EVALUATION REPORT OF:

DISASTER RESILIENCE LEARNING COLLABORATIVE

Creating culturally-grounded healing spaces by leaders of color for leaders of color

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Welcome!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I. THE DRLC: AN OVERVIEW

The massive wildfires that hit Oregon in September 2020 had a tremendous impact on the health and well-being of communities across the state. Oregon experienced a doubling in acres burned compared to the next-worst fire season—and a 100-fold increase in residences destroyed or damaged, many of them the homes of rural low-income communities of color. In the immediate aftermath of this disaster, community-based organizations serving communities of color identified profound gaps in communications, evacuation, shelter, and other systems intended to alert and protect the state's residents from disasters.

The Disaster Resilience Learning Collaborative (DRLC) was created to find and bring together culturally specific and culturally responsive CBOs to help those disproportionately impacted by disasters, especially Latinx and tribal nations of the Pacific Northwest (PNW) communities.

The DLRC pilot was directly informed by the conversations (1) UWCW had with community of color community-based organizations impacted by the 2020 fires, OHA's environmental public health department, and OHA's Climate and Health Resilience Plan (2).

OUR VISION

The DRLC pilot, and proposed network, vision is to advance equitable disaster resilience through healing-centered, culturally grounded collaborations and actions. Healing-centered programs have the capacity to restore identity and support healing for those impacted by disasters and those working with communities experiencing trauma. By sharing stories and connecting with others of similar cultures, individuals are more likely to open up to each other in order to help one another begin the process of healing and learning how to move forward together.

Our pathways for increasing resilience include:

- culturally grounded, healing-centered community engagement
- mental and emotional community health and wellness
- restoration of identity and relationship with self and community

We know that building resilience requires more than strengthening infrastructure and protecting natural resources. Our learning collaborative pilot was a space for statewide communities of color leaders to build relationships, center cultural ways of healing, and reimagine how disaster response strategies can better serve their communities. The pilot used an "education to action" approach, with culturally grounded learning circles.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Our first cohort explored personal and collective power, intending to create systemic shifts rooted in wholeness and relationships. To ensure the specific DLRC topics reflected the priorities and interests of participating organizations, the curriculum development team surveyed UWCW grantees and potential collaborative participants. Seven learning circles – facilitated online group gatherings among DRLC participants- were designed as a flexible, responsive curriculum to meet community-identified needs:

- Introduction and Community Building
- Personal and Community Wellness and Healing
- Climate Health and Disasters
- THRIVE Model (3) and Grant Introductions
- Adverse Community Experiences and Disaster Resilience
- Storytelling and Community-Public Health Partnerships
- Linking Dialogue with the Public Sector

It is also important to note that the lead facilitator for the learning circles is a mental and emotional wellness professional of color within our region, whose priority was to create a healing and safe space in which racial, historical, and personal traumas could be considered alongside the traumas of climate disasters.

Following the learning circle series, community-based organizations had the opportunity to apply for small grants to complete a project aimed at fostering resilience in their community. The grant project period is 6 months in duration; grantees will be invited to monthly group check-ins during the project period.

DRLC PARTICIPANTS

The lead organizers consisted of **Cristy Muñoz and Veyda Hernandez from United Way, Julie Sifuentes, Alyssa Mcclean, and Kim Tham from Oregon Health Authority, and Mandy Davis and Christy da Rosa from Trauma Informed Oregon.**

Ruth Zúñiga from Raices de Bienstar joined as the lead facilitator and consultant for this pilot program. **Ruben Cantu from Prevention Institute, Mark Yaconelli and Erica Alexia Ledesma from the Hearth, and Native Wellness Institute** were facilitators and consultants for the program's development.

The following community-based organizations are participants of this pilot program: **Rogue Climate, The Stronghold: A Culturally Responsive Peer Support Program, Southern Oregon LULAC, Centro de Servicios Para Campesinos, The Hearth, Catholic Charities of Oregon, Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice, Unete Oregon, Familias en Acción, Bridging Cultures, Next Door Inc, Centro Cultural, NARA NW Inc, PCUN.**

THE FUTURE AND LOOKING AHEAD

After the DRLC Story Circles ended in November 2022, DRLC participants created a plan to meet quarterly. Each meeting will have a different theme or topic, with a focus on continuing to work together, share ideas, and build stronger relationships with each other throughout the state. By sharing each other's ideas and continuing to build trusting relationships, we can better statewide inclusive disaster preparedness and resilience resources.

II. THE DRLC MODEL

"I think it was great to come together. Well-funded and to continue to fund people's work and community response, really... The willingness to have a cohort be centered around community response. And to me that is healing." - DRLC Participant

The DRLC pilot's vision is to advance equitable disaster resilience through healing-centered, culturally grounded collaborations and actions statewide. At the time of its conceptualization, we were unable to identify a single model able to propel both its values and mission. We also sought a model that could celebrate BIPOC leaders in disaster work. Drawing on each of our strengths, lead organizers developed a new model, temporarily called the DRLC model, with four crucial components to its conceptualization: social resilience, trauma-informed, healing-centered, and culturally grounding.
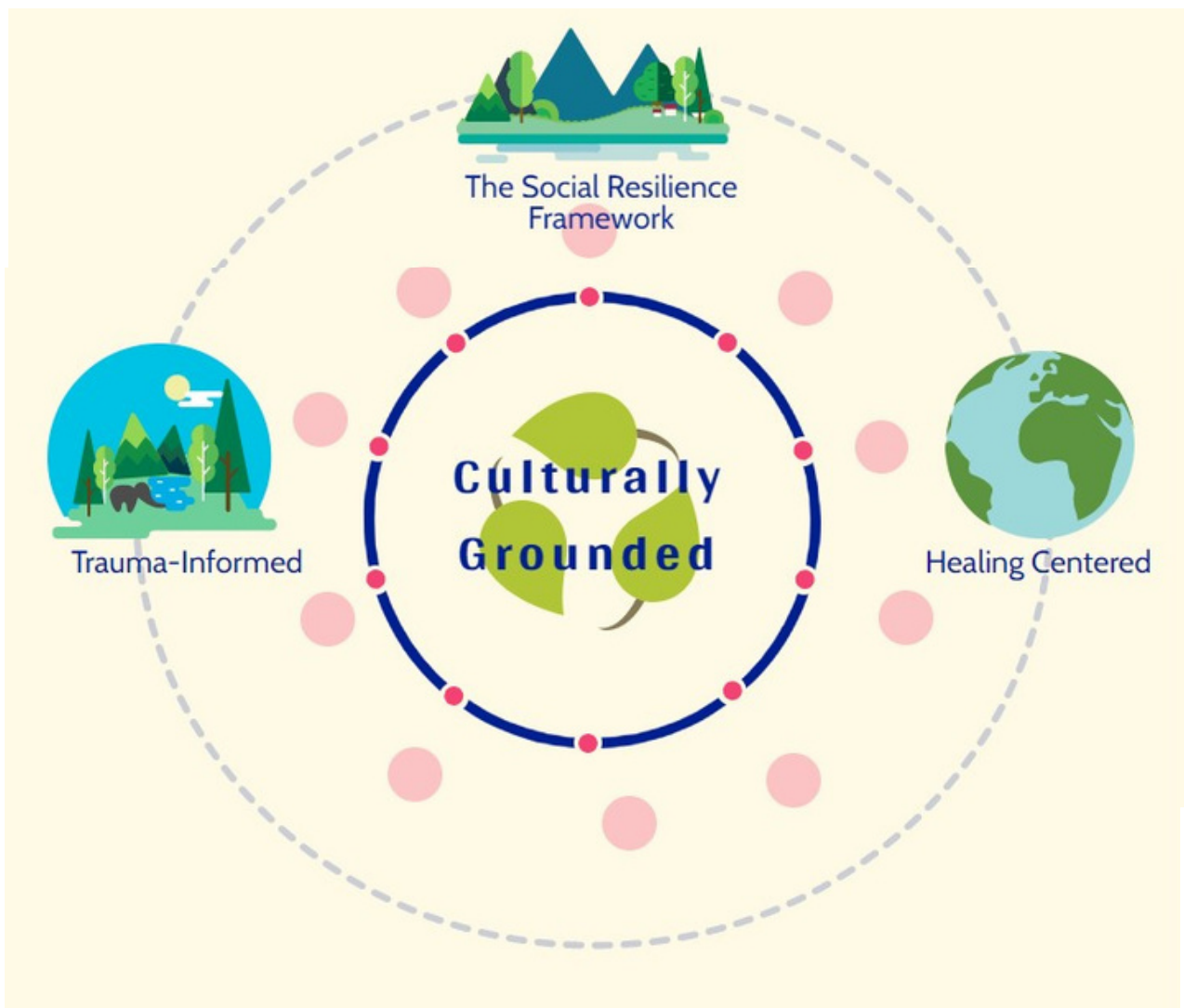
SOCIAL RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

"Social connections are essential to individual and community health."
- Julie Sifuentes (Oregon Health Authority)

Research shows strong evidence of a positive association between social resilience and health outcomes and that social factors are critical for communities facing large-scale disasters (4). OHA identified strengthening social community resilience as a prevention pathway to the adverse effects of climate change. As part of OHA's Climate and Health Resilience Plan (2), launched in 2017, OHA's Climate and Health Program and the Oregon Community Health Workers Association held a series of listening sessions in Hood River, Medford, and Portland, OR. In these sessions, OHA asked community health workers and leaders about their perspectives on social resilience and how climate change is affecting their communities. This Climate Change and Social Resilience report led to an Oregon perspective on different types of relationships (bonding, bridging, and linking) and how governmental agencies could strengthen these relationships towards community. This report (5) alongside research informed the social resilience framework OHA brought to inform the DRLC model.

The social resilience framework suggests that strengthening the following three types of relationships can improve community resilience. They are as follows:

- **Bonding:** Relationships among people with a common social background
- **Bridging:** Relationships among groups with different social backgrounds
- **Linking:** Relationships among people and organizations with power and resources

As lead organizers considered how to build community resilience in the face of climate change, the importance of social cohesion became apparent. The DRLC model applied the social resilience framework as the backbone of the model with the goal to foster these three types of relationships throughout Oregon.

These relationships manifested as follows:

Bonding

The DRLC sought to recruit at least two members per CBO organization, to have multiple CBO leaders per region in Oregon, and CBO leaders identifying as Latinx, Mesoamerican Indigenous, or a member of the tribal nations of the PNW

Bridging

The DRLC sought to connect CBO leaders statewide and outside their affinity group

Linking

The DRLC sought to connect CBO leaders to Oregon Health Authority, UWCW, and Trauma-Informed Oregon. We also sought to fund participation through a participation grant for the seven week learning circles. We also offered a small grant opportunity immediately after the learning circles concluded so that participants could immediately apply ideas they generated in the circles.

Did you know?

SOCIAL RESILIENCE

There are controversial discussions surrounding this resilience. A rationalist, economic approach to resilience diminishes how power (who has it, who doesn't, and why do/don't they?) plays a huge role in the disaster field (Keck & Sakdapolrack, 2013). The DRLC Model and social resilience framework seeks to challenge this notion of resilience, placing power relations, networking, and relationships at the forefront.

TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

Trauma informed care (TIC) at its core is a philosophical stance that recognizes the existence of trauma and the ways in which it impacts people across every aspect of their lives. It is based on growing knowledge about the negative impact of psychological trauma and how systems can unintentionally retraumatize individuals affecting their willingness to participate and engage.

Though clear definitions beyond its core vary, Trauma Informed Oregon suggests that TIC is an organizational change process striving to include the following:

- An awareness of the **prevalence of trauma**;
- An **understanding of the impact of trauma** on physical, emotional, and mental health as well as on behaviors and engagement to services; and
- An understanding that **current service systems can retraumatize individuals**.

What does trauma have to do with disaster work?

Trauma informed care recognizes the significant trauma brought about by natural disasters. Natural disasters, severe environmental hazards that can disrupt an individual's or community's ability to adapt, and runs the risk of adverse mental health outcomes including posttraumatic psychopathologies (6, 7). While this approach targets retraumatization risks, it also centers around the community, the belief that communities have the capacity to overcome trauma's detrimental effects when barriers are removed.

HEALING-CENTERED

"We need to consider the unique and diverse experiences of our communities and the power of community healing."
- Dra. Ruth Zúñiga (Raìces de Bienestar)

Inspired by the Praxis Project, Cristy Muñoz from United Way advocated for the DRLC model to be healing-centered to ensure space for healing-centered wellness and culturally grounded healing practices. United Way sourced their healing-centered lens from the Praxis Project which defines being healing centered engagement as a holistic approach to trauma:

1. Explicitly political rather than clinical

2. Culturally grounded and views healing as restoration of identity

3. Asset driven, well-being is defined as what is wanted rather than what symptoms to overcome

4. Includes providers with their own healing

The DRLC model sought to interweave healing-centered conversations and cultural healing practices into its curriculum. These included sensory care packages that were mailed out to participants, time dedicated to somatic/body movement, land acknowledgments led by participants and invited tribal nations guests, and storytelling activities.

Storytelling activities were conducted with guidance and facilitation of The Hearth who champion transformative, collaborative, and supportive storytelling to foster strength in communities. The pilot program also included a care team which was a set of two the lead organizers who could reach out one-on-one as support.

CULTURALLY-GROUNDED

"We acknowledge that relationship-based work requires us to move slowly. As noted by many network weavers and movement leaders: We will move at the speed of trust. We also acknowledge the legacies of trauma and exclusion that have harmed communities of color for generations—and know that healing takes time, vulnerability, and mutual support. "— Cristy Muñoz (United Way of Columbia-Willamette)

While each of these lenses informed and complimented the framework of the DRLC Model, an essential ingredient interwoven in each of these elements was the community itself. No model can function for communities without the community. Garcia (2020) (9), highlights the importance of incorporating cultural trends and preferences stating, "Failure to understand historical and cultural differences and nuances can result in friction, hostility, and marginalization" (p. 394).

This developing model sought to center each element within culturally-grounded, decolonizing practice. It should be noted that literature on what it means to be cultural grounding is vast in its execution and terminology. The depth and breadth of these adaptations can also range from surface level changes, such as solely linguistic translations, to a deep focus, grounding programs to the population (10). Literature (11) also overlaps with psychological adaptation terms depending on the type of curricula as well as debates and confusion surrounding cultural "sensitivity," "humility" and "competence." Regardless of the terminology, the common thread appears to be to improve curriculum's responsiveness to cultural practices so that the curriculum is complementary, or rather useful and relevant, to the target population (9, 11, 13).

For the purposes of this developing model, we see cultural grounding as recognizing historical and cultural differences, celebrating cultural knowledge and practices, and honoring ancestral traditions within every element of this model. With recognizing historical and cultural differences also comes a sense of survivance, actively resisting oppressive structures that lead BIPOC communities to be "vulnerable" and "marginalized."

As the pilot program was developed, lead organizers sought to integrate reflexivity questions in decision-making:

- Why are we doing what we are doing?
- Who or what is influencing our decision-making?
- Where is the community voice in this decision?
- Does our vision align with the community this program is intended for? How do we know?

In addition to these questions, the pilot program identified basic objectives that could represent some aspects of culturally-grounding practice. These objectives were as follows:

To create safe space by BIPOC and for BIPOC by having BIPOC-majority lead organizers, BIPOC-only participants that reflect the DRLC's communities, and other services (technology, translation, care packages) being sourced from BIPOC individuals

To be accessible by offering two BIPOC-identifying translators, captioning, and space for participants to speak in their preferred language

To dedicate space to build trust and relationships

To be flexible, adaptive, responsive to multiple avenues for feedback (feedback was reviewed and responded to during and after each session in the pilot program)

To honor cultural practices including body/somatic movements, storytelling, land acknowledgements by both participants and tribal nations leaders

To offer trust-based funding both for participation and to take action based on the pilot program's curriculum

Culturally grounding our work informed how we considered the social resilience framework, trauma-informed care, and a healing-centered approach. Through this lens, we sought to challenge dominant narratives around resilience that can enable systematic harm to BIPOC communities, honor intergenerational trauma and culturally-specific forms of trauma BIPOC communities are more likely to experience, and ancestral/traditional ways of healing. We also trusted in a cultural lens by reflexively questioning how our goals or the goals of these components may not be compatible with the goals of DRLC participants.

This ongoing process allowed us to respond to feedback quickly and shift learning circle objectives throughout the program. For example, lead organizers issued surveys to CBOs and met monthly with our facilitators and consultants to co-create the program's curriculum. Another goal for linking relationships included connecting our Latinx, Mesoamerican Indigenous people, and tribal nations of the PNW cohort with a small cohort of the public sector (e.g. emergency management). Recognizing that the first cohort needed space to continue building trust, these two cohorts did not formally meet. It is this organic, ongoing reflexivity that allows this model to stay attuned to the intentions of its members.

Did you know?

AFFINITY GROUPS

This pilot program started off categorizing its first affinity cohort as Latinx and Indigenous. DRLC participants were quick to challenge how these categories were vague and could encourage monolithic assumptions. After discussions with multiple participants, this report revised these categories to Latinx, Mesoamerican Indigenous people, and tribal nations of the Pacific Northwest (PNW) residing in OR.

The Social Resilience Framework

Trauma-Informed

Culturally Grounded

Healing Centered

III. THE DRLC TIMELINE

We recruited CBO leaders across Oregon. In modeling culturally grounded work, recruitment was based on years of nurtured relationships rooted in culture and trust between United Way of Columbia-Willamette and Ruth Zúñiga.

Our recruitment methods were personal, such as outreach, phone calls, and ongoing dialogue about our vision for this pilot program. While we had a formal application process, it was developed to be practical, accessible in language, and with a flexible deadline. We specifically recruited CBO leaders with organizations that were among the first responders to the 2020 wildfires that disproportionately impacted our Latinx, Mesoamerican Indigenous people, and tribal nations of the PNW communities.

Other recruitment factors were organizations that primarily worked with these communities, staff representatives who identified as Latinx, Mesoamerican Indigenous, and/or a member of the tribal nations of the PNW, and had a specific interest in or active disaster work. We sought to recruit 15 organizations and two staff members per organization.

PHOTO COURTESY OF VEYDA HERNANDEZ

THE DRLC PROJECT TIMELINE

January 2021

United Way and OHA Develop proposal and partnership

February - March 2021

CBO surveys, connected with CBO partners on curriculum offerings
Outreach to Latinx and Tribal Nations of PNW curriculum Facilitators

March - August 2021

OHA Contractors; curricula training/building
UW: CBO Outreach

June 2021

Q&A Session, Applications due!

September - November 2021

CBO Leaders join DRLC Learning Circles
Might Networks Launched

November - December 2021

Evaluation Begins
Exit Interviews
Grant applications

January 2022+

Grant process (sent, conducted, DRLC presentations)
DRLC Quarterly meetings

LEARNING CIRCLE CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Based on feedback from CBO representatives, the DRLC program launched on September 24, 2021. The program included seven meetings, or learning circles, dedicated to climate change, health and wellness, and social resilience. Each meeting was called a "learning circle" rather than a session or webinar as we hoped to develop a space that fostered mutual learning between participants as well as between participants and facilitators. Initially, the learning circles were structured to be more educationally-focused with small lectures and discussion. Due to feedback from participants, later circles were re-conceptualized as more collaborative with more mutual discussions and participant engagement.

Please note: Learning circles were held weekly on Friday afternoons from 12:30-4:00pm. Due to COVID-19 safety precautions and in recognition that participants resided across Oregon, the learning circles were conducted by Zoom.

DATE	CIRCLE TOPIC	FACILITATOR
9/24/21	Introduction and Community Building	Ruth Zúñiga, Julie Sifuentes, Cristy Muñoz , Christy da Rosa,
10/1/21	Personal and Community Wellness and Healing	Ruth Zúñiga, Native Wellness Institute
10/8/21	Climate Change, Disasters and Health	Julie Sifuentes
10/15/21	Adverse Community Experiences and Resilience (ACE | R Model)	Ruben Cantu
10/22/21	Tool for Health & Resilience in Vulnerable Environments (THRIVE Model) and Healing Centered grants	Ruben Cantu, Cristy Muñoz
10/29/21	Storytelling and Community Level Strategies, Community and Public Health Partnerships	Erica Ledesma, Kim Tham
11/5/21	Linking Dialogue	Ruth Zúñiga

THE DRLC GRANT

After the learning circles concluded on November 5, 2021, participants were able to apply for a closed grant, meaning that only DRLC participants could apply. The DRLC grant value ranged from $5,000-$14,000. The grant was open to innovative ways participants desired to foster climate and disaster resilience in their communities. Participants were able to collaborate with other DRLC participants from other CBOs. We also sought to increase the accessibility of the grant by accepting written or video proposals. The grant application was open near the end of the learning circles and due after the circles concluded.

PHOTO COURTESY OF VEYDA HERNANDEZ

Did you know?

LEARNING CIRCLES

Originally, the learning circles were called sessions. "Sessions" was later discarded as the term carried the notion that the program is one-sided, as in the facilitator teaches and the participants listen. "Sessions" was changed to "learning circles" to encourage mutual learning (similar to popular education) between participants and between facilitators and participants.

IV. EVALUATION RESULTS

Evaluation is an integral part of this program to evaluate the pilot program itself and to facilitate an ongoing dialogue about the development of the DRLC model. We used open, accessible avenues to gain quick and relevant feedback that allowed DRLC facilitators to make nimble changes to programming, making it culturally ground in real-time. Two questions at the forefront of the evaluation design were:

- Is it accessible? (e.g., Spanish/English, avoids jargon, clear, many feedback paths)
- Is it transparent? (e.g., Awareness of what it is for, access to de-identified data)

We also sought to develop an evaluation that was decolonizing as possible. Decolonizing in relation to evaluation meant we developed the evaluation so that it would be relevant to participants and with opportunities to be as involved in the evaluation as possible. Some examples of this work included informed consent with accessible language and sending participants de-identified data for review prior to analysis. The evaluation collected data from three different points to allow for different ways participants might feel most comfortable providing feedback. All required informed consent prior to gathering information. This included participant observation notes, post-circle surveys, and interviews.

Because the DRLC is a pilot program, we were unable to evaluate specific objectives and direct cause-effect outcomes. Instead, we explored the nature of the program itself to assess if participants felt this program was useful or relevant to their work. **Our three evaluation questions were:**

1. **Is the program's content relevant to the work of CBO leaders?**
2. **Is the program culturally relevant to the CBO leaders and the communities they serve?**
3. **What is the lived experience of participating in this program?**

Participant Observation Notes

Evaluators noted observations and participant feedback during the Learning Circles. The notes were guided by the DRLC evaluation questions and was a way to gather informal feedback to improve Learning Circle content and format from week to week. For this evaluation, we took notes on group discussions in terms of their content and key questions. Content could include topics such as thoughts in response to facilitators' presentations, group-thinking around community, culture, and resilience, and the cohort's perspective on climate change. An excerpt from one of the notes is as follows:

[Some of us emerged from challenging, traumatic backgrounds, and some through a strong sense of being tied to and inspired by family. Each has led to a need or calling to serve our communities. Our communities can be a source of healing and hope.] - 10.22.21 Notes

We sent out a de-identified copy of each circle's notes in English and Español to participants with the option of adding/changing them to better represent the discussions. We took notes for six out of the seven learning circles as we excluded the first introductory circle.

Post-Circle Survey

We invited participants to complete a short survey at the end of each learning circle for those more comfortable providing anonymous feedback and for lead organizers to respond to feedback prior to the next session. The survey consisted of six questions. In total, we received **55 full responses.**
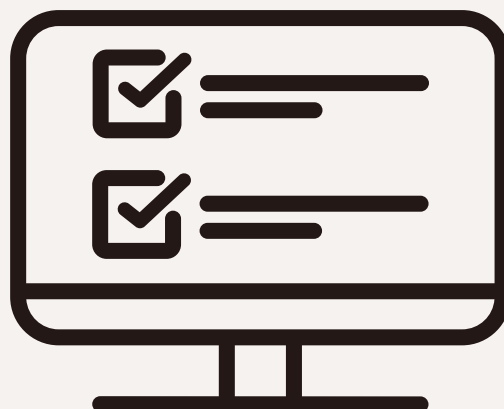
Interviews

Evaluators interviewed participants after the learning circle series was complete. The formal exit interviews provided an opportunity to understand participant's interest in applying for United Way's DRLC grant and for a deeper evaluation of the story circle experience. Participants had the option to attend an interview individually or grouped with others in their CBO. In total, we had 17 interviews and 20 participants out of the 21 participants. We were unable to schedule an interview with one participant despite multiple follow-ups.

The interviews consisted of eight questions that sought feedback on each participant's general experience, perspective on social resilience, improvements to be made, and their vision for the program moving forward:

1. What has your experience with this collaborative been like for you?
2. We sought to make this collaborative culturally-grounded and culturally-healing. Do you think we accomplished that? Why or why not?
3. A big part of this collaborative focused on community-bonding. How do you feel connections with other organizations relates to systematic changes?
4. Now that we've gone through the learning circles, how (if at all) do you feel your thoughts on resilience have changed? How would you describe it now?
5. What critical feedback do you have about the program and/or process?
6. What would you like to see continue?
7. What is your vision for this collaborative? (What do you see this collaborative becoming?)

Summary of Survey Results

After removing blank cases, the DRLC survey closed on November 12, 2021 with 55 cases (2 incomplete), ranging 4-13 respondents per learning circle. Circle 1, the introductory learning circle, had the most responses. Circle 2 (healing, separate cohorts) and Circle 3 (climate and disasters), had the least responses. Responses increased after these two circles. There were no significant drops in attendance between circles. Speculation about the lower response frequency for these two learning circles suggests that the high number of responses from the first circle could be related to a honeymoon phase and rapport had yet to be build towards the evaluation and facilitators during the second and third learning circles. Figure 1 breaks down the number of responses per learning circle.
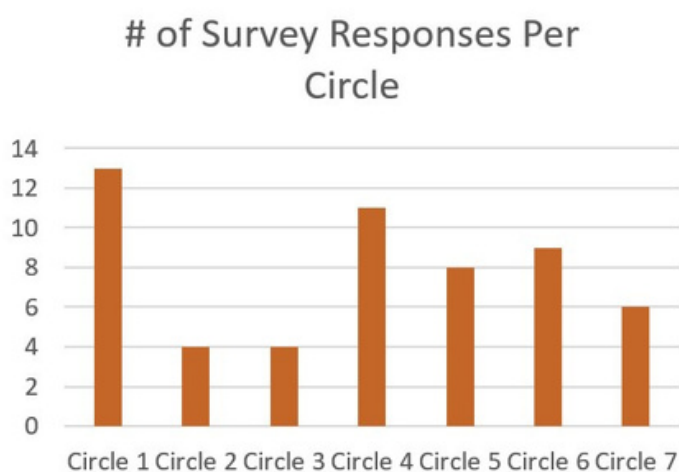

# of Survey Responses Per Circle

Figure 1.

The DRLC feedback survey reviewed three domains: content relevancy, cultural relevancy, and experience. Simply put, content relevancy questions (5 in total) explored if the learning circle's content felt relevant to the CBO cohort's work and interests. Cultural relevancy questions (6 in total) explored if the circle's delivery method and the atmosphere was culturally-grounded or relevant to the CBO respondents. Last, experience explored social connection, lived experience, and overall satisfaction with the learning circle.

Survey items were first compiled together to create three frequency variables (content score, cultural score, and experience score) for each domain. These variables represented the total number of times respondents agreed to a survey question from that domain. For example, to get a score of 5 out of 5 for content score, a respondent must be in agreement to all five content relevancy statements. Cultural score and experience could range from 0-6 in total and content relevancy could range from 0-6. Figure 2 shows the means of each variable per learning circle.
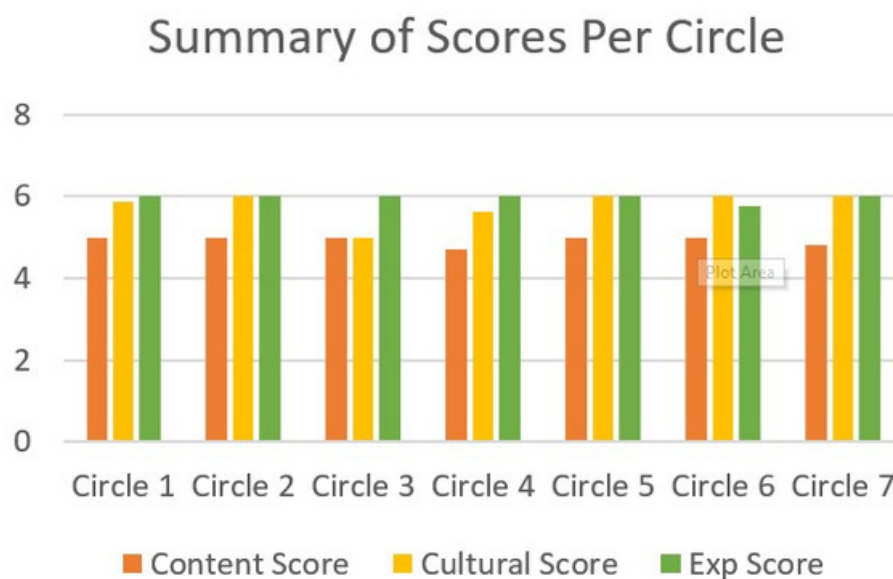

Summary of Scores Per Circle

Legend: Content Score, Cultural Score, Exp Score

Figure 2.

Overall, all learning circles scored remarkably high in each domain. Circle 4's content score is noted to be slightly lower than the other circles After breaking down the scores for these two learning circles, Circle 4 was noted to have a slightly lower score for "I felt like my voice mattered." Circle 6 had a slightly lower score for "I felt satisfied with today's session." These breakdowns can be seen in table 1.

Table 1.

	Circle 4: I felt like my voice mattered.	Circle 6: I felt satisfied with today's session.
Yes	7	5
No	1	1
Maybe	2	2

Content relevancy consisted of five survey items that explored the degree to which the content and delivery of each learning circle made sense and felt relevant to respondents.

Table 2 offers descriptive statistics of each survey item in total. The relevancy of the content of each learning circle had the highest positive responses with no respondents checking "No" to statement #2. Topics respondents hoped would be prioritized are noted to have the least positive responses with 6 "No"'s and 13 "Maybe"'s. The session materials being inspirational for equitable disaster work and the organization of the circles had more positive responses but did have 8 and 7 "Maybe" responses respectively.

Table 2.

	The presentation, discussions, and activities complemented each other.	The content of today's learning circle was relevant to my community role.	Topics I hoped would be prioritized in today's session were given enough time and attention.	The material of today's session inspired my passion to continue equitable disaster work.	The session was organized in a way that made sense.
Yes	49	53	36	44	46
No	1	0	6	3	2
Maybe*	5	2	13	8	7
Mean (1=Yes)	.98	1.00	.86	.94	.96

*Maybe responses were treated as missing data when calculating the mean

Cultural relevancy consisted of six survey items that explored the degree to which the delivery and space of each learning circle felt culturally-relevant to respondents.

Table 3 breaks down the responses for each survey item. Empowerment and culturally acceptable options to participate had the lowest scores with 5 selecting "No" for empowerment and 4 selecting "No" for culturally acceptable options. "I felt like my voice mattered" is noted to have the highest number of "Maybe's" followed by the material being easy to understand. 67.3% (n=37) of the survey cases were completed in English while roughly 18% (n=18) were completed in Español.

Table 3.

	The material of today's session was easy to understand.	I could connect with given examples in today's session.	I felt empowered and safe to share with the group my abilities...	I felt like there were culturally acceptable options to participate in ways that I felt comfortable.	I felt like my voice mattered.	The environment of today's sessions felt respectful and safe.
Yes	46	47	45	46	44	49
No	1	2	5	4	2	1
Maybe*	6	4	3	3	7	3
Mean (1=Yes)	.98	.96	.90	.92	.96	.98

*Maybe responses were treated as missing data when calculating the mean

Lived Experience consisted of six survey items that explored CBO participants' satisfaction and social connection experience during each learning circle.

Table 4 breaks down the responses for each survey item. People responded most positively to statements of feeling connected to other people and hoping to participate in future similar sessions. Though overall positive responses, some people indicated "No" for feeling satisfied with that day's session with 4 people disagreeing with this statement.

Table 4.

	I felt I could reach out to people I met/worked with in this session.	Because of this training, I am motivated to collaborate with other people about equitable disaster work.	I hope to participate in future similar sessions.	I felt connected to other people in this session.	I felt working together with people I met in this session...	I felt satisfied with today's session.
Yes	43	44	48	49	45	42
No	0	1	0	0	1	4
Maybe*	10	8	5	4	7	7
Mean (1=Yes)	1.00	.98	1.00	1.00	.98	.91

*Maybe responses were treated as missing data when calculating the mean

DOMAIN 1: CONTENT RELEVANCY

"I really see the need for the community to be more prepared for these things,"
– (310)

What Went Well

"It has surprised me how much I have learned not only from others in the learning circle but also about myself." –Survey

Most survey responses about the facilitators and the content presented in each learning circle were positive. Respondents commented that they appreciated the multiple perspectives brought in. There were multiple comments of appreciation towards the facilitators and their presentations. The interviews reflected positivity towards the content presented in each learning circle as well but offered a deeper understanding of what aspects of the content were relatable and what participants had hoped for more of.

Social Resilience

Many felt their thoughts towards resilience had changed, improved, or been validated during the learning circles. One survey response expressed "surprise" in how resilience discussions lead to self-reflection of how their understanding of resilience reflected their community work. Significant to resilience discussions was the inclusion of culture. A culturally-grounded lens in resilience highlights the importance of implementing disaster interventions tailored to the ways in which different communities define what support they need rather than top-down government approaches.

Culturally-grounded resilience conveys a sense of pride in ancestral heritage, challenges the "minority" and "vulnerable" identity imposed on Latinx, Mesoamerican Indigenous people, and tribal nations of the PNW communities, encourages advocacy/prevention, ongoing collective-learning, healing, and self-care. These vulnerable reflections offered validity, the potential for statewide power, and equated resilience with culture. As one participant put it, **"[R]esiliency is a fancy word to say, I'm here."**

However, not all felt their thoughts towards resilience had shifted. Some saw resilience as a static starting point, separating activity from the resilient state. Others saw resilience as being as prepared as possible through resources and social connections that will be needed for the next disaster.

Some participants voiced a change in their work because of the resilient content of the learning circles. One individual observed pauses in their work when confronted by certain situations and referencing the DRLC handbook before making decisions.

Climate Change

When discussing differences between White dominant views of climate change and how climate change was discussed in the learning circles, a participant stated, **"This is Latinx climate change."** Discussions on climate change centered around how Latinx, Mesoamerican Indigenous people, and tribal nations of the PNW communities are impacted and exacerbated by systematic barriers. Participants raised concerns regarding agricultural workers experiencing health issues or death due to extreme weather conditions or farming practices (e.g. pesticides, polluting waters, overuse of water). These issues were described to be related to employment and financial risks associated with lack of job security or advocacy. Some participants felt these issues were pitted against tribal rights to land and water rather than the larger systematic pressures disproportionately impacting both communities. Overall, participants did express interest in prioritizing climate change issues from a Latinx, Mesoamerican Indigenous people, and tribal nations of the PNW perspective. As one participant stated, **"This is land. This is our country. We've been here. We continue to be here."**

Self-Care and Wellness

Most participants emphasized the importance of incorporating heart, healing, self-care, and family values in how communities understand climate change. The majority of Latinx people observed a lack of knowledge of how mental health or trauma impacts well-being within their community. One participant explained, **"I thought I was having a heart attack, but it was anxiety."** Some observed hesitancy to acknowledge mental health challenges within their community, citing avoidant behavior and parents opting to talk about their child's mental health over their own. Discussions around mental wellbeing in learning circles offered participants to explore their own self-care practices and how that might apply in their work. One participant reported launching a radio show with a behavioral health specialist in their community dedicated to mental health and wellbeing.

Social Connection

Participants expressed interest in social resilience as relevant to systematic change and disaster preparedness. It was envisioned as a force for political and community advocacy as well as resource sharing. For advocacy, some participants felt unity is a greater force than individual organizations to dismantle systemic barriers their communities face in White dominated spaces. As one participant put it, systematic change requires mutual understanding of the social, historical, and oppressive forces behind systematic barriers. Challenging oppressive forces as a collective provides the opportunity to recognize the strength Latinx, Mesoamerican Indigenous people, and tribal nations of the PNW communities have when together. However, many participants felt that while content surrounding social connection was helpful, there needed to be space to develop common goals. Some gave examples of community bonding within their counties without systematic change. Common collaborative goals were seen as the "glue" that could maintain ties and encourage action. Space and skills to align on similar goals and strategies could shift connection to action. Collaborating within this program did allow for sharing/listening to each other's voices and multiple different perspectives for advocacy work but no definite goals were identified. As one participant observed, **"[R]elationships are everything to systematic change."**

Other participants leaned toward disaster preparedness to support one another in the event of a disaster. Some preparations described included open resource sharing, networking both within and outside their affinity groups, and mutual learning to collaboratively develop programs specific to their community needs.

Connection with OHA was more challenging for participants. One participant did observe that due to pre-existing relationships with OHA facilitators, it was easier to open up during systematic-focused conversations, hoping for system change-focused conversations.

Facilitator Topics

Many participants expressed appreciation for the content presented in the learning circles, primarily health and wellness, the THRIVE framework, and OHA's work. A survey respondent stated, **"I think that some of the things that I learned from the training is that individuals are ready to see that changed that they have been advocating for and OHA and other governmental agencies have the power to make the change."** Some expressed interest in receiving ongoing updates on OHA's disaster resilience work. Please note that all participants appeared appreciative of health and wellness as a topic. This topic is discussed in cultural relevancy.

Critical Feedback

There were some survey comments that reflect the lower scores of topic prioritization and session organization. One comment stated, **"It was way too much information to process in one session,"** while another commented, **"It's important to understand goals before activities."** Interviews reflected these comments, with many feeling overwhelmed and confused as to the collaborative's purpose for the first half of the circles. Some also felt that rather than covering multiple topics, the program could have been more effective by selecting one topic and expanding on it each learning circle.

At the same time, some participants desired more dedication to the following topics:

- **Rural Communities.** Most individuals from more rural counties in Oregon felt the content centered too much on urban communities despite the unique challenges rural communities face. One tribal nations of the PNW member observed that their community feels like a resource desert, requiring difficult lengthy commutes to access fresh food. This barrier is compounded among those with low-income or without transportation. As one participant stated, **"[T]here's just a lot of barriers that we face being in like a rural community."**

- **Tribal Nations of the PNW.** Most participants identified as Latinx while only three participants who completed the program identified as part of the tribal nations of the PNW. Participants mostly expressed interest in learning about each other's perspectives, finding value and pride in cultural identity. There were also a number of Latinx individuals who identified as Mesoamerican Indigenous to their ancestral homes and planned to learn more about their ancestral history in response to the program. However, by the nature of more participants identifying as Latinx, content leaned more towards the Latinx perspectives. Tribal nations of the PNW participants requested future content to be more balanced between affinity groups as well as space to explore differences, similarities, and tensions within these multiple perspectives.

- **Climate Change.** While discussions around climate change were seen as useful, some participants felt the content could be restructured to offer more education on climate change as a whole to better understand how unsustainable systematic factors impact their communities. Some observed that not all participants were able to connect climate disasters to climate change, potentially causing misalignment during group discussions.

DOMAIN 2: CULTURAL RELEVANCY

"I think the human piece is a lot on paper. It's a lot to say that realistically it's a lot harder to do actually." – 1230b

What Went Well

"We used the time to better connect with each other, common ground to relate. We were excited for groups like the breakout groups to build relations." – Notes, 10.15.21

Assessing whether or not this program was culturally relevant to participants is complex. While participants identify as Latinx, Mesoamerican Indigenous, or Tribal nations of the PNW persons, these labels dismiss the incredible depth and breadth of identities within this cohort. Participants endorsed a wide range of identities including:

two-spirit   project coordinator   community specialist
director   Latino   queer   friend   Xicana-Indigena   mujer
Latina   rural   Mexicana   Oaxaqueña Indigena   family
support specialist   community health worker   Confederated
tribes of Siletz Indians   disaster support worker   resident of
the Klamath and Northern Cheyenne tribes
sole providing parent   undocumented   child of farm workers
disabled   Latinx   immigrant   Latina   daughter   child of
immigrant parents   refugee   Mixteca   community   Afro
farm worker   organizer   Nimiipu   first generation college
student   Mesoamericana   community organizer   woman of
color

With such diversity in language, identity, and culture, we sought to create a culturally-relevant program that included dominant understandings of culturally-grounding (such as translations), while also creating an inclusive space that welcomed the unique cultural knowledge that each participant shared. Survey responses and interviews reported that the program was mostly culturally relevant though there are areas for improvement. Participants expressed appreciation towards how content was grounded and re-educated within their community culture. This content provided opportunities to understand others' perspectives, invite multiple meanings surrounding the program's topics, discuss differences between White and BIPOC understandings of climate change, and affirming unique barriers people of color experience. As one participant stated, "I think the validation portion is very much needed especially in our community," (1230a). Discussions around ancestry and pride in cultural heritage encouraged some participants to explore their Indigenous roots.

Having affinity groups (Latinx, Mesoamerican Indigenous people, and tribal nations of the PNW) offered networking, understanding differing perspectives, and connectivity. One participant felt the most enriching part of the collaborative was having a diverse group, especially Latinx Indigenous participants and Tribal nations of the PNW participants. This begged the question of "What does it look like to fight for Latinx rights and liberation on occupied land, on Indigenous land?" (29). Sharing ideas meant However, some participants expressed tension between and within affinity groups due to differing perspectives on climate change and concerns prioritizing one community over another. One participant emphasized the need for a clearer anti-racist facilitator stance to challenge lateral aggression/assumptions within the cohort.

Building Connections, Building Trust

Multiple respondents expressed appreciation for dedicated time to bond through storytelling, mutual learning, and small breakout groups. Breakout groups offered enriching conversations, learning from each other, and opportunities to collaborate. One respondent enjoyed having small group discussions specific to their region/community. Another participant commented that community connection took place with the facilitators who brought in their own stories and experiences. They stated, **"And this is so, you need to know that you're not alone, and that the communities are important. That there are others like you out there."** However, the amount of time dedicated to connection was too short. The majority of participants requested more time in small groups to learn more about each other's work. Though lead organizers modified later learning circles, this request was a repeated request.

A large part of this program included persistently incorporating feedback to improve the curriculum, structure, and experience of the learning circles. This flexibility allowed for collaboration to take place at the structural level. Participants appreciated that feedback was responded to in the moment whenever possible, recognizing that responding to feedback is difficult to navigate through. One individual commented, **"I also saw a lot of willingness, which I think is culturally grounded and healing grounded, a lot of willingness to shift depending on the needs or what was surfacing at whatever moment."** Another participant appreciated seeing feedback responded to.

Language Accessibility

Translations and captions were reportedly helpful for language accessibility. One participant even commented that having captions helped improve their English-speaking skills. There were technological issues with translations. Those who used translations for Spanish to English found only English to Spanish translations on both the English and Spanish channels at times. Some participants also felt there was too much jargon in the discussions.

Cultural Healing Practices

The circles included specific cultural practices. These included land acknowledgements, somatic body movement, and storytelling. There were no concerns regarding these three practices. One participant expressed appreciation to lead one of the land acknowledgements in their first language and felt accepted despite none of the other participants sharing that language. Another participant felt having the land acknowledgements being led by different community members offered a chance to see their perspective and ties to their Indigenous roots. Other participants felt the somatic body movement practices were grounding and helped ground them to the learning circles. Meditative exercises offered the opportunity to **"slow down and see things around us."** They also commented **"...just being this vessel that things come to and that we can also let them go. I think that was very powerful. [It] was very well done, and I certainly appreciated it."** Storytelling was described as an enriching activity to help share and connect with one another. One participant stated, **"I loved hearing everybody's stories . . .and then those that I shared with too very, very emotional, very emotional and heartfelt."** Participants commented on how storytelling brought new perspectives and values to resilience, community, and climate change discussions. Per participant observation notes:

- We shared stories about our cultural roots, sacrifice, family, ancestral countries, respect for the environment and land.
- Some described the experience as "rich" and "joyful," giving faith to what we can do if we set our minds to it.
- Some voiced how powerful it was to share stories in Spanish.

Other identified sources of healing: talking about what resilience means individually, connecting communities as a source of healing and hope, discussions around self-care and wellness, honoring the impact that participants have in their communities, prevention work, and developing a sense of safety.

Critical Feedback

As reflected in the survey items, not all respondents felt empowered/safe enough to participate in ways they felt comfortable. Earlier learning circles had comments related to concern about trust and being able to express their opinions. One respondent observed other participants felt discomfort discussing OHA specific system issues when OHA staff were in the Zoom room. They observed that due to this discomfort, people could not be completely honest in these discussions.

The program had its own tensions between and within affinity groups. One respondent expressed past challenges with other CBO community leaders and feeling guarded in a breakout room with them (which occurred multiple times). Some felt they needed more time dedicated to small group discussions as they didn't feel they had enough time to learn about other participants. One stated, "I didn't know who they were or what they were. I don't collaborate with them regularly," (94). Tribal nations of the PNW participants felt isolated at times when conversations were led in Spanish with unreliable translation services. Some felt levels of animosity where community needs have historically clashed such as tribal water rights being pitted against farm worker rights. Land acknowledgements were appreciated but had the potential to create animosity over land ownership and pride in community location. Participants also expressed concern that the lack of a consistent tribal nations of the PNW facilitator limited the program's understanding of tribal nations' perspective on key topics. As one participant expressed, **"...we just like our voice to be heard the same."** . It should also be noted that when two tribal nations of the PNW left due to their work schedule, this departure was not discussed during the circles. Lack of clear communication as to why these participants left the program preemptively caused concern among the remaining tribal nations of the PNW participants. Should future learning circles continue to be close and emphasize trust-building, it may be beneficial to communicate the reasons for any future departures.

DOMAIN 3: LIVED EXPERIENCE

"We used the time to better connect with each other, common ground to relate. We were excited for groups like the breakout groups to build relations."
– Notes, 10.15.21

What Went Well

"I felt like the group really felt the need to really come together and craft it intentionally. So, I think it was really beautiful to see," (23).

Overall, respondents reported a positive experience to each learning circle, with one respondent commenting, **"See you next week! Thank you!"** in the additional comments. Many expressed appreciation and gratitude for the program, and its facilitators. And as stated in the previous two domains, many respondents explored how their thoughts and relationship to their work have changed as a result of the collaborative. The most common feedback the survey got was about social connection. Respondents expressed feeling connected to others' experiences and enjoyed opportunities to build relationships with one another.

Breakout groups.

Within the emphasis of social connections, the majority of respondents expressed a desire for more small group discussions. One respondent observed that the small groups felt more comfortable expressing themselves and that the small group discussions were inspiring. Another respondent felt the small groups helped them process information presented and build relationships with others. One respondent summarized the importance of these discussions, stating, **"Me gusto como nos conocimos entre los compañeros de una manera mas profunda compartiendo experiencias fue muy buena."**

Group agreements

During our first meeting, we had attempted setting group agreements, but ran out of time and needed to continue with the next segment on our agenda. In the second circle, we had set some group agreements based on what individuals needed to feel safe and comfortable in this space. We took the following values and ideas, that translates into collective agreements:

- Disaster relief and preparedness is often a white-led discussion. Race is a big reason why we are trying to find better solutions for people of color.
- Discussions regarding improvement of inclusive disaster preparedness messaging should not just mean having the information given in different Languages. This should include culturally competent practices/meetings/everything.
- Reminder: we do not have all the solutions
- **"May or may not identify as the same race and have deep differences...",** fighting against this monolithic way of thinking.

We turned some of these comments into a well-condensed group agreement:

We will use these values and make space for relationships, trust, and connection while countering monolithic grouping and thinking. We should strive to move past colonialism within the collaborative's framework and language ("indigenize"). Putting "race" in solutions can be empowering but also risks overburdening marginalized community members to overthrow oppressive practices and values.

Logistics

While logistics/practicalities were not formally measured within the three survey domains, it is important to note that there were comments about the circles' technical difficulties. There were also a few comments expressing a desire for more breaks and one comment requesting breathing exercises.

The logistical team, two IT individuals, two Spanish/English interpreters, and a captioner were present for the collaboration and identified as persons of color. When possible, these individuals were invited to join in reflective conversations.

We had a few minor setbacks with zoom breakout rooms. At times, it was difficult to group the participants differently each time. The leads wanted to assure everyone had a chance to talk to each other in the rooms. While this was not a success at all times, participants were happy to continue talking with the same people, since they had established a relationship with them. Going forward, we plan on having better training for IT to help the flow of the circles. Such as doing a run-through of slides beforehand, so that they know when to click the next slide, play a video, play music, or go into breakout rooms. We were also focused on putting people in the language group they are most comfortable in. For example, we had breakout rooms for just Spanish-speaking individuals, and others for English.

Physical copies of the DRLC handbook were mailed to participants before the start of the program. Participants expressed the importance of having a physical copy as they were able to reference it during the learning circles and during work, review it to get situated and get a clearer understanding of the vision of the collaborative. The core team mentioned the idea of someday having senior/veteran (better word for this) help teach some of the learning circles held in the future. The handbook has reflection sections that can help with this vision for future circles.

Critical Feedback

Critical feedback ranged from many different topics/themes. We were happy to learn that participants were very satisfied with many things, but that other aspects could be improved about the discussions had. As well as the presentations shown in the learning circles. Many of the suggestions made were around logistics and technicalities, and about how the circles began without establishing proper intention. This could also be to the fact that a collective goal was not set. Having a set intention at the start of each learning circle can help navigate conversations better, and help build better relationships.

While most were satisfied with the project, some mentioned that there could be a bit more focus on the trust-building aspect specifically. There were a few technical suggestions, including some concern around turning on cameras, especially during the breakout rooms and consent to record. In the virtual world, it can be difficult to build good relationships if you do not know who you are speaking with. We had this comment in an exit interview, and in the future, look forward to improving relationships and trust with the help of more face time.

Some had expressed concern when the agreements were not revisited. The focus was moved to the learning content. Everyone agreed that the agreements needed to be revisited to help navigate the conversations and strengthen connections to each other. If there had been more focus on the agreements, and we had shared the agreements before each learning circle, we thought it would eventually help lead us to a collective goal. It would have helped set the intention for each learning circle, and also help with some confusion surrounding the information given. The confusion was mostly centered around the fact that this collective goal was not found. The answer to the question "Why are we all here in this project?"

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Content Relevancy Recommendations

While it appears each circle's content and facilitators who presented were met with warm appreciation overall, it is recommended that future curriculums provide space to balance diversity of disaster knowledge from multiple standpoints. It is also suggested that the content itself be trimmed or reorganized in a way that can be processed within each circle and build on each circle. Include space for goals in small room discussions and to develop larger common goals is also suggested.

Cultural Relevancy Recommendations

While the program developed places for bonding on multiple occasions, there are also reports that not all participants felt comfortable participating or trusting of facilitators/other participants. Some respondents recommended more deliberate efforts on the facilitators' end to create a safe space through finalizing group agreements, approaching the program with a declared anti-racist stance, and more effort to decolonize the space from White dominant ways of approaching resilience, climate change, and the program as a whole. It is suggested that the program also explore different ways to encourage participation in discussions and diversity of the voices that speak in larger group settings. Some participants suggest doing so by prioritizing culturally-specific approaches to teaching pedagogies.. Other recommendations include:

- More emphasis on trust/safety building
- Avoiding monolithic assumptions (ethnic commonality does not guarantee trust)
- Continue grouping people by preferred language for small group activities (if requested)
- Develop a line of communication for people to express if they can't be grouped with someone
- Prioritizing Latinx/Mesoamerican Indigenous/Tribal nations of PNW's ways of teaching and learning

Lived Experience Recommendations

There were some recommendations about extending the time given in breakout rooms. Most discussions reflected certain topics per circle. Breakout rooms began in maybe the second or third learning circle. In the surveys, we had many positive responses regarding breakout rooms. Many said that speaking in a smaller circle gave them more confidence and comfort than speaking to the entire group. Smaller groups are also better for connecting semi-one-on-one and helping build trust.

Recommendations were made to change the time and day of the week the circles were held on. Some suggested a weekend conference when in-person meetings are possible. In addition to trying to make the meetings shorter, and maybe more than one day a week, the afternoon time proved to be difficult for a few. Most who spoke up were parents who said the afternoon was difficult because they had young children to pick up from school. Others mentioned weekend days being better, or Friday mornings. At the end of the day, people tend to need to unwind from work. By focusing more on the self-care of the participants, we can help increase engagement and make these meetings occur in the mornings.

Among other suggestions, some requested more breaks. We had a few breaks during the circles, usually lasting around 5-10 minutes at a time. We could also do some grounding exercises that included breathing and mindfulness or stretching exercises. Breaks could be utilized in the future as a way to close the circles. Since some said they felt as if there was no time to process and properly close the circles, this could be a tool to use to help people ground themselves when leaving the circle.

In the future, we would like to improve how technical issues are addressed without interrupting the flow of the circles. It can be difficult to help someone in the middle of the meeting, especially through zoom. Eventually, we would like a zoom training before the group meetings, or a tutorial video released sooner in the series.

Overall Recommendations

While the vast majority of DRLC participants felt that the content was relevant to their disaster work, that the circles were culturally grounded, and overall enjoyed being part of the program, the pilot program was not without faults.

The following list represents a summary of major recommendations:

1. Mutual Learning.
The learning circles were developed with an educational emphasis. While they were intended to encourage mutual learning, many facilitators defaulted to a lecture-discussion-lecture setup. This structure resulted in participants persistently requesting more small group discussions and engaging activities, needing more space to learn about each other, build trust, and collaborate. Later learning circles received a more positive response as the structure shifted to more small group discussions and fewer lectures. It is recommended that the learning circle structure be shifted to encourage mutual, collaborative learning. This recommendation is not made with the intent to rid the program of its educational component. Many participants reported interest in the content. However, the structure could be improved by focusing on more specific information with time to process and discuss the presented material.

2. Building Trust and Goals.
While participants felt there were many aspects of the learning circles that fostered trust, they also referenced opportunities for trust-building to be improved. Some of these suggestions were logistical, such as keeping cameras on. Others desired more time to connect between participants and facilitators. It appears that participants felt there was not enough collaborative space to develop meaningful, common goals that could hold the collaborative together long-term. Goal-setting was also requested at the start of each learning circle to help orient participants to the purpose of each discussion. Space for such discussions and collaboration is recommended.

3. Affinity Groups.

The learning circles were composed of affinity groups: Latinx, Mesoamerican Indigenous people, and tribal nations of the PNW. While participants overall enjoyed collaborative work and mutually learning about each other's identities and culture, the program was not without tension. Tension existed within and between the affinity groups at times. While no group is not without tension, developing a strong anti-racist stance, challenging monolithic assumptions about communities of color, celebrating diversity, and completing group agreements are suggested to foster a validating, powerful BIPOC-only space. Some participants emphasized leading from our roots. Additionally, representation of each affinity group among facilitators and lead organizers, and content specific to underrepresented topics, experiences, and cultures is suggested.

Collective meaning-making

In addition to our three evaluation questions, we also explored how participants perceived social resilience in definition and connection:

Situated Resilience. Process-oriented concepts of resilience use terms such as 'bounce back', suggest a reactive, unchanged, time efficiency stance when informing disaster interventions (14). This White dominant understanding of resilience emerged within the market logic of the neoliberal state apparatus, meaning resilience is nestled in the neoliberal ideology of self-reliance, hinging on the individual being the basis of resilience (15). Resilience, therefore, becomes something inherent and personal. A neoliberal context idolizes individualism (16), causing communities of color to be scapegoated or categorized as too "vulnerable" to overcome the oppressive forces that limit disaster recovery. This ideology suggests that the responsibility (and thereby the fault) of the disaster lies on the shoulders of disaster-torn communities and frames recovery as returning to pre-disaster or worsened social inequities.

Amo-Agyemang (2021) (17) hence defines neoliberal resilience as the "contemporary demand for humans to adapt to the conditions of the complex world instead of transforming the social and political conditions which hold them back or seek to transcend these conditions" (p. 6). Such a definition, though disguised as empowering, encourages disaster work to place focus on 'vulnerable communities' as any community unable to "transcend" their disaster rather than target sources of climate change and systematic oppression. It separates nature from culture, unable to conceptualize communities within their environmental and historical context. As one participant observed, absent from this understanding of resilience are healing, culture, and trauma as resilience as a term "minimizes the struggle, pain, and trauma most folks go through to be resilient," (Survey response).

At the start of the learning circles, there was tension around the word resilience. Many felt White dominant understandings of resilience misrepresented their experiences or were more harmful than helpful. Participants characterized this form of resilience as:

- ·**"...just kind of like a place to begin but it doesn't move anywhere."**
- ·Forced assimilation
- ·Lacks a healing component or rooted in Western ideas of emotional and social wellness
- ·"...minimizes the struggle, pain, and trauma that most folks go through to be resilient," (Survey response).
- ·Toxic, conditioned to avoid asking for help for fear of not appearing resilient
- ·Unwittingly oppressive by shifting focus on being resilient instead of why communities need to be resilient

Through storytelling and mutual learning, participants developed collective understandings surrounding resilience, namely the intersections of culture, community, trauma, and healing in resilience. This resilience, similar to situated resilience (18), decenters colonialism at the center of creating knowledge while adjusting to the multiplicity of resilience. This multiplicity allows for more than one understanding and use of resilience based on each participant rather than forcing a singular interpretation of the word:

- Returning to our roots. Some expressed the importance of bringing back tradition, language, and connection to family while remaining firm in resistance/resilience – not letting forced assimilation define them. One person said, **"Let others know we are proud of who we are."** Celebrating ancestral traditions includes being witnessed, adaptability, strength, and pride in cultural identity. As one facilitator pointed out, "Genocide and forced assimilation did not end Indigenous culture. These and traditional stories are a symbol of resilience in that they were able to be passed down, kept alive, despite the endless injustices on Indigenous people," (Notes 10.1.21).

- Advocacy. With pride comes confidence. Some participants felt resilience means working as a collective, maximizing resource, and challenging the "vulnerable" and "minority" lens placed upon them. This form of resilience suggests that communities as a collective can ignite systematic change, learn and share resources and ideas, and work towards building healthy communities. This narrative emphasizes that resilience is only the beginning, there is much to be learned and to achieve.

- Healing. Participants also considered how resilience might impact their own lives and communities. Self-care, wellness, and community healing were stressed. Participants felt healing included honoring their communities' experiences as well as their own and the wisdom that emerges from them. It is a shift from endurance and desire for change to being the change. As one participant put it, **"I've persisted thinking that was going to change things eventually. And the realization was something along the lines of it's because I'm pushing against the wrong thing. I need to change how I'm working, what I'm working for."**

- The Daily Struggle. Not all participants felt their understanding of resilience had changed. Resilience was described as persevering, preparation, holding hope for future communities, and endurance. Hope was described as a yearning for a better future for their families and communities. It honors the daily work that participants undertake to serve their communities and recognizes the trauma required to be "deemed" resilient. As one participant stated, **"I'm fighting fire, fighting for my communities."**

With honoring the multiplicity of resilience, some participants pointed out a significant difference between their resilience narrative and dominant understandings of resilience. While dominant understandings penalize those deemed not resilient, participants expressed that they don't always have to be resilient, meaning it is okay to be vulnerable and ask for help.

Social Connection. Discussions around resilience linked to the social resilience framework within the DRLC model in that social resilience to some represented unity, advocating for real change, and pushing for healing and growth for their communities. Unity was described as being a collective force for change with pride and confidence in the power the Latinx, Mesoamerican Indigenous people, and tribal nations of the PNW communities held. This included cultural and equitable awareness of the different paths communities need support.

Trust in each other was also described as integral before any strategic goals could be made. Power imbalances between partners need to be recognized and balanced. Power imbalances are not just between CBOs, government, and philanthropy but also include regions with differing access to resources and BIPOC leadership in White dominant spaces. Common goals and moving toward a direction of healing and growth were also seen as the force to propel the collaborative after trust was established. As one participant observed, **"I think it's urgent work, and I think the more we discuss it, share ideas, network, we become just aware of how racism and colonialism are embedded in so many things. I think it's going to start moving the needle."**

Some participants reported reaching out or considering reaching out to fellow DRLC participants when asked a month after the learning circles concluded. One participant reported connecting with two people within their region. Other participants who had previously established connections with fellow participants strengthened their connections by discussing and/or collaborating on the DRLC grant. Others expressed a desire to reconnect but not having the time or not having a strong enough connection with others to independently reach out.

VI. VISIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Participants presented diverse and enriching ideas for the future of the DRLC. Many participants envisioned the DRLC as a network or committee based in care to draw on when statewide, collective power is needed to prepare, respond, and recover from climate disasters within their communities. It would center around the voices of those most negatively impacted by the intersection of climate disasters and systematic oppression that BIPOC communities experience. Some saw this network as a statewide disaster rapid response team. One individual suggested that this statewide collaborative be structured as regional chapters or committees that could address regional issues and present concerns to other regional chapters. Such a collaborative would be close-knit, a space for mutual learning and skill sharing, a place for emotional check-ins and wellness, and a networking space across CBOs, philanthropy, and government to build community power among those most impacted by climate change. It could also serve as a feedback loop across sectors and power for accountability and ongoing education about BIPOC perspectives on climate change.

Participants also discussed how to structure future activities to keep the collaborative together. Some suggested annual retreats to stay connected. These could include storytelling events for cohorts to bond, reconnect, and strengthen. It would provide space to update and network. Others envisioned an annual conference instead of or in addition to updating and educating each other. Such conferences would center around Oregon BIPOC experiences with climate change and be able to share this knowledge with sectors outside the cohort.

Many participants expressed interest in participating in learning circles again or fostering new cohorts. These cohorts could expand to community members, other BIPOC groups, and the public sector. One participant suggested that old and new cohorts connect by having graduates help facilitate, recruit, and present their work to new cohorts. Another participant suggested continuing the online learning circles for new cohort members followed up by an annual conference that would bring all cohorts together. This annual conference was envisioned similarly to the previous one with opportunities to recruit, network, and share experience and ideas related to disaster work. Another suggestion was a train the trainer model wherein the learning circles offer less information and more targeted, skills-centered information that trainees could bring back to their CBOs. The objective of such a model would be for trainees to lead changes to disaster work within their organizations while networking.

We developed the next steps for the DRLC through the visions of DRLC participants. Based on interviews and a follow-up reunion meeting two months after the learning circles, participants agreed to meet quarterly. These meetings will be co-facilitated by participants for the first hour with the last half hour being dedicated to less structured discussions (e.g., self-care, brainstorming). General themes discussed included advocacy, mental health and wellness, and networking/resource sharing. Lead organizers applied for a grant to continue funding the development program phase, participation, evaluation/accountability development, and educational resources participants may request.

A Word from our Organizers

Looking back, what an incredible journey this has been! We are joyful and grateful for the incredible opportunity to be part of this collaboration. We so appreciate every person who is part of this collaborative and/or played a role in bringing it to life. We express gratitude for the stories, the beautiful faces, the stillness, and the passion each participant brought and continue to bring to this work.

Thank you, to each and everyone of you!

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Trauma Informed Oregon:
https://traumainformedoregon.org

United Way of Columbia-Willamette:
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The Praxis Project:
https://www.thepraxisproject.org

The Hearth:
https://thehearthcommunity.com

Raìces de Bienestar:
https://www.raicesdebienestar.org

The Prevention Institute:
https://www.preventioninstitute.org

Native Wellness Institute:
https://www.nativewellness.com

Rogue Climate:
https://rogueclimate.org

The Stronghold: A Culturally Responsive Peer Support Program:
https://www.thestrongholdaculturalresponse.com

Southern Oregon LULAC:
https://lulac.org/oregon

Centro de Servicios Para Campesinos:
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Catholic Charities of Oregon:
https://www.catholiccharitiesoregon.org

Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice:
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Familias en Acción:
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Bridging Cultures:
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The Next Door:
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Centro Cultural:
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