Move to End Violence

Cohort 4 Baseline Report

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Executive Summary

Move to End Violence (MEV), a 10-year program of the NoVo Foundation, seeks to create a world in which “all girls and women are free from violence, act as agents of change, and lead the way to a better world.” The baseline report for Cohort 4, by Social Policy Research Associates (SPR), provides a profile of this newest cohort at the very beginning of its MEV journey. The report explores cohort members’ assessments of the overall movement and MEV, their expectations of the MEV experience, feedback on progress to date, and considerations for MEV staff and faculty as the program unfolds.

Changes in MEV’s Design and Leadership

Though it has naturally evolved over time, MEV has always been grounded in transformational leadership development, movement-building for social change, organizational development, and foundational movement practices, with an underpinning critical feminist and intersectional analysis. Cycle 4 also includes unique design features shaped by the feedback of prior cohort members and the field. Most prominently, Cohort 4 represents a growing recognition within the movement to end violence of gender as a construct that warrants interrogation, and of the importance of addressing the disproportionate violence faced by people who identify as transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary.

Another significant change at the launch of Cohort 4 is the transition in how MEV practices leadership—with the shift from one Director to two Co-Directors, and to a shared leadership model with MEV staff and faculty. These shifts reflect an intentional value placed on distributed decision-making that includes more perspectives, encourages collaboration, and eases the collective challenges of major transitions.

The Movement Makers of Cohort 4

In Cohort 4, MEV sought a group of leaders who identify across the spectrum of gender, who represent movement organizations that take a variety of approaches to ending gender-based violence, and who were ready to take a strong stance on the integration of race and gender justice. The selection process identified 21 diverse leaders from different regions of the country. Cohort 4 is the first cohort made up entirely of women of color and to include transgender women. Furthermore, most Cohort 4 members carry positional authority in their organizations, which are diverse in their size and scope, areas of focus, and social change strategies within the movement.

Participation Goals of Cohort 4

The members of Cohort 4 shared their preliminary hopes and expectations for participating in MEV, mediated by their unique spaces within the movement and their organizational and personal needs at the time. While each cohort member had an individual perspective on their goals for MEV, the following were common goals and expectations shared across interviewed cohort members:

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1 https://www.movetoendviolence.org/our-story/
2 At baseline, all 21 members of Cohort 4 were connected to organizations. At the time of this report, two are no longer with their original organizations.
• **Build beloved community with each other as a cohort**, creating a space to explore issues, offer a support system, and connect with the broader movement.

• **Increase capacity and resources** for cohort members’ organizations and communities, for example through assistance with strategic planning and organizational growth, building infrastructure, and supporting staff members.

• **Develop and enhance individual leadership capabilities** by strengthening leadership skills and confidence, supporting others to lead, and infusing leadership with wellness and balance.

• **Deepen the gender justice and social change lens** within their work and the work of their organizations.

• **Learn from their fellow cohort members**, share knowledge, and better understand each other’s work and the movement.

• **Center transgender women and women of color as movement leaders.**

**Baseline Measures of Key Outcomes**

In the report, we draw on social network survey data to provide a snapshot of how connected Cohort 4 members were to each other, to MEV alumni, and to other movement organizations at the beginning of their MEV experience. The social network survey also revealed Cohort 4’s ratings of MEV’s impact and the current strength of the movement on specific outcomes.

**Cohort 4’s Connections**

In all, Cohort 4 identified 484 total connections to individuals and organizations. Figure 1 below is a network map of all connections between Cohort 4 Movement Makers. Because many cohort members are recruited by program alumni, it is also important to look at the relationships Cohort 4 members have with MEV alumni from all prior cohorts. Figure 2 shows the network map of all connections between Cohort 4 members and MEV alumni, in which Cohort 4 reported a total of 102 connections with 41 different program alumni.

**Figure 1. Connections Between Cohort 4 Members**

**Figure 2. Connections Between Cohort 4 and MEV Alumni**
Key findings from the social network analysis include:

- **Cohort 4 is less connected to one another than any of the previous cohorts.** As shown above, five Cohort 4 members had no connections of any type to the rest of the cohort at baseline. In comparison, Cohort 1 had only one member with no connections at baseline, while both Cohort 2 and 3 had two members with no connections at baseline.

- **Not only is Cohort 4 the least internally connected cohort, Cohort 4 members also are less connected to program alumni at baseline than were the members of Cohort 2 and Cohort 3.** As reflected in the map, three Cohort 4 members were not connected to any MEV alumni at baseline, whereas all members of Cohort 2 and Cohort 3 were connected to at least one program alumni.

The implication of the baseline networking data is that MEV staff, faculty, and members of Cohort 4 may need to be more proactive and intentional about building a cohesive community than have previous cohorts. The relationships that Movement Makers have already begun to develop with one another may benefit from increased support in between-in-person convenings.

**Assessment of MEV’s Impact and Movement Strength**

The MEV Logic Model has five overarching initiative-level goals: (1) Aligning the movement; (2) Strengthening individuals and organizations in the movement; (3) Enhancing the movement’s capacity to advocate for social change; (4) Building critical mass within the movement and with other movements; and (5) Engagement of other funders. These five overarching goals map to 20 initiative-level outcomes that are tracked over time as part of the MEV evaluation. Cohort 4 members were asked to rate each outcome with regards to: the current strength of individuals and organizations in the movement; and the impact of the MEV program based on their personal and their colleagues’ experiences. The following is a snapshot of the findings around Cohort 4’s ratings of MEV’s impact and movement strength:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Strength</th>
<th>Areas for Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEV Impact</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funder engagement strategy and implementation (3.5)</td>
<td>Unified and directional vision for the future of the movement (3.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared critical analysis with intersectional and aligned approaches (3.5)</td>
<td>Connection and engagement with global allies outside of the U.S. (3.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders actively engaged in social change and movement building in their communities (3.5)</td>
<td>Shift to collaborative, shared leadership models (3.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Movement Strength</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders actively engaged in social change and movement building in their communities (2.9)</td>
<td>Funder engagement strategy and implementation (2.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster of leaders committed to working together to end gender-based violence (2.7)</td>
<td>The issue of VAWG is framed in a more holistic, intersectional way (2.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophisticated and evolved social change movement (2.6)</td>
<td>Connection and engagement with global allies outside of the U.S. (2.1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grounding Cohort 4 in MEV**

Cohort members’ experiences at their first convening shaped the lens through which they understand MEV and its role in the movement, specifically around three foundational aspects of the MEV program: beloved community, transformational leadership development, and movement building for social change.

**Beloved Community**

Cohort members spoke about how powerful the concept of beloved community is for them personally and for the development of the cohort. During the first convening, they reflected that they experienced genuine community building, and that MEV brought beloved community to the forefront right away, both inside and outside the formal convening space. At the same time, the needed learning around transphobia and inclusion impacted how Cohort 4 members perceived the beloved community they are
trying to build within MEV. While some cohort members worried about the sense of othering or forced togetherness that may have been fueled, others felt that this moment was actually an example of how beloved community can be built and that the groundwork was laid for beloved community to develop.

**Transformational Leadership Development**

Although this element was not explored at length during Convening 1, cohort members felt that it is fundamental to their MEV experience and were eager to dive in more deeply. More than half reflected that the focus on personal development and self-reflection has impacted them by opening new perspectives of what leadership in this movement can look like. For almost every cohort member, there is a hunger for more discussion and learning around transformational leadership development.

**Movement Building for Social Change**

One quarter of cohort members explained that this element of MEV felt the most exciting and important for them. Another quarter expressed confusion about how MEV understands and will incorporate movement building for social change into the experience, especially given the different ways in which cohort members engage in movement building. In the end, cohort members noted that the only way to truly achieve social change in this movement (and in the cohort) will be through building community.

**Vision for Moving Forward**

Cohort members believe that Cohort 4 will play a key role in elevating and supporting the leadership of trans women and women of color across the movement. Five cohort members specifically pointed to the opportunity facing Cohort 4 to build and strengthen alliances between cisgender and transgender women of color. Movement Makers expressed their belief that this cohort can emerge from MEV able to advocate for the concerns of trans women as both leaders and members of the movement. They trust that Cohort 4 can contribute to an exploration of “what a world led by people of color looks like.”

**Recommendations**

We asked cohort members for their recommendations for how their MEV experience could be enhanced in the future. Below are the key themes that emerged from these recommendations:

- **Consider formal training in trauma-informed responses**, and/or including staff with formal training in counseling to support and hold the emotional responses that can occur.
- Identify and make it clear that there are multiple ways to engage in MEV.
- Recognize that having a cohort of all women of color does not mean that all cohort members share a common analysis around race, gender, and class.
- Make sure that there are diverse speakers and facilitators, including those that identify along the fluid spectrum of gender.
- Orient guest speakers in advance to the principles of MEV and the characteristics of the cohort.
- Consider regional and geographic differences, especially in planning convenings.
- Build in optional relationship building opportunities between formal convenings for the cohort to build trust and align around a common vision.

**Conclusion**

Cohort 4 of the MEV program is comprised of a dynamic group of movement leaders poised to transform themselves, their organizations, and the movement. The SPR evaluation team looks forward to continuing the Cycle 4 journey, and capturing how Cohort 4 amplifies the influence and the evolution of MEV over the next two years.
Chapter I. Introduction

Move to End Violence (MEV), a 10-year program of the NoVo Foundation, seeks to create a world in which all “girls and women are free from violence, act as agents of change, and are leading the way to a better world.” MEV does this by fostering transformational leadership, exploring and practicing liberation and equity, building strong organizations, understanding movement theory and practice, and developing social change skills.

Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) is pleased to submit this baseline report for Cohort 4 in this seventh year of the 10-year initiative. The report provides a profile of Cohort 4 members, as well as their assessment of the overall movement and MEV both prior to and immediately following their participation in Convening 1. The report also highlights their expectations of the MEV experience, feedback on progress to date, and considerations for MEV staff and faculty as the initiative moves forward with its implementation. In this introductory chapter, we provide highlights of how the MEV program has shifted in its fourth cycle, the evaluation framework and methods, and an overview of the report.

Changes in MEV’s Design and Leadership

Move to End Violence is designed to make deep investments in and have an impact at the individual, organizational, and movement levels. Though it has naturally evolved over time, MEV has always been grounded in transformational leadership development, movement-building for social change, organizational development, and foundational movement practices, with an underpinning critical feminist and intersectional analysis. Core elements that continue to be the hallmark of the program are: convenings set in restorative and natural settings; an emphasis on self-care and strategic thinking; physical practice and experiential learning; an international trip to engage in peer exchanges with allied organizations and movement activists; learning that is integrated into organizational work; general support and organizational development grants for participating organizations; and the value of openness and sharing with members of the broader community.

Although the core elements of the program have not changed, MEV has, since its inception, been continually growing in response to feedback from its cohort members and the broader field. The evaluation has documented these shifts to understand how a program like MEV can best support individual and organizational transformation over time. Over the course of the last three cohort cycles, there have been significant shifts in programmatic elements, such as the increased focus on liberation and equity. There have also been structural shifts in how convenings are organized, as faculty have incorporated increased spaciousness into the convenings, which has created opportunities for critical conversations to happen. Some values, such as the importance of seeding beloved community in the first convening, have been reinforced and strengthened over time. MEV has also increasingly engaged the broader movement, through regional convenings, online resources, and webinars on equity and liberation and movement building.

Cohort 4 is no exception to this evolutionary trend, in that it includes unique design features shaped by the feedback of prior cohort members and the field. Most prominently, Cohort 4 is the first cohort to consist of all women of color and to include transgender Movement Makers, representing a growing recognition within the movement of gender as a construct that warrants interrogation, and of the

3 https://www.movetoendviolence.org/our-story/
importance of addressing the disproportionate violence faced by people who are transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary.

Cohort 4 also includes a stronger focus on organizational change than did previous cohorts. Nearly three quarters of Cohort 4 members hold director-level positions at their organizations (with about half being Executive Directors), which provides them with greater positional authority within their organizations to influence change. MEV separated out the individual leadership coaching from organizational development for transformation work in an intentional effort to differentiate between the types of support that are needed to bring about individual and organizational change. Finally, new “Take it Home” workshops evolved from prior cycles’ Self-Care workshops in order to help leaders transfer more of what they are learning in the convenings to the rest of their staff.

Beyond the cohort experience, Cycle 4 will continue to experiment with becoming more “outward facing” with a strong emphasis on building critical mass through additional programming for alumni and other movement leaders. MEV will further these goals through regional workshops, virtual learning and capacity building, storytelling support, and emergent opportunities.

Exhibit I-1 summarizes the MEV Roadmap for Cohort 4 from January 2018 through October 2019.
Finally, a significant change at the launch of Cohort 4 is the transition in how MEV practices leadership. For instance, the directorship of the initiative shifted from a single director, Jackie Payne, to the co-leadership of Priscilla Hung and Monica Dennis. Leadership of the program’s curriculum similarly shifted to a shared leadership model, in which MEV faculty hold a strong role in shaping program elements so that overlap in practices are purposeful, faculty are more deeply involved in the cohort experience, and curriculum is seamless and integrated throughout the cohort cycle. The shift to shared leadership throughout MEV is an intentional effort to promote distributed decision-making that includes more perspectives, encourages collaboration, and eases the collective challenges of major transitions.

**About the Evaluation**

Our overall approach is driven by a dual focus on capturing the multi-level outcomes of the NoVo Foundation’s investment in movement building, as we simultaneously draw out key learnings emerging from this innovative program. The evaluation design allows for flexibility in making mid-course changes to ensure that our efforts can evolve with any shifts that the MEV program may make.

**Evaluation Questions**

The evaluation is guided by the MEV evaluation and learning questions (Exhibit I-2) and the MEV Logic Model (Exhibit I-3), which frame our data collection and analysis for the evaluation. The questions are organized according to the major MEV goals.

**Exhibit I-2: Evaluation and Learning Questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION</th>
<th>LEARNING QUESTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ALIGNING THE MOVEMENT | 1. How has this initiative helped to facilitate the development of a common vision for the movement that is deeply embraced by promising leaders and that uses critical race, class, and gender analyses?  
2. How does this initiative build upon past work while also clearly demonstrating forward motion on ending violence against women and girls? |
| STRENGTHENING INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN THE MOVEMENT | 3. To what extent has the initiative promoted a healthy, thriving movement by experientially increasing the capacity of individuals and organizations to end violence against women and girls?  
4. What is the nexus between individual leaders’ increasing self-awareness, better articulation of movement values in organizations’ mission, vision, and values, and leaders’ ability to advance to the movement? |
| ENHANCING THE MOVEMENT’S CAPACITY TO ADVOCATE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE | 5. How has this initiative promoted and equipped participants to use cutting-edge social change theories and tools as the primary strategy to advocate for ending violence against women and girls in the U.S.? What skills, knowledge, and strategies are leaders using as a result of the trainings?  
6. What partnerships and collaborations are forming as a result of this initiative? |
| BUILDING CRITICAL MASS WITHIN THE MOVEMENT AND OTHER MOVEMENTS | 7. To what extent has the initiative mobilized a critical mass of transformed leaders and organizations such that the movement's narrative and direction is impacted and incorporates global perspectives and cross-movement collaboration? |
| | 8. How does the MEV Program help those in the movement feel connected and engaged? How do those within the large movement feel about this Initiative? |
| INTEGRATION OF CORNERSTONES AND IMPACT OF COLLABORATION | 9. What are the interactions among the various levels, i.e., individual, organizational, network/movement levels? How do changes at certain levels affect other levels? |
| | 10. What is the impact of the collaborative work of Movement Building Initiative participants? |
| ENGAGEMENT OF OTHER FUNDERS | 11. How well has a funder engagement strategy informed and generated greater interest and investment in the work of the movement to end violence against women and girls (VAWG)? |
| | 12. Under what circumstances can a movement be shaped or changed by a funder? What would need to be in place for a funder to shape the movement? What can be learned about a funder’s most strategic role in advancing a movement from the ground up? |
| CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED | 13. What are major challenges and lessons learned about designing and implementing a large scale, multi-year movement building initiative such as this one? What are the challenges of ensuring that this initiative’s implementation mirrors the movement building process? |
| | 14. How is this initiative promoting longer-term sustainability of the movement’s leadership and work? |
### Exhibit I-3: Move to End Violence Program Logic Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aligning the Movement</th>
<th>Strengthening Individuals and Organizations in the Movement</th>
<th>Engagement of Other Funders</th>
<th>Enhancing Movement’s Capacity to Advocate for Social Change</th>
<th>Building Critical Mass within the Movement and with Other Movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Goal 1:** Facilitate the development of a common vision for the movement that uses a critical race, class and gender analysis and is deeply embraced by promising leaders.  
**Strategies**  
1. Provide promising leaders **who are intersectional & have the propensity for social change**, the time, opportunities, restorative setting to:  
   (a) Understand the field and power dynamics of movement building.  
   (b) Align around a vision for the future of the movement.  
   (c) Develop commitment to and capacity for collaborative relationships.  
   (d) Develop and engage in an analysis of challenging issues in the field. | **Goal 2:** Promote a healthy, thriving movement by **experientiality**, increasing the capacity of individuals and organizations to end VAWG.  
**Strategies**  
2. Invest in transformative leadership development for individuals serving as organizational and movement leaders.  
3. Invest in organizational development and provide general operating support to ensure that participating organizations have the necessary capacities and resources to engage in social change advocacy. | **Goal 3:** Develop a funder engagement strategy to inform and generate greater interest and investment in the work of the movement to end VAWG.  
**Strategy**  
4. Engage other funders and encourage their investment in collaborative social change campaigns incubated in this initiative. | **Goal 4:** Promote and equip participants to use cutting edge social change theories and tools as the primary strategy to advocate for ending VAWG in the U.S.  
**Strategies**  
5. Ensure that leaders have the inspiration, training and resources necessary to develop/execute social change vision and strategies.  
6. Create opportunity to apply these trainings and skills to collaborative projects or campaigns. | **Goal 5:** Define and mobilize a critical mass of transformed leaders and organizations such that the movement’s narrative and direction is impacted and incorporates global perspectives and cross-movement collaboration.  
**Strategies**  
7. Design an experiential program structure that will reach tipping point in 5-10 yrs.  
8. Create opportunities to learn from & exchange ideas with activists inside and outside the U.S.  
9. Foster collaboration and partnership around joint strategic campaign campaigns to end VAWG. |
| **Goal 6:** A cluster of leaders committed to working together  
**A shared critical analysis with an intersectional and aligned approach** | **Goal 7:** A shift towards collaborative, shared leadership models  
**Organizations develop, understand and align mission, vision, values and practice**  
**Adoption of models to best advance organizational missions and organizing work**  
**Increased organizational capacity to think strategically and engage in social change strategies** | **Goal 8:** Funder engagement strategy developed and implemented  
**New funders engaged and resources committed to support collaborative social change campaigns** | **Goal 9:** Bold strategies created for ending VAWG  
**Increased time, energy and resources going towards collaborative social change campaigns**  
**Increased engagement of communities in ending VAWG**  
**Shift in public opinion, attitudes, and behaviors as a result of these social change campaigns**  
**Increased political and social will to end VAWG**  
**Shifts in laws and policies that address the root causes of VAWG** | **Goal 10:** Increased connection and engagement with allies outside of the U.S. and usage of a global frame for ending VAWG  
**The issue of VAWG is framed in a more holistic, intersectional way** | **Goal 11:** Increased engagement of anti-VAWG organizations in collaborative campaigns  
**Increased understanding of the opportunities for engaging in the global movement to end VAWG**  
**A network of social justice organizations will integrate anti-VAWG analysis and agenda into their work** |
Data Sources
Following are key sources of data that informed the baseline data analysis and report:

- **Convening 1 evaluation.** SPR developed, in collaboration with MEV staff and faculty, an evaluation survey that was completed by 19 of the 21 members of Cohort 4. The survey captured quantitative and qualitative feedback on Convening 1.

- **In-depth interviews with Cohort 4 members.** SPR conducted 20 in-depth interviews with Cohort 4 members between February 14 and March 16, 2018. Each interview spanned 60-90 minutes and was summarized in notes and transcribed. Interviews focused on expectations for the program, the onboarding process, and reflections on Convening 1.

- **Document review.** We reviewed applications and materials submitted by cohort members as part of their application process, as well as MEV design documents.

- **Quantitative data.** We analyzed data from a survey capturing baseline social network information and MEV outcomes. MEV staff administered the social network survey as part of the Cohort 4 application process to set a baseline for measuring changes in the depth and nature of cohort members’ relationships with previous cohort members. Once selected, cohort members completed a short follow-up survey assessing their relationships with one another, their assessment of the strength of the movement, and their perception of MEV’s impact on the major short- to intermediate-terms outcome.

Overview of the Report
This report includes the following five chapters:

- **Chapter II: The Members of Cohort 4.** This chapter provides an overview of the members of Cohort 4, including key individual characteristics and backgrounds, their expectations for their MEV experience, and information on their organizations.

- **Chapter III: Baseline Outcomes.** This chapter provides a summary of Cohort 4’s connections to the movement and to each other, and of their perceptions of current movement strength and MEV’s impact on the movement along key outcome areas.

- **Chapter IV: Progress to Date.** In this chapter, we present key findings based on cohort members’ feedback to date on the program (e.g., onboarding process, outcomes of Convening 1).

- **Chapter V: Implications for Moving Forward.** This final chapter surfaces implications and expectations for Cohort 4 in the future, and contains recommendations from cohort members for the design of Cycle 4 moving forward.
Chapter II. The Members of Cohort 4

Drawing on the lessons learned and experiences of Cohorts 1, 2, and 3—each with their own distinctive “personalities” and aspirations—MEV faculty and staff envisioned Cohort 4 as a continuation of the purpose underlying Cohort 3, with a sharper intersectional feminist analysis and gender lens. The purpose of Cohort 4 is to continue practicing and experimenting with the MEV program elements, to explore pressing movement questions and tensions around intersectionality and gender, and to engage allies to build an aligned, critical mass. To move that purpose forward, MEV faculty and staff sought to create a cohort of leaders who identify across the spectrum of gender, who represent movement organizations that take a variety of approaches to ending gender-based violence, and who were ready to take a strong stance on the integration of race and gender justice and tackle complicated questions about gender itself.

This chapter explores this unique group of Movement Makers, beginning with the selection criteria for Cohort 4, outlining the attributes and characteristics of the cohort’s members, and highlighting their goals and expectations for their participation in MEV.

The Movement Makers of Cohort 4

Cohort 4 Selection Criteria

MEV faculty and staff focused on recruiting and selecting leaders from throughout the movement using a number of criteria with which to inform their lens when considering candidates. Over the years and cohort cycles, MEV has maintained a commitment to engaging leaders from across the movement to end violence who embody and live into the fundamental practices of the program. MEV Movement Makers—among many other characteristics—are committed to their personal development as leaders and show dynamic leadership potential, are coalition builders who are respected within their communities,
movement-minded collaborators and social change strategists, and are open to and eager for personal and movement transformation.

Throughout MEV’s lifespan, the staff and faculty have added or refined some selection criteria slightly with each cycle as they experiment with cohort compositions and MEV program elements. High priorities for Cohort 4’s Movement Makers included leaders who identify as transgender, gender non-conforming, and/or non-binary; individuals who come from different locations and across generations; people with robust understandings of black, queer, and feminist analyses; leaders who bring lived experience with and can speak to transnational or international movement-building, Muslim communities, youth leadership, disability rights, rural communities, and immigrant and refugee experiences. Coming from different movement spaces, the leaders identified for Cohort 4 have varied entry points into the movement, though MEV faculty and staff were committed to ensuring an increased representation of organizations on the margins, working in different social justice areas, and using a variety of intersectional approaches to strategic social change.

Cohort Members and Their Organizations

Out of the record number of applicants for Cohort 4, the 21 selected individuals represent MEV’s search criteria in all its elements. They are strong leaders in the movement from different regions of the country and identifying across the spectrum of gender. They carry positional authority in their organizations, which—though they all have 501(c)(3) status—are very different in terms of their size and scope, areas of focus, and social change strategies within the movement. (It is important to note that, since this baseline point, two Movement Makers are no longer affiliated with their original organizations.) The following is a brief but comprehensive look at the Movement Makers of Cohort 4 and the organizations they represent(ed) at the beginning of their MEV journey.

Personal Characteristics of Cohort 4 Movement Makers

- **Unlike prior cohorts, Cohort 4 is the first cohort made up entirely of women and to include transgender women.** This cohort represents a significant commitment by MEV to truly center the leadership of all women in the movement.

- **The members of Cohort 4 range in age from 31 to 67,** with an average age of 42 years, and the majority between 31 and 39 years old.
• **All members of Cohort 4 are people of color**, another important shift from previous cohorts. (Cohort 1 was 63 percent people of color, Cohort 2 was 67 percent, and Cohort 3 was 75 percent). The majority of Cohort 4 members identify as Black/African/African-American and/or Hispanic/Latinx/Chicanx.

- **Race/Ethnicity of Cohort 4**
  - Native American, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian: 3
  - Black, African, African American: 11
  - Hispanic, Latinx, Chicanx: 6
  - South Asian, Southeast Asian: 4
  - White, Caucasian: 3
  - Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive, Movement Makers chose as many categories as they identified with.

- **Geographic Location of Movement Makers**

- **This group of Movement Makers comes from various regions of the country**, with high representation of individuals living on the East Coast.

- **The members of Cohort 4 entered the movement to end gender-based violence at different points** in their lives. While some began their work in this movement five years ago, others have been active in the movement for up to 30 years. While the average number of years in the movement is 13, half of Cohort 4 has been engaged in the movement for less than 10 years.

- **Similarly, Cohort 4 Movement Makers span a range of tenure** at their current organizations. Some are brand new, while others have been at their organizations for 30 years. Perhaps reflective of the times at which they entered the movement, most cohort members have been at their organizations for less than five years. As noted above, since the baseline point to which this report refers, two members of Cohort 4 are no longer at their original organizations.

- **Three-quarters of the women in this cohort carry Director-level titles** at their organizations (at baseline), with nine Executive Directors and six Directors. At the same time, one quarter of Movement Makers are coordinators or organizers, showing the spectrum of roles that the members of Cohort 4 play in their organizational lives.

- **Title at Organization**

- **Note**: Categories are not mutually exclusive, Movement Makers chose as many categories as they identified with.
The organizations represented in Cohort 4 operate at different scopes and levels within the movement. Nearly all have a nationwide focus to some extent, and many operate on a statewide or regional level.

Movement Makers’ organizations range from well-established to fairly new, with organizations existing for one year up to 100 years. Even with those long-standing organizations, the majority have been in existence for less than 20 years, with an average organizational age of 21 years.

Given their scope and age, cohort members’ organizations vary in budget size from $140,000 to $3.6 million in annual operating budget. While the average budget is approximately $700,000, half of the organizations in the cohort operate at less than $500,000 per year.

Relatedly, the organizations of Cohort 4 range in size from three staff to up to 500. With most cohort members’ organizations having less than 10 staff, the size and operating budget (above) of their organizations have implications for how cohort members experience the movement and their daily work, including their experiences of resource scarcity and other habits and realities that exist in the social justice non-profit sphere.

Cohort members’ organizations also differ in terms of their specific issue areas—not all of which are squarely centered in the movement, but interact with gender-based violence in many ways. More than half of the organizations in Cohort 4 focus explicitly on sexual violence prevention, and about one third focus explicitly on racial justice. The organizations represent different entry points into the movement, and all address gender justice in their unique contexts.

### Social Justice Issue Areas

- **Sexual violence prevention**: 12
- **Racial justice**: 6
- **Violence largely**: 5
- **Grassroots/community organizing capacity**: 5
- **Criminal justice system**: 5
- **Human trafficking**: 4
- **Sexual/reproductive health**: 4
- **Economic justice/security**: 4
- **Civic engagement/civil rights**: 3
- **Labor rights**: 2
- **Environmental justice**: 2

Note: Issue areas are not mutually exclusive. Movement Makers’ organizations represent multiple issue areas.
• Just as they represent different social change issue areas, the organizations of Cohort 4 fill different roles within the movement. Nearly all do policy or advocacy work in some capacity, and half focus on community organizing and/or research and education. Others offer technical assistance and training (TAT), while others provide direct services or leadership development. The range of roles that these organizations fill affect how Movement Makers have engaged with the movement and the various skills and expertise that they bring to this cohort.

Roles in the Movement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy/advocacy</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community organizing</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research/education</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAT</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct service</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership development</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal services</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art/media</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive. Movement Makers' organizations represent multiple categories.

• Lastly, cohort members’ organizations center a variety of populations. More than half specifically focus on women, and roughly half focus particularly on children and youth, and/or people of color. Others explicitly center specific racial, ethnic, or religious communities, and still others focus on people along the spectrum of gender and/or sexuality. These communities are the ones that Movement Makers bring with them to MEV and shape how and why they enter the cohort space, as well as their hopes and goals for the experience.

Populations of Focus

Note: Populations are not mutually exclusive. Movement Makers’ organizations represent multiple populations.
Participation Goals of Cohort 4

The members of Cohort 4 entered MEV from various places in their organizational careers, their movement spaces, and their lives. Through interviews, they each shared their preliminary hopes and expectations for participating in MEV, mediated by their unique spaces within the movement and organizational and personal needs at the time. While each cohort member had an individual perspective on their goals for MEV, there were some common goals and expectations shared across interviewed cohort members that converged on the following:

- **Build community with each other as a cohort.** Nearly half of the cohort members interviewed expressed entering MEV with the central hope that they will build strong and deep relationships with their fellow cohort members to create a cohesive beloved community. For many, MEV presents an opportunity to develop meaningful connections that they do not otherwise have in other movement spaces. Cohort members described hoping that the community they build as a cohort will serve as a place for exploration of issues, for supporting each other (and thus the movement) to do radical work, and for validating each other. Some hoped that, by establishing a Cohort 4 community, they might also connect with other people in the MEV community and broader movement.

- **Increase capacity and resources.** For seven of the 20 cohort members interviewed, a major goal for participation in MEV was to increase the capacity and resources of their organizations and the communities they serve. Most of these individuals hoped to get support for strategic planning and organizational growth to strengthen their systems of accountability, evaluation, and planning in a way that is grounded in racial and gender justice. Cohort members who described this goal were particularly enthusiastic about the support MEV could provide to their organizations, for example by helping staff avoid burnout to “go for the marathon, not the sprint,” strengthening programs to better serve their communities, and building needed infrastructure. Finally, four cohort members pointed to the hope that through MEV they would be connected to new funders and that the work of their organizations might receive more recognition as a result of their participation, and thus more resources for their communities.

- **Develop and enhance individual leadership capabilities.** A clear thread through the interviews was that cohort members are excited to experience transformation of their own leadership through MEV. Seven cohort members expressed a desire to strengthen their leadership skills and their confidence in their leadership, understand how to support others to lead, and realize ways to infuse their leadership with wellness and balance. Two of these individuals spoke specifically about strengthening distributed leadership and capacity within their organizations with succession planning in mind.
Developing Leadership

I’m hoping that for my own personal leadership and my own personal path, mind body and spirit, that I will unlock questions, unlock answers for my own healing, wellness and balance that may not be so easily grasped or understood at this point... I’m at a different place than I was a few years ago, but I’m hoping that I will get to an even greater place after participation for two years in this.

[My goal is] just having more confidence in myself as a leader, as a director, as a change maker, as a movement maker, and as an agent of the social change that we’re trying to do in our own communities.

My hope is that these two years will allow me to step back, and really empower my staff to step up.

• Deepen their gender justice and social change lens. Five cohort members also entered MEV with a goal of developing a stronger analysis of gender justice and social change that they could more deeply embed into their organizations. A few of these individuals were new to their organizations or operated outside the typical movement spaces, and so were eager to dive into social change and gender justice frameworks that they could apply to their work.

• Learn from their fellow cohort members. Four of the cohort members interviewed specifically called out the opportunity to learn from the rest of the cohort as a hope for their MEV experience. They wished to share their knowledge with and learn from the wisdom of the cohort, in order to have a better understanding of each other’s work and of the movement.

• Enhance the leadership of transgender women and women of color. Among those interviewed, three cohort members explicitly named the goal of participating in MEV in order to influence MEV’s work so that it can center transgender women and women of color as movement leaders. Two cohort members expressed a desire to play leadership roles in discussions among the cohort about how to use MEV as an opportunity to advocate for the interests and leadership of transgender women of color.

I felt like it was a great time to be supported in movement work, movement building, building capacity. And specifically important to build economic empowerment around trans women of color, which also fosters the coaching, leadership, and opening up of organizations to be more progressive around trans women of color being in positions of leadership. Trans women of color having their voices heard at the roundtables and campaigns... I felt like [MEV] was going to be the perfect vehicle for furthering, advancing those rights for our people.

Conclusion

This unique group of leaders in the movement is coalescing around their shared hopes and dreams for their MEV experience. Cohort 4 is comprised of powerful women who come from different life experiences, different areas of social justice, and different types of organizations—all with goal of ending violence against all women and girls. They come to MEV from various spaces across the movement, and bring with them a spectrum of perspectives on the current stage of the movement. The next chapter explores Cohort 4’s views on the strength of the movement and the impact that MEV has had on the movement over time.
Chapter III. Baseline Measures of Key Outcomes

This chapter provides a comprehensive picture of Cohort 4’s baseline network strength and perception of MEV outcomes. We draw on the social network data to provide a snapshot of how connected Cohort 4 members were at the beginning of their MEV experience and then highlight findings related to MEV outcomes, specifically regarding Cohort 4’s ratings of MEV’s impact and the current strength of the movement. These findings are compared with prior cohort ratings and are explored in depth through cohort members’ reflections lifted up from interviews.

The chapter draws on an online survey that was completed by all 21 members of Cohort 4 in December 2017 that asked about their relationships with other cohort members and their assessment of progress towards each of MEV’s 20 initiative-level outcomes. The chapter also highlights perspectives from baseline interviews conducted with 20 of the 21 cohort members. These interviews provide rich information regarding cohort members’ impressions of the outcomes, as well as their connection to other cohort members, MEV alumni, and the broader movement. This data is discussed alongside survey findings to provide a more holistic understanding of Cohort 4 at baseline.

Connections to the Movement

MEV seeks to build a network of social justice leaders and organizations that integrate a gender justice analysis into their work. A key strategy for achieving this outcome is fostering collaboration and partnership around joint strategic campaigns to end violence against all women and girls. To capture changes in relationships over time, the baseline survey contained a social network component to inquire about Cohort 4’s relationships with other members of Cohort 4, alumni Movement Makers, and with more than 100 organizations active in the movement to end violence. The social network survey asked Cohort 4 to identify both informal exchanges and formal collaborations with others in their network.

In all, the members of Cohort 4 identified 484 total connections. These 484 connections were relatively evenly divided between informal exchanges and formal collaborations. Cohort 4 identified 359 connections to organizations specifically, spread out across over 100 organizations. For example, all but one Cohort 4 member reported a connection to the NoVo Foundation. We see clusters around other organizations affiliated with MEV alumni; for instance, 53 percent of Cohort 4 members were connected to A Call to Men, 59 percent were connected to Futures without Violence, and 59 percent were connected to Casa de Esperanza. Additionally, 65 percent of Cohort 4 members were connected to the American Civil Liberties Union, representing the second-most popular connection reported by the cohort. Finally, 53 percent of Cohort 4 members noted a connection to the Ms. Foundation, which was highlighted in interviews as another strong source of funding that aligns with Movement Makers’ work.

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4 One of the cohort members only responded to the first six questions. Her first six responses are included in the analysis, and the remaining were coded as “missing.”

5 Unlike previous cohorts, Cohort 4 did not have the opportunity to write in organizations on the survey; therefore, the baseline data does not fully represent the universe of Cohort 4’s connections and cannot be compared with prior cohorts.
In the following sections, we go into more detail about Cohort 4 members’ connections to one another and to MEV alumni, before highlighting their hopes for how those relationships will grow over the course of their participation in MEV.

**Connections to Other Cohort 4 Members**

Looking at connections between Cohort 4 members, Exhibit III-1 shows network maps of informal exchanges, formal collaborations, and all connections between Cohort 4 Movement Makers. When looking specifically at formal collaborations, 17 cohort members had zero connections, which differs greatly from Cohort 3, in which only five Movement Makers lacked formal collaborations at baseline.

**Exhibit III-1: Network Maps of Relationships among Cohort 4 Members**

The nodes (circles) represent individuals and the edges (or lines) represent the connections between them. Arrows indicate one-way versus two-way relationships (in which both Movement Makers identified a connection to each other). It shows that five members of Cohort 4 have no relationship with any other cohort member. The network of relationships surrounding Tonya, Monique, Isa N, and Monica show the foundations for a budding network at baseline.
Key findings lifted up from network maps (and corroborated in interviews) include the following:

- **Cohort 4 is less connected to one other than any of the previous cohorts, suggesting that MEV staff and faculty may need to offer more support to this cohort to build a cohesive community.** Notably, five Cohort 4 members had no connections of any type to the rest of the cohort at baseline. In comparison, Cohort 1 had only one member with no connections at baseline, while both Cohort 2 and 3 had two members with no connections at baseline. In some ways, the inclusion of individuals who are not previously connected to others within the movement illustrates the reach of MEV and its success at engaging those who have not traditionally had a voice within the broader movement. It also may have implications, however, for the time it will take to build beloved community and shared vision for this cohort. Three of the individuals who lack connections to other Cohort 4 members are from organizations that do not primarily focus on violence against women, but rather focus on girls’ leadership, black women’s empowerment, and Native American youth. Two of those that lack prior connections, however, have worked explicitly on gender violence issues (e.g., rape culture, human trafficking, and sexual exploitation).

- **The network of relationships surrounding Tonya, Monique, Isa N, and Monica show the foundations for a budding network at baseline.** Although there are a higher than average number of individuals in Cohort 4 who do not know one another, there is a small network already within the cohort. It is important to note that both transgender members of Cohort 4 are in this burgeoning network, and thus are relatively well connected to other members of the cohort. Monique is the strongest bridge, meaning that she provides the strongest links between individuals and clusters. Furthermore, she and Tonya have the most connections in the All Relationships map (seven for each). Both women are Executive Directors of membership-based organizations that hold convenings and conferences within the movement to end gender-based violence. Therefore, their leadership positions and organization types perhaps lend themselves to greater access to strong and existing networks in the movement.

- **Several formal and informal connections centered around the Women of Color Network.** Five Cohort 4 members were connected through the Women of Color Network (WOCN)—of which Tonya is the Executive Director—either as staff, board members, or event participants. WOCN provides leadership development and capacity-building within the movement and therefore acts as a connector for Movement Makers.

- **While the majority of Cohort 4 members lacked formal relationships with one another at baseline, Movement Makers are already beginning to deepen their connections with each other.** After Convening 1, several Cohort 4 members commented that they have been in touch through social media, email, and phone. One individual mentioned that she received support on her social media campaign from her fellow cohort members, while others are planning to attend events at each other’s organizations. This cohort member stated:

*It was a really varied group in terms of fields. There were some organizers. There were some policy advocates. There were some justice-focused folks, folks who work with men, folks who work with trans folks. It was a pretty diverse cohort to me.*
Baseline Connections with MEV Alumni

Because many cohort members are recruited by program alumni, it is important to look not only at baseline relationships within the cohort, but also at the types of relationships Cohort 4 members have with Movement Makers from all prior cohorts. Because the survey was provided only to Cohort 4, we were only able to track one-way relationships between Cohort 4 Movement Makers and MEV alumni. Members of Cohort 4 reported a total of 102 connections with 41 different program alumni: of those, 14 were from Cohort 1, 13 were from Cohort 2, and 14 were from Cohort 3. When looking specifically at connections with prior cohorts, we see that Cohort 4 had more formal collaborations than informal exchanges at baseline (as shown in Exhibit III-2).

Exhibit III-2: All Connections of Cohort Members to All MEV Alumni

The connections depicted in the maps only represent connections reported by Cohort 4. Therefore, they do not include relationships between prior cohorts.
Not only is Cohort 4 the least internally connected cohort, they also are less connected to program alumni at baseline than were Cohort 2 and Cohort 3. As reflected in the maps, three cohort members were not connected to any MEV alumni at baseline, whereas all members of Cohort 2 and Cohort 3 were connected to at least one program alumni. As was stated in the previous section, this may reflect that MEV has been successful at reaching beyond the “usual suspects,” to women who often do not have access to opportunities like MEV. It may also suggest, however, that more work needs to be done on the part of MEV staff to build bridges between the disconnected members of the cohort and the broader movement, and to ensure that they feel included in the MEV vision. The quotes below highlight some Cohort 4 members’ perceptions that they do not naturally fit within the MEV ecosystem.

**Because my work has shifted so much, and my organization is only eight years old, it’s different. There was a lot of racial justice work, so there wasn’t a lot of gender justice work in my previous work. That’s a new space.**

**The more I looked at [the MEV application], my initial reaction was maybe I’m not ready. I wouldn’t even be qualified, because I’m so new to this work. And maybe I should apply to Cohort 5 in two years. But then when I was looking at all of the opportunity involved, and what I could learn, I thought, "Maybe this is exactly what I need in this work to start my first year. And being a part of something that’s going to teach me a lot." Then I decided yes, this is something I should apply for.**

Of note, the two transgender Movement Makers were not connected to MEV alumni, despite being relatively well connected to others within Cohort 4. One of these women explained in her interview that she had expected to know MEV alumni and was a bit surprised that she did not. At the same time, she commented that transgender movement leaders are often “left out of the table” in typical movement spaces.
• **The Movement Makers with the strongest connections to MEV alumni were Tonya, Kabzuag, and Sarah.** In phone interviews, they described strong relationships with MEV alumni, often facilitated through their roles as Executive Directors in their respective organizations. Tonya was the strongest bridge and had the most connections in both the Formal and All Connections maps. Tonya and Sarah also had the most informal connections. For Sarah as the Co-Executive Director of Men as Peacemakers, her wealth of connections was likely facilitated in part by the fact that Men as Peacemakers was part of Cohort 3 and already part of the MEV network at baseline.

• **Cohort 4 members felt encouraged to apply to the MEV program because of their relationships with alumni.** As observed in Exhibit III-2, several cohort members have formally collaborated with alumni Movement Makers. Many Cohort 4 members noted that these relationships and knowledge of MEV alumni’s work are what inspired them to apply for the program. For others, such as Saida, alumni themselves encouraged Cohort 4 members to apply to the program. In some cases, MEV alumni directly reached out to individuals and, in other cases, MEV alumni contacted organizations to which Cohort 4 Movement Makers belonged. Thus, overall, prior cohort members’ networks seemed to have strongly influenced the composition of Cohort 4.

• **The regional meet ups were welcomed by Cohort 4 as a way to start building their MEV network and learn from others.** Several Cohort 4 Movement Makers mentioned that they were contacted by an MEV alumnus to attend a regional meet up. The cohort members that went to the meet ups enjoyed the experience and felt that it was valuable for their introduction to and ongoing participation in the MEV program.

Through upcoming regional workshops and the final convening, these connections between Cohort 4 and MEV’s network of Movement Makers are expected to expand and will be revisited again in the Cohort 4 Final Report.

**Continuing to Build Relationships**

As Cohort 4 evolves throughout the MEV experience and comes to understand what its unique role will be, it joins an already existing community of prior cohorts. When asked about their desires to connect with Movement Makers who have gone through the MEV program, the members of Cohort 4 were generally enthusiastic. At least 16 of the cohort members interviewed indicated that they were looking forward to meeting prior cohorts, though they had some qualifications for those meetings:
• **MEV-organized events.** For at least seven individuals, their preferred method for engaging with past cohorts is through MEV-organized events or communication methods sponsored by MEV. They suggested, for example, inviting Movement Makers into Cohort 4 convenings, hosting regional meet-ups, bolstering the listserv, or co-hosting workshops. They pointed to the sixth convening as another space to include all MEV alumni. On the other hand, six Cohort 4 members preferred to connect with past cohorts in more organic, less formal ways, and advocated for the space to reach out to prior cohort members themselves.

There's a part of me that thinks that sometimes you need to better align yourself with what institution is facilitating the connection before you start sort of scrambling everybody up. I think that there's more for us to learn after the first convening. I think that there's more for MEV to learn about us, and about how the convenings work. So, maybe after convening two or three we can be folded into the mix of everyone else because we'll have a better identity relative to MEV.

• **Opportunities to learn from alumni.** In addition to regional workshops and the final convening, several cohort members would like to learn from alumni with regards to what they gained from their MEV experiences and how they have continued to carry MEV forward into their work. Cohort 4 members acknowledged that the regional meet ups would be a good way to foster this interaction; others suggested potential video calls with alumni focused on gleaning lessons learned from MEV.

• **Time commitment required.** At least one quarter of cohort members interviewed were concerned mostly with time when thinking about building relationships with prior cohorts, particularly in terms of their own bandwidth to engage. While connections with MEV alumni are welcomed, some Cohort 4 members felt challenged by finding the space to build relationships with more people beyond their immediate cohort. A few also suggested that Cohort 4 be given more time to immerse themselves in MEV before connecting with other Movement Makers.

• **Alignment of needs.** Importantly, one cohort member did not feel like she was in a place to connect with prior MEV cohorts out of a concern that her needs and perspectives are too dissimilar from those of past cohort members to create real and meaningful relationships. She reflected: “Our needs for transformative, restorative justice [are different] ... And when those don't line up, then the connection really goes nowhere.”

In sum, cohort members have varying opinions related to their needs and hopes for building relationships throughout the rest of their experience in MEV. As Cohort 4 progresses, MEV will continue uncovering and recognizing these individual needs and will need to develop approaches that are appropriate for all cohort members.
Assessment of MEV’s Impact and Movement Strength

As highlighted in Chapter I, the MEV Logic Model has five overarching initiative-level goals:

1. Aligning the movement;
2. Strengthening individuals and organizations in the movement;
3. Enhancing the movement’s capacity to advocate for social change;
4. Building critical mass within the movement and with other movements; and
5. Engagement of other funders.

These five overarching goals map to 20 initiative-level outcomes that are tracked over time as part of the MEV evaluation. The status of these outcomes at the baseline point of Cohort 4’s entry into MEV are discussed in detail throughout this chapter.

Cohort members were asked to rate each outcome with regards to: (1) the current strength of individuals and organizations in the movement, and (2) the impact of the MEV program based on their personal and their colleagues’ experiences. When assessing the current strength of outcomes, cohort members responded using a four-point scale ranging from “not at all strong” to “extremely strong.” When assessing the impact of MEV on key outcomes, cohort members responded using a four-point scale ranging from “very little impact” to “excellent impact.” If cohort members were unsure of the current strength of outcomes or thought it was too early to assess the impact of MEV, they could select “don’t know” or “too early to tell,” respectively.

Average ratings across all outcomes show that Cohort 4 perceived the impact of MEV as between “good” and “excellent” overall. In particular, the cohort saw “funder engagement” (average 3.5), “shared critical analysis” (3.5), and “engaged in social change and movement building” (3.5) as areas of strength for MEV’s impact.
Exhibit III-3: Average Ratings for MEV Impact and Strength of the Movement in All Outcome Areas

- Funder Engagement: MEV Impact 3.5, Movement Strength 2.1
- Shared Critical Analysis: MEV Impact 3.5, Movement Strength 2.3
- Engaged in Soc Change & Mvmt-Bldg: MEV Impact 3.5, Movement Strength 2.9
- Sustainable Leadership Practices: MEV Impact 3.4, Movement Strength 2.3
- Ability to Shift Attitudes: MEV Impact 3.4, Movement Strength 2.3
- Cluster of Leaders: MEV Impact 3.4, Movement Strength 2.7
- Ecosystem of Organizations: MEV Impact 3.3, Movement Strength 2.5
- Awareness of Identity: MEV Impact 3.3, Movement Strength 2.5
- Organizational Models: MEV Impact 3.3, Movement Strength 2.5
- Social Change Strategies: MEV Impact 3.3, Movement Strength 2.6
- Collaborative Efforts: MEV Impact 3.3, Movement Strength 2.4
- Intersectional Framing: MEV Impact 3.2, Movement Strength 2.1
- Investmnt in Next Gen of Leaders: MEV Impact 3.2, Movement Strength 2.3
- Sophisticated & Evolved Movement: MEV Impact 3.2, Movement Strength 2.6
- Cutting-edge Advocacy: MEV Impact 3.1, Movement Strength 2.3
- Alignment of Mission and Practice: MEV Impact 3.1, Movement Strength 2.5
- Research and Messaging: MEV Impact 3.1, Movement Strength 2.4
- Shared Leadership Models: MEV Impact 3.1, Movement Strength 2.3
- Global Allies: MEV Impact 3.0, Movement Strength 2.1
- Unified Vision: MEV Impact 3.0, Movement Strength 2.4

Legend:
- MEV Impact: Red
- Movement Strength: Orange

Scale:
- 1.0: Very little impact/Not at all strong
- 2.0: Some impact/Somewhat strong
- 3.0: Good impact/Very strong
- 4.0: Excellent impact/Extremely strong
One third or more of participants felt that assessing MEV’s impact was “too early to tell” with regards to “ability to shift attitudes,” “intersectional framing,” and “global allies.” Three cohort members consistently responded with “too early to tell;” in fact, one Movement Maker rated each of the 20 outcomes as “too early to tell.” This individual stated that her responses were based on her not having yet participated in MEV programming and thus having limited knowledge of the MEV program. Two respondents rated 17 of the 20 outcomes as “too early to tell.” These same two respondents also rated the majority of the impact statements as “don’t know” (one rated 17 statements as “don’t know” and the other rated 13 statements as “don’t know”). Both of these Movement Makers noted in their interviews that they are relatively new to the movement to end violence against all women and girls and therefore cannot definitively speak to the movement at large. It is important to note that all three of these women also had relatively fewer connections to MEV alumni and current cohort members.

Consistent with prior cohorts, outcome ratings were lower than MEV impact ratings when assessing the current strength of individuals and organizations in the movement. Specific areas for growth as rated by Cohort 4 were “intersectional framing” (2.1) and “global allies” (2.1). Additionally, roughly one quarter of participants responded with “don’t know” to the “sophisticated and evolved movement” outcome. “Engaged in social change and movement building” (2.9) and “cluster of leaders” (2.7) were the highest rated outcomes with regards to the current strength of individuals and organizations in the movement.

Exhibit III-4 displays the top five largest differences between the ratings of MEV impact and movement strength. “Funder engagement” had the largest difference, which was consistent with interview comments that lifted up the NoVo Foundation’s anti-violence work, as highlighted in the quote below:

I did notice after Trump's election that there were a number of funders, including NoVo, especially NoVo...that made a very deliberate decision to actually say, "Okay, now we have this Trump administration. They're screwing over the community of color and they're taking away funding. They're slashing federal funding and things like that. We're going to double down on that and actually increase our funding to these communities, and specifically solicit applications from these communities because these are the communities that we want to focus on and fund."

However, at least four Movement Makers also spoke to the persistent problem of most funders—with the NoVo Foundation being one of the exceptions—not truly understanding the communities that they are seeking to support. For example, one cohort member commented that foundations’ board members often do not understand the issues in impacted communities and therefore do not effectively provide funding, calling out the “Savior Syndrome” that impacts many funders.

The baseline survey also illustrated Cohort 4’s perceptions around differences between MEV’s impact and movement strength. These differences shown in Exhibit III-4 were relatively smaller than the differences highlighted in the Cohort 3 Baseline Report. This suggests that the gap between MEV’s impact and the strength of the movement has been closing over time.
Exhibit III-4: Outcomes with the Greatest Difference Between MEV Impact and Movement Strength Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Movement Strength</th>
<th>MEV Impact</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funder Engagement</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Critical Analysis</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intersectional Framing</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Shift Attitudes</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Leadership Practices</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences and Similarities Across Cohorts

At baseline, Cohort 4 was more aligned with Cohort 1’s average ratings than those of Cohort 2 or Cohort 3. Exhibit III-5 shows that, on average, Cohort 4 began MEV as the most optimistic cohort regarding the movement’s current strength. Although Cohort 4’s average rating was the highest, it hides a higher than typical level of variability across respondents. The high average was driven largely by an individual that rated the movement strength as “extremely strong” on all measures. The standard deviation illustrates that, in general, Cohort 4 members had a wider range of opinions at baseline than did previous cohorts, which is reflective of the diversity of experiences and movement spaces from which they come.

Exhibit III-5: Descriptive Statistics of Cohort Movement Strength Responses ⁷

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cohort 1</th>
<th>Cohort 2</th>
<th>Cohort 3</th>
<th>Cohort 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard Deviation</strong></td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum</strong></td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum</strong></td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exhibit III-6 shows ratings for common outcomes across cohorts. ⁸ We see that Cohort 4 rated all common outcomes higher than did Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 for movement strength. Cohort 4 also had more positive perceptions of “unified vision” and “shared critical analysis” as compared with prior cohorts. Furthermore, “organizational models” was rated relatively high in relation to prior cohorts. Cohort 4 has relatively more Movement Makers with positional authority within their organizations (as compared with prior cohorts), which may be reflected in the higher rating for “organizational models.”

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⁷ While there are 21 Movement Makers in Cohort 4, overall movement strength means were calculated across all indicators using complete cases only, which reflects only 11 Movement Makers.

⁸ Three intermediate outcomes were introduced in Cohort 2 and are therefore not included. These outcomes are: “a stronger bench in organizations with shared leadership and investment in the next generation of leaders,” “sustainable and healthy leadership and professional practices throughout the movement,” and “a thriving ecosystem of organizations working on ending violence.” The two intermediate outcomes that were introduced with Cohort 3 are “sophisticated and evolved movement,” and “engaged in social change and movement building.”
Exhibit III-6: Movement Strength Outcomes Ratings by Cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Cohort 1</th>
<th>Cohort 2</th>
<th>Cohort 3</th>
<th>Cohort 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Change Strategies</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Shift Attitudes</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of Identity</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Leadership Models</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster of Leaders</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment of Mission and Practice</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Efforts</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting-edge Advocacy</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and Messaging</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Models</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funder Engagement</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intersectional Framing</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Allies</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unified Vision</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Critical Analysis</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.0 Not at all strong  2.0 Somewhat strong  3.0 Very strong  4.0 Extremely strong
**Outcome Ratings by Goal Area**

When looking at ratings regarding the impact of MEV (Exhibit III-7),\(^9\) Cohort 4 rated each overarching goal area higher than prior cohorts. Notably, “engagement of other funders” experienced a substantial increase from 2.6 in Cohort 3 to 3.5 in Cohort 4. This new cohort represented the first year in which average ratings for all five overarching outcomes were at a “good impact” or higher.

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**Aligning the Movement**

The “aligning the movement” outcome area is comprised of six outcomes that reflect MEV’s intention to facilitate the development of a common vision for the movement that uses a critical race, class, and gender analysis and is deeply embraced by promising leaders. Exhibit III-8 displays the average ratings from Cohort 4 regarding aligning the movement. The chart shows that cohort members rated each of the six outcomes between “good impact” and “excellent impact.” When rating the strength of the movement, we see that “engagement in social change and movement building” is an area of relative strength (2.9) and “shared critical analysis” has the most room for growth (2.3).

---

\(^{9}\) We do not present comparative MEV impact data for Cohort 1, because Cohort 1’s baseline ratings occurred prior to the MEV program’s launch.

\(^{10}\) Average ratings do not include those that responded, “don’t know” or “too early to tell.”
**Exhibit III-8: Average Current Strength Ratings for Aligning the Movement**

![Chart showing average current strength ratings for various themes related to MEV's impact and movement building efforts.](image)

**Cohort 4 Reflections: Aligning the Movement**

**THEME** | **ILLUSTRATIVE QUOTES**
--- | ---
MEV has helped some cohort members **build systems of support** to work toward ending violence against all women and girls. | I think MEV has done an amazing job at really taking people and their cohorts to the next level and giving us language, giving us ideas, helping light the light bulbs, connecting dots, and really building a solid network of support. Because I completely feel supported. Even on days where I feel alone, like this work is hard, it’s amazing to then look out at some of the cohort members and what they’re doing and feel inspired. What they’ve done with the cohorts that they have right now in terms of building the capacity of these leaders and then their organizations, I think that is really incredible.

Some Cohort 4 members have seen MEV alumni **actively engaging in social change and movement building efforts**, which has shown them that MEV is making an impact. | Of the 14 people that I actually work with or know from the cohorts... I know they’ve been in the movement for a long time. I actually know that they are doing some movement building and some leadership development of their base. There’s some organizing happening in their leadership.

With regards to areas of improvement, some cohort members felt that MEV’s impact could be strengthened by **engaging grassroots organizers** who have been doing the work for a long period of time. | I feel that my experience of MEV before being a member of it was like a wave, like an ocean, like a tsunami coming. Here come the chosen few that are now going to come and tell us about movement building and going to try to get us in alignment with them when we’ve been out here building already.

If you look at the cohorts prior to this cohort, everybody’s been national people. I feel like they’re not the movement. National people are part of the movement, but they’re not the movement. I think there’s a
At the movement level, some cohort members felt that strength is hindered due to **siloing and a lack of coalition building**.

I’ve been doing violence prevention work for many years. I’ve experienced it very much as a silo for trans people.

There’s so many people doing this work, which is great, but I feel like there’s no coalition building.

Furthermore, one cohort member pointed out that while many organizations in the movement provide direct services, they lack skills to do movement building.

One of the things that I think that we as a movement can do better on is that [the movement is] really service oriented, and I actually believe that service is important and needed and should be part of the component of our work. But I actually feel like a lot of organizations and a lot of what I would say “movement people” lack are organizing and movement building skills. I’m not sure how many people are actually doing movement building versus how many people are in the domestic violence/sexual assault movement.

### Strengthening Individuals and Organizations in the Movement

MEV’s second goal is to promote a healthy, thriving movement by experientially increasing the capacity of individuals and organizations to be leaders in ending violence against all women and girls. MEV hopes to facilitate this through investing in transformational leadership development and organizational development. Exhibit III-9 shows Cohort 4’s average ratings for the outcomes associated with this goal.

#### Exhibit III-9: Average Ratings for Strengthening Individuals and Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>MEV Impact</th>
<th>Movement Strength</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ecosystem of Organizations</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of Identity</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Models</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Change Strategies</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Leadership Practices</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investmnt in Next Gen of Leaders</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Leadership Models</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment of Mission and Practice</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This chart shows that, with regards to the impact of MEV, all ratings were within the 3.1 to 3.4 range, indicating that, on average, cohort members felt that MEV has a “good impact” in this goal area. Specifically, “sustainable and healthy leadership” received the highest average rating (3.4), perhaps...
reflecting MEV’s efforts to improve self-care at the convenings and also with the broader community (e.g., the 21-Day Self-Care Challenge). This same area, however, was relatively weak for the strength of the movement (2.3). “Investment in the next generation of leaders” (2.3) and “shared leadership models” (2.3) were other areas for improvement. The following table outlines cohort members’ comments during interviews about the areas of perceived assets and weaknesses related to strengthening individuals and organizations in the movement.

**Cohort 4 Reflections: Strengthening Individuals and Organizations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>ILLUSTRATIVE QUOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some Cohort 4 members have noticed that MEV alumni are emerging from the program feeling empowered to practice sustainable and healthy leadership and professional practices.</td>
<td>I think I heard more of this at the convening, that people felt empowered to leave their organizations. That some had actually done that after participating in MEV. I think that says a lot about the process, and I guess maybe how it’s empowering others to leave situations that just aren’t healthy, or for whatever reason aren’t good for the individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Raben Group’s decision to change their leadership structure was noticed by some cohort members as a positive step toward including and investing in movement leaders of color.</td>
<td>[Jackie] stepping down [felt like] a conscious, explicit statement of wanting to make room for the leadership of women of color [that was] monumental. We have not seen that at that level of this work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort members also commented on MEV’s direct efforts to increase organizational capacity.</td>
<td>I know that in the past [MEV has] shown commitment by having one person in one cohort and then the next two years having the second person from that organization be a part of the next cohort. And I think that that is a great way to continue to build capacity within that organization and give them the capacity building support that they need to get to where they are.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With regards to movement strength, some cohort members commented that the movement lacks a strong investment in new leaders, particularly those from the most impacted communities.</td>
<td>I feel like the leadership has been the “old-girl network” and it’s the same folks in national positions, in national organizations with not much room for new leadership. To me, there’s a gap in terms of how much investment we’re actually doing in young women, trans, non-binary youth, who are most impacted by violence and by poverty. I just feel like we’re not getting to them. We’re not reaching them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additionally, while MEV has made strides in promoting self-care within the movement, this seems to be an area of weakness for the organizations and leaders of color due to resource scarcity and habits.</td>
<td>I just think, in particular for people of color organizations...there always seems to be more work than resources. And then you get all this burnout too. A lot of times we're forced to fight for resources, or forced to massage our visions to kind of fit in with something. That's actually really exhausting work. A lot of times, I think what we call investment in the next generation of leaders ends up being kind of burning youth out. Or just burning everybody out, quite frankly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Enhancing the Movement’s Capacity to Advocate for Social Change**

MEV seeks to promote and equip participants to use cutting edge social change theories and tools as the primary strategy to advocate for ending violence against all women and girls. MEV realizes this goal through ensuring that leaders have the resources, training, and opportunities needed to develop and execute social change visions and strategies. Exhibit III-10 shows Cohort 4’s average ratings for enhancing the movement’s capacity to advocate for social change.

**Exhibit III-10: Average Ratings for Enhancing the Movement’s Capacity to Advocate for Social Change**

We see that increased capacity to gauge, target, and shift attitudes and behaviors related to gender-based violence was an area of strength for the impact of MEV (3.4), but a relatively weaker area for the movement (2.3). Additionally, increased knowledge of and capacity to use fundamental and cutting-edge advocacy, organizing, and campaign tools and strategies was an area of growth for both the movement (2.3) and MEV’s impact (3.1).

**Cohort 4 Reflections: Enhancing Movement’s Capacity to Advocate for Social Change**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>ILLUSTRATIVE QUOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One cohort member spoke to her belief that MEV is improving the capacity for more organizations to engage others in the movement.</td>
<td>For an organization like mine, where our mandate is not explicitly related to the eradication of violence against women and girls, but for us to be doing the work and to be part of the cohort, we can start to tell the story of why it’s important. I think that can shift funders so that they’re not thinking about one issue area, because that’s how they’ve typically worked. I know that one way we’ve been doing some of our work over the last year is to get our champions lined up, and then they set up briefings or conversations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>However, one area that some cohort members feel that MEV can improve is building capacity in impacted communities. Yet, Movement Makers also see that MEV has invited individuals from National organizations are part of the social change movement, but to be honest with you, they don’t work with people who are directly impacted on a daily basis. That, to me, doesn’t create movement. It’s like uplifting voices that “speak for,” versus uplifting voices that are speaking for themselves.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of some of the issues that we had even at the convening and some of the concerns that came up had a lot to do with the fact that many of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THEME

impacted communities into Cohort 4, which makes it a distinct cohort.

ILLUSTRATIVE QUOTES

us are from impacted communities. I think that whatever they had planned, this is not the same cohort as their national ED. This cohort is a little bit different in that. MEV’s going to have to figure out how to accommodate those of us who are a different type of leadership.

One notable area for improvement with regards to movement strength was around effective research and messaging, especially within communities of color and conservative states.

One other suggestion that I have is messaging with specific communities in mind. And targeting them. For instance, if the research and messaging is to the Muslim community, and the message is that people from within the community are part of the movement, it will be received differently than, “Here comes another group of non-Muslims trying to tell us what to do.”

I think that there is some great blue state representation, and then, the rest of the country is forgotten about. I think that that’s a losing strategy of social justice and racial justice and gender justice folks. It’s just a losing strategy to not invest in work and some of the places that are seen as hard and difficult.

Building Critical Mass within the Movement & within Other Movements

Another integral component to MEV’s approach is building critical mass within the movement and with other movements. Specifically, MEV seeks to define and mobilize a critical mass of transformed leaders and organizations such that the movement’s narrative and direction are impacted and incorporate global perspectives and cross-movement collaboration. Key strategies for achieving this goal include designing an experiential program structure, creating opportunities to learn and exchange ideas with international allies, and fostering collaborations and partnerships. Exhibit III-11 shows the cohort’s average ratings for this goal area.

Exhibit III-11: Average Ratings for Building Critical Mass

Exhibit III-11 shows that Cohort 4 feels relatively similarly about both outcomes in this goal area; in general, the cohort felt that MEV had a “good impact” on both outcomes and the current strength of the movement is “somewhat strong.” However, the impact of MEV is slightly higher for framing the issue of gender-based violence in a more holistic, intersectional way (3.2). One cohort member’s reflection, to the right, illustrates that building critical mass is an area that has improved, especially as the result of current national movements.
Engagement of Other Funders

MEV’s approach to ending violence against all women and girls includes engagement of other funders. Specifically, MEV strives to develop a funder engagement strategy to inform and generate greater interest and investment in the work of the movement. As shown in Exhibit III-12, the cohort is much more optimistic about MEV’s impact with regards to developing and implementing a funder engagement strategy, as opposed to the current strength of funder engagement within the movement.

Exhibit III-12: Average Ratings for Funder Engagement

As shown, the cohort, on average, felt that MEV’s impact was between “good impact” and “excellent impact.” However, the current strength of the movement was rated, on average, as “somewhat strong.”

Cohort 4 Reflections: Funder Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>ILLUSTRATIVE QUOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A few cohort members spoke to their beliefs that NoVo is providing funding that is relevant and significant for the movement. | I do have to say that MEV is putting more funding streams in the movement, and I’m glad to see that, in ways that we did not have before, that allows people to do work in much more sort of innovative ways. Not just innovative, but grassroots in ways that [allow them to] try it on and matches what they do.  
I feel like NoVo has really created a space where they’re actually wanting to hear the “real stuff.” The fact that they are engaging in the program and co-creating with us is really exciting for me and something that I would not feel comfortable doing with any other funder. |
| Some cohort members felt that funder engagement still has a long way to go, particularly due to continued reliance on the federal government, as well as the mindsets and intentions of many funders: | People with money and resources go into the world of philanthropy because they think of philanthropy as charity. There’s a mainstream notion that charity is good, it’s kind, it’s what creates a good person, to be charitable. But charity’s not going to change a system of oppression.  
It’s been the same sources of funding and heavily reliance and over-reliance on government, federal government specifically... The revolution won’t be funded, especially by the feds. |
Conclusion

Chapter Three illustrated several key points about Cohort 4 at baseline. While there are signs of a budding network among Cohort 4 Movement Makers, Cohort 4 has fewer connections to one another and alumni than have prior cohorts. Tonya emerged as a key bridge that connected Cohort 4 members to one another and to MEV alumni, reflecting the centrality of her efforts and organization, WOCN. Turning to the outcome ratings, Cohort 4 showed a relatively wide range of ratings, thus reflecting the diversity of the cohort. The average of these ratings, however, were generally higher than prior cohorts for both MEV impact and movement strength, signaling progress toward MEV’s outcomes. Cohort 4’s network connections and outcome ratings will be collected again toward the end of Cohort 4’s MEV journey to provide insight into the cohort’s evolution and the status of the movement and MEV’s impact.
Chapter IV. Progress to Date

From being accepted into MEV in November 2017, through Convening 1 in January 2018, Cohort 4 is steadily finding its path on the MEV journey. During the first convening, the members of Cohort 4 were oriented to the MEV program and grounded in its values and core elements. This chapter examines Convening 1 through the eyes of cohort members, as illuminated in convening evaluations and interviews, and then explores how grounded and connected the members of Cohort 4 feel to the core elements of the MEV program.

Convening 1 Experience

In January 2018, Cohort 4 met for the first time at Convening 1 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This first convening of their MEV experience was intended to lay the groundwork for beloved community as a cohort and support each member to locate themselves within the movement, its history, and their own unique paths towards transformative leadership and movement building.

After Convening 1, the members of Cohort 4 were asked to rate the extent to which they felt that the desired convening outcomes were achieved. Exhibit IV-1 displays the results from the convening evaluation that was completed by 19 (out of 21) cohort members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understood the importance of building beloved community in this work.</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt that the convening set the cohort on a path for cultural resistance, resilience, and movement-building</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I began to practice becoming a beloved community within my cohort.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt nurtured, cared for, and replenished to support explorations of embodiment, personal transformation, and liberation.</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel oriented/grounded in the purpose, values, and expectations of the MEV program.</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt that the convening cultivated a vision of liberation in which all girls and women are safe and valued</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I engaged with and located myself within the history of the movement.</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As displayed above, the majority of cohort member respondents agreed that each outcome was met during Convening 1. They felt particularly strongly that the importance of beloved community in this work was reinforced, and that the convening set Cohort 4 on a path for moving forward. Cohort members also
agreed—though less strongly—that their experiences during Convening 1 supported them in cultivating a collective vision of liberation, and that they were able to engage with and locate themselves in the history of the movement.

While no convening throughout MEV’s existence is truly comparable to another—due to the characteristics and needs of each individual cohort, and the fluid nature of how each convening space is held—the following Exhibit shows Convening 1 rating trends across all MEV cohorts.

**Exhibit IV-2: MEV Convening 1 Ratings: Trend Analysis by Cohorts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of Convening Experience</th>
<th>Cohort 1</th>
<th>Cohort 2</th>
<th>Cohort 3</th>
<th>Cohort 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The overall content of the convening was useful and relevant.</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, the presenters, facilitators and staff were effective.</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pace of the convening was appropriate and not too packed.</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The session methods were appropriate and conducive to my providing input and discussion.</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understood the purpose of the convening before arriving.</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Averages:</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As demonstrated in the above Exhibit, Cohort 4’s ratings of Convening 1 are generally similar to prior cohorts’ ratings of their first convenings, with overall high agreement across all elements of the convening experience. The Cohort 4 ratings reveal some important reflections about the first convening for Cohort 4 and over time:

- **Across the convening elements, most of Cohort 4’s ratings are slightly less positive than those of prior cohorts.** However, Cohort 4’s ratings are still on the higher end of the agreement spectrum, with most cohort members agreeing or strongly agreeing for all elements.

- **Throughout the MEV program, ratings about the pacing of Convening 1 have steadily increased,** showing the growing intentionality that MEV is placing on spaciousness and flexibility during convenings. However, a few members of Cohort 4 still believed that the pacing was not appropriate for their learning styles, showing the difficulty with adapting pacing to suit everyone’s needs. (Pacing and flexibility are discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.)

- **Similarly, Cohort 4 had mixed ratings of the appropriateness of session methods,** with most people agreeing or strongly agreeing, and a few disagreeing—this trend is consistent across all cohorts’ ratings of Convening 1. In interviews, some Cohort 4 members elaborated on this, saying

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11 In Cohort 1’s convening evaluations, this statement was worded as follows: “The facilitators and speakers were well informed.”
that the format of discussion (i.e., small group versus large group) was not always appropriate for the content being discussed. Like pacing, tailoring session methods and programming for each individual is challenging, and the trend in ratings speaks to the challenge in getting this right for each and every cohort member and across session topics.

- **As in earlier cohort cycles, Cohort 4 struggled with having the necessary information** to understand the purpose of Convening 1 beforehand. With nearly a third of cohort members disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this element, preparing the cohort to enter their MEV experience together at the level they would like continues to be complex.

**Cohort 4 Reflections on Convening 1**

The information gathered through the interviews with Cohort 4 members generally reinforced what was shared through the convening evaluations, and sheds light on the unique and collective experiences of the members of this new MEV cohort during Convening 1. The following discussion is presented through the themes that emerged across interviews, including cohort members’ perceptions of the diversity of this cohort, the emerging cohort community, the intentionality and flexibility that went into Convening 1, and the depth and emotionality that cohort members experienced.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME: DIVERSITY OF THE COHORT</th>
<th>ILLUSTRATIVE QUOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When asked about Convening 1, nearly half of the cohort members interviewed first spoke about the diversity of Cohort 4. They were struck by how powerful it was to be in a room with all women of color, representing different communities and different aspects of womanhood, and felt that there was comfort inherent in that space of “sisterhood” and “family.”</td>
<td>I enjoyed everyone I met. I think the first takeaway was that the selection process was stellar, spot on...a really well vetted group of women...just representing so many various experiences, and touching on many different aspects of womanhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several cohort members were excited specifically about what an all-women-of-color cohort means for MEV and for the cohort cycle design.</td>
<td>After doing introductions and getting to know our other cohort members, I think MEV did a really good job at reinforcing or telling us that we belonged there. At that moment in time, we are all where we need to be or should be and we are all bringing unique perspectives and strong perspectives and strong experiences to this work. So they reinforced why we were selected and I thought that was amazing and the way they did it was really beautiful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few cohort members also raised a concern about how MEV will hold the space for and support this cohort. Another individual wondered about how the dynamics of oppression will change and be addressed among this unique and diverse group.</td>
<td>Because all of the faculty are so brilliant and wonderful, sometimes you can just get super excited by being like, “Yes, it’s gonna be a woman of color space!” You don’t necessarily think about how does that really shift what programing looks like for us?... How do we take in the emotions and the trauma in the room?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So the fact that [MEV is] bringing an intersectional approach, bringing racial justice and healing justice, and LGBT inclusion and all of that kind of stuff together to build this movement, that’s my ultimate vision... It’s things that I would daydream about wanting to be able to delve deep into... When it’s not just women of color but there are white people in the room, I think it becomes easier to call out symptoms of white supremacy and racism. But when you take them out of the equation, it’s not like all of those oppressions go away. They’re still there and...you don’t know how to call it out because the community that’s engaging in it has historically also been marginalized.</td>
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### THEME: BUILDING COMMUNITY

Throughout Convening 1, the members of Cohort 4 generally felt that they were building strong relationships with each other and laying the groundwork for an authentic community. Nearly all those interviewed expressed how impressed they were with their fellow cohort members, and how eager they were to connect with them. Several noted leaving the convening particularly energized about furthering their new relationships and getting to know each other more between convenings.

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<td>I personally did not feel challenged by any of my sisters, and the faculty seemed to really try to decolonize the process and have us be part of that of organizing and creating that space together collectively... It allows space for us to build the level of trust necessary to move forward. I don't think it's all going to be pretty, rosy, but I think it really was laying the groundwork for us to work together in the future.</td>
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Ten cohort members spoke at length about how much they appreciated the opportunity to make connections and build relationships with others. They were amazed by how quickly they built bonds with their fellow cohort members, both in and out of the formal convening space, saying that there was “organic joy” and laughter throughout, as well as deep and difficult healing.

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<td>I think with movement people, even though it’s called downtime, it’s really building time. So I appreciate the individual and more free time to build with people outside of more structured spaces.</td>
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At the same time, a few cohort members left Convening 1 thinking intently about what it means to be in community with each other, especially as women of color.

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<td>[I’m] just thinking about what it means to have a community that is entirely women of color and what that means in terms of challenging each other without further alienating each other or further causing harm to an already marginalized community.</td>
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### THEME: LEARNING AROUND INCLUSION

Every cohort member interviewed reflected on a perceived moment of transphobia that was inadvertently facilitated by one of the guest speakers. For many, this was a difficult experience in which individuals felt that, in the moment, there was a distinct lack of response from MEV faculty and the cohort as a whole.

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<td>Folks who were invited from the outside to come in and speak to us, these indigenous leaders, in the circle, they kind of just carried on this conversation in a transphobic way, and no one interrupted it and no one put a stop to it, neither the facilitators nor the participants or anyone in the circle, and so Monica got up and left, and after a certain amount of taking it, I just got up and left, and then I stayed kind of frozen in some ways... I was frozen and thinking, “Oh my God, is this really happening?”</td>
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Several members of Cohort 4 voiced concerns that the transgender cohort members had to “carry the emotional weight” of that moment and the discussions that followed it.

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<td>The outpouring of emotion then became emotional baggage that these two women had to carry. That really frustrated me, and it angered me because it is similar to the ways in which supremacy and patriarchy falls on women.</td>
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Nearly half the cohort saw this moment as clearly launching a trajectory of learning around inclusivity in the MEV community, particularly for transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary leaders in the movement. Many mentioned that they appreciated the way in which the faculty took responsibility for their

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<td>There was a conversation that happened the day after to address all that happened, but the concern is it became more about the lack of response from folks, and the awareness to really understand how to, in that moment, interrupt a violent situation against a participant, against the people who felt harmed... It was alarming for me to realize that in this moment, in this week, my</td>
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response and for the learning process, and others continued to wonder how MEV will lean into this learning moving forward.

fear had in some ways manifested itself in this moment, and I felt in some ways really questioning whether I belonged in [MEV] or not, and thinking of the future gatherings and it was definitely a learning moment, so I can appreciate the way folks reflected and were apologetic and were like, “We want to do better.”

THEME: INTENTIONALITY & PLANNING

The members of Cohort 4 noted that they deeply appreciated the intentionality that went into designing the Convening 1 experience, feeling that everything was well-thought-out and planned for. They found healing in the art and spirituality that were embedded in the experience, with half of those interviewed noting that these were key to their experience of being together and being themselves.

At least five of the cohort members interviewed expressed feeling immensely well-cared for, and that their self-care needs were nurtured and attended to throughout the convening. They described feeling valued and supported by the faculty and by having the space they needed to recharge and regroup in their own ways.

A few cohort members did mention some areas in which they perceived a lack of intentionality on the part of MEV, especially as it related to the rooming arrangements. While a few people said they enjoyed having a roommate, three cohort members reflected that having individual rooms, for them, was necessary for recharging and self-reflection. These individuals felt that the rooming situation exacerbated movement habits around the culture of scarcity, particularly for women of color in the movement. In the end, they noted their appreciation for MEV’s responsiveness to their requests for their own rooms.

Everyone needs to have their own space because it was so intense and people needed to be able to go back to their own space to process that... I think that’s such a definite, particularly having a cohort of all people of color and they haven’t experienced that and knowing that this is a must for our cohort.

It’s little things like that I feel like this project may not have structurally considered that may have been something that they asked other people to do and in this case I feel like there’s a hardship. It actually proved to be a hardship for a couple of women of color who walked in not feeling embraced because of that... It was all these small things that I just don’t think that MEV literally got a chance to consider that I hope that they are considering now.

THEME: FLEXIBILITY & PACING

The cohort members interviewed nearly unanimously pointed to the flexibility and pacing that were built into Convening 1, saying that it provided the right balance of hard work and spaciousness for them. Three cohort members specifically mentioned how different the MEV convening was in comparison to other convenings or workshops they have attended in the past, noting

On the second day I really listened to myself. I was like, “Instead of struggling in space and trying to just ignore what I’m going through, I’m just not going to participate today” ... When I decided to do that, people were really supportive. I was really thankful for that... I’m glad that the response was what it was, which is to take care of yourself so that you can come back as a full person. I think that’s wonderful.

I really appreciated the pace of the convening, in that the facilitators and trainers were flexible, moving at our pace. I’m not
the spaciousness in the schedule and the fluidity of the agenda as elements they have not experienced before.

Some cohort members saw the opportunities to debrief as a group as critical to self-care, while others appreciated downtime as key moments to attend to their own well-being.

Seven members of Cohort 4 also noted that they appreciated the way in which the faculty seemed to be on a journey with the cohort, and that the faculty acknowledged when things did not go as they expected and made space for the needs of the cohort as they emerged. For example, some cohort members specifically mentioned the openness of the staff in the discussion about how inclusion and transphobia manifest within the MEV community.

[The convening] was paced in a way that definitely promoted self-care. We had lots of downtime in between sessions. We had breaks in between sessions. There was time for a debrief, which also could be considered self-care. Taking a break from the heavy nitty gritty stuff. There was community dinner and community gathering at night. It definitely promoted self-care.

The faculty was on it and acknowledged it and said, “Yes, this is the way in which we could have done better...” I felt that was a really necessary practice in terms of being like, “Yes, we are fallible. We are human, and we're not going to pretend like we always have the right answers.”

The team was very understanding and there was a moment where we needed to voice a concern. What I got back from the team, what I felt from the team is that they didn't feel like they knew everything. They didn't feel like that our questions weren't valid or that our concerns weren't valid. It seemed like they were having a learning experience as well. That made the situation more relaxing, made it more healing.

Seven cohort members remarked on the depth of the experience for them and the intense grounding that they felt, which was both powerful and challenging. One cohort member expressed surprise at how quickly the cohort “dove deep,” and believed that this cohort was going to be unlike others because of the very profound and immediate needs of its members. Two others spoke about how the site visit to the local Native community provided a grounding experience for them that scaffolded the rest of the convening.

I think that it was a very intense week, emotionally, spiritually, and on a lot of different levels, and it was very clear that the facilitators and MEV are wanting for us to undergo a very rigorous process in transforming our leadership and transforming the ways in which we're thinking about this work, and that's intense.

[The site visit] just make me feel at home and that I had a place, even though I don't know where that place is, my ancestral place. It was just very grounding for me. And just welcoming and just learning from different cultures about how they lived life. That's always important and helps me and connects me to the rest of the world. That was really great.

A few cohort members also felt that, while there was substantial emotional grounding during the convening, they lacked a solid conceptual grounding to support them. They described this as needing a better “balance between the head and the heart.”

I don't think that it's a bad thing to ask us to be open hearted and to have us hold space for emotion. That's not a bad thing. I just think we were out of balance... I think it's too heart heavy, and the head was just not in it.
# Theme: Emotional Toll

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<td>Even with the attention paid to self-care, because of the intensity of the experience, nearly half of the cohort members interviewed described <em>feeling emotionally exhausted by the end of the convening</em>. The emotional depth of the Convening 1 activities surprised several cohort members, and they felt unprepared for how much emotionality would be a part of this first experience together.</td>
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<td><em>There was a certain amount of vulnerability that was being asked of us to be in that space and to share that circle with the leaders of our community and the work, and so I felt at the end of that day, I felt so raw and so open, not that’s it’s bad… I felt like the week was in some ways heavy-handed in that approach and in that space, and so I just don’t know if for the week that we’re supposed to get to know each other, if there were other ways to get to know each other that weren’t so intense.</em></td>
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<td>A few cohort members noted feeling “<em>pressure to emote</em>” when they were not ready to open up in that way, and feeling uncomfortable with the heavy emotions they believed they were being asked to feel.</td>
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<td><em>I do wonder if maybe there might have been a pressure to emote, or to feel. I will say when we went to the Women’s Center, at one point she was like, “Please come into a circle and just bring your grief into the room.” It bounds people a little bit, but it’s also a really intense ask, to ask people to bring folks’ grief into the room.</em></td>
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<td>At least four individuals were concerned by a <em>perceived lack of trauma-informed support</em> during these emotionally intense moments. They explained that, particularly for this cohort of all women of color, MEV needed to have a better system of support in place to address trauma.</td>
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<td><em>I assumed that if we were going to be going deep into personal experiences and history that there were going to be some mechanisms in place to support the women in the room… Topics came up, and agitations and triggers arose, and there wasn’t a trauma-informed response in place. With a cohort of women of color, a third, if not half, if not even all the women in that space have interpersonal or tangential experiences with violence and violent histories, or challenges… I thought from a programmatic standpoint it might have been helpful to have had some additional supports in place.</em></td>
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## Grounding Cohort 4 in MEV

As explored above, Convening 1 set much of the framing for Cohort 4’s introduction to MEV. Their experiences at the convening shaped the lens through which the members of Cohort 4 understand the MEV community and its role within the movement. The following section presents the perspectives of interviewed cohort members on foundational aspects of the MEV program, including:

- **Beloved community;**
- **Self-care;**
- **Physical practice and Forward Stance;**
- **Transformational leadership development;** and
- **Movement building for social change.**
### Cohort 4’s Reflections on Aspects of MEV

#### Beloved Community

For many Cohort 4 members, building beloved community is foundational to the MEV experience, to furthering the work of previous cohorts, and to deepening the movement. Beloved community as a concept was new for two cohort members, who both felt they learned a great deal about it during Convening 1. Other cohort members—even those who felt they came to MEV with an already deep understanding of beloved community—agreed that they gained new knowledge about beloved community as a concept.

Seven cohort members spoke about how powerful the concept of beloved community is for them personally and for the development of the cohort into an authentic community. During the first convening, they reflected that they experienced “genuine community building” and that MEV brought beloved community to the forefront right away.

Four cohort members specifically described how they learned the most about beloved community by practicing it with their peers during the week. This seemed to happen mostly outside the formal convening space, such as with roommates at night or during unplanned and non-structured activities.

The needed learning around transphobia did have an impact on how Cohort 4 members perceived the beloved community they are trying to build within MEV. As one cohort member mentioned, she felt that MEV’s response may have fueled a sense of “othering” for the transgender women in the room, and that she experienced a “forced togetherness” that is antithetical to beloved community. On the other hand, two other cohort members felt that the response was actually an example of how beloved community can be built and laid the groundwork for it develop, and that this cohort as “all the right people to do it.”

### Illustrative Quotes

- Activism gets really heated and there are people [who say], "You’re either with us or you’re against us." And I’m really thinking about how you can build this beloved community with not just the people who are on the same page as you, but also the people who are still thinking about whether or not they want to be on the same page with you, and even the people who are on the opposite side of things.

- It was our love and our challenge at the same time. What does it mean to be in true beloved community? What does it mean for me to actually love you? What is my challenge to make sure that I am truly being part of this? Because it is so much deeper than networking... We really need to have that beloved community to make any kind of transformational change. That was a beautiful part.

- Right away everybody hit it off and we built the community that we were going to be in because we spent time with each other away from the convening. We went and did things, shopping. We rode bikes. We went to see the horses. We built the community within.

- I think at the point that people started to be a little more honest about their feelings that the beloved community was definitely dismantled. I don’t feel like I’m stepping back into Convening Two into that dynamic. I feel like it might have to be reassembled.

- When the incident happened that was transphobic...the way the debrief was held was indicative of the kind of beloved community that we can offer and have. I think there was also some learning that happened with community around balancing respect for elders and...being respectful of being in a particular place, but then also holding each other and each other’s needs. I think the seedlings for beloved community to really blossom are there.
### SELF-CARE

Seven individuals spoke at length about their own journeys to elevate self-care as a core aspect of their leadership, and the difficulty of that journey, especially as some of them have taken on new leadership roles that make a focus on balance challenging.

Nearly three-quarters of cohort members interviewed explained how self-care was prioritized—even if not explicitly—throughout the entirety of Convening 1. One cohort member did wonder how MEV could approach self-care with a stronger trauma-informed lens going forward.

### PHYSICAL PRACTICE & FORWARD STANCE

For at least half of the cohort members interviewed, physical practice represents a necessary piece of movement building and transformational leadership. The elements of physical practice at Convening 1 were particularly meaningful for some cohort members, as five people reflected that the practice supported them throughout the convening and will continue to support them in their daily lives. On the other hand, two cohort members shared that physical practice did not resonate with them, or that they felt uncomfortable doing it in a group setting.

Forward Stance was a familiar concept to at least three cohort members, two of whom are regular practitioners. These individuals described it as an “inner power-builder,” and a grounding force that enables openness to the nuance and complexity that is a natural part of this work. They believed that Forward Stance is critical for effective leadership and can act as a way to weave leaders together.

For three cohort members new to Forward Stance, they were intrigued but felt that they did not get enough information, teaching, or framing around it. While they are eager to learn more about Forward Stance, they felt they did not have the knowledge they need to apply it. For them and others, there was a missed opportunity during the convening to weave Forward Stance more strongly throughout the week. Five cohort members

### ILLUSTRATIVE QUOTES

The idea that I was going to take time off to take care of myself was, and still in my mind is, a selfish proposition. Learning how to change my mental view on that I think is important.

You've got to be healed before you can heal someone else.

I don't know how [MEV] talks about self-care in trying to address trauma and vicarious trauma in this work. As women of color who are directly impacted, what does it mean for us to be these powerhouse leaders that are dealing with violent situations on a daily basis, both personally and also in the way that we're engaging this work? How do we talk about that? How do we talk about those dynamics and how that manifests in our life, and what do we do with that trauma? How do we release that trauma?

I feel like [Forward Stance] taught me to take a step back here and there. Providing direct services, you're always on. It's a self-care piece that I could utilize in my everyday life, not just through work but also in home life as well. Take a step back and breathe, and motion, and being present. I would say that it changed the way I looked at just always being on and never taking a break from that or stepping away.

To me, [Forward Stance] is a posture that really enables you to stay open and really think about situations in a larger way, in a more nuanced way, and hold a complexity of it because we're constantly facing these challenges and these dynamics. I think that Forward Stance is about sustainability and how we do this work in a more sustainable way.

For our very first convening, the concepts [around Forward Stance] were not really well introduced. It seemed really hurried and like you didn't actually have an experience of what it meant... I didn't feel like those concepts were actually really brought forward in our first convening.
wished that there had been more time to explore embodiment and mindfulness.

**TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Although this element was not explored at length during Convening 1, cohort members felt that it is fundamental to their MEV experience and were eager to dive in more deeply. More than half reflected that the focus on personal development and self-reflection impacted them by *opening new perspectives of what leadership in this movement can look like.* Some observed that they did experience some transformation during the convening, and that they have brought that back to their organizations and are empowering their staff.

*Illustrative Quotes*

I really loved this idea that we’re not just focusing on the professional development but we’re really focusing on personal development as well. Our emotional development, our self-awareness, it’s everything intertwined together. And I love that because the work that we do, I like to say that it’s self-work, because in order for us to have conversations about ending violence or even this movement and where we are in this movement, it really depends on where we are personally in our healing journeys and our own self-reflections.

For almost every cohort member, there is a *hunger for more discussion and learning around transformational leadership development.* While they believed that the seeds for this element have been planted, they wanted to continue to explore it in future convenings and learn how to engage in practicing transformation as leaders.

*Illustrative Quotes*

I think [MEV] brought together a group of really amazing leaders and there’s this incredible faculty that feels really wise... When we think about transformational leadership development, I think about people just seeing and knowing their own power. I think the resources and the intent is there, so I’m excited to see where it goes.

**MOVEMENT BUILDING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE**

One quarter of cohort members explained that this element of MEV *felt the most exciting and important for them,* particularly in the context of their daily work towards social justice.

*Illustrative Quotes*

I think I’ve been thinking a lot about that. How do we support all of the different ways in which movement building happens?... When I think about movement building, I think about people, specifically white institutions, [who are] actively supporting that, but then [about] also stopping practices that create the conditions where this movement building is needed.

Another quarter expressed leaving Convening 1 with *confusion about how MEV understands and will incorporate movement building for social change,* especially given the number of different ways in which cohort members engage in movement building. Some observed that cohort members have different understandings of movement building, and that there was limited time during the week for them to explore those intersections.

*Illustrative Quotes*

When it came to the visits we were doing at the pueblos, that was [described as] movement building. It’s totally possible that it is actually movement building, but there were...a lot of things that were presented to us, and we were asked to just take them... I just felt like there’s not a dialogue, and that’s okay, it’s a beginning... I’m just not clear on what movement building means.
Throughout interviews, many Cohort 4 members raised the idea that there are different entry points to the movement: given the breadth of experiences in Cohort 4, not everyone is entering the discussion with the same grounding. At least five cohort members interviewed reflected on this fact and believed that it was actually a good representation of the movement at large, in which organizations with different intentions and beliefs engage with the movement in different ways.

For many cohort members, the only way to truly achieve social change in this movement (and in the cohort) will be through building community. Nearly half of those interviewed pointed to the necessary connection between movement building and beloved community, reflecting that by forming deep and trusting relationships with each other, the movement itself will become stronger. They therefore wished that there was more space given during Convening 1 to have conversations with each other about their views on and work towards social change, and hoped that MEV can facilitate this space in the future.

**Conclusion**

Through their first few months as a cohort in MEV, the members of Cohort 4 have experienced their first convening and have been oriented to the purpose and elements of the MEV program. In Convening 1 they laid the seeds for beloved community to flourish and experienced the simultaneous intensity and spaciousness that are hallmarks of MEV. They faced a moment of distress and tension together, and acknowledged when good intentions do not go far enough. The members of Cohort 4 are moving along their MEV journeys grounded in the values of the program, with an understanding of—as discussed in the next chapter—where they and MEV must grow moving forward.
Chapter V. Implications for Moving Forward

Cohort 4 members feel extraordinarily lucky to be part of the MEV experience and they left the first convening feeling nurtured and generally grounded in the values of MEV. In almost all cases, the members of Cohort 4 viewed their acceptance into the program as potentially transformative for their work and their lives. In this concluding chapter, we share what cohort members believe will be the work of Cohort 4 as it moves through its MEV experience, along with their questions and recommendations.

Vision for Moving Forward

Given the early stage of Cohort 4’s experience in MEV, cohort members have naturally very different understandings of what will be the work of this unique cohort. Most commonly, cohort members believe that Cohort 4 will play a key role in elevating and supporting the leadership of trans women and women of color across the movement. Five cohort members specifically pointed to the opportunity facing Cohort 4 for building and strengthening alliances between cis and transgender women of color, and between organizations working on issues related to each of these groups. At least four individuals expressed their belief that this cohort can emerge from MEV “powerful and clear” on their work against violence and for gender equity, and able to advocate for the concerns of trans women as leaders and members of the movement. They trust that Cohort 4 can contribute an exploration of “what a world led by people of color looks like.”

My goal and my hope is that [Cohort 4] sticks through the experience of being challenged and the hard conversations that we will have, that we will emerge really powerful and really clear and really sharp, it’s what I think the movement has been waiting for in terms of how to think about the work and how to think about violence and how to think about centering those most impacted and how to think about equity, the leadership of women of color, of trans women of color in this moment, and I think all those things the movement is leading, and what does it really look like and how is it really possible?

Other cohort members shared their beliefs about the work of Cohort 4, describing central aims for the cohort that would strengthen the overall fabric of the movement, such as:

- Promoting partnerships and alliances across multiple issue areas
- Leveraging more resources for gender justice organizations and actors
- Engaging in policy advocacy and civic activism
- More intentionally centering the communities most impacted by violence
- Developing a shared analysis at the grassroots level
- Healing, and accepting grievances and discomfort as important steps towards healing
Questions for Faculty from Cohort 4

- What do we need to really build beloved community? When the cohort hits conflict, what do we actually do? How do we handle it in a way that incorporates Forward Stance?
- How do younger adults feature in this cohort?
- What are MEV’s desired outcomes? Why does MEV exist?
- When will we start on projects?
- What is the timeline of the experience? What are some of the guideposts?
- How have past cohort members created space to make the most of this experience and apply it to their work?
- What are the conversations around leadership transformation that the faculty are having?
- Is MEV’s goal to develop the cohort’s leadership or the leadership in the communities in which MEV leaders work? Or both? How should the cohort think about this?
- What type of time commitments are expected of cohort members?
- Can regional trainings be offered in Spanish?

Recommendations for Moving Forward

We also asked cohort members for their recommendations for how their MEV experience could be enhanced in the future. Below are the key themes that emerged from their recommendations, which resonate strongly with the feedback provided through the Convening 1 evaluations:

- **Consider formal training in trauma-informed responses, and/or including staff with formal training in counseling.** Seven cohort members that were concerned about the lack of support for trauma surfaced during the convening and suggested that the faculty become trained in trauma-informed responses, or that they include individuals whose sole purpose is to support and hold the emotional responses in the room. Two others also emphasized providing warnings if activities may act as triggers.

I think even just having that space and time to recognize that, so even if we have to move forward to get content covered, and we all understand that... I think, is really, really important to say, “We’re not just moving on. We understand your pain does not just move on, and so we’re going to take a space and a moment to acknowledge that something really bad happened and that you’re still in pain from it and to let us hold you in whatever way that we need.”

I kept thinking about healing and how when someone is having these kinds of emotional experiences... who can be in the room [and] that’s their job, to support that person or those persons? If it means calling them out to a separate space to begin to do that healing work with them, I think would be important. I think the faculty’s purpose is definitely dual but, I’m not sure if it’s that and if they’re trained to do so. So I think it would be really important to have healers in the room who can support folks who may be experiencing that.
• **Identify and make it clear that there are multiple ways to engage.** Several women mentioned that it would have been helpful for the facilitators to explicitly address that there are multiple ways to engage in MEV and in the movement. Cohort members described this as differences in the degree to which individuals are comfortable being extraverted and expressing emotions.

• **Recognize that having a cohort of all women of color does not mean that all cohort members share a common analysis around race, gender, and class.** Two cohort members spoke specifically about how some work may need to be done in order to establish a common critical analysis among all cohort members, saying that MEV cannot assume each cohort member has the “same analysis around race, class, and gender.”

• **Make sure that there are diverse speakers and facilitators, including those that are transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary.** Two cohort members requested that staff consider adding someone who identifies along the fluid spectrum of gender to the faculty team or to the list of speakers and trainers who engage with the team.

• **Orient guest speakers in advance to the principles of MEV and the characteristics of the cohort.** Several cohort members thought that the perceived transphobia that occurred in part because the guest speakers were not fully aware of who they were speaking with.

• **Consider regional and geographic differences, especially in planning convenings.** Two cohort members indicated that it would be nice to have a convening in the South. For one respondent, this is because of its deep African American and Black history, while another felt it was important given the unique political climate in the South.

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A lot of the convenings are happening outside of the deep South. The site visit in New Mexico on the pueblos reminded me that we also, as Black folks in the room, need to be able to hold a convening in the deep South because so much of the migrations happened and started from the deep South... I think we need to be able, as Black folks, have that kind of experience but in the deep South. While we were on the pueblos, I think it spoke to the Native people that were there and also the Latinas that were in the room too. And for Black folks, it definitely made us crave our ancestral land.
• **Build in optional relationship building opportunities between formal convenings.** As illustrated in Chapter III, as a group, at baseline, Cohort 4 is less connected both to one another and to MEV alumni than previous cohorts. This suggests that they might benefit from additional opportunities to build trust and galvanize around a common vision. In addition to in-person meetings, MEV might consider sponsoring virtual video conversations on MEV concepts that would help to build relationships and deepen shared understanding of MEV’s vision for movement building and individual transformation.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, Cohort 4 of the MEV program has launched smoothly with a dynamic group of movement leaders poised to transform themselves, their organizations, and the movement. The evaluation team looks forward to continuing this journey and exploring ways to capture the many facets and impact of MEV as it continues to evolve and make increasingly visible waves and ripples within the movement to end violence against all women and girls.