

Webinar: One Year Later: New Mexico, COVID-19, and Leaders of Color

16 March 2021 #OneYearLater #OnTheFrontlines

Presented by the [Building Movement Project](#) (BMP)

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Hello and good morning. Welcome everyone. My name is Alicia Lueras Maldonado, really excited to be with you all this morning. I'm based here in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I'm a consultant at the Building Movement Project, really honored to have everyone here with us in the room this morning. Today we're presenting One Year Later: New Mexico COVID-19 and Leaders of Color. And before we do that, I really wanted to just take a moment to acknowledge where we are today. I'm based here in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Want to honor the ancestral indigenous lands that we are on and recognize our relatives and ancestors whose land that we are on, the elders and the people that still live here. And so I know that folks are joining us from various parts of New Mexico and even nationally, but want to take a moment to recognize where I am in this moment. Catherine, should we go ahead and move through and I'll do some housekeeping? So for our webinar this morning, the attendees are not visible. Please again, use the chat to send your questions to the panelists and tech issues to our BMP Admin. I want to recognize Catherine Foley, with the Building Movement Project, who has been instrumental in helping us to produce this webinar this morning. So thank you again, Catherine, for that.

The webinar is being recorded and we will share the link along with additional materials. What we're going to do today is we're going to review some of the data and findings of are [On the Frontlines](#) which was a report that came out last year. We're really honored to have some of the panelists that are joining us today for our discussion last fall. And so we've invited some of them back along with an additional guests for our discussion. After that we'll open it up for some, some Q&A.

This morning I'm really honored to present our panelists. We have with us, Johana Bencomo is the executive director of New Mexico CAFé down in Southern New Mexico. We have Angel Charley, the executive director of the Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women, based here in Albuquerque. We have Sachi Watase, executive director of the New Mexico Asian Family Center and Henry Brutus, the executive director of La Casa, Inc. Also down in Southern New Mexico.

Wanting to talk a little bit about the Building Movement Project, but before I do that, I wanted to recognize the Building Movement Project team members who are on the call today as far as I know, I want to recognize the co-directors of Building Movement Project, Frances Kunreuther and Sean Thomas-Breitfeld, who I've had the privilege of working with for several years they're based in New York, Olivia Peña and Leah Steimel are also our other team members that do work with us here in New Mexico.

And so just want to welcome them and acknowledge the work that they do on behalf of Building Movement Project. BMP is a national organization that really does work around systems change, leadership development, and working for social change. Particularly in New Mexico, we have done that through the Common Good Action Project work, where we do direct one-on-one cohort work with direct service organizations and nonprofits. We do that work also through the release of surveys and reports like the one that we're talking about today On The Front Lines. And so really honored to be doing this work with Building Movement Project. You can go to buildingmovementproject.org for more information on the work that Building Movement Project does nationally and here in New Mexico.

So again, the [On The Frontlines](#) report is the 2020 report from the Building Movement Project and [SolidarityIs](#). Collected data from over 400 nonprofit leaders of color, so today we'll be looking at some of

the key findings, there were testimonials and quotes, and there were recommendations for philanthropy, nonprofits and the government in this report. [It's available for download.](#)

So last year when we started to shut down right after the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and it's been a year, right? It's been an extremely tough year for many folks, right? A great loss of life, shifts in work, loss of funding, incredible challenges, and now we're moving into a year later and dealing with vaccination roll outs, how folks are going to get back to work, mental health issues.

And so these were the questions that were at the forefront of doing the initial survey, and then even all these years later, reflecting back on how COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted communities of color, how are POC nonprofits responding? What do they anticipate over the next three to six months? How did the 2020 uprisings affect POC non-profits? What's the current environment and what changes must be made in order to rebuild a different future. So these were the learning questions from *On The Front Lines*. And so today we'll be digging into these questions a little bit more with our panelists. Again, please feel free to pose your questions and the opportunities and challenges that you all are bringing with you as panelists.

So what we found through the survey, through this last year, through the stories that have been lifted up to the people that we have spoken with, black indigenous and Latino communities are three times more likely to contract COVID-19 and twice as likely to die from it as white people. Black, Asian, and Latino communities are contending with the worst of the economic crisis, high rates of unemployment, housing instability. And even at the beginning of the pandemic, we saw that Latino, black and indigenous communities were already food insecure at the start of the pandemic.

So what we found from this report was that the crisis is about to get worse. Non-profits are having to make up for government inefficiencies. The climate has taken an immense toll on people of color leaders, particularly women of color, long-term financial stability of POC-led nonprofits are at stake and it's time for systemic change and solidarity. Anticipated community needs that we found from the report remain the same as they did last year. It was very clear that these issues would continue to grow particularly as we were waiting for relief packages and we'll talk with our panelists today about what the current relief package means for them and for their communities. But really looking at cultural and linguistical needs, the digital literacy, surges illnesses, what's happening with voter disenfranchisement and really looking at the big picture of anticipated community needs and what sorts of systemic change we're going to need in our communities.

I wanted to share a quote from the report that really speaks to the desire to engage in solidarity from non-black folks to engage in political education, strategy development, and generative conversations with other leaders of color. As we think about how we do anti-black racism work, anti-Asian American work, supporting indigenous values and relationships, really looking at how we are standing in solidarity with each other. And we'll get into that in our discussions in a little bit. "This moment is calling for us to center African Americans, that path is not yet clear to me, we need to deepen our analysis." And so this is something that we want to lift up for all of us, as we think about how we move forward in solidarity with each other.

So where do we go from here? The next few slides we'll talk about the systemic and policy changes and the recommendations that we are putting forth. Access to basic services, universal healthcare, access to technology and education. I think that we really need to look at.

The next slide show some recommendations in philanthropy that we want to lift up followed by recommendations for the nonprofit sector. But in cultures of well-being, the current climate and really leaning it to the knowledge and experiences of our POC leaders. So want to move us into a short ... Well, one more slide that I think is really indicative of where we are now, right? Having to be flexible moving through the challenges that we are all facing together. Before we move into the panel discussion with our panelists, I know that Catherine has a poll that we wanted to present to those of you who are with us today.

And I think we've got that set up. So what are your most pressing concerns right now? A little bit set up for a couple of minutes, so yes you can respond to it. Okay. I think we are getting some responses. And yes, thank you for that. The slides will be made available after this webinar and the findings and recommendations can be found on our website, in the chat as well.

We are sharing the core results of the pressing concerns right now. And it looks like mental health problems and trauma is the leading one, followed by access to the vaccination and food and housing instability. So again, those findings that were part of last year's report were showing that those are still very much on the front of people's thoughts. So thank you for sharing.

I want to go ahead and open it up to our panelists and welcome and thank Johana and Angel, Sachi and Henry once again for taking the time to join us this morning, really appreciate all of you being here with us though. So thank you once again. I wanted to go ahead and start with our first question that really looks at what has shifted and how you do your work. What have you had to do differently in terms of new programs or added changes that you have had to do and maybe Sachi, if you want to go ahead and get us started on this first question.

Sachi Watase: Yeah, sure. Thank you. So for our organization, I think we've had to really adjust to the technological needs of our clients because many of them don't have access to certain types of technology to connect with the resources they're needing. And so we've had to be that liaison that really ... Because we can't go in person to provide the services, we have to do everything remotely and that causes so many other access issues and language barrier issues that have really skyrocketed since the pandemic started. In addition to the incredibly high rate of clients that we've also been seeing. And so while we have more clients, we also have ... Every client takes a little bit more time because we're also having to find all of these different ways to get them to the resources through new ways and help them understand the different tech issues and phone calls that we have to do.

And I think that's been big. And then also communicating with our communities has been really challenging because again, many of them don't have access to broadband or to smartphones necessarily. And so we've also been trying to create have creative ways of getting to them. And we've been creating a little video in language videos throughout this past year to send information about the pandemic and even that is not perfect, right? Many of them can't access that, but just trying to find different ways for people to get access to information because most of the places in the state don't actually provide that language access and that culturally specific approach for the particular population that we serve.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Johana, do you want to share as well in terms of what you all are dealing with down in Southern New Mexico? What has shifted in how you're doing your work a year later?

Johana Bencomo: Thank you. Thanks for having us again, it's great to be here with all my colleagues one more time. It's also just really good to process out loud, some of these things. So we are community organizers. It's not in our nature to do virtual transformative relationship building. And so it's been a really difficult adjustment honestly for our staff and for the members of our base as well, as well, our leaders they're used to seeing us in their living rooms, in their churches, in their communities. And that's been really difficult. I will also say that we work in Doña Ana County, across Union County, Luna County, Hidalgo County, and Grant County, many communities that don't have access to reliable internet and broadband. And so it's been really difficult to actually have good conversations with people even through Zoom.

So that's been honestly really difficult and Alicia, something you said earlier about nonprofits, really having to pick up the slack where government has failed. That has really been true. And even for us to do a lot more macro systemic policy work, we've really been on the front lines of pushing government to do better for people who've been excluded like immigrant families. And right now we're four days from the legislature ending. So on top of our regular advocacy work, we've had to layer on economic relief and fighting for what feels like often crumbs for families to be able to just survive one more week. And so that's been honestly really heavy and I say that right with this acknowledging privilege in that I get to work from home, sorry about that.

I get to work from home with my dog barking and it doesn't matter, right? I'm still able to do that. And a lot of other people haven't either have lost their jobs completely or have to risk their lives every day at work and their health and the health of their family. And so I very much acknowledge that which I don't know, it has given me a lot more [inaudible 00:21:20], a lot more energy to push government to do better by our people, but it's definitely been ... It's taken a toll for sure.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Angel, what has shifted for you all? And I wanted to also have you think about the relief package was just approved, right? And so folks are now getting their stimulus monies and there's money now going into the communities. What does that mean for the organizations and communities? What does that look like?

Angel Charley: Thanks, Alicia. Good morning everybody. The work that shifted, so I'll answer kind of that piece. First, for us I think I'd like to just pick up where Johana set it down, which is like, I'm tired, I'm exhausted. There's been so many times we've had decision fatigue over the last year and just tired of making decisions and tired of responding. We don't get to ... This isn't a 9:00 to 5:00 Monday through Friday for us. We live our missions. We are the populations we serve.

So, some of the ways that we've shifted is we've made permanent our food security programming through our native youth outreach. And so now we've committed to food security or sovereignty as violence prevention. We continue to provide PPE and you'd be surprised at how often we're doing it every single month, still providing those basic necessities to communities. And then I think one of the biggest changes is building and rest. So for the reason that I started off with, we're really being intentional about resting and needing to create boundaries for ourselves as we work through the movement. And then the stimulus package one of the provisions that we're really interested in is how much of that money is going to be earmarked for tribal communities and tribal governments. And this last go-round to New Mexico was one of maybe two. I want to say, states that had earmarked federal monies to get to tribal communities. So that's not happening throughout the country and we're fortunate that we live in a state that prioritizes tribal communities, tribal governments, but that's not the case everywhere.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: What about you Henry? What in this past year, what has shifted for your organization and have there been new ways of thinking, new solutions to challenges that have risen? And then also thinking about the new COVID relief package and what that means for the work that you all do down in Southern New Mexico.

Henry Brutus: Good morning, Alicia and good morning, everyone. Great questions. So in addition to what my colleagues stated, and I think they said it very well, I think in terms of new decisions or solutions it's every single day, right? Because every day it's different. We're not sure what we're logging into. So we're having to make those decisions many times on the fly. One of the elements for me, that's been really challenging. So yes, it's challenging to connect clients with services and these days, especially we serve a largely ... A lot of our area that we serve is rural, which means they don't have internet connectivity, et cetera. Or it's very patchy. So trying to do that remotely is challenging in itself. But I think also in the work that we do, we build a human connection. So being disconnected, because even here, behind the screen, we're not together.

I mean, I'd love to have been around a table somewhere with my colleagues and we're chit-chatting versus being here behind a screen. So that connection has lacked and I like to say that it takes at least, and I think I speak for all of us, in our work it takes people to do the work. We can't rely on AI or anything like that. So not having these connections to make us well, then we're expected to make others well. And in addition, so the other side of this has been, we've seen ... I work mostly in DV, in domestic violence. The severity of cases has been worse than I had seen in a few years before. The number of cases also, I mean, it comes in waves, so there may be no hotline calls today and then tomorrow they're like 1,000.

So I mean, I'm so fortunate, I'll just give a quick plugin for those that I work with, my employees as well as partner organizations, because it really demonstrates during this time, and we talk a lot about resiliency of the nonprofit sector. But it really speaks to resiliency of each person to be able to still be here a year later and still doing this work and doing it well. I think that speaks volumes.

In terms of the Stimulus Package, the latest one, unfortunately, I don't know all the specifics yet. So I'm really happy that we're getting funding into people's hands, especially those that may have need it the most, those that lost their employment or struggling to pay their rent or mortgage, et cetera. I just wish we would have something that's more sustainable because I think of the one piece of it that I know about is several persons within certain income brackets are going to get \$1,400. How far can that go? Is that a month? Is that two months? And then what happens after that? And then if you were behind the last six months, are you just getting caught up? So then what happens tomorrow? The first will come again before we know it. So I just wish we would think of more long-term solutions versus just a quick bailout if you will. But I'm happy for the most part. I mean, at least it's something versus nothing, but I just wish we'd have the end game in mind versus just today.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: I think that's really important what you looked up Henry and I think too what Johana referenced earlier, the nonprofits are really having to do a lot of the heavy lifting right now for their communities. And so as we think about what could the government be doing to help right folks really address the deep need. And I'm curious for you all given the great need and the demand for services has new coalitions formed or new partnerships within your work that you might not normally have considered before COVID-19? And what have those looked like if that has been the case? Maybe Sachi, if you want to start or ... Sorry, Johana, I saw you about to go, so for it.

Johana Bencomo: I just want to jump in to get rid of the silence. Yes, but I can jump in. I don't know if there's been necessarily any new ones where I didn't ever imagine, but the partners that we've worked with in the past on a number of issues, workers' rights, immigrant rights. honestly we are in meetings every week. Talking about how are we going to respond to this? How are we going to push for that? How are we ... And I mean, honestly, since March, we've been meeting on a weekly basis with coalition partners like [foreign language 00:29:43], New Mexico Voices for Children, partnership for community action. You really sort of come together to figure out how will we respond together and push our local government or state government to really show up for immigrant families, for undocumented folks, the American Rescue Plan, thankfully this year, this time around was a lot more inclusive than last plan that really excluded a lot of undocumented folks, it even excluded spouses of ITIN filers, it excluded US-born children who had undocumented parents.

It left out a lot of people and this term around it was a lot more inclusive. Don't get me wrong, there's still a lot of undocumented folks that are left out of relief. But it was more inclusive. And we're also just trying to add the state wide level, how do we push for better policies that protect every single New Mexican, regardless of income level, regardless of immigration status. And I've been honestly deeply, deeply thankful for those partners who we've just grown in our relationship with each other and then we're currently fighting for a Statewide Basically Bill and that coalition has been really broad and really beautiful. And I think partly because of the pandemic, it was able to expand that widely, people recognizing how intersectional that work is. And so in many ways it's made me just love the nonprofit sector even more, especially here in our state. I think we've been doing an incredible job.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Sachi, what about you all in your work with the New Mexico Asian Family Center?

Sachi Watase: Yeah. So full disclosure, I'm a pretty new executive director. I started back in September, so I started in the middle of the pandemic. So I don't have necessarily a comparison from before. But I would echo what Johana said that I know that many of the coalitions we're a part of have been meeting more often. We meet weekly with a lot of them. And also yeah, because we serve a very large ... It's a small population in person in New Mexico, but it's very wide, it's spread out and it's in many ways disconnected from each other. And so we have a lot of different really specific coalitions, like the Sexual Assault Coalition. And then we have immigrants rights, meetings that we attend and we have refugee rights meetings that we attend. And it spreads out because there's not ... We're asked to do a lot of different things as one small organization and feel a lot of different gaps in different resources that should be available from the state side or from the government.

Yeah, we have a lot of coalitions, I would say many, many coalitions and we're attending so many meetings every week as well. And I think because of the working from home format, it is nice because then we can gather with folks from other places in the state in a way that we may not have been able to before, but it also means that we can meet more. We can have back to back meetings with one minute in between. And that also is really draining and is put on all of us to really be there constantly and be advocating with our community partners and be sharing resources constantly with each other on Zoom. And yeah, it's a different kind of communication that we have had to adjust to and a very constant communication, which is important, but exhausting.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Anything, Henry or Charley that you all want to share in terms of new solutions or coalitions that has evolved as a result of dealing with the existing challenges?

Angel Charley: Yeah. I want to name two things that we saw, and I think we'll continue to be, which is the mutual aid efforts that happened over the past year. I think a lot of us got involved with those, and those might not necessarily been the way we were meeting community where they were. But we've been heavily involved in different mutual aid efforts to show up one time with like 300 gallons of leech, looking good, never done before. And then thinking about new coalitions or solutions it feels really good to share and say that tribal communities are really leading a lot of the relief efforts. So if you're in proximity to a tribal community, chances are, they've offered vaccination up to your ... Opened their vaccination infrastructure to your community. And I think that's the new way that we're seeing. So it's all the more reason to get behind communities of color, right? We are constantly thinking in positive ways for our communities we living out, being a good relative.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: I've actually wanted to shift the head to something you just lifted up Angel. And we think about the enormous impact of COVID on communities of color and the challenges that exist in terms of accessing resources, right? And so you're really leaning into mutual aid, into tribal communities, into coalitions that are being formed because of either lack of funding or lack support from the government. And so even here in New Mexico, we're seeing that some businesses are telling folks to go to Texas or other places to get vaccinated. There's an uphill battle within the immigrant population around vaccinations. Looking at the increase in violence against our Asian American communities and even what we've seen here in Albuquerque and New Mexico. And so I wanted to shift to talk a little bit about the impact of COVID-19 on our communities of color and what your organizations are dealing with and having to address.

I thought maybe Henry or Johana, you could talk about in Southern New Mexico, what you're seeing in terms of the vaccination efforts, in terms of language, access and ability to access resources.

Henry Brutus: Johana, we can tag team. I think the one thing I can contribute is I just recently, I was on a call, I was smiling at her when she was speaking, because boundaries don't seem to exist anymore because people expect everything right then and there because they think you're at home. But I sat in a conference with the Department of Health recently, the New Mexico Department of Health, and then a slide during that conference really stuck out at me. It showed vaccination by county, it also showed vaccination by ethnicities or races. And again, we're still having a challenge in the state where the black and Hispanic population or Latino population is still being vaccinated at a much lesser rate than others.

So I was assured that there are some messages that will be coming out to target these communities. I have not heard or seen them yet. Again, I think when this pandemic started and we started talking about a vaccine, there were a lot of talks at least nationally about communities of color or people of color not being as trusting as others. And there are many reasons for that. History tells us a lot of that. So I think it's a myth that while we knew the vaccine was going to be rolled out, that we didn't have these messages already prepared to go out and the effort and outreach efforts done in these communities to make sure that once the vaccine's available that people are we've already dispelled those myths so that people could be in line to be vaccinated or registered to be vaccinated. Johana, now, I'll turn it to you.

Johana Bencomo: No, that's right on Henry. Just yesterday, I was looking at the dashboard on the New Mexico Department of Health website and disproportionately Latinx folks in New Mexico are getting COVID and they are, I think at 11% vaccination rate. Incredibly low not even as low as black New Mexicans. So they have the lowest rate of vaccination in the state. And I just feel like ... I mean, Henry's right. I think we could have done a lot more to be prepared for this moment. And then being in Southern

New Mexico, we've had some of our local elected officials really pushing for vaccine equity. Doña Ana County has in fact been getting a lot less vaccines than the rest of the state. And not just Doña Ana County, but a lot of Southern New Mexico counties. And honestly, it has felt like a struggle to get that sort of equity for a lot of our communities.

And to be honest with you, I'm hearing a lot of, people of color are hesitant, immigrants are hesitant. It is my experience that they are not hesitant. It's just that they don't have enough information in Spanish. The tool perhaps is complicated to use. It's not accessible for people. It's not that people don't want to take it. It's that, "I don't know where to go. There's not enough information for me to be able to access those resources." So we're really trying to work with our partners and the Department of Health to bring Spanish town halls, virtual town halls, to our communities from trusted partners like nonprofits, right?

And often DOH will not be a trusted partner in our community because people have felt like, "I don't know, maybe you don't really care about." Which we all know that's not true, right? But I think in communities, there's this overwhelming sense that that's true. But non-profits like ours are very much trusted names in our communities and government entities should rely on us. They should come to us and sort of ask us about how we can get more information out. And I hope that we can continue to do that because it's really the only way that we're going to get back to any sense of normalcy, it's the only way that we're going to get folks back on track and it's really worth it.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Sachi, I wanted to see if you could talk a little bit about dealing with what we're seeing in terms of what Johana and Henry just talked about in terms of access to resources, right? And the language barriers. But in addition to that, the xenophobia and the rise in anti-Asian American violence there was an article in the Journal just a few months ago with members of your organization talking about what they're facing and how that impacts people's ability to access resources or ability to be open to vaccinations, to be able to be in community. And what you all are dealing with and seeing within the community here.

Sachi Watase: Yeah. So I would just really go again what Johana was saying about the access needs. I mean, it's not in language. I mean, they have the translation in Vietnamese and then Spanish, I believe on the website. But that's it. And even not as like, not really easy to navigate, and if people don't know how to do that, or don't have access to a smartphone or laptop to do that it's not easy and it's not easy to navigate or know how to answer those questions. And and then of course, all the other languages that are represented in this state aren't represented on those forums. But we have had folks from the Department of Health reach out to us and we've been in conversation with our partner, the Asian American Association of New Mexico to also think about ways that we can reach out to our community in a different way, or to really help them get access to these resources.

But it's still I mean, I think what Henry said is really interesting that it's like, why didn't we have this prepared beforehand? Why weren't we ready? We knew this was going on. Why aren't we ready and really be able to get access to these communities. And then in terms of the anti-Asian violence, I think it's really important to note too that this violence has existed. It has existed far before the pandemic. And I think people just starting to pay attention more and it became more mainstream and shared on social media. And that's why we say, there's ... A lot of people are talking about it more, but this has been going on beforehand and in our state as well. And we've seen our clients come to us with these stories.

And I also think that there's definitely some cultural pieces to it too, that like sometimes there's a lot of taboo around coming forward for help and sharing these situations and it can bring shame to people and their families. And so oftentimes we don't have people coming forward about these situations. I also think that it's also a huge result of the model minority myth, which is that the Asian community is doing great and everything's fine. And it really leaves out so much of the reality that's going on. Yeah, this has been going on for a very long time, and it's only becoming mainstream now with what we say, like the rise in anti-Asian violence. And of course it has been really deeply disturbing and saddening to watch these videos and see what's going on and very traumatizing for many people.

And it's also not unexpected in some ways this is all just a result of white supremacy and the way that the same kind of ideas hurt all of these communities in different ways. And I think for our communities, it's like, how do we create spaces that are safe and places that they can go and share these stories and be heard and believed. And then what can we do? It's hard to know all of this. We do a lot of case management. And so we support folks in getting different aid that they are seeking, but we don't really have a system in place in New Mexico to really collect these stories. And we're actually talking recently with the Asian American Association about thinking of ways to collect this information and really ... Within New Mexico that's been happening, ongoing for years and even more so now.

And I guess it's all compounded and makes it of course, harder to access resources or seek help. One of course, we're also in the middle of a pandemic and families are being deeply affected by that losing their jobs, not being able to pay rent, maybe the least of their worries is coming to us to talk about a hate crime that happened when they're trying to get food on the table. And so I think that there's just so many compounded issues here that are really affecting our communities and we see that every day.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you for sharing that Sachi. And I think that you do lift up that tension that exists in terms of the deep need in the communities, right? And so folks are having to choose what's [inaudible 00:46:09]. I think you really hit that. Like food on the table, or "I'm going to go report the thing that happened to me." And we shouldn't have to be put in that position, but we are right as a society being put in that position. I wanted to spend the last few minutes talking about what you all need in this moment and taking some time to reflect with each other.

But before that, I've got a couple of questions that have come in from our Q&A. And Angel, there's a couple of questions. We know that the Native American Community was impacted just disproportionately early on, right? With COVID and the immense loss of life. And a question about how are tribal communities supporting the recovery of COVID, and then we're also seeing that the tribes are doing an amazing job with vaccinating their community and even offering ... Can you all still hear me? I just lost my video.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: So I want to call on Angel doing an amazing job with even offering vaccination on to other community members. And so I wanted to see if you could talk about that briefly before we move into a reflection among you all.

Angel Charley: It's really leaning into those values that you talked about in the very beginning, great. When communities of color have very similar values relationality when it comes to values around wealth, how much you have, it's how much you give. And so we come from communities that prioritize the health and wellbeing of our people, all of us that are up here right now. And how tribes are leading the effort while they're still closed. They're not reopening the borders, they're still closed. I went home for my vaccination and I was greeted by, "If you're a non-resident, you still need to stay out. But you can

go through the vaccination line." And just that, that they are leading in vaccination for them and the surrounding areas. Yeah.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: I'm waiting for my video to come back up, but I can still hear all of you. So let's just keep going because we've got a few more minutes. I wanted to ask how this moment is affecting you all and what do you need from funders, from your board to sustain your leadership. And so wanted to spend some time in the last part of today's webinar talking about what do you need now? How's this moment affecting you now?

Henry Brutus: I wish that I could start with that. So in terms of funding, I think at least in Doña Ana, we've been very fortunate in the City of Las Cruces, stepping in with a lot of funding effort and the state as well. There's been a lot of other typically foundations that would not fund our work that I've reached out to offer some funding. I think what are missed though, is a lot of this funding is related to COVID efforts. So I get a lot of people that call me and offer funding to sanitize and disinfect. And that's great, right? But there's only so much disinfection or sanitizing I can do. Whereas the other needs still exist. So the need that existed before still exist. And then there are new needs that again, we just talked about the systemic inequality. So our people, the people that we're serving, they're suffering and they have certain needs that we're not having the funding to meet those needs.

So that's a big thing at least that would help me. And I think that would help all of my colleagues. In terms of the board of directors, I think we are in a pandemic, so it's not normal times. I think that's something I wrestle with. It feels as if the demands are the same as they were always, while we're still trying to navigate this pandemic which is new to us also. I know we're leaders and we're expected to have the answers and to make decisions, but we're also learning this as quickly as everyone else is and trying to make decisions that are best for everyone involved right in the minute, the same time that you're learning as well.

So I think a little bit of understanding that we are in a pandemic, so all of us are working on this and do you just have a little bit of patience? I think everything prior to the pandemic really should take a back seat to what's actually going on right now. We can go back to whatever planning we were doing before the pandemic once it ends. But right now it's not the time for that. So I think just that patience and support would be great.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you, Henry. I'm looking outside and I've seen a Comcast Xfinity truck in my yard. So I think my internet went out. But I'm glad to be here on the phone so as you all. Angel, when we were talking last week, you mentioned about taking a moment to reflect and honor the impact of this past year. And I wondered if you might want ...

Angel Charley: You went on mute when your camera came back on.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Okay. Here we go. I think I'm back. Thank you. Of course, this won't happen now, right? And were you able to hear me?

Angel Charley: When we're talking about reflection, yeah and the last year, and I definitely want to lift up there's something Henry said when we were getting prepared for this. Which is, "So much has happened this past year, so much lost the inability to prioritize, time to grieve." We've been pivoting and just like we just did with you losing signal and sound, right? Pivoting and continuously moving on.

But how are we as leaders of community of color organizations prioritizing time to stop and rest and reflect and process a lot of what's happened. Honor and celebrate a lot of the ways in which we've responded. And just take heed of this past year. I said it earlier, but we don't come from communities where this happens. Somewhere else it happens in our own organizations, it happens in our own families. And I think it's important for the resiliency, for all of these ways to keep us going that we stop and reflect and have space and time with our organizations, with our board of directors to take need about what happened. And then if I could just jump in really quickly and answer that other question about what we need from our boards and funders, because I need a list. Is asking everybody to go beyond land acknowledgements when it comes to indigenous issues, right?

Learn about the communities and the tribal people of which, whose land you're on. There's a history there. If possible somebody from both communities should be on your board of directors. Also, somebody on your board of directors for all of us should be from the communities that we serve. And in saying that we should all be prioritizing alternative pathways to leadership within our organizations, on our board of directors, like westernized systems of education don't necessarily equate leadership for our communities.

And then when it comes to philanthropy, we know that less than half a percent of those dollars make it to native organizations and less of that to native-led organizations. So fund our organizations right and trust us to find the solutions to the violences that we face, because we know those very intimately and deeply. Okay.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you, Angel. Johana, do you want to add to that? Because I know when we were talking last week as well, you were sharing some thoughts on what you all need from your funders, from your board and your staff in terms of supporting your leadership and the work that you all do.

Johana Bencomo: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, just going off what Angel said at the end, the people closest to the pain are the people closest to the solution. And funders really need to take note of that in this moment, because a lot of us are saying, "Look, here is the need, we need things like cash assistance, we need to be fighting for some very transformative systemic changes." Things like unemployment law and who gets excluded. The new Rescue Plan had some really incredible things in it around childcare and child subsidies that should stick around for frankly ever.

And in order for us to do that kind of work, we need funding that matches those bold ideas that we have, those bold solutions and don't get me wrong. I've been very thankful in the last year that CAFe has received ... Have been awarded some rapid response grants, 10,000, 15,000, \$20,000 here and there. I'm deeply grateful for that. And at the end of the day that's just simply not what we're saying that we need. And so I'm really hoping that foundations really begin to be better thought partners with us and conspirators with us about what our communities need. And we're totally willing to come to the table like that because frankly our communities are in need of some bold action right now.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you so much. I know we're at 11:00. That time went very quickly and my technical issues put me behind a little bit. So I appreciate that. Maybe just some closing thoughts, I'm really grateful to all of you for your time this morning, sharing with us. I don't want to keep you all on too much longer beyond this time. But if you just have some closing thoughts that you want to share before we wrap up. Again, thank you to all of the attendees today for dropping in your chat, for the questions that you posed. We really appreciate it. Again, you can always go to

buildingmovementproject.org for more information on our work. Super grateful to you all, grateful to our panelists. And if you all want to share any last thoughts before we wrap up today, you're more than welcome.

Angel Charley: Mine is that we're not done with the pandemic, we're still in it. Wear your mask, get a vaccine when you can and wash your hands like all other things. And we're going to come out of this stronger than before, for sure.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you, Angel. I agree. We're not done yet. And we need to keep taking care of each other and you all are amazing examples of that sort of leadership here in New Mexico. So we're very grateful for you. Sachi, Johana, Angel, Henry, go ahead, Johana.

Johana Bencomo: I was just saying, thank you all so much.

Sachi Watase: Yeah, I was just going to say that this was an incredible conversation. And I loved hearing from my colleagues here and also just uplifting this again, is that as leaders, as leaders of color, we hold a lot of trauma ourselves and so do our staff. And I think just recognizing that and being patient with ourselves and really finding ways like what Angel said to rest and reflect and acknowledge that we're holding so much on our shoulders. And we're a super people doing this work. So yeah, just all of you here who are attending and leading other organizations and working with people on the ground, it's incredible what we're doing and we're surviving and thriving. And even though this is so hard, thank you.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you for that. Thank you.

Henry Brutus: I'll close by saying thank you to you, Alicia, and the BMP team for hosting this. I think it's really important to have these conversations. I learned from my peers, my colleagues, your perspective teaches me and also gives me a sense of hope and purpose. So I think it's important what I'd like to say to all of our audience and all of you here with me, it's keep connecting. I know it's not the same that we're used to because we'd rather be in person having a tea, or coffee, or water, whatever that is, whatever your passion. But in connections, there's kind of that sense of hope.

This pandemic was probably the worst of us in many different ways. But we still found a way to keep going forward. And here we are, a year later as we started and we're still here and we're doing the best that we can. And hopefully, we're still here the year after that and the year after that. So again, connections are very important, so don't lose sense of that. Because I think it's very easy today, we're all isolated in our homes, it's very easy to just disconnect. And I think that would be the worst thing any of us could actually do.

Alicia Lueras Maldonado: Thank you for that, Henry. I think that's a really beautiful note to end on. I'm very grateful again to all of you for taking the time today to talk, to keep those connections, to keep the work going. Again, thank you to my Building Movement Project team for all of your work, your insight, for these reports, for the studies, for the continued work. I'm very grateful to all of you. And we are over time, so I'm going to sign up. Thanks again, everyone for joining us, appreciate you. Have a beautiful and blessed day. Bye-bye.