Technical Assistance Progress Reporting Form Recording Transcript

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Intro Slides of Recording Session

Hello, and welcome to the training for Grants to Technical Assistance Programs. We will be going over how to fill out the reporting form from the first question the last. Before we get started, I want to let you know that there are two reporting periods-- the first from January to June of every year, and that report will be due July 30. And the next one is July to December, and that will be due January 30 for that reporting form.

So first off, thank you for accessing this recording. We hope that the training enables you to provide the most detailed and accurate reporting of your grant funded work for your semiannual progress report. Accurate data reporting is incredibly important for many reasons. Your quantitative and qualitative data allow for VAWA's effectiveness be measured. VAWA MEI creates reports for OVW using your data, and these reports support OVW to ask for increased appropriations and to defend VAWA funding. Your data is really helpful, and it also allows OVW to make sure that federal funds are being spent appropriately and to measure the performance of grant funded programs.

Every few years the Attorney General is required to submit a report to Congress on the overall effectiveness of VAWA funding. VAWA grantees, including technical assistance providers, provide data that makes up a significant part of that mandated report. The more consistently that you all report your data, the more accurately VAWA's effectiveness can be measured. And that is why we are here, not only to train you on these forms but to also provide technical assistance.

Here are a few tips before we start looking at the progress reporting form page by page. First off, read the separate instructions. You may have downloaded these with the progress reporting form sample from the web site, or you may be able to click on all of the question marks, which I'll show you later throughout the form to get those instructions. So please look at those. There are many helpful examples to assist you in filling out the form.

Throughout the form, there are "other" categories for many questions. In general, we ask that you use the "other" category only if you can't find a way to make the information fit in another category that already exists and is a close enough fit-- perhaps not perfect but close enough. When we aggregate data for a report, often the information that is reported in the other category will not get included, and that can be a challenge.

However, there are cases when "other" really is the only option for capturing what you are reporting, and that's fine. We just ask that you take the time to rule out all other options first. Additionally, if you do not have an "other" report, just leave that box blank. Don't report "NA" or "none". You can just leave the box empty.

At the end of this form, you'll find narrative questions-- some mandatory and others optional. You'll use the optional sections to talk about the unique successes of your grant funded activities. So talk about the impact that your grant funded activities have had on the community that you serve. The questions exist at the end of the forms so that you can provide more details on the work that is being done. And we will talk more about that as we get through the form.

We ask that you try not to use abbreviations or acronyms when reporting your data. If you do have an acronym that you are going to use over again, that's fine, but please provide an explanation for that acronym in the beginning of each text box that you are using it in. Finally, do not send attachments or extra documents containing data that is asked for in your report. Only data contained in the report itself will be looked at by VAWA MEI.

And last but not least, if you any questions about reporting, please give us a call or send us an email. We are here to help, and we would be more than happy to help you work through any questions or scenarios that you have regarding your report.

(Minute 4:30) Section A1 – Grant Information

So Section A1, Grant Information-- all grantees must fill out this section. **Question one** is the date that you are completing the form. And **Questions two through five** will be pre-populated for you. Here you can note the question mark that I referred to earlier. If you click on the question mark, information from the instructions will pop up and help you fill out the form. You'll find these throughout the entire form, and they can be really helpful at giving examples--examples and useful information that will help you fill out all the question.

Question six is the type of lead agency or organization. Choose the one description that most closely describes your organization. While the options may not exactly fit your organization, we do ask that you try to find the one that best fits.

Question seven, what does your TA cooperative agreement address? Here, check all that apply. These are the type of victimizations that you address and the people that you work with. Also, because this isn't an all that applies type of question, you can feel free to utilize the other text box for more detail.

Question eight, point of contact-- provide the contact information for the person that is most heavily involved with your day-to-day with your grant program. This is the person that we will be contacting to ask what the data may mean. Or for example, say we really need to get in contact with the person that knows the ins and outs of the program, and this may not necessarily be the project director or the fiscal agent.

Question nine addresses tribal populations. If you indicate yes, then your program's intention is to focus specifically on addressing a tribe, tribes, nation, or nations and should have been addressed in your grant proposal. It doesn't have to be all that you do, but it does need to be an intentional focus.

Question ten asks about the OVW grant programs for which you provide technical assistance. For this, you want to provide specific names. So in this question, we're looking for an answer that states you provide TA for the LAV program or for the rural program.

Question 11-- list all the project partners that you listed in your summary data sheet. This may or may not apply to you. **Question 12**, priority areas-- you'll get these from the original solicitation. OVW will list priority issue areas that they want groups to focus on, and that's where that will go. It's right there.

(Minute 7:55) Section A2 – Staff Information

Section A2, Staff Information-- This is where staff funded by TA funds are reported. If your funds were used to fund staff positions, answer yes to **A2**, and you'll be answering **question 13**.

So when considering how to report staff, only report FTEs for staff who are fully or partially funded by grant funds. And you want to include contracted work as well. So if someone is partially funded, funded for less than six months or part time, then you will want to pro-rate that. You will only report the time that your program's grant funds funded their work. You want to report to the second decimal. And if grant funds support overtime or grant services and not a particular person, you'll want to calculate that and change it into an FTE

We do have some tips for calculating FTEs. I find this particularly helpful if I'm trying to come up with info on someone who has been a contractor. Here is a chart that can help you calculate FTEs for a 40 hour work week. In a six month period, there are 1,040 working hours, so you can use the math here to help calculate the amount of salary that the grant budgets for a particular employee.

Here's an example of calculating an FTE. Full time employee funded 100% with TA co-operative agreement funds worked full time for the first two and the last two months of the reporting period. She did not work under the grant for the middle two months of the period. So in this case, you would need to prorate the FTE to reflect four months of work during the six month reporting period. The correct FTE for this staff person is 0.67 FTE.

(Minute 10:05) Section B – Program Activities

Section B, Program Activities-- all grantees must complete this question. This is a checkbox question. On here, you would check all program activities that your TA cooperative agreement engaged in during the reporting period.

(Minute 10:30) Section C1 – Training

Section C1, Training-- If TA provider program funds were used for training during the current report period, then check yes. And you're going to answer **questions 15 through 18**.

So when we talk about training, we want to discuss the definition of training. Training is defined as activities for professionals or volunteers acting in the role of a professional to improve their response to victims or survivors as it relates to their role in the system. So that is the official definition that we are using. Complete this section if grant funds were used to train non-grant funded people. Do not count staff development or grant funded staff or community education in this section.

When deciding whether or not to count something as training, think about the audience. If you're presenting to a group that is typically not seen as professionals that work with survivors or offenders, then think about whether or not what you are doing is actually training or perhaps community education instead. Once you've decided that in **Question 15**, you'll be asked about the number and types of trainings you provided. Report the total number of training events, either provided by TA program grant funded staff or through grant funds. Your audience will either be national, regional, statewide, or local.

Remember that a training event can be 20 minutes or a week-long conference. Both are considered one training event. So a conference would be an event that could last a day or more that can include workshops and address a number of topics. Workshops or seminars are small training events that can be part of a larger conference. New grantee orientation should only be reported by TA providers that coordinate and deliver the full NGO. If you present at an NGO, then that will be counted as a workshop or seminar.

Online learning environments would be an appropriate "other" that you could put in the "other" category for this section if you have an online learning environment or computer-based tutorial. Put "1" into the "other" category and name it, then let us know the audience. Most likely, it will be national, and you'll count it as one training event. And each person that signs up and completes this course or forum will be counted as one in the people trained section.

So here's a training example. Grant funded staff went to a three day long national conference and provided a workshop for a completely different audience each day. Grant funded staff also provided one statewide conference and two local train-the-trainer sessions. So in this case, in question 15 here, it would be filled out with three separate national workshops, because three separate groups participated, so national right in here. Workshop section right here. And you can see a 3 auto-filled in right there.

There would also be one statewide conference and two local train-the-trainer sessions that would be recorded. You can see those right there in this example as well.

This example is now continued to show how to report people trained. One hundred and ten professionals attended the grant-funded national workshops, 45 professionals attended the grant-funded conference, 35 professionals attended the grant-funded statewide conference, and eight professional attended the train-the-trainer session. Thirty-four total hours were spent on training.

So in this case, in **Question 16**, you would report all 198 professionals that were trained with grant funds. Make sure that you have broken them up into their appropriate disciplines, as this example shows. See how that 198 has been broken up by profession.

A note here is to only use the multi-disciplinary category as a last resort. It is an option on this form. However, it is one that doesn't give much information about who was trained. And it's best to try to break individuals up by the title that best describe them. And then in the narrative section, you can talk about the multi-disciplinary nature of the training, if that pertains to your situation.

You would also report in **Question 17**-- down a little further-- the total number of hours spent on training. Round by 1/4 hour. Only training time should be counted, so no prep time.

And this is also pure training time provided, so don't multiply the time that you spent training by the number of people attending the training. Just strictly the amount of time you spent at that training. And then here for question 18, check all content that was provided during training for this report period.

(Minute 17:10) Section C2 – Technical Assistance

Section C2, Technical Assistance-- if TA program funds were used for technical assistance, check "Yes" and answer **Questions 19 through 21**. Please only count technical assistance that was provided to people that you were funded to provide it to.

So here are some tips for reporting technical assistance. In **Question 19**, you are asked for the number of technical assistance activities.

So what is a technical assistance activity? Technical assistance is a wide variety of activities designed to facilitate individual or agency change in some systematic manner by providing expertise to solve the problem. There are many things that TA providers do that could fall under that definition. So this form provides some options for you.

First, we have site visits. A site visit is an in-person visit made to an agency or other location for the purpose of providing technical assistance consultation. So to report a site visit, just type in the number of sites given to each different type of recipients. And those recipients are listed here on the left. And you would fill in this column right here, just to the right.

Technical assistance consultation is a very broad category. They can be provided telephonically, electronically, via a chat room, or many other ways, including a round table. So each point of contact should be counted as one consultation. And those consultations would go in this column, just to the right of site visits.

Information request responses are defined as providing informational materials, including tool kits, articles, or packets. So any time you send information to a grantee, if you do send materials to a grantee, you can count that here as well as in the product section. And that we will get to in a little bit-- right here in this category here.

And finally, we have for referrals-- so any time you refer a grantee to another TA provider, a web site, et cetera.

All right, so in **Question 20**, you want to report the total number of technical assistance hours. For this question, you can count time that includes researching for a grantee or any preparation for responsing to a grantee's request, as well as the time it took for the response itself.

For **Question 21**, topics of TA-- simply check all that apply for this report period.

(Minute 20:50) Section C3 – Underserved Populations

Section C3, Underserved Populations-- if your TA funds are used to develop or enhance standard protocols or procedures for underserved populations, or to encourage the representation of underserved populations in coordination activities during the current reporting period, then you would check "Yes" for **C3** and answer **Questions 22 and 23**.

In **Question 22**, you would check all activities listed that your TA co-operative agreement funds were used to develop or enhance services for underserved populations, or to encourage the representation of underserved populations in coordination services.

So here for **Question 23**, indicate which populations were addressed for the activities that you reported in **Question 22**.

(Minute 22:05) Section C4 – Products

Section C4, Products-- if your TA co-operative agreement funds were used to develop, substantially revise, or distribute products during the reporting period, check "Yes" and answer **Question 24**.

For this chart here, enter the number of any product developed or revised, give us the title or topic, the intended audience, and the number used or distributed-- do those options right up on top here. You don't want the number printed, but you want the number distributed.

If the product was distributed in any language other than English, you would indicate that here on the far right. And if you did not develop a product during this report period but you did distribute them, then what you would do is fill out every column except for the number developed or revised. This rule of thumb also applies if you developed a product but did not distribute it, fill out every column except for number distributed.

(Minute 23:20) Section D – Narrative

Section D, Narrative-- Question 25 is asking about the status of your TA program, grant goals, and objectives. All TA providers must answer this question. Report on the status of your program grant goals and objectives that have been approved already by OVW. Refer to your original award letter if you're not sure what your goals and objectives are.

A note here is that your OVW program manager will pay very close attention to this question. This allows them to monitor your goals and objectives. Indicate whether the activities related to your objectives have been completed, delayed, or revised, and include any additional information that you think your OVW program manager will need to understand what it is you have or have not accomplished. So list any challenges or provide an explanation for any goals that are not following the timeline that you expected them to be following.

Let me scroll down-- for **Questions 26 and 27**, you are only required to answer these once a year for the reporting period of January to June. You can answer them for all reporting periods if you'd like, but that's at your discretion. You're only required to do so once a year.

For **26**, what is the most significant area of remaining needs with regard to increasing victim/survivor safety and offender accountability? So for this question, consider geographic regions, underserved populations, as well as challenges and barriers unique to the grantees that you serve. So where you see the tools, resources, funding, et cetera, not going too adequately.

Question 27 asks what you see as the most significant needs of grantees and/or emerging issues. These are the things that you're seeing the grantees need that the awards are not meeting.

And in **Question 28**, this is always optional, but it's still important, if you have any other data that would more fully and accurately reflect the work you do that you did not fully get reflected in the form, this is the place to put that. This is also a great place to put any additional information that you think us here that Muskie may need in order to make your data more complete, or to help us better understand your data.

That's it for the form itself. Once you have completed the form, you must go to the last page and validate the form. When you have validated the form, it will give you a validation error for anything that you did not complete or missed. And it will ask if you wish to continue or return to the section to go over the missed information.

The first validation error that's shown is up here. And that's the red x. This means that you are missing some of the required information. If you wish to go back to that section, click “Yes” and fill in the missing data. If you click “No”, you can continue with the validation process, but be aware that you cannot complete validation process until you fix those errors.

The second type of warning is a reminder, with a yellow exclamation point. This tells you that something looks like it may be incorrect. You do not have to fix these issues in order to complete the validation process. If you wish to go back to the area that the message is referring to, click “Yes”. If not, click “No” and continue with the validation process.

After correcting or completing, return to the bottom of the form and click Validate until validation is complete. And lastly, you will get a final warning message that isn't really a warning message at all. It's stating that your form has been successfully validated and is ready for you to submit through GMS.

Another reminder is to please use Muskie's VAWA MEI website to help you with your reporting form. We have sample progress reporting forms, training dates and materials, Reports to Congress, summary data reports, and OVW updates on reporting.

If you have any questions as you are filling out the reporting forms, please do not hesitate to contact us at 1-800-922-8292, or through email at vawamei@maine.edu.

You can also contact your program specialist at 202-307-6026, or OVW GMS Support at 1-866-655-4482.

Thank you so much for participating in this online training and we look forward to hearing from you if you have any questions in the upcoming days. Thank you.