law enforcement in the target area. The stressors of having too few law enforcement officers are especially pronounced on the Navajo Nation. The distances that officers are often required to travel in response to calls for service make immediate enforcement unrealistic in many situations. Indeed, participants noted that it can take a very long time for law enforcement to respond to a call and in some cases calls for service get overlooked entirely. This is not surprising given the limited manpower, with some law enforcement agencies staffed by only a single officer. The lack of manpower and backup can make it risky for officers to respond to violent situations.

“...the Navajo Nation does not have law enforcement that we wish for and imagine that we should have, or we dream of having a full staff here to cover calls that are 30 miles away that an officer will take off and be there within 45 minutes. Even if it’s like five miles away, because we don’t have the manpower. With the amount of officers that are working in this area, it’s pretty dangerous.”

Participants explained that the limited law enforcement staffing is a function of two key problems. First, there is a lack of funding. PSN can assist with providing overtime to officers to complete PSN related activities, but cannot fund new officers. However, as some participants explained, even if there were funding available, it is difficult to attract and keep law enforcement on the Navajo Nation. Thus, the second difficulty is that opportunities for better pay are offered in nearby jurisdictions, luring law enforcement officers away.

Thus, the area in which PSN has been implemented for this project is geographically spread out, largely rural, experiences greater than average poverty and includes jurisdictional boundaries that are unclear and complicated. Moreover, law enforcement is limited and resources are strained.

Crime problem

We asked participants to describe the crime problem in and around the Navajo nation with respect to the key areas that PSN is meant to address with this grant: guns, gangs, juvenile

crime, and domestic violence. Part of the purpose of this question was to assess the problems that Task Force members see as most pressing. In addition, asking this question helps to understand whether the activities that are being undertaken are addressing these problems. In this section, we describe the crime problem as viewed by interview participants, and supplement with available data.

Firearms

Unlike other PSN sites, firearm offending is generally viewed as less of a problem than other types of crimes. Many of the participants did not even address gun issues, but did discuss gangs, domestic violence and substance abuse. Among those who did discuss whether guns were a problem, most agreed that there were some crimes committed with firearms, but that other weapons were prevalent in conjunction with violence. There was some indication that guns are misused, such as firing off a weapon, but that offenders do not typically use firearms in violent offenses, robberies or in gang related offenses.

However, two participants did indicate that guns pose a significant problem in the area. Both cited the number of guns confiscated and currently held by the Navajo Nation Police as evidence of the gun problem. In addition, one noted that the police receive firearm related calls for service daily:

“Guns (are) a big problem, because we get at least maybe one or two calls on guns per day, some kind of an assault with a deadly weapon.”

Gun violations may be occurring, particularly among individuals who have protection orders against them or have been convicted of a domestic violence offense and have firearms, in violation of the Violence Against Women Act. However, participants explain that they do not always know who has been convicted of domestic violence, in part because in the Navajo Nation courts, these often fall under aggravated assault and battery. Until recently, the Navajo Nation did not have a statute specific to domestic violence; recently they passed the Violence Against Family Act that will allow them to classify certain crimes as domestic violence.

Available data suggests that the extent of firearm offending varies across the target sites. Data available from the grant proposals indicates that the number of firearm offenses per 1,000 population in Crownpoint peaked at 14 between 2005 and 2009, but may be as high as 23 per 1,000 population in Shiprock. This conclusion should be considered tentative as the data from the Crownpoint area are dated. Further, we calculated the number of gun crimes reported in Shiprock based on data we were provided. However, this was given to us by charge type, and presumably incidents could have more than one charge associated with them. Thus, it is likely that the numbers we report here are inflated. Still, it does provide some information about the relative extent of gun offending in the major target areas.

Progress reports submitted to DOJ from the project coordinator indicate there were no violent crimes committed with firearms in most months. Indeed, only during the first reporting period from October to December 2009 were any firearm related violent offenses noted. However, this may be due to lack of reporting rather than lack of offending.

Obtaining an accurate picture of the extent of offenses involving a firearm is difficult. It appears to be more extensive in Shiprock, but without accurate and updated data, it is impossible to know for certain. What is clear, though, is that most participants do not see firearms as a major problem in the target sites. They do, however, see other targeted crimes as more problematic.

Gangs

Most participants noted that gangs are a problem in these target areas. Several, though, note that those involved are “wannabes” rather than real gang members. The gangs are not highly structured and organized, but do cause problems in the communities. Many note that graffiti is a problem and some also suggest that there are gang related crimes including burglary, battery and fights. However, from participant responses, it seems as though gang presence and related gang problems are sporadic. This may, in part, be a function of law enforcement gang suppression efforts, which according to some have been successful. Most participants did not actually witness gang crimes, but are aware of gang members because they see local kids wearing “gang colors” and they notice gang related graffiti around the community. The extent of the gang problem, though, is hard to know. One participant, for example, suggested that many crimes are gang related, but are not labeled as such when they appear in court. This is not an atypical

problem- many jurisdictions cannot determine the extent of gang related crimes as these are not always specifically documented. Like the reporting of firearm offending, progress reports indicate no gang related offending except at the beginning of the project period. Again, this may be due the fact that the gang affiliation of offenders is rarely spelled out in official crime reports, and crimes are not formally categorized as gang-related in the official record.

Juvenile crime

Participants primarily characterized juvenile offending as gang related. Some participants also note that youth in the area are involved with drugs. There was some concern about the increasing disrespect shown by juveniles as well, though this is not a crime. Further, two participants noted that they believe truancy and other behavioral issues are problems among the youth in this community. Participants likely see the lack of respect and juvenile status offenses like truancy as precursors to more serious crime problems. Indeed, the literature shows both oppositional/defiant behavior and school problems to be associated with subsequent delinquent and criminal behavior (Lahey and Loeber, 1994; Loeber and Farrington, 2000; Thornberry, Moore and Christenson, 1985).

Domestic violence

Domestic violence is one of the most pervasive problems on the Navajo Nation. Both participants and the literature clearly indicate this is a serious ongoing issue (Rivers, 2005; Zion and Zion, 1993). Participants characterized domestic violence as a pervasive problem that is often associated with alcohol, and sometimes involves weapons. While fists are described as the most common weapon, sometimes other types of weapons are used as well (lighter fluid, knives, etc.). Firearms are rarely implicated in conjunction with domestic violence. When participants discussed domestic violence, they included not only intraspousal abuse, but also family violence more broadly including sexual assaults.

Participants explained that much domestic violence goes unreported because victims choose not to report, but also because of the lack of infrastructure (no cell phone towers, no electricity) and isolation. Further, because law enforcement has so far to go to some of these calls it is not uncommon for the offender just to run away until the police leave. Some participants also indicated that offenders are often not arrested. Some participants also felt that, like many victims

of domestic violence, the victim often returns to the offender. However, some also felt that Navajo women return to the abusive situation more often than their non-Navajo peers.

“And you wonder why and you know, will it take a lady at least, you know, nine times before she finally leaves, you know. Where’d that study come from? Does that come from the reservation or is that coming from nationwide? How can we do a study on the reservation to see if this is true? To me, in my opinion, this ain’t true on the reservation. I think our numbers are a lot higher or the victim never leaves the suspect at all.”

As mentioned above, the Navajo Nation Council recently passed an act that specifically addresses domestic violence, called the Family Violence Protection Act. Many participants told us about the passing of this law and felt this was a step in the right direction.

We asked participants whether they thought domestic violence was associated with other types of crimes. Most participants believe that it is. Participants felt that domestic violence is related to a number of other types of crimes, including other batteries, gangs, property damage, and substance abuse. The last of these, substance abuse, was noted by many to be associated with domestic violence. In addition, one participant noted that if domestic violence crimes were prosecuted, it could impact offenders’ perceptions about the prosecution of other crimes. In other words, if domestic violence were consistently prosecuted, it could act as a deterrent to committing other types of crimes as well.

Besides its relationship to other crimes, many participants explained how domestic violence impacts families, creating dysfunction within family units which can spread to society more broadly. One participant poignantly explains how domestic violence is impacting culture and cultural values:

“How do you walk into your house and see your blood stained into the wood floor? How do you remove that without having to tear out the wood? Those are some of the things that I think of for outside of this office. My grandmother would say, ‘You can’t have your own blood while you are still breathing embedded into your blanket or even anywhere.’ So how do you go beyond that, what you are taught? ...So, those are the things that victims have to deal with. It’s everything that they held sacred is being destroyed at the hands of someone they love.”

Drugs

Many of the participants note that while there are some problems with illicit substances, the major substance abused is alcohol, and alcohol is associated with violence in this area, particularly with domestic violence as noted above. Besides alcohol, there was general agreement that the next most frequent substances abused are marijuana and methamphetamine, in that order. One person did note that while some believe methamphetamine to be a problem, she has not really seen it. Another, though, says that he has seen an increase in the use of methamphetamines.

Participants primarily see the drug offending as a problem originating from outside of the reservation. Several people explained that illicit substances are brought in from outside the reservation, either because dealers have ties to the people living in the reservation and bring it to them or because they are living there and obtain the drugs from outside the reservation. Participants explained that people know that Navajo Nation police resources are limited, so they use that to their advantage to transport drugs through Navajo Nation land.

Primarily, participants see the youth in the community as drug users/traffickers. However, one participant also pointed out that he is seeing older people abusing prescription medications and or using prescription medications and driving under the influence.

III: What PSN is doing to address the crime problem

In this section we compare the activities that were listed in the 2011 grant proposal to actual PSN efforts to date. In order to determine what activities have been occurring, we asked participants to discuss how PSN is addressing the key crime problem areas: guns, gangs, juvenile crime and domestic violence. We also asked participants to tell us about the types of activities that are coordinated. The responses to these two questions helped to shape our understanding of which activities are occurring in conjunction with the PSN initiative. We also examined other data sources including the progress reports submitted to DOJ and our notes from Task Force meetings. Because there were some activities mentioned by Task Force members during interviews or in meetings that were not enumerated in the progress reports, we asked the program coordinator to tell us if there were other activities engaged in but not noted in progress reports; in response, she sent a list of PSN activities engaged in but not included in the progress reports. It is important to note here that it is common for actual program activities to shift over time and thus vary from proposed program activities. This is not necessarily problematic and can, in fact, be a good thing when it shows programmatic flexibility and responsiveness to on the ground needs.

In this section, we describe each of the PSN related prevention and intervention activities in more detail. Following the layout of the grant proposal, we treat domestic violence efforts separately from the other crime prevention efforts, though these efforts include prevention, interdiction and prosecution as well. Each section begins with a summary of the activities proposed in the 2011 grant followed by a summary of what is occurring.

Prevention

Proposed

Prevention activities are to include middle school-oriented “Sentry” gun violence reduction and G.R.E.A.T. (Gang Resistance Education and Training) training delivered in the schools as well as community awareness activities. Topics of the education efforts are to include “options, choices and consequences; media literacy; offender stories and/or skill building session; DEA web-based just think twice counter drug program.” There are slated to be eight sessions per semester for four semesters in three areas: Crownpoint, Thoreau and Shiprock.

Current activities

The Task Force is regularly and actively engaging in education efforts. Education efforts are geared primarily to the youth of the community. These occur in a variety of venues, including schools (private, public and BIA), boys and girls clubs, community centers, (parent advisory committee meetings- check), and in conjunction with summer programs. Primarily though, educational efforts have been occurring in schools and target children in middle school and some in high school, though younger children are sometimes included. Community presentations have also included adults.

Most of the children hear the presentations more than once. This repetitive training is important for helping to ensure students hear the message; however, it does require that the presentations be changed up on occasion. This has been discussed in recent Task Force meetings, with the concern being that if the presentation is not changed somewhat, that the youth will become bored and tune out. Besides altering the presentation content somewhat, other suggestions for altering the presentations and expanding the target audience included bringing a canine unit, creating display boards for parental and other adult education, as well as conducting a presentation during a chapter meeting.

Participants described the topics discussed in the educational presentations. These align with and extend those specifically targeted in the grant proposal: gangs, juvenile crime, domestic violence, gun safety, consequences of engaging in illegal activities, bullying, and drug use (all forms of drugs including tobacco, alcohol, prescription drugs, illegal drugs/narcotics). In addition to the topics participants specifically discussed, the post program quizzes indicate that the education also includes media literacy, another topic that was included in the grant proposal. Education is tailored to the needs of the school: if gangs or drugs are especially problematic, the education will focus on those issues.

While there is one person who is responsible for providing education, a number of individuals from the Task Force participate in these activities. These include the domestic violence advocates, representatives from the prosecutor's office, and law enforcement officers including those who are certified GREAT officers. While GREAT training had been occurring in schools, it has not occurred recently. This portion of the educational outreach is developing though:

“right now where we’re on is one of them that’s required is sending officers back into the schools to do the gang resistant educational training for like the mid school students. That’s one thing we’re still working on.”

There have been efforts to encourage officers to become GREAT certified. Several recent Task Force meetings included discussions of training available to officers to participate in the GREAT program.

Overall, this aspect of the initiative is well underway. The education efforts are occurring and are ongoing, and the efforts focus on the topics proposed. GREAT training occurred in the past but currently is not occurring. However, this is being addressed and efforts are being made to train GREAT officers and reestablish this component of the prevention efforts.

Interdiction

Proposed

The grant proposal outlines two major interdiction activities. First, the Task Force will conduct four of either individual, or a combination of, targeted patrols, warrant sweeps, and/or “Night Light” enforcement operations in the Thoreau area, the Crownpoint area and the Shiprock area, with one of these operations occurring per quarter.

Second, the Navajo Police Department Gang Unit is responsible for implementing a “High Point/DMI”-style initiative in target areas. This model is based on a drug intervention initiative first implemented in High Point, North Carolina. This initiative has several key components, as outlined in “The High Point Drug Market Intervention Strategy” (Kennedy and Wong, 2012) and on Michigan State University’s website about the project (<http://www.dmimsu.com/>). First, it is data driven, using crime mapping, surveying, and incident reviews to understand the nature of the drug markets, distribution networks, and chronic offenders. Police then built a case against those individuals. Those identified as serious offenders are prosecuted, while those who are deemed less serious offenders are offered a second chance. These lower level offenders along with their families or other influential people were invited to a community meeting where they were told to stop their illegal activities and associated violence. In addition, law enforcement engaged with community members who attend both to tell the offender to stop, but also to offer

assistance (various social services like drug treatment, employment assistance, job training, etc.). Continued undercover activities occur, and if the offender continues to offend, their cases are prioritized for prosecution. At the same time, community members are asked to call police to report suspicious activity. Finally, resource delivery follow up occurs where offenders are contacted to ensure that they are getting the help that they need.

PSN provides overtime funding to law enforcement agencies to complete these activities.

Current activities

“...the big thing that they do is the bench warrant round up.”

According to all three main sources, PSN partners have been actively and regularly conducting warrant roundups. The targets of the warrant round ups vary. In some months, the Task Force partners target individuals who have warrants for serious violent offenses, and include state and federal fugitives. Other warrants sweeps include only probation violators. State warrants must be cleared for extradition by the Navajo Nation Prosecutor’s office and Navajo Nation president. However, in conjunction with PSN activities, the Navajo Nation Prosecutor’s office has agreed to allow state probationers to sign waivers of extradition. This allows warrants for probation violations to be executed without going through the extradition approval process. There has been some confusion, though, about whether the Navajo Nation prosecutor must be available to read the waiver of extradition to probation violators when they are apprehended. It was reported that initially, this was a requirement but that this has now changed. Instead, those arresting the individual may read the waiver of extradition paperwork.

Multiple agencies are involved in the warrant roundups, including the Sheriff’s offices in McKinley County and San Juan County, the Navajo Nation Police, Federal Probation and U.S. Marshal’s. Several participants indicated that the U.S. Marshal’s has taken the lead in organizing these warrant sweeps, but participants are quick to point out that warrant sweeps are a collaborative effort with everyone sharing the responsibility of carrying them out.

In addition to the warrant roundups, interdiction efforts have included sex offender address verification operations, saturation patrols, undercover drug operations and highway interdictions focused on searching for drugs. Gangs and gang members are being documented: law

enforcement reports taking photos of graffiti and gang signs, as well as completing saturation patrols in areas to address gang problems. One participant also noted that they are involved in surveillance operations where law enforcement gets:

“...a man on the ground idea of what is going on; who’s doing what; who to look for; developing the evidence in cases against those individuals who are causing problems in those communities.”

Activities in fiscal year 2011 have primarily included warrant roundups for probation violators and sex offender address validation. However, discussions in Task Force meetings indicate highway drug interdiction activities have occurred, and others are planned. In addition, an upcoming operation included plans to target drug offenders and gang members.

Agencies involved in warrant sweeps also work together to varying degrees on the other operations. The FBI was noted to help specifically with drug operations. In addition, cooperation between law enforcement and the Navajo Nation prosecutor’s office as well as State magistrate judges is required to successfully engage in these activities. We discuss collaboration across agencies in more detail below.

Operations have been conducted in the McKinley County area including Thoreau and Crownpoint, and Shiprock. Consistent with the proposal, we were told warrant round ups occur once every quarter. Other operations had been occurring with some frequency, but according to recent progress reports do not appear to have been occurring as regularly.

One component of the proposed interdiction activities is to implement a “DMI” or “High Point” model. None of the participants specifically mentioned the High Point model; noted activities that conform to the description of the model as provided above include surveillance and undercover drug operations. These were last documented in the progress reports submitted to DOJ in 2010. However, we do not have 2012 progress reports, nor do we have specific knowledge of the interdiction activities that have occurred as this was not a focus of the current process evaluation,. Additionally, we did not ask specifically about the implementation of the High Point model during the interviews. We did later ask two Task Force members about the implementation of the model, and one responded, explaining that they are applying that model in all three areas, with some modifications to address the unique aspects of Indian Country. Thus, according to that source, the model is in some stage of implementation with some modifications.

In summary, interdiction activities have focused primarily on warrant roundups, but other interdiction activities have occurred as well. These include sex offender address verification, saturation patrols, surveillance, gang and drug operations and highway interdiction. In addition, we were told that the High Point model is being implemented in each of the three target areas.

Prosecution

Proposed

The assigned Indian Country Assistant U.S. Attorney is to review and refer cases to appropriate jurisdiction; prioritize gang and gun-related violence cases through aggressive tribal and federal criminal justice system Task Force strategic planning input, case review and response.

Current activities

Prosecution efforts have not been fully implemented, but are under way. To date the State District Attorney's office has received PSN funds to prosecute gun and gang related crimes connected to Indian Country. In addition, the USAO recently hired an Indian Country Assistant U.S. Attorney who is expected to be housed at the District Attorney's office in Gallup.

Domestic violence

Proposed

Proposed domestic violence activities include prevention, interdiction and prosecution components. Proposed prevention activities include: developing a coordinated family support response team to augment and/or recommend substance abuse and family counseling, maximizing victims' advocacy, and assist in determining appropriate coordination of services for those involved in domestic violence. Also noted are efforts to reach out to the community and media. Interdiction activities are to include: monitoring of protection orders, assisting in warrant sweeps (domestic violence awareness), and community policing (domestic violence awareness). Finally, prosecution efforts are to include the implementation of an AUSA and tribal prosecutor domestic violence case management coordination plan.

Current activities

Prevention

PSN responded to a need for domestic violence advocates located in the communities they serve. As a result, PSN funded two part-time domestic violence advocates. The advocate in Crownpoint has been working for PSN for some time and has an office located in the tribal courts; the advocate in Shiprock began in March 2012 and has an office located at the office of the Criminal Investigator's. Participants explained to us that these locales were strategically chosen to ensure that the domestic violence advocates would be available in the places where they were needed. Advocates in both locations are responsible for helping victims fill out protection orders, sitting with the victim in the court, following up on protection orders to see where they are at, how long they will remain in jail so the victim can make plans, and providing referrals to agencies such as domestic violence shelters. Victims learn about the domestic violence advocates in various ways. Victims become aware of the advocates through the court, Indian health services and other medical centers. In addition, one of the advocates has also proactively engaged in reaching out to domestic violence victims by posting flyers and calling businesses to let them know she was there to assist with domestic violence victims.

In addition to the direct services they provide to victims, they also engage in community outreach. For example, advocates have presented on teen dating, participated in a domestic violence awareness walk, and in the past have visited the different communities to educate them about domestic violence including a presentation geared towards school age children. In addition, they have engaged in professional outreach by giving a presentation to the Navajo Nation tribal court and attending meetings with other groups providing domestic violence services.

Interdiction

The PSN Task Force is still working on fully implementing service of protection orders. When victims petition the court for protection from domestic violence, a temporary restraining order is

issued if the court finds that the order is warranted. The temporary order is in effect until an extended order hearing occurs, which in the Navajo Nation is 14 days. The order and petition must be served to the respondent (the offender) along with a summons to appear in court for a hearing for the extended order of protection. However, respondents are often not served with the order, which may result in unsuccessful protection order petitions meaning that extended orders are not granted. One reason for this is that there are few officers to serve the order to appear and petition to the respondent. Thus, PSN provides overtime funding to officers to serve the orders. This part of the initiative is currently being implemented in the Crownpoint area, but has not yet begun in Shiprock.

Law enforcement in Crownpoint, however, has had some difficulty in getting protection orders served. At a Task Force meeting in March 2012, law enforcement indicated that there were not enough officers available or interested in working overtime to serve the protection orders. More recently though, while law enforcement are reportedly available and willing to serve the orders, they are not always successful. Indeed, we were told that about half of the orders are being served. In the Task Force meeting held in October, 2012, law enforcement said they had been unsuccessful in getting protection orders to respondents because they avoid service. The tribal court judge in Crownpoint and key PSN representatives met to address this second issue. As a result of this meeting, the domestic violence advocacy group is engaged in creating an emergency order that law enforcement can issue at the time of the incident. This would allow the respondent to be served immediately and would remain in effect until the next business day. The victim could then follow up with the courts to obtain an extended order. This will require training of law enforcement. In addition, the domestic violence advocacy group is working on the long term process service.

One of the participants also reported that they are working on a system to track domestic violence offenders. Currently, law enforcement in the Navajo Nation must check hardcopy records to determine whether there is a restraining order against individuals. They are working on automating that system so at least Navajo Nation Police can share that information with one another. That program is in its infancy.

Prosecution

As noted previously, an AUSA has been hired. In addition, a victim specialist will be hired to assist. This aspect of the initiative is in the early stages of implementation.

In sum, the domestic violence efforts that are occurring include domestic violence advocacy for victims filing protection orders including referrals for social services. Domestic violence advocates have also engaged in domestic violence awareness efforts including education and participation in community events. Service of protection orders is not yet fully implemented. There have been barriers to serving protection orders that the domestic violence team is working on resolving. Specifically, emergency protection orders will be provided to victims at the scene; the domestic violence team is working to create a packet for police. This is occurring only in the Crownpoint area; the service of protection orders has not yet been addressed in Shiprock.

Other activities

Proposed

Besides the activities listed above, the grant includes a number of other activities such as strengthening collaborations among community and law enforcement officers, identifying communication avenues and opportunities for intelligence sharing, conducting home visits to targeted youth, and involvement in law enforcement training workshops, among other activities.

Current activities

There are a number of other activities PSN partners have been engaged in. First, they have been engaged in training both law enforcement partners and domestic violence advocates. Some of the training is funded at least in part by PSN, such as GREAT training for officers. In addition, information about upcoming trainings available in the community is announced at the Task Force meetings. Domestic violence advocates participate in training activities as well. Two of the documented trainings and conferences that PSN Task Force members have participated in include domestic violence and suicide prevention and a state gang strategy forum.

In addition to training, the PSN partners are looking into possibilities for sharing intelligence. In particular, they have been given a presentation on Gangnet, a software program that allows law

enforcement to share information about documented gang members and their associates. This has not been implemented in the area, however. In addition, they are looking into using the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NCIS) more broadly. This system is used by Federal Firearms Licensees to ensure that individuals attempting to buy a gun are eligible to do so (<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/nics>). Currently, Navajo Nation law enforcement have access to the system through a node in Utah. Increased access to the system would allow law enforcement agents to check the backgrounds of individuals in custody, to determine, for example, whether they are allowed to have firearms.

Recently, PSN partners participated in a reportedly very well received graffiti cleanup. This is one way that PSN has reached out to the community. PSN partners have also participated in community events such as the “3rd Annual Churchrock Treaty Day” and “Elder Feast” at the Red Mesa Chapter House. PSN has also held meetings at chapter houses, where community members can attend. We were told that meetings were previously held in the evenings to encourage community participation; however, this practice was discontinued reportedly because it was difficult for Task Force members to participate in the evenings. Recently, in conjunction with pursuing the 2012 grant application, PSN members reached out to chapter officials, council delegates and leaders in the tribal government to get support for PSN in the community. As a result, a resolution to support PSN was written. One Task Force notes that this was an important outreach effort that increased awareness of PSN and perhaps will prompt some chapter officials to request that PSN visit their chapter. All of these community outreach activities may result in stronger community and law enforcement ties.

IV: Collaboration

A primary focus of this process evaluation is to assess collaboration across agencies. The PSN model that forms the basis for this prevention/intervention initiative prioritizes inter-agency collaboration. Existing research on PSN initiatives highlight collaboration as integral to PSN success (Department of Justice, n.d.). Following this PSN model, it is important that all aspects of the current initiative build from effective collaboration across stakeholder agencies and partners. In this section, we explain who is involved in the collaboration and what activities require collaboration. We then report on the ways collaboration has been successful and the factors that promote collaboration. Finally, we note some of the factors that PSN stakeholders identified as barriers to collaboration.

Who collaborates

Members of the PSN initiative include a variety of individuals representing diverse agencies and organizations. Those identified by the PSN coordinator as PSN members include law enforcement from all levels: tribal, county, state and federal; tribal, state, and federal prosecutors; tribal court judges; domestic violence advocates; fiscal agents; and Task Force coordinators. In addition, representatives from community agencies such as Indian Health Services and Navajo Housing Authority are partners in the initiative.

A core group of members regularly and actively engage in implementing the initiative, as reflected in the Progress Reports submitted to DOJ and as represented at Task Force meetings. These include the law enforcement agencies (Navajo Police Department, McKinley County Sheriff's Office, San Juan County Sheriff's Office, the Motor Transportation Department, the New Mexico State Police, the FBI and the U.S. Marshal's), the Eleventh Judicial District Attorney's office, the domestic violence advocates, the prevention specialist, the Task Force project coordinators and the fiscal agent. Other community agency representatives regularly attend Task Force meetings as well, such as those from the Indian Health Services. While the individuals who represent each agency may change over time, the agency or organization itself continues to be represented.

Activities that require collaboration

All PSN activities require some degree of collaboration. For example, prevention activities such as education programs include not only the prevention specialist, but others on the Task Force as well such as the domestic violence advocates, law enforcement officers, and members of the State District Attorney's Office. In addition, other Task Force members assist the prevention specialist to approach schools and other groups like Boys and Girls clubs to identify and access target populations and to offer locations for conducting education efforts. Community outreach efforts such as a recent graffiti clean-up include members from the Task Force and their agencies as well as community members and other volunteers.

Among the key collaborative intervention efforts are interdiction activities. Warrant sweeps, one of the major activities PSN partners engage in, require cooperation between various law enforcement agencies as well as support from the chief tribal prosecutor's office and the Navajo Nation president's office. These latter two are important to the warrant round ups because the extradition process requires signatures from both of these individuals in order for the extradition to be legal. Other interdiction activities also require effective collaboration. For example, the FBI assists the tribal police in investigating illegal activity such as gang, gun and drug offenses.

Finally, though the prosecution efforts as delineated in the grant proposal are still developing, there is collaboration regarding prosecution efforts. One participant explained that because some individuals can be prosecuted under tribal, state or federal charges, the prosecutors at each level discuss a case to determine where it can best be prosecuted. This may not occur in every case, but does happen.

Collaboration success

Establishing new connections and strengthening existing ones

Overall, participants describe the collaboration between agencies as very successful. Agencies that did not interact in the past, now work together as a result of the PSN initiative. For example, prior to their participation in PSN, agencies like St. Bonaventure's had not worked with law

enforcement; these groups are now working together. Similarly, some law enforcement agencies had not worked with domestic violence advocates in the past. Extending networks through such collaborations has expanded the resources that agencies like law enforcement can refer community members to. For example, one participant describes how connecting with the domestic violence advocate is helpful:

“I didn’t know much about their program. Now I know what they have to offer. We have that line of contact where, ‘Hey, can you help me with this? This is what I’ve got going on.’ And a lot of times if they can’t help us with it, they know somebody who can. So I mean, it helps immensely with just giving us avenues of other types rather than just doing the general law enforcement. We hate to tell people, ‘Sorry. We don’t deal with that. Good Luck.’ So with the PSN, it’s opened up so many lines to where, ‘Hey, we can help you with that. Let me call somebody and see what we can do.’ So I mean, it’s very helpful in that end.”

In addition, PSN has helped to strengthen ties between agencies. Some of the agencies and/or individuals had worked together before in some capacity due to the nature of their work or because they worked together on other Task Forces. However, for some, those ties had not been very strong. For example, some participants explained that they had previously heard someone’s name or had spoken with them over the phone, but because of PSN have actually met face to face. Another participant explained that while he had worked with some of the same agencies represented on PSN, he has increased the number of contacts he has within those agencies. This again helps to strengthen the bonds between agencies and provides resources to members.

Perhaps most important, though, is that the agencies have come together and recognize that they are working toward a common goal. Several people felt that PSN has really facilitated this working relationship. Communication has improved, trust has been established, and agencies are willing to work with one another. Traditional boundaries are being erased. Two participants noted that this sort of multi-agency collaboration across jurisdictional lines had not happened prior to PSN’s involvement. While some of these agencies, like the U.S. Marshal’s has always been there and worked in Indian Country, the extent of the relationship is new. Thus, agencies that had worked together previously are now working together in a more integrated way:

“I like the word seamless. It, it’s made it not perfectly seamless, but it’s... a better woven piece of fabric like a Navajo rug.”

One participant provided the analogy of a “sandbox” explaining that all the agencies were willing to work together in the same areas or “sandbox.”

“I think PSN helped bring everybody together to say, ‘Look, we’re all here for the same thing, whether it’s on reservation or off reservation. We want to take those individuals that are causing bad things to happen in our community and get them out and let’s take care of a problem that we have. If we don’t do it, it’s just going to get bigger.’ So I think PSN was good in that respect.”

Besides the positive impact collaboration can make on meeting the common goals of crime reduction and safer communities, the collaboration has other benefits. For example, it helps the diverse law enforcement agencies to feel supported by one another.

“I think the collaboration has been phenomenal with the different agencies working together. And, it also shows them that they’re not by themselves out there. We are willing to help and they are not going to have to do all of the work on their own. I think once they see that, they rely on it quite a bit, because they know that they are short officers and they can’t take it all on themselves.”

Moreover, it facilitates law enforcement efforts. There are now more direct lines of communication. In another example, one PSN partner explains how they now are able to work directly with the USAO, whereas before they were required to go through the Criminal Investigator’s office.

Increased knowledge across agencies

Another successful aspect of the collaboration is that each of the members brings their knowledge to the table increasing everyone’s awareness in each area of expertise. For example, one participant explained that she had learned about current laws; another participant noted that he learned about activities that are occurring in other agencies or in the community that are similar to or overlap with PSN’s activities.

Extends beyond PSN activities

Collaboration between PSN partners extends beyond PSN activities. Individuals acting on behalf of themselves or on behalf of the agencies they represent will volunteer to help one another and the community.

“We’re always talking with each other about what we can do and sometimes it’s not just PSN related, but because we know each other and the different areas that we are dealing with, there is some other problem that somebody is having, that we’ll just reach out and say ‘Hey, can you help me?’ Or just, you know, aside from PSN.”

In addition, community members can attend the meetings and seek assistance from the group. Again, these are activities that typically occur outside PSN’s scope, but the group itself is being used as a resource to help in the community.

Because of the increased communication and trust, and a willingness to work together, agencies are successfully working towards PSN goals. In particular, many noted that the various law enforcement agencies have worked particularly well together on warrant roundups, and that the planning for these is good. Other PSN efforts such as the education outreach and domestic violence advocacy have also benefitted from the positive collaboration.

Collaboration facilitators

Collaboration success and facilitators are strongly intertwined; therefore, it is somewhat difficult to separate the two. However, participants clearly articulated what they believe has facilitated collaborations. Participants identified facilitators that can be collapsed into three groups: Task Force meetings, utilization of existing networks, and cross-commissioning.

Task Force meetings

While collaboration does occur outside of meetings, through calling, e-mail or in conjunction with joint operations, participants indicated that the monthly Task Force meetings are the greatest facilitator of collaborative efforts. In addition to the core members described previously, community members and others are invited to attend.

Task Force meetings follow the same structure each month. They begin with a call to order followed by discussion items which typically includes a review of the budget, reports on current activities and any items of interest such as upcoming trainings. The group then breaks up into two groups: a law enforcement group and non-law enforcement group which is comprised of victim's advocates, education, Project coordinator, Indian Health Services and others. After the breakout sessions, the group reconvenes. Typically, the date and location of the next meeting is announced and the meeting is adjourned.

All of the areas identified as successful aspects of collaboration are facilitated by the regular Task Force meetings. While we discussed these somewhat above, in this section we describe how the Task Force meetings specifically impact each area.

Everyone has a voice

The Task Force meetings have opened a line of communication that has helped to improve the relationship between agencies. Several interviewees made the important observation that at Task Force meetings, everyone has the opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns. Observations of Task Force meetings support this conclusion. Moreover, the Task Force meetings offer an opportunity for individuals from diverse agencies to get to know one another better.

“You know, I think when it first started we had kind of, you know, rough edges, but as we kept holding these meetings, start you know, settling our differences and all that it’s starting to go smoothly now.”

The importance of this regular and open communication cannot be understated. Participants indicated that prior to PSN, the interactions between agencies was very limited or nonexistent.

However, now:

“And we have open lines of communication. You know, whether we’re smiling or frowning when we’re talking, we are talking. And that’s huge. Really.”

Problems discussed and intelligence exchanged

At Task Force meetings, agency representatives have an opportunity to discuss past or upcoming operations or activities and solve problems/brainstorm solutions to problems. This can occur either while the Task Force is meeting as a large group or during breakout sessions.

For example, at a recent Task Force meeting, a Task Force member mentioned a case involving a suspected gang member who is going to be prosecuted. A law enforcement officer offered to help that person find out whether this person is a documented gang member.³

Further, during our observations of the meetings, we noted that law enforcement sometimes use this opportunity to share intelligence on offenders. At a recent Task Force meeting, for example, a law enforcement officer was talking to another one from a different agency about a drug dealer in the area to let him know about the drug dealer's activities. In another exchange, one of the domestic advocates was discussing a victim who sought her services and she was not sure how to best help him. Another Task Force member reached out to her and told her where she could get legal assistance for victims in those cases.

Finally, Task Force meetings also offer an opportunity for members to hear about the successes of the initiative, which can fuel further success by motivating members to continue with the project.

Key people attend

Several people noted that it has been helpful having key people who consistently attend the meetings. While PSN may expect that the members of the group will change, this consistency was pointed to as something that has helped move the initiative forward and helps promote stronger ties between groups. Moreover, the Task Force meetings are typically attended by individuals who are able to make decisions for their agencies.

"I think what it is, is having a... the head people at the meetings. Or somebody that's in charge of overseeing that agency... it's just like we get an answer right away rather than having somebody from patrol. They may say, 'Well, I have to ask. I have to get back with you.' But if it's

³ Documented gang membership data is not currently automated; further, there are limitations to accessing data like this by non-Navajo Nation individuals and agencies.

the head person or somebody designated, they already know what... what we're asking and they'll... it just makes it a lot easier for us."

Venue to raise issues/solicit help

The Task Force meetings provide a venue for both Task Force members and community members to raise issues or solicit help for activities that may or may not be PSN funded. Recently, for example, the Office of Youth Development attended several meetings to solicit the help of Task Force members to complete a graffiti cleanup in the target areas. This was reportedly a successful joint venture where several individuals and agencies on the PSN Task Force volunteered their time and effort. Task Force members also help each other out. Recently, an FBI representative noted that they do not have a victim's specialist currently; the Gallup District Attorney offered his. Likewise, PSN domestic violence advocacy funds were running low. A representative from another agency went back to her agency to see if they might be able to fund part of her time. They were able to secure funding for her in exchange for data collection efforts. Thus, the domestic violence advocate is able to provide services on a more regular basis at the tribal courts, with funding from both PSN and the other agency. Thus, by joining forces, the impact on the community is greater.

Sometimes PSN is not able to directly help with matters being raised. For example, in a recent Task Force meeting, a participant raised a concern about commercial vehicles speeding through the target area. While speeding is not something PSN addresses, we were told that the issue was brought up by a Task Force member to others who could address it. Thus, even if an issue is outside the purview of PSN, Task Force members are often able to help address the issue. Others at the table may be able to help, and often offer to do so if they can.

Thus, those things that members point to as being successful aspects of collaboration—communication and the resulting improved relations across agencies—are facilitated at Task Force meetings. Note, though, that the majority of people we spoke with regularly attended Task Force meetings. Whether those who do not attend would agree with this assessment is unknown. Our own observations of Task Force meetings generally support the perceptions of those in

attendance that these meetings facilitate cross agency collaborations that might otherwise not happen.

Utilization of knowledge of community and networks

Potential PSN partners, whether permanent or temporary, join the Task Force and participate in PSN activities in several ways. Participants note that PSN proactively identifies needs for collaboration. Besides identifying and approaching those agencies that are required to accomplish PSN goals, like the law enforcement agencies, PSN partners tap into existing networks. For example, a participant explains that because of the connections she made from previous work experience, she can help open doors for prevention education. Members' connections to the community help in other ways as well. For example, they know people they can ask for help (like items or manpower for a graffiti cleanup) or know where to go to get what they need. They can also use those connections to increase awareness of PSN and their efforts.

In addition to drawing on existing relationships, some PSN partners actively look for potential people or agencies to facilitate the work they are doing. They do this by attending meetings on behalf of PSN, telling other groups about what PSN does and pulling in people from the community to participate in Task Force meetings.

“Like there’s meetings (in the community)...I put myself in there for PSN so we can be a part of, because of what we do, what our goals are and so I am attending the meetings monthly and have PSN a part of it.”

Thus, PSN partners bring their knowledge and their partnerships into PSN activities, thereby extending the resources available to the PSN initiative.

Cross commissioning

Finally, collaborative efforts are enhanced when law enforcement is cross commissioned, meaning that they are allowed to cross jurisdictions. This has been very valuable to PSN efforts, allowing the agencies to work together and limiting the barriers that jurisdictional lines create. Participants explained how important it is for justice that multiple agencies be involved and able to arrest individuals regardless of whose jurisdiction it is:

(Interviewer: “Okay. And are there any things that make collaboration across agencies easy?”)

“You know, just letting everybody get out and voice what’s going on. Through that, it is, I believe is a really good deal. Cross-commissioning so that everybody is able to work within everybody’s sandbox. No one person wanting to say, ‘Hey, we’re King of the Hill.’ It is usually really good when it comes to something like this. So, I think that was part of it.”

Most participants felt that when multiple agencies work together and are cross commissioned, offenders cannot use the jurisdictional boundaries to their advantage to avoid arrest. However, one participant noted that it is not always beneficial to have multiple agencies at a call because there is sometimes confusion over who does have jurisdiction and in those instances there could be a problem. Note that this is not the same as having multiple jurisdictions represented when conducting operations like warrant sweeps, where the efforts are preplanned.

(Interviewer: “So you think by having multiple agencies represented when a call is made, that is not necessarily beneficial. So you are sort of making sure that somebody’s there that has jurisdiction?”)

“I think that’s exactly right. It’s not necessarily beneficial and the reason being is because you get there and you say to yourself, ‘Oh, I’m not going to do that. She’s going to handle that.’ Or, ‘Captain and squad over there have that, so that’s going to be covered, so we don’t have to.’ And then things end up getting missed.”

Barriers to collaboration

Although collaboration and cooperation between agencies is generally positive and strong, participants did note some areas for improvement. We supplement these based on our observations and review of progress reports.

Jurisdiction

The most commonly cited barrier to collaboration- jurisdiction- is also a barrier to the implementation of the project overall. There are two ways that jurisdiction inhibits

collaboration. First is when officers are not cross commissioned or when they lose their cross commission status. In order for non-Navajo police to work in Indian Country and for Navajo police to work outside of Indian Country, they must be cross-commissioned. When a department loses its cross commissioning, it severely limits what they can do to assist. This has had a direct impact on PSN operations in that one of the key agencies lost their cross commission status for a period of time, and while they could go on the operations to show a presence, their hands were tied. It's a road bump that PSN can do nothing about, but participants need to be aware of the problem when working in Indian Country.

The second way it causes problems is with the extradition process. Although there may be a warrant for an arrest by the State or a federal magistrate, the Navajo Nation government does not recognize it. Instead, an extradition process must be followed. As we understand it, the process is that warrants are submitted to the tribal prosecutor's office, who reviews each one determining whether the person named in the warrant is the person that they are planning to arrest and whether the extradition is reasonable. The chief tribal prosecutor is the only person in the tribal prosecutor's office who can sign the extradition paperwork. Once the tribal prosecutor signs the extradition, it proceeds to the President's office, and he then reviews and signs the warrant. Once the two signatures are received, the warrants can be executed. The process, though, can be very slow, causing frustration for law enforcement. One participant explained that they have waited up to eight months for the extradition paperwork to be signed. Participants offered some reasons for delays including absences of either party due to illness, vacation, etc. We are also told that the prosecutor's office is running a very thin staff, and we expect that this would likely limit the amount of time available to sift through a pile of warrants; we are told that it is not unusual for 60 warrants to be submitted at one time. The time it takes for a warrant to be processed varies. Participants indicated that a short time would be three weeks, but can be delayed as long as three months. As noted above, some warrants take even longer to process.

There are ramifications if the processing of warrants is delayed. One is that planned PSN operations may be delayed. Alternatively, if state warrants cannot be executed, fewer violent offenders are removed from the Navajo Nation. Finally, the warrants sweeps could focus on apprehending less serious offenders, such as those with tribal warrants. While these are

important to execute, this means that more serious offenders are loose, with the potential to victimize others.

While several participants felt that the extradition process could and should be improved, not everyone agreed, with one participant saying that it was a smooth process and communication is good, and another explaining that it was working as well as it can given the institutional barriers that exist. Further, participants did say that the process has improved over time with better communication than in the past. Despite this, the process is not yet ideal. Clearly, on the tribal side the prosecutor's office and the president must balance community safety with sovereignty and ensuring that the rights of its people are not being violated.

Another side of this problem is that not all aspects of extradition are clear to all of those who are tasked with implementing the law. For example, one participant explained that a jail supervisor was not aware that federal warrants do not require extradition.

Not all key people attend Task Force meetings

Meetings offer an opportunity for Task Force members not only to build relationships, but also to make plans for future operations. While having key people attend meetings has facilitated collaboration, some PSN partners do not attend meetings regularly. In some instances, participants cite a lack of resources to send a regular delegate, and/or because other regular duties must take precedence. In other cases, it is unclear why a regular attendance does not occur. While attendance at meetings is voluntary and lack of attendance may not reflect the agency's or individual's level of commitment to the project, it can be detrimental to ensuring that open and positive communication occurs. This is important, particularly when agencies rely on the support of other agencies to accomplish tasks.

Besides not being able to attend, not all potential participants are included in e-mails informing members of upcoming meetings. One of the participants indicated that he was not aware of the Task Force meetings and did not receive e-mails informing him of the meetings. Thus, encouraging individuals to attend and ensuring that everyone who may contribute to the initiative is included is important. Unfortunately, despite efforts to encourage attendance, some agencies and agency representatives are simply more invested and participate more regularly than others. In addition, some agencies that could be helpful to the initiative lack the resources to commit to

participating. As the success of collaborative PSN efforts grows, participation and investment by a broader range of agencies may also grow. Indeed, those agencies with the fewest resources may have the most to gain from the collaborative model PSN utilizes.

Geography may also be a barrier to participation. As noted, the project area is vast. Meeting locations are not always convenient for all potential participants. For example, some of the partner agencies from Shiprock do not frequently send representatives to Task Force meetings. Most meetings have been held in the Crownpoint area and surrounding communities. This could deter some members from attending meetings, and we did note that when the meeting was held in Shiprock, there were attendees who had not participated in recent meetings held further away. In addition, though, some participants explained that commitment to the PSN project is still building in Shiprock:

“ Shiprock is obviously the newer region that we have established as a target site and so we are not as familiar with that area in terms of the original Task Force. We’ve brought in folks into the Task Force from that area and we are going to have to rely on them heavily on applying the resources in an efficient manner as possible and make things happen in the right way. But it will progress. I see it myself as another two to three year process to get them as established as the original target area.”

Given that the project was just expanded to that area, this is to be expected.

Turnover

Besides sporadic or minimal attendance by some key members, some participants felt that the turnover in Task Force members can be detrimental to completing the tasks and that, conversely, consistent attendance can help ensure positive progress as well as collaboration.

“When I started I’d go to one meeting and when you go to the next one in another month half the people at the first one aren’t at this meeting there was a whole bunch of new ones and it seemed like every meeting there was a whole handful of new people and it was just switching off and there wasn’t that much continuity. Now it seems like we’re starting to get a pretty regular core, regular core of people. And they’re understanding what it is and ... things are happening, so.”

As noted above, although PSN expects this sort of change, it does require getting any new people oriented and acclimated. Further, past progress reports indicate that changes in individuals have been a detriment. For example, it was noted that a key member had left the Task Force, to be replaced by an individual who had a different perspective regarding the goals of the initiative. This can make effective collaboration more difficult. Besides the importance of maintaining momentum and having similar viewpoints, having a consistent agency representative present at Task Force meetings has been helpful to reduce the runaround agencies have experienced when working together in the past. Thus, if that is lost, it can inhibit both collaboration and the effectiveness of the initiative.

Feedback from one of the PSN partners who read the initial findings noted that while turnover can be problematic, it can also be beneficial. New leadership can bring new ideas and infuse new life into the Task Force. The key, then, is to objectively assess whether turnover is becoming detrimental to the project.

Other

Although the Task Force members are able to see one another regularly at the meetings, they may not have one another's contact information particularly when new members attend. This was identified as one barrier to collaboration. Second, one participant noted that data that could be used to proactively address crime is not always shared across agencies. For example, intelligence may not be shared because of concerns that it may violate intellectual property.

Overall, collaboration was considered quite successful, especially across law enforcement agencies where little collaboration had been seen prior to PSN. This is clearly a milestone for which the members of PSN should be commended. Collaboration is still growing in Shiprock, where the initiative was implemented in 2012.

V: Perceived success of PSN

Overall, participants indicated that PSN has experienced some success. While some thought the overall impact to date was not extensive or felt they could not tell us how effective it has been, nearly all participants did feel that PSN has experienced some degree of success. Comments varied from statements like PSN is “making a dent” in the crime problem, and it is “pretty good,” to others indicate who feel it is “very successful.” Primarily, this pertains to activities in the Crownpoint and Thoreau areas, where PSN has been established for some time. Participants characterize success in the Shiprock area, particularly in regard to law enforcement activities, as up and coming.

Although the overall extent of the impact was not considered significant by most participants, the PSN Task Force members reported that PSN has been successful in a number of ways. In this section, we discuss the ways in which participants feel the initiative has been successful. First, participants generally agree that certain activities have been successful. In particular, three activities were repeatedly named as successful by many of the participants: the domestic violence advocates, the education efforts and the interdiction efforts.

Successful activities

Domestic violence advocacy

Many participants felt that the domestic violence advocacy component of the initiative is successful. Domestic violence advocates help victims fill out paperwork for protection orders (either by helping victims to ensure that they are including all that they need to or by acting as interpreters), help them understand the protection order process, refer them to services in the community, and are generally there to support them.

There are several reasons this aspect of the initiative is successful. First, until PSN provided funding for the domestic violence advocates, this service had not been available in either Crownpoint or Shiprock. Thus, PSN is filling this need for the community. Moreover, by strategically placing the advocates at the court and criminal investigator’s office, they can offer immediate assistance to victims. Many participants felt that the services provided by the domestic violence advocates are very helpful to the victims. Indeed, one of the domestic

violence advocates had not worked for a period of time, and her absence was noted. A participant asked me when the advocate would be returning because there were victims that she wanted to refer to her. Other participants also noted that it was helpful to have the domestic violence advocates available, so victims' needs could be addressed. Finally, the focus on domestic violence and the availability of the domestic violence advocates helps to increase awareness of the problem in the community. While participants point out that PSN is not the only group that is working towards raising awareness of domestic violence, its efforts are helpful.

Interdiction efforts

The warrant extradition efforts are another area many participants indicated is successful. A number of warrant operations have been completed resulting in successfully apprehending individuals and bringing them to justice. Importantly, several participants felt that the extradition process itself has improved due to PSN. Several participants noted that the extradition process was not working at all before PSN, and now the process is in place.

"...we really didn't enforce any state warrants unless you know, uh... unless they actually came on and petitioned the court that we want this guy, you know. If not, they'd just say, 'Well, we'll just wait for him and we pick him up when he comes off the reservation' type of deal."

Others explain that while extraditions did occur prior to PSN, the process for extradition was confusing and slow. Now, law enforcement officers know where to go and who to talk to in order to complete the process. Further, the process is much quicker now than it was in the past. Importantly, participants agreed that the collaboration between law enforcement agencies to complete warrant sweeps is working well. However, participants also noted that the extradition process is not flawless, and that there is still work to be done to make the process smoother.

Finally, because of the collaborative response by law enforcement, some participants felt that it is not as easy for offenders to use the jurisdictional boundaries to their advantage.

Specific crimes addressed

Participants relayed that because of PSN, law enforcement is able to focus their efforts on targeting the types of crime covered in the grant, rather than more general enforcement.

“It’s more specific. Like in the past if we were to put units out in a problem area, it probably be more traffic oriented-type stuff, like that. This way, it’s more focused on gangs; it’s more focused on the DV aspect of it. So, I mean, it’s more specifically addressed when we put our units out there for the PSN.”

This increased focus on violent crimes has occurred because of the collaboration and financial support offered by PSN. Several participants noted efforts to address drugs and gangs as areas that they have focused on and are making some headway. Two participants indicated that in conjunction with the FBI, they are beginning to get drugs out of the target areas in the Navajo Nation. In addition, some participants felt that due to PSN efforts, they have been able to increase their efforts in addressing the gang problem, including increasing the documentation of gang members and training of police officers to make contact with and identify gang members.

Education

Nearly all of the participants indicated that the regularly occurring education efforts are a successful component of PSN. Participants felt that due to this outreach, children’s awareness in many areas has increased including: gun safety, the dangers of alcohol and drugs, consequences of violence, and who to go to for help.

“I see that the ways we’re trying to address it is spreading awareness and presentations, things that I have known have not occurred on the reservation and having Joe come out and, you know, give his information as well. I see that awareness. I’ve seen an increase of the awareness within the children.”

Moreover, some participants believe that the children bring that awareness back to their families, telling them what they have learned.

(Interviewer: “So, to what extent do you think that PSN has impacted gang crime, firearm and drug crimes?”)

“At, at the youth level, educating the kids. Because what happens there is they go home and they say, ‘You know what Dad, you know what Mom?’ This is what we learned. The youth are educating.”

One reason participants believe this aspect of the initiative has worked is that the PSN prevention specialist goes to the school or other venue and delivers the curriculum for free. Once educators and other community members see the presentation(s) or hear about it, they request that the prevention specialist present to their students, or request that they return.

“So every year, they keep calling guys back, ‘Can you come and do some more training here in our area?’ And that’s what they like.”

Participants also indicate that repeated education is important. The more the children hear the message, the more they remember it and potentially internalize it. However, this repetition may make it necessary to vary up the delivery of the program to make it interesting and maintain the students’ attention.

Finally, because the curriculum is flexible, the intervention specialist can emphasize certain aspects of the curriculum to fit the needs of the group. For example, a principal or other person may notice a particular problem with drugs or gangs at their school. Thus, the specialist can arrange the curriculum to ensure that those topics are strongly addressed.

Follow through

Several participants felt that one very successful aspect of PSN is that when the PSN Task Force decides they will do something, it gets done. In other words, they follow through.

“...every time we step in there and we say we’re going to do this, it comes to light and it happens. So that is really positive for our agency and that’s nice to work with other agencies. It’s just a positive thing for us all around.”

Increased awareness in the community

Several participants indicated that community members are more aware of law enforcement efforts in the community due to their increased presence. Participants relayed that this increased visibility is important because criminals get the message that they cannot hide, and cannot use the jurisdictional boundaries to their advantage.

“I think on the enforcement side, the show of force out there. To show them that they're coming and they could be coming, like the sex offenders, "oh man, I've never had anybody come check on me, check on where I live or what I drive or where I work" and it's in the back of their head now, well they actually can come up here and they're keeping an eye on us. So I think the show of force and showing them that, you know, there actually is law enforcement out there, and we can be held accountable for the crimes we commit. So I think that's made a big difference with the PSN.”

“When you see all these different agencies out there, it shows there's no boundaries.”

Moreover, law enforcement is visible through community building efforts, like a recent graffiti cleanup as well as ongoing education efforts. These proactive efforts along with increased patrols and other interdiction activities are positive for the community and promote goodwill with law enforcement.

“Feedback from the community, just in general of it's nice to see so many units out in the area. Because usually, we're a rural agency and we only have maybe one guy available per shift and that's a big area for our district in the East District. So it's nice for the community to see four, five units driving around in the area for six, seven hours.”

The more police are in the area and community members see them as both trustworthy and reliable, the more likely they are to pass on tips for law enforcement. This may occur via PSN representatives, and indeed, one person notes that this has happened.

“...we've gotten some, people are comfortable enough to know that there is someplace that they can go to report something and so, so sometimes they'll tell me. They'll give me a tip saying, 'So and so is maybe selling over here,' and I'll pass it onto a law enforcement person who deals with

that stuff...So I think a lot of the people know now that there's this going on in the community and there's people they can turn to. I think they feel comfortable doing that."

Besides the increased awareness due to increased visibility of law enforcement, the Task Force meetings are also a way to increase the visibility of PSN and its efforts. One participant explained that when community members see the government vehicles and others parked at the chapter houses or other public locations, it makes community members question what they are doing there.

"You see all of these different agencies' vehicles parked outside and people start talking, 'What are these guys doing here?' You know, 'What's going on here?' So they see that."

Finally, one member explained that the PSN efforts can also bring hope to the community once people are aware of the activities and see the different groups working together:

" 'Okay. Well, maybe something's really happening. Maybe there will be a change,' or something like that. I think that's what they look for. That's the ultimate goal of everybody."

Finally, several participants reported that as a result of the awareness of PSN and all of its activities including the prevention and intervention components, other communities want PSN in their areas.

"You know, we get comments 'well what about us? You guys are focusing here.' So, now we've branched into the Shiprock area with the new grant. So we are doing operations up there. But it's just matter of time before everybody else is going to say, 'Well we want the projects moved down here. We want to part of this PSN.' "

While it is a good thing that awareness of PSN is raised and community members want similar law enforcement and other activities to occur in their areas, PSN does not have the funds to cover the entire Navajo Nation. This can cause some problems for law enforcement when the community sees strong efforts focused in just a couple of communities while other communities do not get the same attention.

Project facilitators

We asked participants to tell us what has facilitated the project overall. Many indicated that the same things that help collaboration—the Task Force meetings, using existing networks, and cross commissioning—also help the project overall. In addition, several other things were thought to help the project move towards meeting its goals.

Buy-in

The most frequently cited facilitator was buy-in. Specifically, participants noted that the success of the project is facilitated by the commitment of the members who volunteer their time and effort.

“Everybody having buy-in. The agencies and every group coming together and having buy-in.”

Longevity

Several participants note that one reason PSN has been successful is that they have been able to remain in the community for a longer period of time than many other grant funded programs have been able to do. In particular, some participants noted that since most grants are short lived and people know they are short lived, there is not as much investment in the grant.

“We’ve had a lot of people who applied for grants and ... nothing ever happens. I think that might be the problem that we had at the beginning, is we introduce ourselves to communities. Well, this is what we can do. Blah, blah, blah, blah. And now, we’re what? Maybe like four years into the project and we are still around and I think people see that. I think that’s really, really helped, because when you have something going on, you see maybe like a new resource one day and then maybe three weeks later, they’re gone. And I think with the PSN, we’ve at least established some type of sustainability and I think that’s what people like to see.”

The participant above explained that community members were hesitant to embrace the project because they have seen so many grants come and go, that they do not trust that this one will stay. The expansion of the project into the Shiprock area, then, is an example of the longevity/continuity of the project that can serve to bolster the community’s confidence in the initiative.

Community based

Several participants also felt that the community based aspect of the project is has helped it to be successful. One way this community based focus is realized is in PSN's willingness to meet the needs of the community. This responsiveness to community needs was evident from the beginning of the project, when, in response to community input, PSN expanded its focus to included domestic violence as a key aspect. More recently, the Task Force added sex offender address verification in response to a need identified by law enforcement working in the community. Thus, PSN incorporates other aspects of violent offending into the initiative as appropriate.

Another way that the community based aspect of the initiative is successful is that members of the community- those who live and work there- are included in the Task Force. This can encourage members to take ownership of it, and to find ways that PSN can best address problems they see in their communities. Indeed, one participant observed how the community members on the Task Force are embracing the initiative:

"The thing that I've seen is that...when I first started, they were very hesitant to run with the program and (name) basically had to run with it. Well, I've seen a big change in that since then. Those people have kind of, they haven't taken complete ownership of it, but they bring out things that hey, need to be done out there and they bring it out to the table and we talk about it and then we find a way to do it. So, that's really a pleasant surprise, like I said."

Community members who are not part of the Task Force are encouraged to attend meetings to find out what is happening and voice concerns they have. Recent Task Force meetings have included various community members including Chapter house representatives, councilmen, and other community members. They are invited to speak at the meetings to share their concerns.

Finally, several people explain that PSN has been successful because it brings services to communities where it is needed. In particular, the domestic violence advocates are situated in locales where victims are likely to need their services. Also, education was noted as reaching people by going to the schools and not requiring people to come to them.

Timing

Timing is an important element of the success of PSN. One of the participants astutely recognized that PSN has been implemented at a time when the doors are open to address problems, particularly domestic violence. This Task Force member noted that other agencies had worked in the community to combat domestic violence, but had not met with as much success. One reason for this was that the community was new to dealing with the issue at the time and was not as receptive to addressing the issue.

Other

Two people noted that having St. Bonaventure as fiscal agent has been an important facilitator to the project. Having them act as the fiscal agent has decreased the bureaucracy and related red tape that might have hampered efforts if another agency took on the role of fiscal agent. For example, it may have been difficult and time intensive for the Navajo Nation to coordinate payment to various non-Navajo agency partners. This has allowed the Task Force to do more in a timely fashion. In addition, one person noted that it was helpful to have a central person to get information from for things like upcoming operations. Finally, one participant explained that the diversity of the agencies represented is a facilitator to success.

Challenges to project implementation

While there has clearly been a lot of success associated with the initiative, there are some challenges that inhibit PSN from reaching its full potential. Many of these challenges reflect the difficulties of implementing law enforcement in and around the Navajo Nation. One challenge mentioned by the vast majority of participants is jurisdiction. There is nothing that PSN can do about the jurisdictional barriers themselves, but PSN can help to facilitate increased communication and understanding across groups that need to work together.

Jurisdiction

“just the barrier that we are going to be dealing with. It’s the monster. It’s just the jurisdictional issue. That is literally what keeps us from moving freely between our lines, you know, the invisible lines.”

Nearly everyone we spoke with noted that jurisdiction is one of the biggest challenges to implementing PSN in the Navajo Nation. As noted throughout this evaluation, jurisdictional issues cause “speed bumps” at every level of law enforcement. Further, from our interviews, it is clear that jurisdictional barriers are frustrating for everyone: those operating under Navajo Nation laws and those under state or federal law.

One of the problems caused is that it is not always clear who has jurisdiction when a crime is first committed because of the checkerboard land issue and those invisible lines. Criminals use it to their advantage by jumping back and forth between jurisdictional lines or by telling law enforcement they do not have jurisdiction. Law enforcement officers who make arrests outside of their jurisdictions can be sued, which may cause some hesitation to make arrests. Several participants talked about how those jurisdictional boundaries are not always clear, and may need to consult a GPS to determine the exact location and jurisdiction of some incidents.

PSN has tried to address this issue by having multiple agencies represented when they conduct their operations, so that someone who has jurisdiction will be there. Further, by encouraging cross-commissioning, jurisdictional boundaries become less of a barrier. However, as noted previously, not everyone is cross-commissioned and once it is lost, it is a long process to reinstate it. Moreover, there are still limitations for those who are cross-commissioned.

Previously we also mentioned the difficulties encountered with the extradition process. While this is reportedly better than in the past, not everyone feels that it is as smooth as it could be. Extradition delays can cause problems not only with collaboration, but also may inhibit the success of the program overall.

Finally, jurisdictional issues can also cause frustration for those who feel that some cases that should be prosecuted fall through the cracks. Cases involving serious offenses can be handled at multiple levels-tribal, state, or federal. The federal government can try cases involving one of the thirteen major offenses as defined by the Major Crimes Act, and participants expected that these would be prosecuted at that level.⁴ However, the federal government does not always choose to pursue prosecution. While these cases could be tried at the tribal level, the

⁴ The major crimes are: murder, manslaughter, kidnapping, maiming, sexual abuse, incest, assault with a dangerous weapon, assault resulting in serious bodily injury, assault on a person less than 16 years old, arson, burglary, robbery, theft as defined in 18 USC §661. Additional information can be found in 18 USC § 1153.

consequences that can be doled out at that level are relatively minor, with a maximum of one year in jail. Based on both interviews and a news article (May 31, 2011), there is some frustration with the federal government's lack of prosecution of serious offenses. There may be legitimate reasons why the federal prosecutors choose not to prosecute certain cases such as a lack of credible evidence or other procedural reasons. However, it appears that such reasons are either not well articulated and disseminated to interested parties, or not well understood by those parties.

"We want to know why you decline cases? What percentage are being declined? Why are they being declined? With Arizona...they get a thorough report about why the case got declined but ...with New Mexico it's just a one liner, um I don't even know if you call it paragraph, a one liner thing that says we decline. That's it."

Resources

Resource limitations, a second challenge, impact not only the regular operations of law enforcement, but those related to PSN as well. Law enforcement manpower is limited in the target area. PSN funds overtime for existing officers, but cannot fund the hiring of new officers. This can impact operations. For example, at the March 2012 Task Force meeting, the service of protection orders was discussed. The officer present explained that they had not been able to serve the orders because they were short on officers, and most of the officers did not want to volunteer to work overtime to serve the orders. There was one officer at the time who was serving orders. The officer reporting on the situation expected that there would be more officers in the summer, and that they would be able to serve more orders then. Interviews indicate that there are officers who are interested in working overtime to serve orders now.

It should be noted that currently, not all protection orders are being served. This has not been attributed to a lack of manpower; rather, it has been attributed to an inability to serve the participants due to evasion of service of process.

In addition, although both law enforcement and the community may want the project to expand to other areas, even if there were funding to do so, some felt the strain on law enforcement would be too great.

“So at some point in time, with the current manpower, because we’re already spread thin, it’s really going to get spread thin.”

Finally, even if more manpower were available in the target areas, some participants note that the grant funds themselves are rather meager. For example, PSN can only afford to fund one warrant sweep per quarter and the domestic violence advocates are only funded two days per week. This could limit the effectiveness of PSN. For example, participants vary in their perceptions of the adequacy of the dosage of interdiction activities. Some indicate that one per quarter is not often enough to allow the program to experience as much success as it could if there were more frequent activities.

“You know, at times the projects are so spaced out – one a quarter. You know, they are just so spaced out to see a big effect.”

However, given that these activities happened with much less frequency in the past, and rarely as a coordinated law enforcement effort, this is an improvement. Indeed, another participant indicated that one per quarter is frequent.

“We have lot of operations. I think they try to go for one every quarter.”

Technology and intelligence sharing

We were told that the police operating in this area are not equipped with the most current technology, putting them at a further disadvantage. For example, some participants suggested that it would be helpful if each patrol unit had GPS systems, which could be very useful given the checkerboard nature of the area (if connected to a layer/overlay that shows the jurisdiction of each parcel of land). One participant also noted that units needed better communication tools when out on patrol.

Besides the physical equipment, the various law enforcement agencies are not able to share some information due to lack of access. For example, the Navajo Police Department does not have access to New Mexico’s NCIC (though they can access Utah’s NCIC). Regular and timely access to automated criminal history data would allow the police to check whether a detainee or offender has an existing restraining order. This could be helpful in two ways. One, it is beneficial to the victim to have that immediately available; two, the police would know whether

an offender is allowed to possess firearms. Currently, the data they have regarding protection orders is in hardcopy format; in order to find out whether someone has a restraining order against them, they must search those hardcopy records.

Similarly, while there are law enforcement sharing tools like Gangnet, these are not currently being used across law enforcement in the target areas. The data from the Navajo Nation is only available in hard copy, though there is currently an effort underway to automate that data. In addition, Criminal Investigations does have a database, but cannot share the information across agencies. One participant explained to us that part of the problem with freely sharing information across jurisdictions has to do with the Navajo Nation's concern with intellectual property. Thus, even if the software were available, it is not clear that this data would be readily accessible across jurisdictional lines. However, the automation of this data could greatly help law enforcement within the Navajo Nation itself. It should be noted, though, that PSN partners did indicate that sharing of information across jurisdictional boundaries has improved under PSN.

Program data

A third limitation is the lack of data to evaluate the initiative. Participants note that data is either not available or is not being compiled and shared in a way that shows the Task Force that they are making a difference. Several participants said that they are unable to determine the extent to which the Task Force has been successful, because there is a lack of data to show the change. Moreover, two participants noted that having data that shows success can be good for morale; in other words, when data is shared that shows the Task Force is making a difference, it validates their work. People feel that the Task Force is effective, but can't really assess the extent of its effectiveness:

“How effective it is, it's hard for me to tell. I believe it's effective, but again, I see that there are some things happening that the community is pretty happy about. So, that didn't used to happen before.”

One participant noted, though, that the call volume in Thoreau is down and that burglaries are down.

“Our call volume has gone down in the area of Thoreau. Burglaries have gone down in the area of Thoreau. So, it’s taken some impact.”

We also noted that at several Task Force meetings, there has been a request for firearm and other crime data for reporting purposes. For example, the progress reports submitted to the Department of Justice include a section on the number of various violent offenses committed with firearms. With the exception of the first reporting period, this number has been “0.” While one Task Force member suggested that there has not been any to report, it is unknown whether that is the case.

Another area where data could be improved is in regards to the evaluation of the prevention component. Currently, a post-program survey is administered after every education session; the version of the survey administered differs slightly depending on the curriculum delivered. While these post program surveys are administered and collected, they have not been analyzed. Further, the evaluation design in the grant proposal calls for pre-survey as well. We discussed this with the PSN staff, who indicated that it was just not feasible to ask students to complete a pre-program survey due to time constraints. We suggested that perhaps teachers might be willing to administer the surveys ahead of time, but PSN staff thought that was too much of an imposition and teachers would likely not be amenable to this. Thus, at this time, it does not seem feasible to administer pre-program surveys. While this does not prohibit prevention efforts, it limits ongoing evaluation and refinement of the program.

In other aspects of the project, data is being collected. For example, domestic violence advocates are currently working on collecting data. Further, there are initial plans in the works to conduct an outcomes evaluation focusing on the domestic violence advocacy portion of the project.

Data is important for refining each of the program components, determining where to target prevention and interdiction efforts, and for understanding what short of short and long term impact the initiative is making.

Support

A fourth challenge is support. In order to be implemented successfully, PSN must have support on many fronts. One place where support can be lacking is at upper levels within an agency, which could be due to a difference in viewpoint about the initiative:

“There’s always going to be, I think, at the upper echelon level between agencies, what direction things ought to be going. You know, so there’s a difference of opinions at times. But I think when it comes down to just the core of operations themselves, everything’s fine.”

Support from the community is also an important component. Participants note that in some ways this is lacking. Despite reports that PSN is reaching out to community members and that they are becoming more willing to report crimes, there is the perception that community members do not want to get involved or tell on family members when they have committed a crime. As one participant explained, it is crucial that community members let law enforcement know what is going on in their communities.

“It’s got to be the community members embracing this project and reaching out and wanting the help.”

Without their help, law enforcement assistance is limited.

Other ways that support from the community can play a role in PSN is in participation in community based events, such as the graffiti cleanup. It was noted that at a recent graffiti cleanup, there was great support by many members of the community, but some particular demographics (like 30-40 year olds) were not in attendance. Recognizing that there are certain segments of the population who are not participating is important so efforts can be targeted to gain their support.

Rural area

Participants also note that the rural nature of the area creates challenges for implementing PSN. The geography is one of those challenges. Participants note that not only does law enforcement have a lot of ground to cover, others have to travel long distances to complete required activities. For example, the prevention specialist is located in Albuquerque, and must travel several hours

to conduct education outreach. Community members also may travel long distances to access services. Although the services are brought to central areas in the community, some still have to travel long distances. For example, one participant explains that some domestic violence victims must walk:

“We have social services, just one besides (named person) with social services, just to serve this wide area and I don’t know what the population is. It’s like 33 chapters that we’re serving and some have walked here, just to get the services they need. And it’s not a short walk, either. It was in the snow and freezing weather.”

Another rural related challenge is that cell phone service and other utilities are limited. This can impact residents who cannot call for help but also service providers. For example, one participant noted that he uses a cell phone to talk to victims, but cannot always get service.

Other

In addition to the barriers listed above, another barrier noted at the Task Force meeting where we shared the results of this evaluation, was that there has been a change in grant administrators at the federal level. This has caused some inconsistencies in expectations regarding the fiscal aspect of the program, which can then impact the implementation of the program.

Continuation of PSN

“The progress that has been made and the relationships that have been established just won’t go – they are not going to go away because money goes away. I think that we’ve kind of crossed that threshold.”

We posed the question, if PSN funding were to go away, do you think agencies would continue to effectively collaborate with one another? The purpose of this question was to try to understand how collaboration could continue without funding. Participants answered this question in two ways: one was specific to whether collaboration would continue, and the second was whether PSN activities would continue. Generally there was the perception that activities may slow down a bit, though this varied by participant. Participants felt that while collaboration would continue, some components of the initiative were less likely to continue without funding.

In particular, participants pointed to the domestic violence advocacy portion. Since these positions are fully funded by PSN, rather than being supplemented like law enforcement, it would require new funding sources. Some participants were optimistic that that could happen: problems that are being addressed are also addressed by other organizations, so funding for education and outreach could potentially come from somewhere else. For example, one participant noted that Indian Health Services may be in a position to fund prevention activities. Indeed, as noted previously, Indian Health Services has stepped in to fund one of the domestic violence advocates. Thus, it is possible that other funding could be secured. One interviewee suggested that in order for the domestic violence, education and law enforcement activities funded by PSN to continued, the Navajo Nation would have to pick up the expense, but that the likelihood of that happening was not strong due to limited resources. Others also indicated that they were less sure that these funded activities would continue. However, it was pointed out by several participants that this is not due to lack of dedication or a desire to work together, but because the agencies can't afford it

Participants all expressed the belief that agencies would still be willing and want to work together. However, most felt that the Task Force meetings would need to continue in order to ensure that people would continue to touch base with one another. Perceptions about whether this was likely varied by individual. Some believed that this could happen, but would require planning beforehand.

“I think it would just be a matter of just maintaining the communication links that we’ve developed with people. And just, you know, and of course if there was actually a time and it came to an end, sit down and I would think have a meeting before the end and just say, okay, how are we gonna keep sailing this ship after PSN’s funds run out?”

Others felt that the onus to continue the meetings would be on the members themselves. Further, another participant felt that while people would not want the collaboration to end, it probably would in most instances based on experience with other Task Forces. One person said that they would want to collaborate, but felt that the USAO and Ron Lopez have been a key to the success of the program, the implication being that collaboration would be more difficult without USAO leadership.

We also asked participants if there is a person who helps to coordinate activities. The answer to this question has important implications for continued collaboration. Different people identified different people as leaders. Importantly, while a member from the USAO typically coordinates PSN activities, at the Task Force meeting on January 13, 2013, one member explained that there are three coordinators for the project. One is from the USAO, and two are individuals working in the Navajo Nation (one from St. Bonaventure's and the other from the Navajo Division of Public Safety). These individuals were all named as coordinators during interviews, along with two other individuals who work in Indian Country. In other words, not everyone identified the USAO representative as a key coordinator, suggesting that there are one or more people and/or agencies who could naturally assume a leadership role if PSN funding were to end. For example, several participants cited the U.S. Marshal's office as a key player in the warrant roundups. Others felt that one of the officers from the Navajo Police Department was an important coordinator for law enforcement activities. Moreover, though the USAO has been a key facilitator, some have seen a shift over time from the USAO to others on the Task Force. This is a good thing as it suggests that in some aspects the initiative have taken a life of its own and there are aspects that some people have taken ownership of, and could potentially continue if and when PSN funds dry up.

VI: Conclusion and Recommendations

In this section we begin by summarizing the findings of this process evaluation. This is followed by recommendations for the Task Force to consider. Many of the recommendations originate with the members themselves; we asked participants if there was anything PSN could do that is within its scope of work, but not currently part of the initiative. Most participants did not feel that there were any other things that PSN could do, but a few participants did offer some suggestions. In addition, peppered throughout the interviews were suggestions for improvement. We supplement these recommendations with our suggestions based on the findings presented in this report.

Perceptions of the crime problem

Participants explain that the violence in the target areas is notable. Gangs are problematic, but do not appear to be large scale organized operations. Instead, many participants describe gang members as “wannabes” involved in acts of graffiti as well as drugs and burglaries. Juvenile crime is associated with gangs and drugs, but also some participants note that juveniles are engaged in behaviors that can be precursors to more serious delinquency. All participants considered domestic violence to be a significant problem, aligning with the mission of this PSN initiative. Finally, while firearms are used in some crimes, most participants felt that violent crimes (like assaults) are more often committed with whatever is handy- fists, rocks, axes, etc. Two participants, though, felt that firearms were a serious problem in one of the target areas. It is difficult to determine the extent of firearm related offending at this time due to lack of available data.

Activities and their success

The activities proposed in the grant application are in various stages of implementation. The prevention efforts are regularly occurring throughout the target area. One area of prevention- GREAT- is not currently being provided but the Task Force is actively engaging in efforts to implement it. Overall, participants agreed that the prevention is one of the more successful components of the PSN initiative. Participants explained that awareness about guns, gangs, drugs and domestic violence has increased among the youth. However, they also explain that it

is hard to know whether the awareness raised through education efforts has impacted behavior, but at least the awareness has grown.

As part of the interdiction efforts, regular warrant sweeps are occurring. Participants who commented on this aspect of the project consider it successful. However, participants did indicate that there is some delay with the extradition process which sometimes requires law enforcement to postpone or alter planned efforts. In addition to the warrant sweeps, participants report that they have also actively engaged in sex offender address verification, patrols/highway interdiction, undercover drug operations, as well as gang documentation and suppression efforts. One aspect of the grant initiative is the proposal to implement a High Point model in this area. According to one source, the model is being implemented, with some modifications.

Prosecution efforts are in the process of being implemented at the federal level; an Assistant United States Attorney has been hired for the area, office space has been offered at the District Attorney's office in Gallup, and the AUSA is expected to begin work soon. To date, prosecution funds have been provided to the State District Attorney's office for the prosecution of gun and gang crimes.

Important domestic violence efforts have been initiated. Domestic violence advocates have been hired and are actively working in both Crownpoint and Shiprock. These advocates provide services to victims who file for orders of protection, including assisting with completing the petitions, providing advocacy in court, and referring them to services available in the community. Many participants felt that the services that the advocates provide are a beneficial and successful component of the initiative. Besides victim assistance services, the advocates have also engaged in outreach efforts, educating youth and raising community awareness about domestic violence.

The service of protection orders is being addressed in Crownpoint, but is not yet fully implemented. Law enforcement reports difficulties in attempting to serve protection in the Crownpoint area. In response, the domestic violence team, in conjunction with the tribal court, is working on creating an emergency order packet to offer victims an alternative. The service of protection orders has not yet been addressed in Shiprock.

The Task Force has also engaged in other activities, such as referring law enforcement and domestic violence advocates to training, engaging in community graffiti cleanup efforts, running information booths at community events and exploring options for intelligence sharing. The last of these is very important as breaking through the traditional jurisdictional barriers will require the sharing of intelligence on a regular and larger scale than is occurring currently, as reported by participants.

Overall, then, most proposed activities are at some stage of implementation, with prevention efforts, warrant sweeps, and domestic violence advocacy being the most active of these. Generally, participants felt these activities were successful, particularly the education efforts.

Collaboration

Overall, participants report that this project has been very successful in getting law enforcement agencies to work together towards a common goal. Regular and open communication has been encouraged, and because of the success in this area, agencies have a better understanding of one another and have forged a deeper cooperation and trust. Direct contact facilitated by Task Force meetings has encouraged cooperation and efforts amongst law enforcement agencies and among the others present. Law enforcement and non-law enforcement have also been working towards a successful collaboration, facilitated by Task Force meetings. For example, they have worked together to provide prevention education and graffiti cleanup activities. Generally, there is a community feel to the Task Force meetings that often does not occur in more urban areas, and that encourages members to take a personal interest in the problems raised. Besides creating and strengthening relationships across Task Force member agencies and individuals, the collaboration has increased members' knowledge about each group's area of expertise. In addition, the collaboration extends beyond PSN partners and activities, with members pulling in individuals from their networks into PSN. PSN partners also volunteer to work together to address other (non-PSN) problems in the community.

As noted above, the Task Force meetings are largely considered a facilitator to the collaboration that occurs. In addition, the ability of members to draw on their existing knowledge and networks within the community has facilitated collaboration. Participants also pointed to the ability of law enforcement to be cross commissioned as a facilitator to collaboration and

completing PSN activities. Despite this, there are still some areas where collaboration could be improved. In particular, there are some agencies that do not regularly participate in the Task Force meetings, and turnover is sometimes a problem. The biggest barrier, though, is jurisdiction which slows down the extradition of offenders as well as limits law enforcement collaboration when agencies are not cross commissioned.

Perceived success of project

We noted above that participants felt that several aspects of the project are successful: the prevention efforts, aspects of the interdiction efforts, particularly warrant sweeps, and the domestic violence advocacy provided. In addition, participants noted that the ability to focus on violent crimes provided through the PSN funding has been very beneficial. Several participants also felt that because of PSN efforts, there is an increased awareness of law enforcement presence in the community resulting in increased hope that something can be done to address crime in the area as well as requests for services in areas near the target sites. Importantly, several participants felt that PSN has been successful in terms of follow through: they do what they say they are going to do, and if something prevents that from occurring, they try to solve the problem so they can move forward. This is apparent in the recent efforts to address the service of protection orders.

Project facilitators and barriers

Besides those things that facilitate collaboration, members cited several things that promote project success. The most common of these is buy-in; that is, the Task Force members believe in the project and are dedicated to it. Some of the other facilitators that participants note are the longevity of the project, the community based aspect of it, the timing (that is, the community was ready for the services), and the location of the fiscal agent.

Besides jurisdiction, which causes difficulties in implementing many aspects of the project, participants identified other barriers. These include lack of resources, technological and informational resource sharing limitations, lack of support from supervisors and community members, lack of data to show program progress and rural related challenges.

Continuation of PSN

When asked, many participants felt that PSN would continue without funding in some form, particularly the collaborations that have been established. However, participants felt other aspects were less likely to continue such as those things that are solely funded by PSN, such as domestic violence advocate services. Some participants, though, thought it would be possible to secure alternative funding for some of these services. Several people were identified as key coordinators for the project: the coordinator from the USAO, the two coordinators located within the Navajo Nation and one other individual who is not a project coordinator. The non-USAO coordinators could potentially assume a natural leadership position if funding were discontinued.

Recommendations

In general, the PSN initiative is moving forward and has experienced much success, particularly in terms of collaboration amongst agencies, bridging jurisdictional barriers. Despite the successes, there are still areas that could be improved. In this final section, we identify recommendations that originated both from participants and our own observations.

Increase collaboration

Although collaboration is generally considered quite effective, participants did offer some ways that collaboration could be improved. One way to facilitate connections between PSN partners is to encourage Task Force meeting attendance. Some members are not able to attend Task Force meetings, or do so irregularly. Some key partners have been invited by project coordinators, yet fail to attend. In this case, it may be helpful for peers who do regularly attend meetings to encourage their attendance.

In addition, it is important to ensure that the e-mail distribution list includes all partners or potential partners. One participant told us that he is not on the e-mail list that notifies partners of upcoming meetings; this is an important omission since those we interviewed were identified as key partners. If not currently on the e-mail distribution list, the Task Force may consider including representatives from the following: Navajo Housing Authority, Navajo Behavioral Health, tribal courts, and perhaps groups like Family Harmony in Crownpoint or The Home for

Women and Children in Shiprock that provide services to domestic violence victims. Some of these groups likely have been approached in the past, but continuing to reach out to them (unless asked not to do so) could encourage their participation.

One way to encourage participation and collaboration of key partners who have agreed to participate but do not attend Task Force meetings may be to provide members with a summary of the key points that were discussed at the meetings, including any problems raised and resolution of those problems (obviously any confidential information would be omitted). Although we have seen members take notes of meetings, when we asked for a copy of the previous meeting minutes, they were not available. Maintaining meeting minutes would not only help to keep members apprised of current activities, but may encourage members to reach out for more information. Moreover, the issues discussed during Task Force meetings go beyond the major topics listed on the agenda. People may not be aware of how useful the meetings are when they do not attend regularly.

One suggestion generated from the interviews was to make sure that all members have personal contact information for one another so that they can easily reach one another outside of Task Force meetings. One way to do this would be to copy and distribute the sign in sheet from each meeting. Alternatively, a contact list could be compiled and distributed periodically.

Another area where communication could be improved is regarding the domestic violence advocates' schedules. It would be beneficial to let those who refer victims to the advocates know their schedules and any changes in those schedules. Communicating about changes in schedules is especially important given the reported sporadic nature of services provided by other groups and the perception that grant funded projects in the Navajo Nation are limited in longevity.

Finally, participants noted that jurisdiction is a barrier to both collaboration and the PSN initiative overall. Much of the jurisdictional issues that occur are beyond the control of PSN; instead, this is the reality of working in this area. However, there are some things that PSN can do to help agencies operate within these boundaries. Several participants expressed frustration or acknowledged limitations with the extradition process. This is a very difficult problem to navigate due to jurisdictional and sovereignty issues. However, ensuring regular and open

communication about the extradition process is important. The Task Force may wish to schedule one or more meetings with key members to discuss whether any more can be done to facilitate the extradition process than is being done currently, and to air concerns that partners have. The meeting would include the Task Force coordinators, key law enforcement representatives and representatives from the Navajo Nation prosecutor's office. It would be useful to be prepared with data to show what sort of impact the warrant sweeps have had, the extent of the delays and the impact of those delays. Even if there is nothing more that could be done, it may be useful to have the conversation to ensure that the concerns of all key members are heard. The progress reports indicate that a meeting was held sometime between January and June 2011 to address these issues. However, since this is something that was brought up by more than one person, it is important to investigate whether there is an ongoing problem. It is important to note, however, that there have been efforts to work together to address extradition difficulties, such as ensuring that probation violators who sign waivers of extradition are able to be apprehended without having to go through the extradition process. This suggests that there is a willingness to cooperate. Thus, regular open communication may be necessary to ensure ongoing collaboration.

Two participants expressed frustration with another jurisdictional related issue: the declination of prosecution of federal cases. There is a process that the United States Attorney's Office uses when it chooses to decline prosecution. A brief letter is sent to the investigators to explain why the case was declined. An example letter was provided to us. It stated that the USAO had declined prosecution due to lack of evidence, but there were not specific details. It may be helpful to increase communication about why cases are not prosecuted and to analyze why cases are dropped to discover any patterns. For example, if most cases are not being prosecuted because the evidence is not strong enough, PSN may be able to help train officers to enhance evidence gathering practices. This would require knowing what evidence would have been needed to proceed with the case. Presumably, once the AUSA is actively working in the area, this concern will decrease as she can communicate with stakeholders about individual cases, but it is important to note that this was a concern raised.

Increase community outreach

A number of participants indicated that more could be done to reach out to the community. One target for community outreach is increasing awareness of PSN efforts. Several participants suggested doing public service announcements, perhaps at theaters, on the radio or in the newspaper. Another participant thought it would be useful to follow up with chapter houses where initial contact was made.⁵ This follow up would include informing chapter house members about the PSN activities that have been happening in their communities, giving them progress reports (such as how many and what types of arrests were made), as well as letting them know how the resources are being used.

In addition, everyone who is identified as a key partner or participating agency/group/organization should be made aware of PSN's activities and successes in the community. There are members of key agencies who are not aware of PSN's activities in the community. For example, when I asked about the success of PSN, one participant explained that he could not tell me:

"I, remember I emailed you and I said, 'What's PNS (sic)?' (Yes, yes) That should tell you. Yea. That should tell you I don't know anything about it. I'll just be honest with you."

Likewise, it is important to ensure that groups that have been targeted for partnership but have declined to participate are aware of PSN activities. Not only could this encourage participation in the future, it could also be another avenue to increase awareness of PSN activities through word of mouth.

At the January meeting, one suggestion was made to create a website where information about PSN and their activities in this area could be posted. This website could include pictures taken of some of PSN's activities, such as the graffiti cleanup. Members immediately discussed who would be involved in getting this website up and running. This would be an asset to this PSN effort and would help to ensure that both PSN partners and community members are aware of PSN's activities.

⁵ The PSN project coordinator provides PowerPoint presentations to introduce PSN at chapter houses, law enforcement agencies and when requested.

PSN may also wish to consider reaching out to particular demographic groups. One participant noted that while there are many community members who volunteer their time to improve the community, such as in conjunction with graffiti clean ups, certain demographic groups are not well represented. This participant noted that those in the 30-40 year old age group particularly are not engaged in community building efforts. Thus, one recommendation would be to identify and target those demographic groups that are less engaged to ensure that they are represented and supportive of community building efforts.

In addition to increasing awareness of PSN and engaging the community, a few participants felt that more could be done to educate victims of domestic violence. For example, in discussing this issue, one participant said:

“I don’t think we do enough educational side saying, ‘Look. That’s not how life is. It shouldn’t be that way.’ ”

In addition to efforts aimed at educating victims, the Task Force may wish to consider reaching out to batterers. It may be useful to attempt a proactive approach, educating batterers about the impact of domestic violence on their families and communities, while providing them with resources regarding where they can seek help to stop their destructive behavior. It may also be helpful to ensure that those who interact with domestic violence victims, such as court personnel, are familiar with the types of domestic violence services available in the community. Partnerships with agencies that provide these sorts of services would likely be very helpful for conducting these outreach efforts.

Finally, participants indicated that the community is not fully supportive of law enforcement efforts, as shown by a hesitation to report criminal activities. This is an important area where PSN may want to focus some of its efforts. Participants explained that it is difficult to secure community participation in law enforcement efforts because people do not want to tell on clan members and others in their community. However, it seems that there is a desire by at least some in the community to provide information to law enforcement. For example, it was reported that community members will alert law enforcement that something is going on, but will not give any more information. If this is more than what has been done in the past, this is progress. It does require some level of trust to even alert law enforcement, even if details are not provided.

Hotline

Besides increased outreach to the community, two participants suggested that PSN create a hotline where the public could call to report drug/gang activity/get referral for where to call for domestic violence. The July to December 2010 progress report indicates that the We-Tip crime hotline was to be established in all of the schools. Further, other documentation indicates that We-Tip signs were distributed to BIA, private and public schools. At the Task Force meeting in January where these results were presented, we were told that the We-Tip signs had also been placed at some Chapter Houses. At that time, one member explained that he had used the We-Tip hotline and that he had experienced some problems with reporting. The Task Force may wish to determine whether the We-Tip line is working appropriately, and if so, partner with a media outlet or additional chapter houses to publicize this number or another appropriate hotline more broadly for the purposes of reporting crime anonymously.

In addition, one partner suggested that the public be made aware of how they can report crime to their local police departments.

Equipment

Several participants offered suggestions regarding equipment that PSN might be able to purchase. One was to use available equipment money to install lights in areas where there is a high amount of graffiti. Two people noted that it would be useful for all law enforcement in the area to have GPS units that include information on whose jurisdiction it is when they are out on a call, since it is not always known who has jurisdiction. This PSN project does currently fund the purchase of GPS systems.

Data

PSN success in the target areas is based on anecdotal evidence. Several participants noted that data to support those successes has not been made available, such as information about crime trends in the area. For example, it is not known whether gun crimes have changed in the target areas since PSN was implemented. PSN is making some efforts to address this deficiency. For instance, at the November 2012 Task Force meeting, a representative from the Navajo Nation IT

department was present and provided information about what data might be available and how to access that data.

Besides crime data, the Task Force may want to consider some additional evaluative efforts to help determine what sort of impact the education efforts have made. First, to examine short term intervention impacts, it would be useful to analyze the results of the post-program surveys to see whether students are providing the expected responses. In addition, though it is clear that the Task Force does not believe it is feasible to administer a pre-program survey at this time, considering how that might be done in the future to show changes in knowledge would be useful. Other data gathering efforts geared at illustrating more long term educational impacts could be considered as well. For example, the Task Force could gather data from the schools to assess whether there has been a change over time in firearm offending, violent offending, drug offending within the schools where the program has been delivered.

Another data effort to consider is maintaining meeting minutes. Besides the potential benefits to PSN partners who do not attend the meetings, through self-evaluative efforts, this documentation could help further refine the program as it moves forward. It could also be useful as a blueprint for future iterations of the program.

Similarly, documenting activities could be useful for self monitoring of ongoing progress. For example, it would be useful to document the activities associated with the implementation of the High Point model. This would allow the Task Force to examine whether the model is being implemented with fidelity and to the fullest that it can be, and if not, what is prohibiting full implementation and how to address that.

Dosage

Prior research on PSN related initiatives indicate that when they are implemented with sufficient intensity and focus, there is a significant impact on violent and gun-related homicides (Hipple, Corsaro, and McGarrell, 2010). Determining what is sufficient for a given area may be difficult. However, some participants suggested that the dosage of PSN here is not sufficient to make a substantial impact. This is largely due to the lack of funds available. However, the Task Force may want to explore whether there are ways to increase strategic planning of operations in a way to maximize success.

Conclusion

Overall, this PSN initiative is making progress towards reaching its goals. Participants indicated that great strides have been made in strengthening the relationships between diverse agencies, working together towards meeting common goals, and eroding traditional boundaries. PSN partners tap into their existing networks to extend resources available to implement PSN here. Participants felt that the youth in the target areas are becoming more aware of the dangers of gun violence, drugs, and gangs. Domestic violence advocates are providing services where they are needed. While there are areas that can be strengthened and where progress is yet to be made, the initiative is well underway.

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