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| **Strategies for SILC Resource Plan**  **Q & A Session**  **Presented by Ann McDaniel**  **July 13, 2016** |
| >>Tim Fuchs: We're going to begin today's call. Thanks again for your patience. Of course today's call is the *Strategies for SILC Resource Plan*, our live Q and A session. Today's presentation is brought to you by the SILC-NET Training and Technical Assistance Center. The TA center is brought to you by ILRU and the support was provided by the community living by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Today's call is a live question and answer session. For the on demand presentation that you all have already seen. If you haven't watched that on demand presentation, just please keep in mind that today's call is really intended as a Q and A opportunity with Ann McDaniel, the presenter and we're not going to be able to rehash all of the content from that presentation. That said, we have until 4:00. It's more than enough time for any and all of your questions and I hope that you'll be engaged today. So I want to introduce our presenter for today Ann McDaniel. I'm sure many of you know her. She's the presenter for the strategies for SILC resource plan. I know these Q and A calls are new. If you haven't seen that session yet that's okay. You're still welcome to join us today. You're welcome to ask questions and participate too. But just make sure to go ahead and view the on demand training. It's about an hour and it was a link to that was included in the same confirmation you received to connect today's Q and A call. You all can ask questions in a couple different ways. You can press star pound if you have a question on the phone. And Luke, our operator will help activate your line. Right now everyone's muted but if you have a question, we'll be able to unmute your line and you can ask your question life to Ann. Or if you're on the streaming text today, the CART screen you can log into the chat there. I am logged in there as Ken and you can type them out and I'll voice it for you. So we can get started. Again press star pound to ask your questions or streamtext and we'll give you time to ask questions about the SILC resource plan. And, Luke, you can just let me know if anybody has a question.  >> Luke: Okay, no questions on the phone line. If you are connected by phone and you have a question you can press star and pound on your phone. But so far it looks as if we have none.  >> Ann: It might be helpful if I just give a little bit of information that might stir some questions. I wanted to remind folks what the learning objectives were for this training. That you be able to locate and explain the regulatory requirements regarding the SILC resource plan. It's referred to more than one place in the law and we wanted to let you know what those things were and what the language was so that you would recognize it. That you could describe what a process for developing your SILC resource plan would be like, look like, how that would work. Including being able to describe all the allowable sources of funding for your resource plan or other resources if it's not cash. Also describe opportunities for SILCs to obtain public and private sources of funding. Resource development is a new thing about SILC. We wanted to give you information about that as well. And also some creative approaches and strategies for SILC resource development and giving you examples and helping you be able to generate your own examples. So those are the kinds of things that were covered in the training. And I hope that will make you think of some things you would like to ask questions about.  >> And we do have one question on the phone. .  >> Ann: Go ahead.  >> Hi, that is Sandra from the Texas SILC and I have a question about the use of I&E funds for a SILC resource plan. Our new DSE is not -- does not receive RVR funds. And so we are having a hard time, or we had a hard time convincing the new VR recipient that they are required to provide I&E funds for the SILC resource plan. Does anybody have any advice on how to be successful in that process?  >> Ann: Well it's obviously going to be a more difficult process when they are not your DS E. Particularly if you changed to a different agency to serve as your DSE because of issues you were already having. But the law does -- it's the only funding in the law that is required to be used for the SILC resource plan and that is still in the law. I think congress was pretty deliberate about everything they did with regard to independent living in this version of the law. So I don't think that was an accident, number one, number two the whole thing was compounded when they sent out their regulations being changed around the -- changes through WIOA and said that -- that the DSU may use I&E funds for the SILC resource plan but that it wasn't required and it was up to the DSU and the SILC to decide whether it was necessary or not. So that didn't help matters any. What I've been trying to help folks to understand is that the law requires it. That's really, really clear but you obviously can't say the law requires you give us money so give us money. That's not going to fly well, particularly because of what they're hearing from RSA. So what I would recommend is that you put together a meeting that you include folks from the council itself, board members, not just SILC staff. And you -- approach your DSU as a partner in meeting the needs of people with disabilities in your state and increasing their success with independent living and employment. Because if you're not successful with independent living you're not going to be successful with employment. And help them to see what role the SILC plays and what you can bring to the table how you can be of value in the bigger picture that they care about and work on and -- with regard to the people with disabilities in your state. So it's going to require some savvy. But I think it's very possible to do. And, you know, if you hit walls, there's probably other, more adversarial way to approach enforcement of the law. But I would start in that way personally.  >> Sandra: Thank you.  >> Ann: I hope that helps.  >> Sandra: Thanks.  >> Ann: We have another question?  >> So far no other phone questions. Just a reminder if you have a question on the phone please feel free to press star and pound.  >> So we had 66 people sign up for today's call. And so -- resource development is brand new and spills were just due so I can't believe there aren't more questions than this. I do hope you'll use the time we set aside today for this. Please don't be shy. We got a lot of time and there aren't any silly questions. That's why we're here. You can press star pound or you can type them out on streamtext.  >> Tim: Luke, can you tell me how many people we have on the line today?  >> Luke: We have 29 people total and we have another phone question that just popped in. All right, and caller, you should be up muted and you can go ahead and ask your question.  >> Karen: I'm from Ohio. We are not a nonprofit in Ohio and I'm interested in how other SILCs in some specific ways to develop besides the communication and reaching out, what has been successful for other SILCs to getting engagement with their board members to become more active in resource development?  >> Ann: That's the million dollar question. It's always a challenge. It's particularly a challenge if your board members don't personally have a lot of money. But I think it's really possible to build some of that. One of the things that we do with my council and with some other boards that I'm on is to regular ly just pass the hat so to speak. To get everyone to give something because it's really attractive to other funders if you can say that your entire board supports the council financially. Even if it's a small amount of money. That's one thing. One is to take the time and maybe do a form for this or have an activity for this, to check in with all of your members of your council to determine who they know and what connections they have in the community with people with money, with other organizations and boards and councils, with businesses because if you can find some direct connections, some personal connections, that you can then build on and give them a task, something specific that they can do or ask for from the folks they have connections with. That gives them a lot more buy in and get help to get them more engaged in what you're doing. And then, of course, I think it's always a good idea for your council members to serve on a committee to talk about resource development or to do it as part of strategic planning with your full council or some other kind of activity with your full council. To kind of lay out a plan for resource development and what your goals are and what kinds of things everyone thinks are good ideas to help work toward achieving those goals. Hope that helps.  >> Karen: Thank you.  >> All right. That's great. Anybody else have questions today?  >> Luke: We do have one more phone question.  >> Gale: Hi, I'm from Louisiana and I had a question for Ann regarding types of fundraising activities known to be successful that could be done, you know, throughout a state like events or any activities or something specific.  >> Ann: I can give you some ideas. I'm not an expert by any stretch of the imagination but there are a lot of traditional fundraising kinds of things where you're selling something or doing some kind of event that requests donations. There are special events. A lot of people have one big thing a year. Some kind of a gala or some big event that is their big fundraising event. Those don't work well until you established a funding base. What has always been recommended to me is you need an annual fund which is a predictable amount of money that comes in through donations every year. And then that donor base is how you build a successful big event. And you can build a donor base by doing something like not only asking your council member to all give something periodically but tapping into all of their connections to try to build donor s that you can approach every year that will give you some kind of money every year. That's the first thing you can do. You can do more extensive and complicated things like direct mailing. Other kinds of pledge events. To get folk to make an annual do -- donation to your organization. But building that is the first thing you need to do before you do some kind of a big event. You know, different kinds of fundraising activities can be more successful or less depending on who your target audience is. I would caution when you talk about fundraising for your SILC that you would just like any other member ship organization of people with disabilities, you don't necessarily target your membership. Because your funding pool is limited that way. You need to be able to reach out broader to people who have money. So looking at some kind of event that will be open to the public. I can give you an example of a different group in West Virginia last year before the holidays. They did north pole express. And had buses that took people through neighborhoods with Christmas lights and sang carols and then ended up at the north pole and they had all these different activities for children and then they had a Santa in a separate area so it was quiet. That the kids could all go and see Santa and do that thing. And they made a good bit of money doing that. That was the first time they ever tried it. So something that's going to give you broader appeal just in the general public. Sometimes can be a good way to generate funding. One of the things my council's been doing a long time with the income ebbs and flows it's not something that's consistent, we have a couple different lapel pins that we designed. One is stylized version of the access symbol of a guy in a wheelchair although this guy is leaning forward and looks like he's moving and we sell those and we have ruby slippers because there's no place like home. Little lapel pins and those are low cost things to get and fairly popular to sell. So you can do things like that. Obviously grant writing is an option but as you -- I'm sure you know, most places want to fund a project or something. They don't want to fund your operating expenses. So you need to think about what it is that you need funding for. And that will help you figure out which place to look for it. Hope that helps.  >> I work -- I'm executive director of a SILC so we do have an annual event every year and so it's -- I understand about that study something that you have a base for and you grow upon every single year. But the way that we're spread out and we don't meet but once a quarter it's pretty hard to put together an event like that but I like your idea about the lapel pin.  >> Ann: I do think it's important to get your folks engaged in figuring out what to do for resource development so that they're invested in it and their ideas are part of your plan but you really ought to have a plan for resource development because that helps you to figure out what you need money for. What your goals are. Where's the best place to try to get that money and I think you'll find that as a helpful process to get your board engaged as well.  >> Gale: I think actually someone mentioned at the last meeting that they would like to earn money to be able to send more of the council members to fill Congress this year.  >> Ann: There you go. That's a good goal so that will get them more engaged in the activities because they know exactly what the goal is.  >> Gale: Right. So that sounds like a good goal.  >> Ann: I think so, yeah.  >> Gale: All right, thank you.  >> Ann: You're welcome, Gail, thank you.  >> Tim: Any other questions on the phone. Again, you can press star pound if you have a question on the conference line. Okay, great. Go ahead.  >> Luke: We have couple here's the next one. All right, and caller, your line should be unmuted and you can go ahead and speak.  >> Steven: Hello.  >> Ann: Where are you from.  >> Steven: Colorado. So I am on this SPIL committee for Colorado and I know that we -- that we were looking for -- well this is for future goals that we would like to establish and I know that we are in between going in -- we're going to the Department of Labor. So there's like some uncertainties with where we're at. We also are looking for a SILC chair and, like a paid, like part paid maybe type of position. Then we wrote, like -- because right now we are not a 501(c)3 or whatever. So we can't fund raise. So we can't really get money for funds for activities or group events or anything to be able to do in the system. I was wondering if you had any help about looking to become a 501 and suggestions or -- because we do have -- we're kind of in the middle of also losing our executives. We're going to be voting and all that. It's just like an important time. And I know that we have got this filled but I was just wondering if that that, yeah. Is that too much?  >> Ann: I can give you a few suggestions, Steven. First of all there's nothing that says you're not allowed to fundraise. The big deal is that if you're going to do significant fundraising you need to be registered as a charitable organization in your state and that requires that you be a 501(c)3. This also makes donations to your organization tax deductible for people. Which is an incentive for people to make donations. So that's why you hear that a lot. That it's important to be a 501(c)3. It sound like you're dealing with a lot of different issues right now but I think the first thing you need to do is to kind of figure out, as a group, where you want to go if you want to do fundraising, if you want -- for donations to be tax deductible for folks, then you need to look at becoming a 501(c)3. There's a lot of pieces to that process and there's likely going to be some folks on your council even that can help you with that. If not, I'm sure the centers for independent living can because they are all 501(c)3s so they've been through the process. You have to get incorporated and you have to do all the paperwork for the IRS and it's very doable. So don't be afraid of doing that. There are other advantages to doing that as well. To me, being 501(c)3 gives you a lot more autonomy because you can be an employer and hire your own paid staff. You were talking about getting paid staff. And, you know, the SILC is supposed to be autonomous, you can't be a part of the state agency. You're supposed to have staff and what has proven out I think to be one of the best ways to do that is to be a 501(c)3 so that you have that level of autonomy and you can hire your own staff and manage those staff and manage your own budget. So it's something that your council really needs to sit down together and have a long hard talk about and decide if that's the direction you want to go in. And then start looking for technical assistance on how to get there. And I'm sure you're aware that there is technical assistance available to SILCs and there's peer mentoring available to SILCs and I wouldn't hesitate to tap into those opportunities as well as you start moving forward with where you're trying to get to. Does that help?  >> Steven: Yeah. It does. I have another little bit with, there was part, we had closure upon the areas and so far that was -- we're preparing, right now we had a -- a little bit different because it was just like a really hard thing that happened and a big area like did shut down and it was during this year. So we had a write for all the other SILCs on the spill. But we -- but there's like a part to where we're trying to get back that for the up and coming years. So it's just wondering if you had any suggestions on that was mile high that closed down. So it is a big area and it just closed this year. So I mean it was a lot of the -- so we wrote that. So I mean there was just like -- the spill that -- that for three years. You know, that -- first year. I'm not -- I don't have the spill memorized or anything. But like rural areas are going to get for one year, like that are underserved in rural for one year. And second year will be like for more of the back to, like, where the area of the affected. That might have been affected by the SILC closing down to try to get up another one or whatever.  >> Ann: What was the funding source for the center that closed? Do you know?  >> Steven: I think it was federal and state that, yeah.  >> Ann: If you haven't heard this yet, one of the things you need to find out is whether or not ACL is going to re-compete those funds. To fund a new center. Are they going to, do you know?  >> Steven: Yeah. For ACL? They're looking for, I think.  >> Ann: For the federal money?  >> Steven: Yeah, I think they are and they're -- I got like a lot of things saying, like, like it's like people are interested and you got to go and, like, do all this stuff to be able to, yeah.  >> Ann: Yeah there are a lot of things that folks have to do but one of the things SILC has to do is to get the word out that the money is being competed and you need another center and make sure that gets out to the existing centers. To disability organizations in that service area. To advocacy groups in that service area. So that folks are certainly aware of it. And if they are needing technical assistance in that process that you can help them find technical assistance. So that –  >> Steven: I am the chair of social media.  >> Ann: So you can ensure you get good applicants for the money so you can get SILC going.  >> Steven: Yeah. Yeah. That -- how -- I have like a question about social media too. This probably -- just for myself but, because I'm the chair and I -- I know it's like a new medium and it's a new way of like reaching out to people that are in, like, the areas that they can't really participate or maybe not but it connects them and -- kind of like, I don't know, right now wondering how far have you seen the platform like go? Because right now I've been skeptical and I have not asked to put anything for –  >> Ann: Social media is not my strong suit. I don't actively participate. I have a staff member that helps me maintain a presence in the social media. We have a twitter account and a website of course and I know that a lot of people have been able to build a really strong following with social media and use that to get information out very quickly and to generate response very quickly to advocacy alerts and other kind of things like that where we used to in the old days use phone trees and a lot of people are using social media for that purpose and getting really, really strong followings and really good response by doing that and you can get information out to people a lot more quickly that way. Like I said, that's not my area of expertise, so I have staff that have that area of expertise so that we can make sure we have that presence and I would recommend you work on doing that too.  >> Steven: Awesome.  >> Ann: Can we move onto the next caller please?  >> Luke: Absolutely.  >> Ann: Thank you.  >> Luke: Next caller.  >> Karen: This is Karen from Ohio. There was statements you made about keeping funds separate if we receive funds but we should disclose it in our planning to -- it says you have -- I'm reading from the transcript of your -- of the training. It says you have to show funding in your budget? So our SILCs are very -- they're not as open with their other moneys that they received from different source to our DSE. And we've kept our DSE. They don't feel the need to have to do that. Is that a requirement with WIOA now or are you just suggesting they account for all their funds? They don't use I&E funds for any of the duties and the jobs required to fundraise? So they don't feel --.  >> Ann: What I was referring to was not necessarily in public information. I wanted to make two points there. One was your budget needs to reflect each of your sources of money and what that money is being used for so that you can show if you're doing things outside your duties as a SILC that you're doing it with money other than your SILC resource plan. And if you're a nonprofit, you have a SILC resource plan. Specifically to fulfill your SILC duties. But you also, as a nonprofit corporation may have other roles and funks and so you would have a budget that your SILC resource plan is one piece of that you may have other sources of funding in there to cover the other activities that you do that are not part of your SILC roles and responsibilities. And your SILC duties and functions. Now in terms of how much of that you have to share with different funding sources, which is where I think you're going with the question about the centers and what they tell the DSU/DSE about their funding, that's kind of up to what the laws are in your state. But my point was not for external consumption but for your organization internally, that you need to have your funding sources clearly delineated and your accounting clearly showing which pots of money, different things are being paid for out of. So that if you were to have an audit, either an audit that you paid to have done or an audit where at the time comes in to audit because you're receiving funding from your DSE or whether ACL decided to do an audit of you. There has to be clear lines of what your money is and where it came from and where it's going out and that you're using the funds in your resource plan for authorized expenses and not for things that you're not allowed to do as a SILC or that aren't part of your SILC functions and duties. Does that make sense?  >> Karen: Yes, it does. That's exactly what's happening in our state. I just wanted to be sure that nothing had changed so thank you very much.  >> Ann: Oh, you're welcome.  >> Tim: Any other questions on the phone?  >> Luke: Currently no questions.  >> Tim: It's star pound if you have a question on the phone or you're welcome to type it in the CART chat. I wanted to mention too since we have some down time that social media can relate to resource development too. It's all about building a network.  >> Ann: Absolutely and that's a new and fast way to build your network.  >> Tim: And don't expect to put a fundraiser appeal on social immediate and have it responded to immediately. Just like building relationships with funders over time. But in terms of how to use it with your messaging I'm not an expert but I have some experience and I would encourage you all to use social media the same way that you use other mediums. And so your messaging can and should be the same. You may have to vary its length, or tone but use it to share the same messages you're sharing through other channels. And you might find a different audience. You might find a larger audience and once it's established you can use it to contribute to fundraising as well.  >> Ann: Yeah, social media can help you reach an audience you haven't reached before and particularly if you're doing fundraising activities that you want to appeal to the general public. Social media is a really good way to get the word out because it's like the old saying, you tell two friends and they tell two friends and so on and so on. And the connections that happen behind the scenes in social media that if I get it to you and then it goes out to your friends and then it goes out to their friends, you can reach a lot more people a lot more quickly. And like I said, particularly with fundraising where you're trying to appeal to the general public, that's a really good way to broaden your audience very quickly.  >> Tim: That's right. Any other questions that have come in while we have been talking?  >> Luke: One more phone question, yes.  >> Tim: Great.  >> Heidi: I'm from Alaska and our DSE was changed on us. When -- reading you’re -- the transcripts from the presentation you made you did a great job of discussing how a change in DSE should be handled. What question you should ask. However we didn't have that opportunity because the state came to the network that said guess what, you're moving. Right now we have an agreement with our VR agency that the I&E funds will be used for the SILC for the next three years. In other words, for this spill. But after that, they are thinking that they can get out of offering up any funds -- any I&E funds for the operation of the SILC. It sounds like they probably could do that by using those funds for the SRC. Is that correct? Or can we force them to continue funding the SILC with I&E funds?  >> Ann: The law says that they shall set aside money for I&E and they will use the I&E money to fund the resource plans for the SILC and the DSU. Not or, the law is very clear. But as I said before, you have to finesse how you do this. You can't go in and make demands. You have to be of value of them. While you have a DSE now you also have three year to finesse the system and work with your Governor's office and whoever else you need to see if that is where you need and want to still be. Or whether you need to designate somewhere else to be. As long as it's in your state plan or in an amendment to your state plan your DSC can still change. If the state said this is how it's going to be you need to engage your Governor's office and I would strongly advise you to do that with this new DSE or not because they need to understand the role of the DSE number one and what the SILC nodes out of the DSE and regardless of who the DSE is the federal law requires that the DSU, which is the designated state unit for VR, provide I&E funds for your SILC resource plan. I would make sure that's the only funding that the law requires to you for the SILC resource plan there's other funding where allowable use of those funds. But it's not a required use of those funds. And helping them to understand that could give you more leverage with your DSU, number one. Number two, helping them to understand that having a base of funding is really critical to you meeting your responsibilities as the SILC. And also to being able to conduct resource development activities to expand your funding base. And then perhaps lessen your need for I&E funds. So there's a lot of way to explain it and spin it and put yourself forward as a resource to your governor's office but also as an entity that can be an asset to the DSU and I can give you an example of being an asset to your DSU. Anytime your DSU state funding gets cut they suffer a maintenance of effort penalty from the feds and they can't always be the one to explain to the governor and/or legislators how and why that is. And that's something that you could share information outside of what the DSU is doing that helps those decision-making decision to understand the ramifications of cut to your DSU. That makes you of value to your DSU. Kind of you scratch our back and we'll scratch yours. So those are the kinds of things that could be really helpful. But I just want to make sure everybody is clear that having a designated state entity does not make them your DSE forever. This is something that you could continue to work on. A lot of states made this change without input or consultation from the SILC. Moving forward I think the SILC needs to be really thoughtful about how to handle that. And whether there needs to be a change and who do they need to work with and educate to make sure you get the best fit possible? But in the meantime, the law says, I&E funds have to be used for the SILC resource plan. It doesn't say how much. It could be a dollar but you have to finesse that process to make sure you're able to access that.  >> Heidi: That was the other part I thought was interesting. I thought that in, again, in the transcripts of the presentations, I had thought it said that the I&E funds have to be used, let's see, shall set a portion of the funds. Oh, shoot, I can't find it. For -- to actually be able to operate a SILC or DSE.  >> Ann: It doesn't say the I&E funding is the only funding in your resource plan. It says the resource plan has to be of a necessary and sufficient amount for you to fulfill your duties and functions and responsibilities. I&E is the one source funding that's required to be a part of that but you can also, you may use part B dollars and you can use funding from other public and private sources. So there's nothing that says your whole resource plan has to be I&E money but it can certainly be a base to help you build the rest of those sources of money.  >> Heidi: But the state has an obligation to make sure that the SILC has enough to operate.  >> Ann: Yes.  >> Heidi: I've heard these horror stories of SILC ED getting crossways with a governor or a commissioner and, you know, their funding gets zeroed down to one or ten dollars or something. And certainly that's not -- you have to close shop. And the chair has to start doing all the work.  >> Ann: Well, no, if you have to close shop and your council cannot function then your state is not eligible to receive the part B dollars and if you don't have an approved state plan, they also cannot receive part C dollars in your state which mean your centers are going to lose their funding. So that's the kind of thing that you need to build a relationship in your governor's office so that they understand that. They understand your role. They understand that you are required to exist. They understand that the state has an obligation to make sure you have a resource plan that is necessary and sufficient for you to fill those roles and they need to understand what happens if the council is not functioning and your bill does not get approved what the ramifications are but as I said before you need to be a resource on this stuff and not go into making demands immediately. You may get to the point where you feel like you have to make demands but in the beginning you need to make sure they understand. You have to make sure that first of all that you understand the law better than anybody else in your state. Your council has to understand the law. And, number two, then you have to be the one that can help everybody else understand it. The governor's office, and whoever is in that office you can connect with that is in a position to help make things happen. Your DSU needs to understand, your DSE needs to understand and you're the one that knows title 7 the best you being your council. The DSUs know title one far better than title seven so you need to be their resource on title seven except you need to understand what section 101 A-18 says and that's the section on innovation and expansion.  >> Tim: Great.  >> Ann: Do we have other questions?  >> Tim: We're about at the top of the hour. We might have time for one more question is there is one. Luke, anybody else waiting on the phone?  >> Luke: Currently no one else is waiting on the line.  >> Tim: We're here at 4 o'clock on the east coast so we're going to conclude our call and hopefully those were all the questions you wanted to ask. Really glad that we set aside this time. Thank you, all, again for your patience at the top of the hour. I'm sorry that we had to keep you all waiting. If you all come up with any additional questions, or if any of you did not have time to watch the presentation before today's Q and A call, and have questions after watching it, please know you can send them to me at tim@ncil.org and I'll be happy to share them with Ann and get you all an answer. Ann, thank you so much for taking the time to prepare the SILC resource plan presentation and record with us and for doing the Q and A call today. And thanks to all of you for joining us on the live call today. Please be in touch and let us know how we can help you all as you begin to work on this. All right, have a wonderful afternoon, everybody. |  |
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