



TRANSGENDER ADVISORY BOARD REPORT

May 2019

Overview

In May of 2019, Gilead's Public Affairs team hosted a Transgender Advisory Board meeting with leaders from Transgender advocacy and healthcare organizations. The meeting's objective was to identify specific opportunities and priorities for engagement and improved health outcomes within the Transgender community. The leaders identified the following advocacy priorities:

- Invest in Trans-led housing services for Transgender communities
- Support economic empowerment opportunities for Transgender communities
- Invest in workforce and professional development programs for Transgender communities
- Invest in Trans-led direct services
- Invest in re-entry services for formerly incarcerated Trans individuals
- Invest in community-informed approaches for Transgender communities
- Continue to invest in innovative solutions and research within Transgender communities
- Continue to provide resources for Trans-specific and Trans-led programs
- Highlight reproductive rights for Transgender men and women

The meeting focused on specific ways to support Trans organizations and coalitions, outlining challenges and opportunities in **financial independence, professional development, capacity building, coalition building and rapid-response grant-making.**

Barriers to Success for Transgender Advocacy and Healthcare Organizations

1. The lack of funding for Trans-led organizations and initiatives

Prioritize funding Trans-led organizations whose boards and/or staff are at least 50% Transgender individuals. For organizations that are not Trans-led, focus on funding those that prioritize hiring Trans individuals into positions beyond programs focusing on Transgender communities. Lastly, when it comes to the grant-making process, organizations providing funding should incorporate a collaborative model instead of making the Request for Proposals (RFP) process competitive for Trans-led organizations.

“Trans-led organizations need unrestricted resources in order to provide direct services for their clients.”

- Maria Roman

“Diversity is about numbers and inclusion is about the impact.... In order to achieve both, organizations have to invest in professional development opportunities.”

- Tatyana Moaton

2. The need for professional development as a key driver to sustainability

Investment in professional development opportunities for Trans individuals is a key strategy to help improve their overall health and well-being. Trans people need support through professional development centered on ideas to improve hiring practices, opportunities to provide soft-skills training to Trans individuals Transitioning from a community member to a service provider and re-entry programs for those who have been incarcerated, with a focus on re-entering the workforce.

3. The need to improve organizational Infrastructure and administrative capacity

For Trans-led organizations to be successful, their capacity and infrastructure must be prioritized — namely, their administrative and programmatic training needs. Administratively, this includes providing training in financial management, data management, evaluation, grant writing and other areas as needed. Programmatically, organizations should prioritize training that is trauma-informed to better provide tailored services to their clients.

“Capacity building should be a shared process and not forced or mandated to a singular focus area.”

- Morey Riordan

Financial Independence

Although financial independence looks different in various communities at risk for HIV, it is generally defined as having enough resources to be self-sufficient and can be challenging for Trans communities to achieve due to a variety of factors. Important aspects of fostering financial independence in Transgender communities include:

- **Creating financial opportunities.** One way to support Transgender communities is to help them develop financial management skills.
- **Prioritizing re-entry populations.** It's important to explore opportunities to partner with re-entry programs and facilities in order to provide job readiness, skills-building and coping skills training to incarcerated Trans individuals.
- **Focusing on trauma-informed direct services.** There is an ongoing need to focus on direct services for Transgender communities that incorporate trauma-informed approaches around substance abuse, mental health and other direct services.
- **Ensuring collective organizational sharing.** Resources are needed to share knowledge on the individual level and share information at the organizational level across Transgender communities.
- **Ensuring equitable resources.** Organizations should ensure all Transgender communities have equitable access to resources that facilitate improved health outcomes across communities.

Professional Development

For Trans individuals to achieve financial independence, there needs to be an investment in professional and career development opportunities, which often exclude or do not reach out to Trans communities. These opportunities are needed for Trans individuals to acquire valuable, Transferable skills they can use throughout the workforce. Professional development efforts should consider:

- **Prioritizing employable skills.** Organizations providing professional development opportunities for Transgender communities should prioritize employable skills including conflict resolution and interpersonal skills training.

- **Prioritizing sustainable leadership development opportunities.** Investment in the leadership of Trans-led organizations is needed.
- **Providing comprehensive professional development opportunities.** Professional development opportunities should extend outside HIV employment opportunities and organizations should provide opportunities for career training as well as tuition reimbursement.
- **Ensuring professional development programs are community led.** The most effective way to ensure these programs reflect the experiences of and barriers faced by Trans people is to let Trans-led organizations develop and run them.
- **Focusing on re-entry services.** There needs to be an intentional effort to work within the re-entry system and provide professional development opportunities for Trans individuals re-entering society after being incarcerated.
- **Supporting the entire community.** Professional development opportunities should be made available for both Trans people living with HIV and those who are not.

“Funders should trust Trans-led organizations to know what’s best for Transgender communities and provide them with the financial resources to implement professional development and leadership programs.”

- Aryah Lester

Capacity Building

Trans-led organizations must address capacity-building needs to ensure sustainable, long-term growth as this is a point of difficulty for many organizations. Organizations should receive training and technical assistance for the programs and services they provide as well as for their administrative processes to ensure they are executed with longevity in mind. Because capacity building and technical assistance needs vary across organizations, it is important that each organization prioritize:

- **Identifying infrastructure needs.** Depending on an organization's stage, advisors recommended Trans-led organizations prioritize training needs for the following areas: fiscal management, data management, grant writing, program evaluation, human resource and hiring practices, resource development and mentorship programs.
- **Identifying programmatic training needs.** Advisors recommended Trans-led organizations prioritize the following programmatic training needs depending on the focus and longevity of the organization: cultural sensitivity, program management, trauma-informed approach, implicit bias, mental health and leadership coaching.
- **Focusing on sustainable training needs.** Training opportunities should be targeted towards those involved in the short- or long-term implementation of programs within Trans-led organizations, including decision-makers.

“There should be an investment into executive coaching for Trans-led leaders to ensure organizational sustainability.”

- Sean Coleman

Coalition Building

Trans communities have a history of engaging in coalition-building throughout their movement. To ensure continued momentum within the Transgender rights movement, Trans-led organizations must work to build coalitions that advocate for the priorities of the Transgender community. Recommendations to build and leverage coalitions successfully within the community include:

- **Ensuring coalitions are community-led.** Successfully implementing and scaling coalition movements depends on healthy coalition-building strategies, which can be empowered by appointing community representatives nominated and supported by community members. The main obstacle to successful coalition building has been

trying to capture issues specific to certain regions or demographics and successfully incorporate them into the “bigger” message.

- **Identifying indicators and metrics of success.** Key indicators of success for any coalition should include unified support for and achievement of primary goals, Trans individuals at the center of the movement and conversation, programs that help other branches improve via cross-training, a refined administrative mechanism, the employment of evidence-based solutions and ongoing and long-term financial stability.
- **Ensuring coalitions are equitable.** Healthy coalitions must ensure that Trans leaders have access to all the services and support needed to thrive. This includes a strong sense of agreement and collective thinking across individuals in the coalition, established boards of Trans representatives to help perfect messaging, regional strategizing to improve efficacy and ongoing training to ensure continuity as individuals Transition out of leadership positions in the coalition.
- **Establishing strategy-driven coalitions.** To scale a Trans-led coalition, organizations should implement a focused strategy that includes a commitment to meeting the most urgent and realistic needs as well as a fiscal sponsor with infrastructure to support the coalition goals and progress.

“We must continue providing assistance in creating accessible services for unincorporated and indigenous areas.”

- Matte Jim

Rapid Response Initiatives

There continues to be an increased need for rapid response initiatives to improve the health outcomes of Transgender communities, especially when it comes to ancillary services such as housing, workforce development and legal services. Rapid response initiatives should focus on:

- **Supporting community needs.** There are a myriad of rapid response opportunities, including legal assistance,

access to food programs, sexual violence prevention, clothing and Transportation.

- **Prioritizing access points.** Rapid response initiatives should be prioritized in Trans-specialized spaces that provide resources and a safe space.
- **Including all communities.** Ensure diverse communities, such as those living in unincorporated or indigenous locations, have access to services as well.
- **Encouraging community-led responses.** As with capacity and coalition-building, providing space for community members to develop and implement rapid response projects is important to making them relevant and effective.

“Piloting mini-grants for community members to implement projects within their communities when rapid response is needed.”

- *Tori Cooper*

Additional Opportunities for the Private Sector

Organizations can work with potential grantee(s) to bridge gaps between grassroots Trans-led organizations and larger Trans-led organizations. Pilot projects would include direct service programs that incorporate professional development opportunities to improve the health outcomes of Transgender communities.

GILEAD ATTENDEES

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