



SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH  
ASSOCIATES

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# The Strong Field Project 2012 Annual Evaluation Progress Report

## Executive Summary

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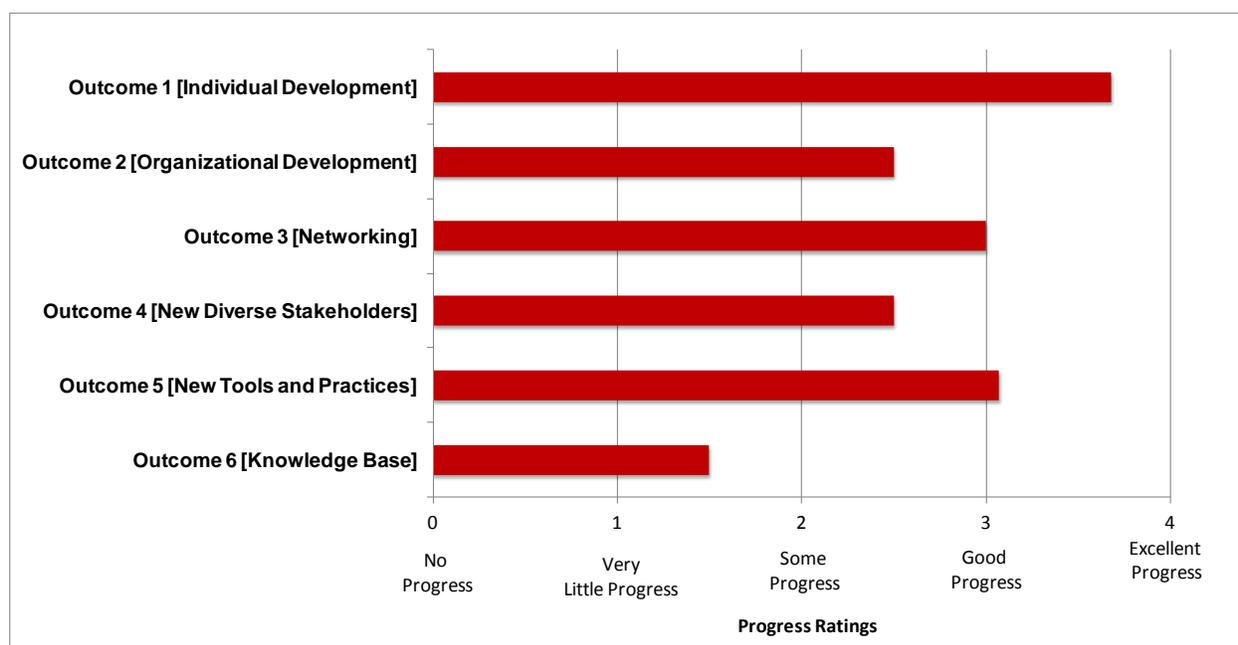
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## Executive Summary

As the Strong Field Project (SFP) enters its third year, Social Policy Research Associates' (SPR) analysis shows that there is strong and continued progress toward a number of SFP outcomes that have the potential to leave a lasting legacy for the DV field in California. Along with their SFP predecessors, the second generation of SFP participants and grantees are establishing their own mark and reporting benefits from their SFP participation. By the end of 2012, the central focus of this annual progress report, the Leadership Development Program (LDP) Cohort II completed two-thirds of its 18-month program, and the Organizational Strength Grants (OSG) Cohort II grantees were a half year into their work. This past year also marked considerable network building and knowledge sharing (NBKS) through events such as the well-received SFP Institute.

Building on the Coordinating Committee (CC) and Advisory Group (AG) members' assessments of progress towards SFP outcomes, the evaluation team reviewed the participant-level data in this report to summarize our assessment of progress towards the major outcomes. (See Attachment 1 for the SFP Logic Model.) As a whole, we find particularly strong evidence of progress toward Outcome 1 (increases in individual skills in management and leadership) and Outcome 5 (creative and effective tools, practices, models and collaborations to address domestic violence). On the LDP side, this reflects both the intensive design of the LDP program as well as the ascension of LDP participants to new leadership positions. On the OSG side, this reflects the generation and potential of new models, strategies and tools for informing the growth of other DV organizations.

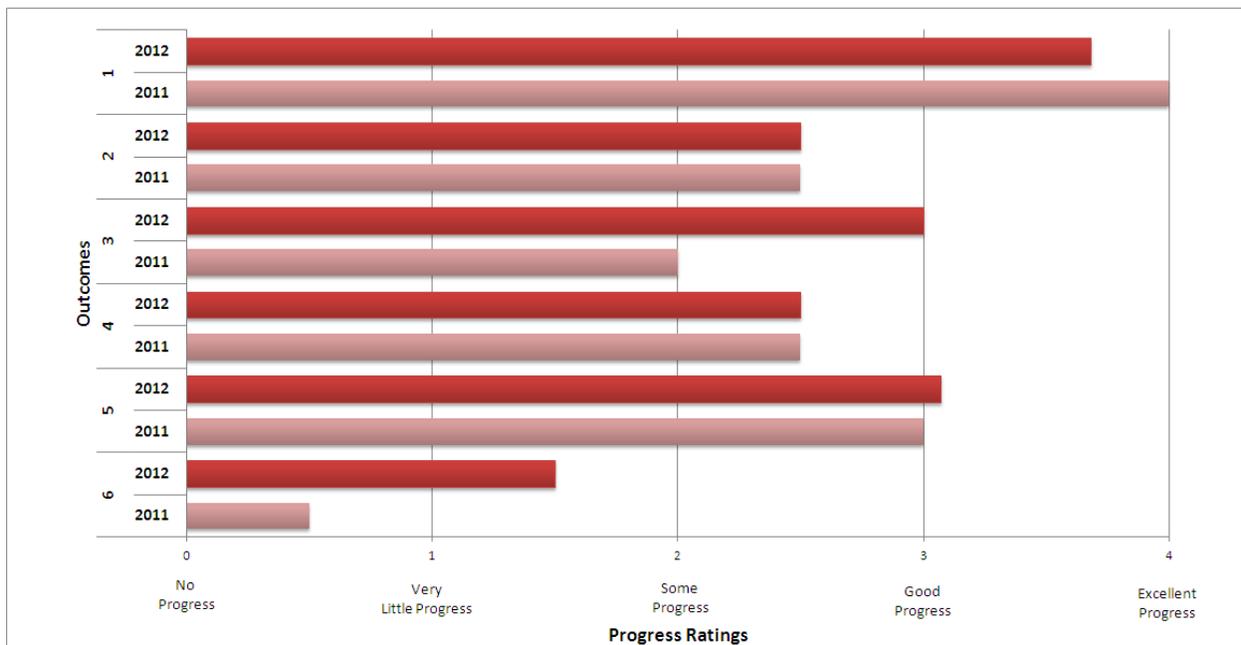


In addition, good progress has been realized toward Outcome 3 (stronger DV networks and field capacity to network and collaborate to promote peer learning and share best practices). This represents a significant improvement from last year's progress report and is attributed to stronger

peer networks through LDP-specific and SFP-wide gatherings such as the SFP Institute, as well as a growing sense of how knowledge is being shared among agencies.

Outcome 4 (new, diverse individual and organizational stakeholders engaged with DV organizations) was also rated as between some and good progress, with the most visible contribution being the increased diversity of LDP Cohort II. Lastly, Outcome 6 (a rich and relevant knowledge base useful to the DV field) shows little to some progress. While the SFP website has been fully launched, the knowledge base is still nascent in its structure as an accessible repository of SFP knowledge.

In comparing SFP’s progress in 2012 relative to 2011, almost all outcomes show progress over the previous year, particularly for Outcomes 3 and Outcome 6—largely due to the SFPI and the amount of knowledge shared in 2012. While still showing near excellent process, Outcome 1 showed a slight decrease due to the fact that the second cohort is currently finishing their training and is not yet able to fully report the impact on their leadership. Outcomes 2 and 4 are the only outcomes that have remained relatively the same based on either the ongoing work of new cohorts coming onboard or no new evidence to cite. While the ratings took into account the cumulative effect of the SFP’s work since its inception, the new LDP and OSG cohorts and their evolving progress create a sense of anticipation to see the final effects achieved from their involvement.



With this overall progress as a backdrop, we present the following findings specific to each key outcome.

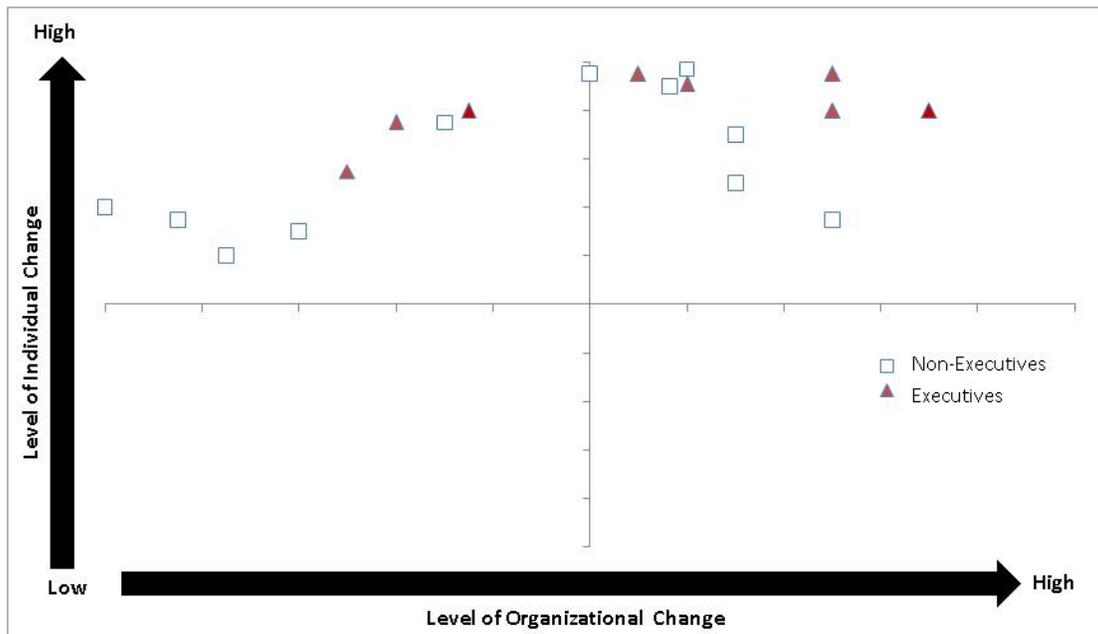
**Outcome 1 Findings: Increases in individual skills in management and leadership**

- **There is strong evidence of the LDP program making a noticeable impact at multiple levels of leadership development: leading self, leading others, and leading within a network or field.** LDP Cohort II participants described impact along numerous dimensions such as increased sense of confidence and, as a result,

greater risk taking. Participants are also reporting greater people-management skills, and enhanced field leadership. CC and AG members reinforced the sense of progress being made, particularly citing the number of LDP alumni who are now in state-level positions of leadership.

- **At this point in time, there is greater evidence of individual rather than organizational transformation from LDP participation.** Almost one-third of Cohort II participants reported experiencing obstacles in bringing back LDP tools and knowledge to their organizations. Some of the challenges in this area were time and resource constraints, competing priorities and staff turnover. However, another contributing factor was LDP participants’ positions of power within their organizations and their associated inability to influence change—particularly among non-ED participants.

**Individual and Organizational Transformation Mapping by Executive vs. Non-Executive Positions of LDP Cohort 2<sup>1</sup>**



- **Peer coaching circles are highly valued but could use additional follow-up support.** Nearly all LDP Cohort II members appreciate the peer coaching circles for reducing their sense of isolation and for the opportunity to see expert coaching modeled by CompassPoint staff. Some cohort members needed more support and practice in bringing back techniques and tools that do not necessarily come naturally to them or do not fit with their organizational culture. They are

<sup>1</sup> This chart was generated based upon a combination of (1) participants’ self-ratings, (2) the lead CompassPoint trainer’s assessment, and (3) SPR’s review of the evidence and stories reported by the participants.

requesting that trainers help them practice and develop stronger accountability mechanisms for implementation.

- **Emerging and mid-level leaders emphasize the importance of fundamental management and supervisory training.**
- **StrengthsFinder implementation in LDP Cohort II organizations has been slow.** The relatively slow rate of progress is largely due to constraints of time and resources, rather than to insufficient interest.
- In summary, LDP continues to have very powerful and noticeable impacts on its participants, despite the fact that there are fewer EDs in this cohort. It is apparent that CompassPoint’s adjustments to the training curriculum have accelerated certain aspects of learning and application for Cohort II. This is evident by the strong overall progress and “high” individual transformation ratings. At the same time, as CompassPoint wraps up Cohort II’s training, it is important to be mindful of the obstacles that non-EDs face and to support Cohort II to bring back and fully implement some fundamental tools (e.g., StrengthsFinder) and continue to practice and improve their coaching abilities.

#### ***Outcome 2: Measurable improvements in organizational strength***

- **The timing and variation of CCAT administration dates has posed serious challenges to the utility of CCAT data for evaluation purposes.** While all Cohort I grantees took the *first* round of the CCAT before the award of the OSG grant, the time varies from February 2009 to March 2010—that is, anywhere from about four to 17 months before the grant period started. This variation translates to an inconsistent baseline period. For the 12 Cohort I grantees that took a *second* round, it was generally in the fall of 2011, which was just over the halfway mark of their two-year grant term. Thus, it may be said that the second round of the CCAT did not serve as a “post-test” that would reveal changes after the end of the OSG grant period. Cohort II presents less of a challenge, in that all 15 of these grantees took a round of the CCAT in approximately the same window of time before the Cohort II grant.
- **At least one-third of OSG Cohort II grantees feel that the main or only value of the CCAT is that it simply confirmed or validated what they already knew about their organizations.** Depending on the grantee’s perspective, this was either helpful or unnecessary.

#### ***Outcome 3: Stronger DV networks and field capacity to network and collaborate to promote peer learning and share best practices***

**The NBKS events of 2012 have increased trust, collaboration and SFP participants calling upon each other for advice and support.** LDP participants and OSG grantees report that the SFP’s Institute and webinars, along with the LDP- and OSG-specific gatherings and webinars, have been invaluable in providing the time and space for SFP participants to connect with DV peers, learn and share resources with each other, and reach a comfort level that promotes communication between organized events and at non-SFP events. Similar to last year’s findings, LDP participants have shown the most growth in terms of relationships and knowledge

sharing, owing largely to the size, intensity, and design of the program. Similarly, OSG members use their in-person meetings to share project updates and promising practices with each other. Finally, the SFP Institute, and the two SFP webinars, connected 259 people in the field to network directly and indirectly.

**Outcome 4: New, diverse individual and organizational stakeholders engaged with DV organizations**

- **LDP is responsible for a great deal of the increased engagement of diverse stakeholders.** Respondents generally attributed the greater engagement of diverse stakeholders to the diversity within LDP Cohort II and the second Advisory Group. Respondents also pointed to BSAV’s complementary strategies, typically BSAV’s Cultural Competency initiative, as efforts that more explicitly and effectively address diversity.

**Outcome 5: Creative and effective tools, practices, models and collaborations to address domestic violence**

- **OSG projects hold rich potential for informing the larger DV field, though OSG knowledge is underutilized within SFP.** In addition to the innovative first generation LDP and OSG tools highlighted in the 2011 report, it is clear from conversations with OSG Cohort II grantees that exciting models and strategies are being developed and tested, particularly around fund development, but also in the areas of evaluation systems, organizational restructuring, communications and advocacy. The exhibit below highlights priority areas and the corresponding Cohort II grantees. Fund development is the area with the most representation (five grantees) while leadership sustainability is the only priority area with no representation among Cohort II grantees.

**OSG Cohort II Grantees by Priority Funding Area**

OSG Grantee Category	Strategies and Activities
Fund development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>My Sister’s House</b> (develop and launch a highly sustainable revenue-generating enterprise that will augment sources of fund development.)</li> <li>• <b>Center for Community Solutions</b> (build a social enterprise venture to diversify funding sources.)</li> <li>• <b>YWCA of San Gabriel Valley</b> (earned income venture that will establish an ongoing, flexible means of financial support for the agency, and address employment, training and job placement for DV survivors.)</li> <li>• <b>Jenesse Center</b> (formulate an in-house and centralized development function/office that will monitor, develop and build all funding sources.)</li> <li>• <b>East Los Angeles Women’s Center</b> (increase agency’s capacity to raise funds from individuals, corporations and foundations.)</li> </ul>
New systems and/or technology for evaluation or organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Family Violence Law Center</b> (develop a new system for meaningful and ongoing program evaluation that includes a business model analysis.)</li> <li>• <b>Maitri</b> (implement Community Impact Project which will create evaluation system to gauge Maitri’s impact on clients and community.)</li> </ul>

OSG Grantee Category	Strategies and Activities
efficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Korean Community Center of the East Bay</b> (develop a new system to evaluate Shimtuh’s culturally competent model by using framework to reflect on organizational outcomes and processes.)</li> <li>• <b>The Center for Violence-Free Relationships</b> (become a performance-driven organization by aligning services with mission and target population, measuring progress towards outcomes, and using self-correcting processes.)</li> </ul>
Strategic restructuring and/or collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Center for a Non-Violent Community</b> (transform organizational structure to one of collaborative leadership and increase capacity of newly created Leadership Team.)</li> <li>• <b>Shasta Women’s Refuge Inc.</b> (merger with the Shasta Family Justice Center to increase capacity to serve victims of intimate partner and family violence and sexual assault at one location.)</li> <li>• <b>STAND!</b> (engage in post-merger integration activities including restructuring services and improving communications with the community.)</li> </ul>
Strategic communications and marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Interval House</b> (development and implementation of a communications strategy to gain visibility, increase funding, increase collaboration and increase prevention education.)</li> <li>• <b>Community Resource Center</b> (utilize new evaluation data to develop a DV awareness campaign that increases the fundraising and advocacy capacity of CRC and regional DV agencies.)</li> </ul>
Policy advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CUAV</b> (through Campaign Development Project, mobilize members and constituents to develop and win campaigns that improve lives and reduce vulnerability to abuse.)</li> </ul>
Leadership sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No Cohort II grantees were selected under this funding priority area.</li> </ul>

- **At the same time, it is also clear that the level of awareness and knowledge about OSG within the SFP is much lower than about LDP progress and outcomes.** This holds true at the CC and AG level, as well as among LDP participants.

***Outcome 6: A rich and relevant knowledge base useful to the DV field***

- **The creation of a knowledge base useful to the DV field is still in a nascent phase.** Much of this knowledge currently resides with individual DV leaders and on the SFP website. What the knowledge base should contain, how this knowledge will be shared with the larger field, where the knowledge base will reside, and who will manage it after the SFP sunsets are all questions that have yet to be determined.

Although not a formal part of the SFP workplan, following are reviews of progress on Outcomes 7 and 8.

***Outcome 7 & 8: Increased skills, knowledge, spaces to develop a coordinated & shared agenda and Increased engagement by state and local leadership to shape and advance a coordinated DV policy advocacy agenda***

- **The SFP is laying an important foundation for a shared agenda through the development of DV leaders' knowledge, skills, and networks.** Additionally, the SFP has provided DV leaders with various venues to connect and discuss ideas. Moving forward, DV leaders expressed interest in holding more discussions with each other and further engaging The Partnership to develop this agenda. However, questions around the logistics of these discussions (e.g., who would facilitate them and where they would be held), along with the viability of a shared agenda still persist.

***Synergistic Effects of Multiple BSAV Participation***

- In this round of data collection, we were not only interested in the progress toward individual SFP outcomes, but also in how the various SFP components reinforced each other and if any synergistic effects existed from participation in multiple BSAV opportunities. Generally, we found that the reported synergistic benefits were very low. This suggests there may be some additional missed opportunities to leverage and reinforce the many rich opportunities that BSAV provides to the DV field in California.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the perspectives and analyses presented in this report, here we discuss resulting recommendations and areas for consideration.

***Strategy-Specific Implementation***

- **Supplement onsite LDP training with follow-up and individualized support to engage senior leaders around change and transition management.** Some LDP cohort members requested more individualized and/or follow-up support to bring back techniques and tools that do not come naturally to them or do not immediately fit within their organizational cultures. This is particularly the case with mid-level managers who report encountering strong resistance from their executive directors.
- **Reconsider the value and ultimate purpose of the CCAT.** The SFP should reconsider how the CCAT data will be used for evaluation purposes, particularly given the challenges with its administration dates for OSG Cohort I, and in light of previously raised limitations (e.g., the CCAT is a snapshot in time, it may reflect less about OSG project success and more about larger contextual challenges). The CCAT data have also not been well set up for maximum utilization, especially without in-depth support to make meaning of the organizational assessment data.
- **Better harness the potential of OSG knowledge.** While OSG grantees are clearly generating models, practices and tools with rich potential for benefiting the field, it is also clear from interviews with CC and AG members that, as a whole, they are more knowledgeable of the processes and outcomes of the LDP

than the OSG component. This challenge may be addressed by giving more attention to OSG products, such as organizational case studies, and opportunities for OSG grantees to share their experiences and learnings with other SFP stakeholders in person.

### ***Opportunities for Leadership***

- **Reconsider the mixture of participants with positional power and those who have potential to be “movement network” leaders in the recruitment and selection of the LDP Cohort 3.** Recruiting more executive directors and senior staff will help address the challenge of participants who—given their positions of power within their organizations and associated ability to promote change—have encountered obstacles to implementing LDP tools and knowledge to facilitate organizational transformation. In addition, Cohort 3 would benefit from having more leaders who can play a key role in facilitating critical field-level conversations around a shared agenda and extending the reach of the SFP beyond its sunset.
- **Model transference of power and engage DV leaders in planning of key networking activities such as the SFPI in 2014.** With an eye towards sustaining SFP’s contribution to the DV field and the importance of the CC’s co-creation with DV leaders, the CC might consider engaging DV leaders more substantively as thought partners and not just as participants of the SFP. This might include working with leaders to set the agenda and plan key networking/knowledge sharing events such as the 2014 SFP Institute. Key questions might include: What is happening in the SFP that is not happening in other spaces in the DV field? How can the outcomes of the SFP be replicated and scaled up? What critical conversations need to be had?
- **Create a Women of Color LDP Cohort.** Given that relatively little progress has been made on Outcome 4 (engagement of diverse stakeholders) and based on the top priorities that emerged from the CC/AG November 2012 retreat, there was strong interest in developing and promoting the leadership of women of color in the DV field. This focus would not only clearly reinforce SFP’s commitment to diversity and its direct engagement of diverse stakeholders, but also help create more pathways to leadership for women of color in the DV field.

### ***Scaling for Impact and Cross-Networking***

- **Continue to link complementary projects, especially the BSAV Cultural Competency Project, to the SFP.** Much of the feedback SPR received suggests that other BSAV efforts, particularly the BSAV Cultural Competency Project, can more explicitly and effectively engage diverse stakeholders through serving as a source for LDP participant recruitment, and as a source for models of culturally competent practices.
- **Promote cross-sector connections as part of the networking and scaling up of the SFP’s impact.** Moving forward, a number of those interviewed said it was important to continue engaging in cross-sector work. This includes cross-sector collaboration such as with the health care field—with a focus on DV prevention and reproductive health.

- **Facilitate critical conversations and linkages with other movement building efforts such as Move to End Violence.** SFP participants are expressing readiness to better use the SFP space for critical field-level conversations, noting that there has not been enough discussion in the DV community around what a movement should look like and what direction it should take.

Similarly a CC member urged the SFP to continue to create dedicated spaces for DV leaders and organizations to come together and create a shared vision:

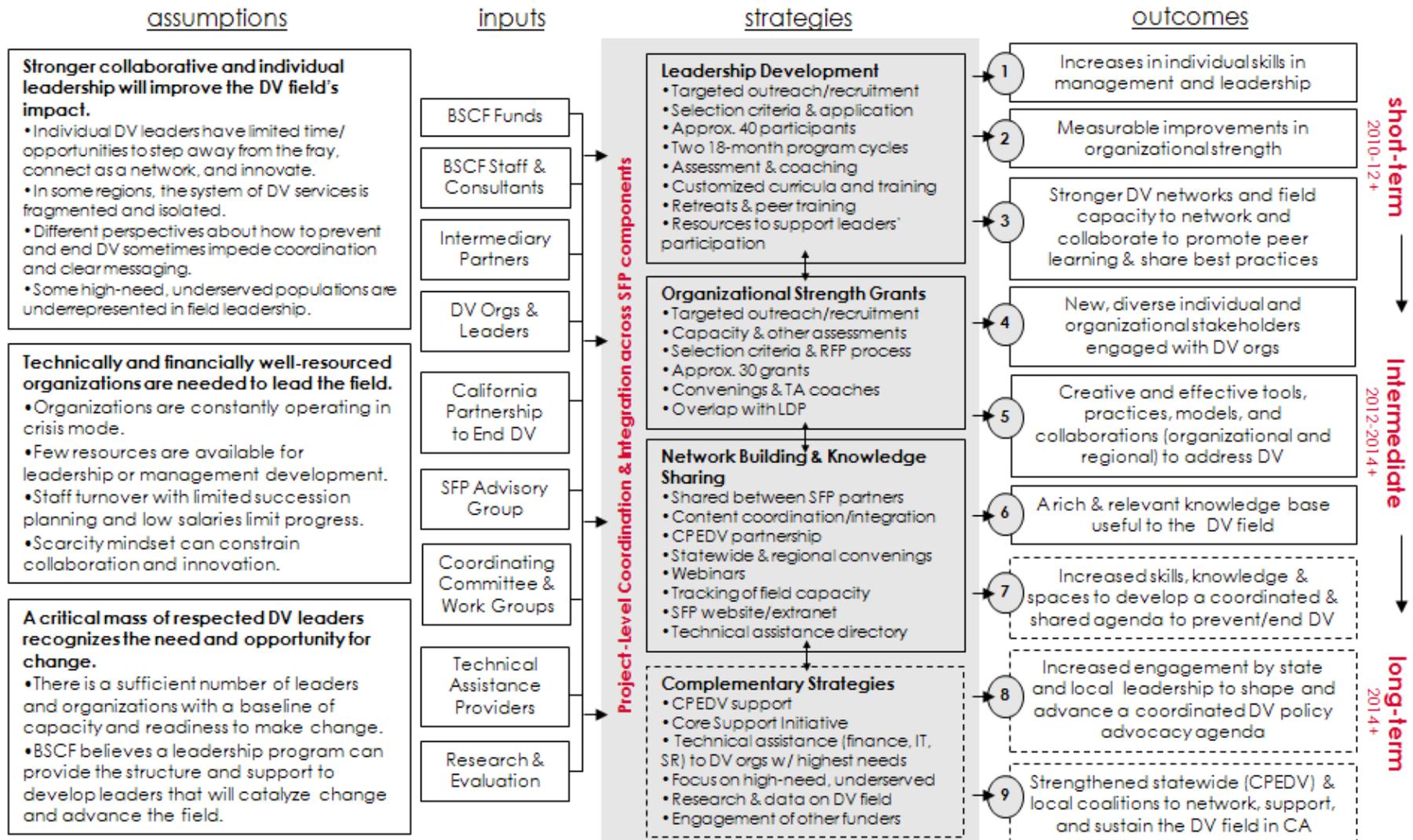
*“Significant money needs to be invested creating a space where really difficult conversations can be had, where everyone can be participate, [a statewide town-hall] ...There’s deeper work that needs to be done around it, and there’s an opportunity with the SFP to create that space for really authentic conversations.”*

In summary, the SFP has made noticeable strides in achieving its outcome goals in 2012. The foundation for a stronger DV field appears to be firmly in place with a critical mass of leaders with strengthened management and leadership skills, with organizational strengthening models and practices created, and with an extensive amount of networking and knowledge sharing among DV leaders. As they continue this work, the SFP partners and participants are also now expressing the need and desire to focus on further transferring and institutionalizing the knowledge gained and practices developed. Fundamentally, the level of trust and relationships has deepened, thus enabling a community of leaders to reach a point of readiness to engage in authentic conversations about the needs of the field. Through this process, they will strengthen their ability as a field to end domestic violence.

# strong field project model

updated 12/13/12

guiding values: diversity, collaboration, innovation, learning



**ultimate impact:** a strengthened DV field, equipped with a critical mass of diverse leaders and organizations that have sufficient capacity and the right support, tools, skills and knowledge to lead forward a stronger movement to prevent and end DV