



# Capacity-Building for Alliances:

the Capacity for Our Resilience and Effectiveness Model

*A Partnership between the National Domestic Workers Alliance and RoadMap*



 **RoadMap**  
Strengthening Organizations. Advancing Social Justice.




“Capacity-building is central to our social change work. It is even more effective when linked to the organizing and campaign goals of alliances. In five years, NDWA will represent 10% of all domestic workers in this country; we will have won state Domestic Worker Bill of Rights laws across the country; and we will have changed public views and policies. We will look back and identify the critical role that CORE and our deep investment in organizational capacity-building played in helping our partners increase the scope and scale of their work and thus achieve a tipping point for care and care workers in this country.”

— Ai-jen Poo, Director,  
National Domestic Workers Alliance

# **Capacity-Building for Alliances: the CORE Model**

**A Partnership between  
the National Domestic Workers Alliance  
and RoadMap**





Now entering its second year, the Capacity for Our Resilience and Effectiveness Program (CORE) is an innovative collaboration between the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) and RoadMap grounded in the understanding that alliances are only as strong as their affiliates and base. By providing targeted, tailored organizational development to a set of NDWA affiliate members, RoadMap and NDWA are bolstering the organizations' abilities to sustain themselves and contribute more effectively to the alliance.

# THE EVOLUTION OF CORE

In 2014, NDWA was engaged in successful capacity-building programs including its Strategy, Organizing, and Leadership (SOL) Initiative, an intensive leadership development program for domestic worker organizers and worker-leaders, and the Base-building Innovation Group (Get BIG), an initiative to support affiliates to strengthen their membership structures and base-building systems to grow and build power. Despite the strength of these initiatives, NDWA lacked a program that was tailored to individual affiliates' organizational and senior staff leadership needs to build healthy internal organizational practices, achieve long-term stability and sustainability and

create a solid foundation for growth. From that need RoadMap, a national network of social change capacity builders, and NDWA collaboratively launched CORE with financial support from the Ford Foundation and the Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock.

Mariana Viturro, NDWA's Deputy Director, describes the program:

*The different capacity-building programs that we have offered, and the CORE program in particular, have had a tremendous impact on NDWA and the domestic worker movement. It not only has built up our local affiliates, but also helps consolidate and strengthen the national organization and movement. There is a true partnership between our affiliates and the national organization that has provided the necessary foundation to be able to be responsive to changing conditions and opportunities, continue in our growth trajectory, and develop an innovative approach to strategy and program development.*

CORE is both a successful collaboration and an innovative model for strengthening local organizations' power to establish the firm foundation essential for making lasting, large-scale social change. CORE demonstrates that investing in affiliate organizations' health and stability is fundamental to building an alliance's broad based power.

In order for NDWA to meet its ambitious goals at national, state, and local levels, it must have strong, powerful groups and leaders on the ground. Organizational strength is rooted in building core infrastructure, planning, and leadership development with staff and members. Through CORE, NDWA and RoadMap have demonstrated that investing in NDWA's affiliates builds exponential power to campaign and win on multiple levels simultaneously.

**"We are going through a huge transition and it has been so helpful to have experts guide our way through it. The burden of management is now shared with more staff; the organization has better communication systems in place; we are all moving forward into the unknown together and with a little more confidence now that we are being guided down the path of a leadership transition."**

- Hilary Stern, Casa Latina



From the earliest conversations, NDWA staff and the RoadMap team established a strong foundation based on shared personal and organizational history. The organizations saw eye to eye about how strengthening people and structures internally leads to strong external impacts. They also agreed that affiliate organizations should be able to opt in to the program and be given a choice of consultants. Finally, rather than providing organizational development support to the entire alliance, NDWA and RoadMap agreed that a model that went deeper with a few organizations was more strategic than dispersing support lightly among many affiliates.

In reflecting on the decision to focus on affiliates, Emily Goldfarb, RoadMap's Executive Director notes,

*"We often see the bulk of funding and overall attention going to support the 'mother ship' of an alliance. NDWA was very clear that this was not what they were seeking. We have learned over the years that leadership and organizational development require significant resources, so we agreed we would not even consider launching the program until we had the funds to go deep with at least some of the NDWA partner organizations."*

**"On behalf of El Centro we are extremely grateful and feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to build a trusting relationship with our consultant and RoadMap. With her guidance the organization feels better equipped to both continue programs, develop more leaders among the worker members and embrace new opportunities on the horizon."**

—Sarah Shikes,  
Centro Humanitario



# HOW CORE WORKS

## SELECTION CRITERIA

Determining which affiliates to invite to CORE was a key strategic decision as NDWA wanted to ensure that there was a logical connection between CORE and NDWA's broader movement goals. This intentional alignment is one of the key elements that makes CORE different from more general alliance-building approaches or from one-time capacity building engagements with organizations or providers outside of a movement context. When choosing which organizations to invite, NDWA considered the following criteria:

1. Location: which organizations are strategically located in parts of the country where we're trying to build power?
2. Capacity: which organizations are poised to make a breakthrough with the help of tailored support?
3. Alliance engagement: which organizations are already deeply engaged in the alliance's work and positioned as leaders of their peers in a way that could allow the impacts of CORE to ripple outward?

## TAILORED SUPPORT

Based on this criteria, NDWA invited nine of its more than 40 affiliates to apply for 12-15 months of in-depth, tailored capacity building support from RoadMap. All nine affiliates submitted requests and completed RoadMap's My Healthy Organization (MHO) assessment. NDWA and RoadMap then selected six of those nine organizations to participate in CORE based on their fit with NDWA's goals as well as their readiness and commitment to invest in this process, resulting over time in a significant leap in their scale and impact.

The participant organizations then selected consultants with whom to work. RoadMap suggested two consultant options whose skill sets and other qualities would make them a good fit with the organizations. In suggesting potential consultants, RoadMap considered which of its network members were aligned with each organization's priority needs – based on the MHO assessment results and the needs outlined in the organization's original request. RoadMap's Director, Emily Goldfarb, and Program Director, Michelle Foy, also conducted interviews with all the participating organizations before making consultant suggestions.

Once the match was made, the work began, starting with a scope of work agreed upon by the organization and the consultant (or consultant team as appropriate). RoadMap's staff checked in with the consultants and organizations every three to four months to provide support, to ensure that the work was progressing well, and that the organizations were satisfied with the consultants' support.







## CORE 1 PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATIONS

Organization & Location	Focus of CORE Capacity-Building Support
<b>Adhikaar</b> - Woodside, NY	Internal systems and practices, communication strategy, and leadership coaching
<b>Casa Latina</b> - Seattle, WA	Strategic planning, coaching for ED, and comprehensive leadership transition support
<b>Centro Humanitario</b> - Denver, CO	Coaching, support for leadership, and the alignment of values, mission and vision across the organization
<b>Fe y Justicia</b> - Houston, TX	Staff development, providing support implementing strategic planning goals, leadership coaching
<b>Latino Union</b> - Chicago, IL	Board development and transformation
<b>Pilipino Workers Center</b> - Los Angeles, CA	ED coaching, grassroots fundraising support and strategic communications

### ALLIANCE-WIDE SUPPORT

In addition to the tailored support that six NDWA affiliates received, during the first round of CORE programming, all of NDWA's affiliate organizations were invited to capacity-building webinars on the following topics: grass-roots fundraising, executive transitions, and financial management and literacy. The leadership transition webinar was supplemented with a clinic facilitated by RoadMap during which organizations could ask additional questions of the RoadMap consultants as well as their peers.

### MOVEMENT BUILDING MODEL

CORE began by deeply investing in a set of six NDWA affiliate organizations that were roughly at a midpoint in their life cycles, on the verge of reaching a new level of scale and impact with their work, and for whom high quality organizational development could make a critical difference. As creative leaders and formations including Occupy Wall Street, the Dreamers, and #BlackLivesMatter continue to challenge our traditional theories of change, models such as CORE help us think creatively about how to support movement building. How does an alliance equal more than the sum of its parts in ways that lead to building power among previously unorganized workers to achieve concrete victories? In the case of NDWA, the alliance infrastructure allows for local work to be amplified and for the sector to move policies and achieve broad victories such as state level Domestic Worker Bills of Rights.

Mariana Viturro notes,

*"Domestic worker organizations are for the most part relatively young. Simultaneously, we have experienced a major trajectory of growth in the domestic worker movement in recent years. This has meant that the scope and scale of our capacity building has had to evolve to meet the needs of the affiliates and to support their growth. One myth about capacity building is that it is totally independent of organizing and campaigns and only relates to organizations' internal work. This is an artificial separation. This view of organizational development as secondary or only dealt with during a crisis means that most organizational development work is reactive versus strategic. NDWA sees capacity-building as central to its work and directly linked to our goals to organize domestic workers, win policy change, and transform the way the people of this country view care, care workers, our economy, and our democracy."*





# WHY CORE WORKS

The intention and care that RoadMap and NDWA took in developing this collaborative project have been central to CORE's success. RoadMap and NDWA took the time to build a respectful partnership, ensure alignment, and create something that brought out both organizations' strengths. For CORE to work, NDWA needed at least one in-house person who understood and embraced organizational development as fundamental to the alliance's

strength. Mariana Viturro, Deputy Director of NDWA, has been that person. Many of NDWA's staff and board members, and member organizations pointed out the important role Mariana plays in CORE and all NDWA's capacity-building work. Having an organizational champion to support the affiliates' capacity building work ensures that capacity building will be integrated effectively into the alliance's overall programming and will not be treated as a sideline or "special" project.

This commitment to integration also allowed RoadMap and NDWA to share important information when questions came up about a particular group's challenges or needs. While strict confidentiality guidelines are maintained in CORE that allowed groups to be honest and vulnerable, the close and trusting relationships that the NDWA staff has with the affiliates ensure that the capacity building with RoadMap occurs within a supportive context.

RoadMap's tailored approach to capacity building is also essential to CORE's success. Each participating organization collaborates with RoadMap to shape the content of its organizational development program based on its specific needs. Additionally, each group selects the consultant(s) it feels is the best match from a pool of RoadMap consultants with experience as practitioners in social justice organizing and a deep understanding of movement work. Recognizing that each affiliate will have specific needs and challenges, RoadMap strives to develop a capacity-building program aimed at addressing each group's needs while maintaining a firm sense of NDWA's needs as an alliance. Combined with NDWA's other capacity building programs described above, CORE provides the affiliate participants with wrap around support from both RoadMap and NDWA.

Because CORE is designed to increase organizational, alliance, and movement strength, its long-term viability is crucial. RoadMap and NDWA have sought out funders that recognize how important capacity building is to reaching movement goals, understand the slow, steady pace at which organizational development happens, and encourage collaboration rather than competition.

**"The consultants have not just come in to provide us with something, but have helped us to plan, develop and implement these things so that our own capacity to continue to do it is strengthened....The 'coachsultants' have been great matches for our organization. We are an organization that knows that we have much more learning and growing to do and the help of outside 'coachsultants' that understand us, but bring in new knowledge and experiences is very helpful. Capacity building is important for us to get to a new level of productivity and impact."**

—Aquilina Soriano, Pilipino Workers Center

Often capacity building programs are expected to achieve big results with minimal financial support. Support from the Ford Foundation and the Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock allowed NDWA to provide approximately \$25,000 to each of these six groups to support capacity building provided by RoadMap. The commitment by the Ford Foundation and Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock to this work and partnership has been critical. The funders' trust in RoadMap and NDWA's skill and expertise has provided space for RoadMap and NDWA to develop an innovative and effective program.

Laine Romero-Alston, Program Officer of the Promoting the Next Generation Workforce Strategies portfolio at the Ford Foundation, was the primary philanthropic thought partner for CORE. According to Laine,

According to Laine,

*"Whenever my colleagues ask me what we've learned about how to support capacity building with alliances, I tell them about CORE. RoadMap knows social justice organizational development and brings together the best team to work with alliance members. NDWA prioritizes capacity building as a core strategy and gets how it connects to a broader alliance strategy to move a social change agenda that links local, state and national. The partnership between the two groups has created a great model and I hope it can be replicated elsewhere. Let's spread the word!"*

## CORE COHORT COSTS AT A GLANCE

### An investment of \$250,000 in CORE 1 provided:

- *My Healthy Organization* online assessments to all CORE 1 applicants
- Consultant matching and support through the initial part of the capacity-building process
- Six organizations with an average of 169 consultant hours of tailored capacity building support per organization
- Regular support and check ins to participating organizations and the consultants with which they worked throughout the course of the engagement
- Travel for consultants working with groups outside their local area
- Three webinar training series to all NDWA affiliates
- A portion of RoadMap's overhead costs



# WHAT'S NEXT FOR CORE?

Based on the success of CORE's first cycle, NDWA and RoadMap have begun a second year of programming. Together they have made programmatic adjustments informed by an evaluation of CORE's first cycle. CORE's second cycle of programming will include:

- More opportunities for peer engagement and support through smaller cohorts of organizations facing similar issues
- Increased collaboration between CORE and NDWA's internal capacity building programs with a particular focus on more tightly integrated organizational development support with technical assistance in grassroots organizing
- A track of capacity building trainings and workshops tailored to the needs and priorities identified by affiliate members and organized by RoadMap for the 2016 National NDWA Congress.
- Document the impacts and outcomes of affiliates participating in CORE.

Based on these two years of work with some of the organizations we expect to be able to track and report on some concrete outcomes.

CORE's movement building potential is significant. In Emily Goldfarb's words, "Bottom line - this is a great model for supporting strong alliances by individually strengthening the sum of their parts without whom alliances are nothing." CORE's success in increasing domestic worker organization's health and stability has better positioned those organizations to effectively participate in NDWA's campaigns as well as other campaigns they are involved in. That success has also increased NDWA affiliates' abilities to join forces to pursue even bigger and more substantial gains. Because of continued financial support from the Ford Foundation, RoadMap and NDWA will be able to continue to provide capacity-building support to four of the initial CORE cohort members and two additional NDWA affiliate organizations.

With your support, CORE's impact could be even greater. Increased funding would mean expanded capacity building for NDWA affiliates, including both more depth to the tailored support current CORE participants receive and allowing more affiliates able to participate in the program. Increased financial support could also extend the CORE's reach beyond NDWA to include additional alliances. Perhaps most importantly, investment in the model signals support for this promising capacity-building model and in the power of alliances to make high impact, long-lasting change.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the worker leaders, staff, and board members of the six NDWA partner organizations who participated in the in-depth CORE Year 1 track and offered valuable evaluative feedback on the program.

Founded in 2007, NDWA works for the respect, recognition, and inclusion in labor protections for domestic workers. The national alliance is powered by 53 affiliate organizations—plus their first local chapter in Atlanta—of over 10,000 nannies, housekeepers, and caregivers for the elderly in 36 cities and 19 states. NDWA is winning improved working conditions while building a powerful movement rooted in the human rights and dignity of domestic workers, immigrants, women, and their families. NDWA lead staff for CORE include Mariana Viturro, Lisa Moore, and Jill Shenker.

RoadMap is a national team of sixty-nine consul-

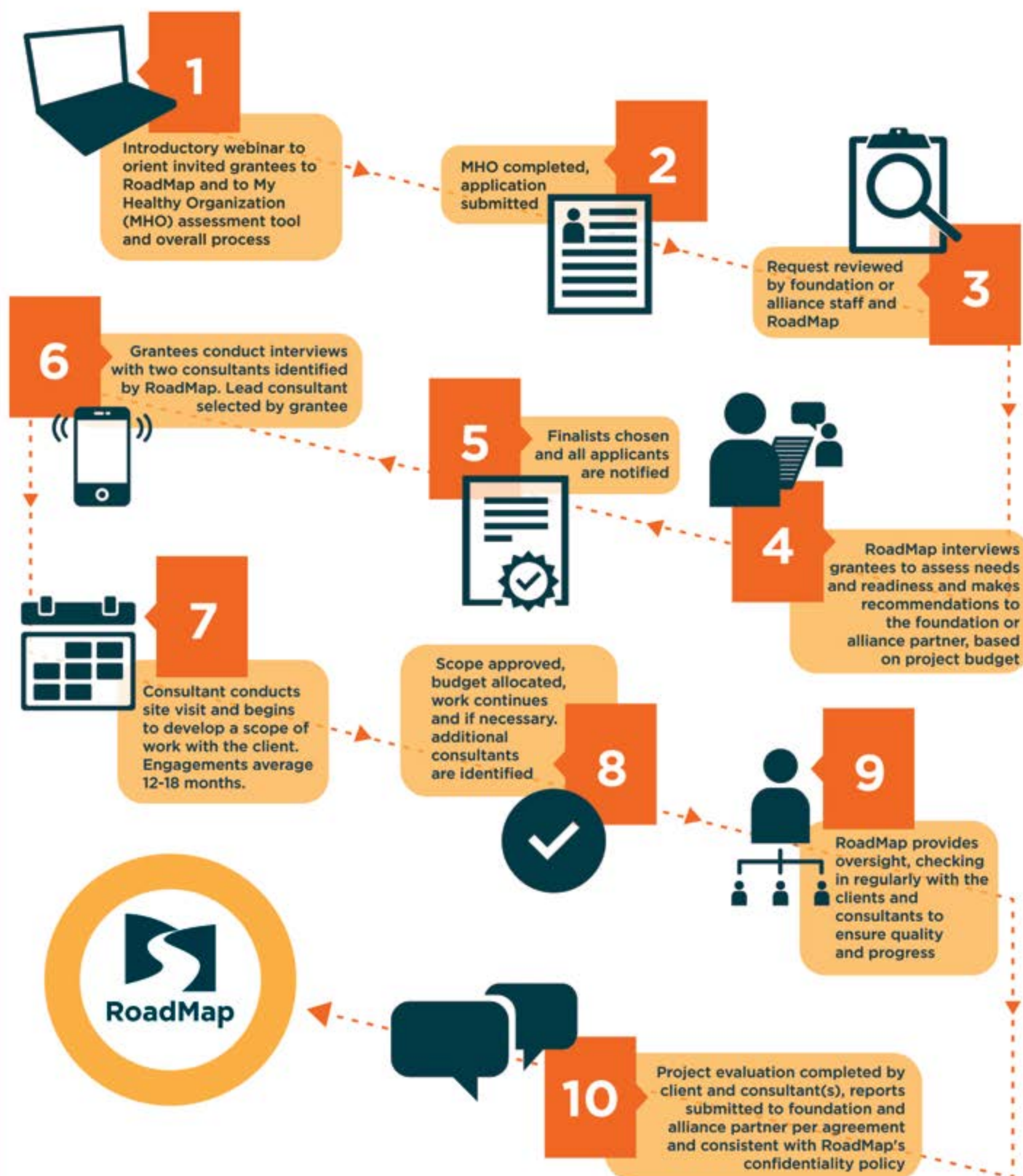
tants across the country dedicated to advancing the power and promise of social justice organizations. RoadMap lead staff for CORE are Emily Goldfarb and Michelle Foy. RoadMap consultants working with the CORE partners include: Francisca Gonzalez Baxa, Viveka Chen, Jung Hee Choi, Nijmie Dzurinko, Ellen Gurzinsky, Janet McIntyre, Mary Ochs, Joseph Phelan, Ana Perez, Lisa Russ, Mari Ryono, and Rita Sever.

*Photo Credits: Centro Humanitario, Casa Latina, National Domestic Workers Alliance, Pilipino Workers Center, Adhikaar.*





# RoadMap's Capacity Building Program with Foundations/Alliance Partners





c/o Common Counsel Foundation  
405 Fourteenth Street, Suite 809  
Oakland, California 94612

**[www.roadmapconsulting.org](http://www.roadmapconsulting.org)**  
[info@roadmapconsulting.org](mailto:info@roadmapconsulting.org)

Design and Layout by Design Action Collective