

Towards an Environmental Justice Collaborative Model

An Evaluation of the Use of Partnerships
to Address Environmental Justice Issues in
Communities

Evaluation Report

January 2003

Prepared for the Federal Interagency Working Group on
Environmental Justice by the U.S. EPA Office of Policy,
Economics, and Innovation

Towards an Environmental Justice Collaborative Model

An Evaluation of the Use of Partnerships
to Address Environmental Justice Issues
in Communities

Acknowledgements

An Evaluation of the Use of Partnerships to Address Environmental Justice Issues in Communities (Evaluation Report) and *Case Studies of Six Partnerships Used to Address Environmental Justice Issues in Communities* benefited from the assistance of several organizations and individuals. First, the strong support and cooperation from the federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice and EPA's Office of Environmental Justice has been invaluable. Second, comments from individuals who participated on two national conference calls to discuss the evaluation effort greatly assisted in improving the evaluation methodology. Furthermore, partnership leaders and coordinators graciously helped minimize the challenge of conducting interviews within partnership communities across the U.S. In addition, constructive comments from Tom Beierle, John Callewaert, Caron Chess, Bruce Tonn, and Gregg Walker notably enhanced both the content and organization of the Evaluation Report. Improvements to the final versions of the case studies were also made possible because of assistance from Garth Beyette, Noemi Emeric, Paula Forbis, Michael Garrett, Brian Holtzclaw, Ralph Howard, Harold Mitchell, Althea Moses, David Ouderkirk, Kara Penn, and Elena Rush. Finally, a special thanks to all partnership members who, through their thoughtful reflections, recommendations, and critiques, helped provide a clearer understanding of what it means to use multi-stakeholder collaboration as a tool for strengthening environmental protection and improving the overall quality of life in some of the nation's distressed communities.

Towards an Environmental Justice Collaborative Model: An Evaluation of the Use of Partnerships to Address Environmental Justice Issues in Communities

January 2003. EPA/100-R-03-001

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation. Washington, D.C. A team based in EPA's Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation performed this evaluation. Eric Marsh was the project manager for this effort.

This report is a companion report to *Towards an Environmental Justice Collaborative Model: Case Studies of Six Partnerships Used to Address Environmental Justice Issues in Communities* (EPA/100-R-03-002). View both of these on-line at: <http://www.epa.gov/evaluate/ej.htm>.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	1
Executive Summary	5
CHAPTER 1	12
Introduction	12
Background.....	12
The Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice	12
Why Collaboration?.....	13
Towards an Environmental Justice Collaborative Model	13
Roots of the Environmental Justice Collaborative Model	14
Collaboration Explored in Brief	15
Goals of the Evaluation.....	17
Brief Discussion of Following Chapters.....	18
CHAPTER 2	19
Evaluation Methodology.....	19
CHAPTER 3	23
Overview of Case Study Partnerships	23
CHAPTER 4	26
Partnership Involvement Approaches, Activities, and Outcomes.....	26
Partnership Involvement Approaches	26
Satisfaction with Partnership Opportunities for Involvement	27
Perspectives on Whether Partnerships Adequately Address Participant Concerns	28
Partnership Activities	30
Outcomes of Partnership Activities	33
Satisfaction with Outcomes of Partnership Activities	35
CHAPTER 5	39
Partnership Successes & Challenges	39
Partnership Successes	39
Partnership Challenges	41
CHAPTER 6	45
Key Factors Contributing to Partnership Progress and Success	45
Distinct Partnership Identity.....	46
Existence and Strength of Leadership	46
Diversity of Partners	47
Local and/or Regional Government Involvement.....	48
Federal Involvement	49
Community Engagement.....	50
Communication.....	50
Agreed Upon Goals and Activities.....	51
Flexible, Overarching Vision.....	51
Administrative Structure.....	52

Implementation of Environmental and Public Health Protection or Socio-economic Development Activities	52
Development and Use of an Evaluation Framework	53
CHAPTER 7	55
Organizational Styles, Policies, and Procedures Influencing Progress and Success ...	55
CHAPTER 8	60
The Value of Collaborative Partnerships to Address EJ Issues	60
Value of Collaborative Approaches to Address EJ Issues	61
Addressing Issues Without Use of a Collaborative Approach.....	63
Using Collaborative Processes to Address Similar Issues Facing the Affected Communities in the Future	65
CHAPTER 9	68
Federal Involvement in EJ Collaborative Partnerships.....	68
Value of Federal Involvement in EJ Collaborative Partnerships for Affected Communities	69
Value of Federal Involvement in EJ Collaborative Partnerships for Federal Agencies.....	70
Increase in Collaboration Across Federal Agencies as a Result of Collaborative Partnerships.....	72
Interviewee Recommendations for Improving Federal Involvement in Partnerships	74
CHAPTER 10	78
Core Findings and Recommendations	78
Core Findings.....	78
Conclusion	81
Core Recommendations.....	82
Appendices.....	87
Appendix A.....	88
List of Interviewees	88
Appendix B	90
Guiding Principles for Evaluation of EJ Collaborative Model.....	90
Appendix C	94
Copy of Interview Guide	94

Executive Summary

In June 1999, the federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (IWG) began to develop the concept of an Integrated Federal Interagency Environmental Justice Action Agenda (Agenda) as a way of incorporating environmental justice in all policies, programs, and activities of federal agencies. Finalized in May 2000, the IWG's Agenda seeks to build dynamic and proactive partnerships that access the initiatives and resources of federal agencies to improve the quality of life of minority and low-income communities that suffer disproportionate environmental impacts.

To help implement the Agenda, the IWG selected fifteen IWG national demonstration projects in June 2000. To make the selections, the IWG considered several criteria which included the extent to which the projects: were community-based; had strong community interest; represented areas that were predominantly minority or low-income populations; had sufficient resources to carry out activities; had previously taken steps to address or consider environmental justice issues; had the commitment of at least two federal agencies to participate; and were committed to using multi-stakeholder collaborative problem-solving as a tool for addressing environmental justice issues. Goals of the projects were varied, but included, among others: asthma rate reduction, comprehensive lead abatement, and contaminated site cleanup.

A critical component of these projects for the IWG were parties' commitments to collaborate with each other to address environmental justice issues of concern and federal agencies' commitments to coordinate with each other to help support the projects. After witnessing many years of environmental justice disputes end with less-than-ideal solutions and long-lasting negative relations between stakeholders, the IWG came to recognize the importance of encouraging a cooperative, problem-solving spirit across stakeholders. Once these issues are raised to the federal government, the IWG explains that, they typically "(1) cut across agency jurisdictions or areas of expertise; (2) involve many stakeholders holding mutually inconsistent perspectives about the nature of the issues confronting them; and (3) involve parties having longstanding, adversarial relationships."¹ In response, the IWG argues that use of a multi-stakeholder collaborative effort can be an effective way to achieve sustainable, quality-of-life improvements for communities in which issues have taken "the form of intractable, multifaceted, and multi-layered disputes." Furthermore, the IWG explains that championing collaboration at local levels, with federal agencies serving as partners, is a realistic and necessary response to the on-going environmental justice issues facing affected communities.

Following the designation of the projects, the IWG continued to champion collaboration as an important tool for addressing environmental justice issues. Furthermore, the IWG began identifying elements of success based upon the current projects and past efforts that used multi-collaborative problem-solving around environmental justice issues in order to outline an "environmental justice (EJ) collaborative model." Committed to learn from the demonstration projects and inform the development of the emerging EJ Collaborative Model, starting in November 2000, the IWG began working with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop an evaluation strategy. The plan eventually included the development of six case studies for six demonstration projects, and a cross-case study analysis. Data used to develop

¹ Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Environmental Justice Collaborative Model: A Framework to Ensure Local Problem-Solving, Status Report*, EPA 300-R-02-001, February 2002. p. 5.

the case studies was generated primarily through interviews of partnership members conducted between September 2001 and April 2002, and document review. Interview data was collected through use of a semi-structured, open-ended interview guide. The case studies include:

- A multi-stakeholder partnership based primarily in an inner city community near downtown San Diego that is addressing health concerns brought about by incompatible land uses.
- A multi-stakeholder partnership focused on Southeast and Southwest Washington D.C. championed by the Washington Navy Yard that is seeking to ensure that local redevelopment efforts benefit local residents.
- A collaboration between a tribal community in Alaska and several federal agencies that is working to ensure cleanup of over 80 contaminated sites on the community's home island.
- A partnership between federal agencies and several organizations based in East St. Louis and surrounding communities that is taking a comprehensive approach to reducing local threats from lead-poisoning.
- A partnership between three rural communities, federal agencies, and other organizations in southern Missouri that is taking a structured approach to addressing local asthma, lead, and water quality issues.
- A partnership consisting of numerous groups and agencies and driven by a grassroots group in Spartanburg, South Carolina that is seeking to cleanup contaminated and abandoned sites and revitalize the nearby neighborhoods.

Following completion of the case studies, the cross-case study analysis was performed that examined: 1) partnership process, activities, and outcomes; 2) key factors influencing partnership success; 3) value of collaboration to address environmental justice issues; and 4) value of federal agency involvement in these efforts. Following these analyses, findings were developed based upon a review of the core analytical sections and the six case studies. Findings describe the value of using collaboration as applied in the six partnerships, value of federal involvement, and specific factors contributing to progress and success of the partnerships. Some of the core findings are described below.

Multi-stakeholder collaboration can act as a transformative mechanism for enabling communities and associated stakeholders to constructively address complex and long-standing issues concerning environmental and public health hazards, strained or non-existent relations with government agencies and other institutions, and economic decline.

Multi-stakeholder collaboration in the environmental justice context can be transformative in two ways. First, it can provide disadvantaged communities with an opportunity to openly discuss concerns and potential solutions to issues affecting them in a manner that genuinely suits the affected community's needs. Second, it can provide public service organizations, including government agencies and community-based organizations, with an effective forum to coordinate, leverage, and strategically use resources to meet complex public health, environmental, and other socio-economic challenges facing disadvantaged communities. The power of the collaborative approaches used in the six partnerships is reflected in the fact that nearly 80 percent of the interviewees addressing this topic (52 of 66) indicated that the

issues facing the affected communities either would not have been addressed, or would not have been addressed to the same extent, if at all, without use of a collaborative approach.

The partnerships are generating a variety of positive outcomes for the affected communities.

The partnerships' most significant outcome has been the creation or enhancement of relationships through which numerous, diverse, and sometimes competing, stakeholders can come together and engage in constructive dialogue to overcome environmental justice concerns. Through these collaborative partnerships, community organizations and residents strengthen their capacity and confidence to work with agencies and institutions that are intended to serve the public. In addition, this collaboration helps build or reinforce critical bridges between institutions and the affected communities, which are important ingredients for local environmental protection and redevelopment. The partnerships are also obtaining strong support and/or involvement from members in the affected communities, and better ensuring the implementation and/or the *more effective* implementation of specific public health, environmental protection, and other economic development programs.

The partnerships are also enabling the many institutions seeking to provide community assistance to work more effectively with the affected communities.

Targeted programs designed to assist communities are made more effective and best applied when sponsoring officials can more efficiently navigate challenging stakeholder relationships and understand how their program may fit the affected community's overall needs. Working through a forum that is already strongly supported by the community and involves numerous and diverse stakeholders can reduce service providers' needs to develop separate, independent relationships within the affected community necessary to more effectively implement their programs.

Several of these partnerships have and continue to face challenges to improve situations for the affected communities.

Most notably, parties struggle with the maintenance and operation of their partnerships, grappling with such day-to-day issues as coordination and ensuring continued cooperation amongst the different parties. Furthermore, several partnerships are facing challenges with the implementation of specific activities, such as developing more protective zoning regulations and ensuring that all responsible parties participate in the cleanup of contaminated sites. In addition, some partnerships are still learning how best to engage the affected communities they are working in to ensure that all residents have a genuine voice in and/or sufficient knowledge of the partnership efforts and their activities. Finally, one partnership, although committed to working out differences, has struggled to bridge diverse perspectives amongst participating stakeholders.

Federal agencies have and continue to play key roles in these partnerships.

First, federal agencies have assisted in the creation or continued implementation in all the partnerships by generating or seizing opportunities and by providing energy and enthusiasm. Second, they have supplied the partnerships with critical resources, knowledge, and expertise. Finally, federal agencies have provided or enhanced the credibility, legitimacy, and/or trust surrounding the partnership efforts. This has been done by validating community concerns regarding issues of environmental justice, offering assurances that certain locally-based solutions to address these issues, are, in fact, appropriate, encouraging reluctant

regional and local officials to consider becoming involved in these efforts, and bringing a greater overall degree of accountability to the partnerships.

Despite the positive roles of federal agencies, cooperation and coordination in support of partnership efforts within and between federal agencies could be enhanced and made more apparent to non-federal partners.

Some interviewees believe that coordination has improved. However, some don't see any evidence of cooperation, while others are unclear about the cooperation. Some federal representatives, however, are exhibiting signs of improved coordination. One federal agency has developed an internal team to better coordinate the many agency-led activities taking place in the partnership community. In two other partnerships, memorandums of understanding were established to improve coordination and cooperation between some participating federal agencies. Moreover, at least one federal representative at the regional level has begun meeting with representatives of different federal agencies to discuss ways in which they can coordinate on additional partnerships centered on issues of environmental justice.

Much of the success of these efforts can be attributed to individuals, either at the community, regional, NGO, or government level, who took it upon themselves, at real risk of failure, to pull diverse groups together.

Pulling partnerships together, especially when the goal is to address challenging environmental problems and social relationships, and/or help a community revitalize, can be a difficult endeavor. This challenge is magnified when organizations are not accustomed to working in a coordinated manner, and when resources for maintaining the partnerships are not always readily available. Such an effort requires not only leadership skills, patience, and the ability for creative thinking, but also strong interpersonal skills that naturally lend themselves to stakeholder bridge building. In many instances, such a combination of skills in one individual may not be available; nevertheless it confirms the need for communities and other institutions desiring to use collaborative partnerships to look for these qualities in persons to lead or co-lead these efforts.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This evaluation examined the value of using collaborative partnerships to address environmental justice issues in predominantly low-income or minority communities. The evaluation was built upon six case studies that were primarily written between December and July 2002. Through this effort, the evaluation team and the IWG sought to set a high standard for evaluating environmental justice (EJ) collaborative partnerships. The evaluation team strived to accurately convey the spirit of what partnership stakeholders believed to be the main successes and challenges of their collaborative efforts, as well as what they expressed to be the overall value of using collaboration to address complex local issues. In addition, the evaluation team sought to provide a broad and insightful understanding of EJ collaborative partnerships in terms of what they are achieving, factors contributing to their progress and success, specific organizational barriers that may be limiting collaboration, and the role of federal involvement in these efforts.

Evaluation findings indicate that the partnerships are producing a variety of important results. In regards to overall value of collaboration, most interviewees indicated that the issues facing the affected communities either wouldn't have been addressed or wouldn't have been addressed to the same extent, if at all, without use of a collaborative approach. Interviewees also saw federal involvement in these efforts as critical. In addition to the many positive points

voiced, interviewees also noted the partnerships are facing some challenges, including difficulties associated with partnership maintenance and operational support. Despite these and other challenges expressed, most interviewees voiced very favorable impressions of the partnerships to which they were associated. Much additional work will be needed in the future to more fully understand the strength of multi-stakeholder collaboration for resolving local environmental justice issues. However, evidence from this evaluation suggests that use of these approaches, as demonstrated within these partnerships, can be an effective means for addressing environmental justice issues in communities.

To advance the use of multi-stakeholder collaborative partnerships as a means for addressing environmental justice issues in communities, the evaluation team recommends the following:

For institutions at all levels responding to environmental, public health, and socio-economic challenges associated with community revitalization...

Expand use of multi-stakeholder collaboration as a tool for addressing EJ issues in distressed communities. Government at all levels, community organizations, faith groups, other NGOs, philanthropic foundations, and the business community should review opportunities to initiate, support, and participate in multi-stakeholder collaborative partnerships.

Use of collaborative approaches can effectively enable disadvantaged communities and associated stakeholders to constructively address complex and long-standing issues concerning environmental and public health hazards, strained or non-existent relations with government agencies and other institutions, and economic decline. Participation in these efforts not only better ensures that the nation's least advantaged populations' concerns are heard and addressed; it can also better ensure the effective delivery of community development services. Assistance in these efforts need not only take the form of financial resources and expertise, it can take the form of personal interaction with the affected community as partners, improved coordination across organizations, and enhanced coordination within organizations.

For those organizations and institutions actively participating in, supporting, or overseeing EJ collaborative partnerships...

Identify long-term opportunities with organizations and institutions to build the administrative and coordination capacity of the collaborative partnerships.

Partnerships reviewed for this study have creatively found ways to remain functioning and ensure continued coordination. However, energy continually devoted to the performance of administrative functions by partnership leaders is energy lost to further meet, discuss ideas, develop strategies, and/or oversee the implementation of partnership actions. Furthermore, strong assurances of long-term administrative and coordination support can go far in terms of reducing overall anxiety of partners and especially partnership leaders. Finally, a well-established administrative and coordination function can potentially assure potential partners that the partnership is a solid operation worthy of additional support.

Promote community-based leadership and organizational development at the local level for communities using multi-stakeholder collaboration to address EJ issues.

It is much easier for partnerships using multi-stakeholder collaboration to implement actions that support the affected community if the community has a strong voice in partnership

affairs. The community's voice is best heard if the partnership includes representatives of community groups that have broad local support. In order to obtain greater community involvement in partnerships lacking a strong voice from the community, efforts should be made, to encourage community organizations and their leaders to emerge from within the affected community and work with the partnership as partner members. This could be done through: (1) strategic use of grants to either build or enhance the capacity of existing community-based organizations to participate; (2) sharing of lessons learned from local leaders representing EJ collaborative partnerships about how to better ensure local leadership; and (3) informal and formal requests from partner members asking local community-based organizations for their direct involvement.

Focus attention on the environmental, public health, and socio-economic outcomes produced by EJ collaborative partnership activities.

Attention given both upfront and throughout a partnership's life cycle to several items should move the partnership that much closer to generating the type of results desired by the affected community. Items to consider include: (1) the identification of short- and long-term goals; (2) the implementation of activities and leveraging of resources in pursuit of these goals; and (3) the careful linking of goals, activities, and environmental, public health, and socio-economic outcomes. To help do this, partner members should early on consider using community visioning, strategic planning, performance measurement, and evaluative tools.

For the academic community...

Systematically promote rigorous academic study and intellectual discourse around the use of collaborative models to address EJ issues.

Much additional work is needed to more fully understand the value of EJ collaborative approaches at both the national and community level. This could take the form of additional program evaluations and other research efforts. Moreover, this could involve academic symposiums and even new coursework that examine both the theory underlying EJ collaborative approaches, its current application, and potential for use on a broader scale.

For the IWG...

Link those involved in EJ collaborative partnerships into a national structure that encourages cross-partnership learning and builds additional support.

Partners operating in isolation may feel that their work is overwhelming and that they are continually charting new territory. This could be at least partly overcome if partner members are made to recognize that they are part of a process that is being used in places across the country to address complex issues in the midst of challenging stakeholder relationships. Efforts to create a national structure could include: (1) continuing the on-going effort by the IWG to promote a national dialogue on use of EJ collaborative approaches; (2) hosting annual regional and national conferences for partnership members and others interested in such approaches to discuss partnership progress and successes; and (3) distributing a national newsletter to partnership members that provides updates on partnership progress, partnership resources, and recommendations for overcoming partnership obstacles to success.

Fully develop the EJ Collaborative Model.

A carefully articulated model would provide a clearer understanding for parties interested in collaboration of how, and under what circumstances, collaboration can take place, and what

benefits effective collaboration could produce in addressing environmental justice issues. Second, such a model would enable the IWG, and leaders of the EJ collaborative partnerships, to learn from EJ collaborative efforts in a more systematic fashion. The full development of the EJ Collaborative Model could include: (1) identification of the Model's main components; (2) identification of basic outcomes to be achieved; (3) a discussion that clearly explains the links between collaborating and the expected outcomes of collaborating; (4) identification of indicators that can be used to determine the extent to which outcomes are being achieved; (5) identification of agreed upon questions to systematically identify key factors contributing to partnership progress and success; and (6) development of a data gathering plan that is user-friendly and minimizes the burden of data collection.

Review opportunities to forge stronger links between established government environmental programs that are critical to the cleanup and revitalization of disadvantaged communities.

These include federal initiatives such as DOE's Brightfields, EPA's Brownfields, DOE's Clean Cities, DOE's Rebuild America, EPA's Smart Growth Index, EPA's Superfund, and others. These programs produce results acting independently. In order to fully meet the needs of communities challenged by numerous environmental, public health, and socio-economic issues, EJ collaborative partnerships would greatly benefit if the leaders and coordinators of these programs either enhance or begin formal partnerships with each other. Formal coordination efforts could include periodic assessments of (1) how cooperation by government program coordinators can be improved, (2) how related government programs could be tailored to more easily complement one another, and (3) how the public regularly obtains access to and uses these programs.

Expand internal federal support for both current and future EJ collaborative partnerships.

The IWG has played an important leadership role in supporting, nurturing, and promoting EJ collaborative partnerships. However both current and future EJ collaborative partnerships would benefit by expanded IWG support. First, each IWG-sponsored partnership would benefit by having a designated champion within the IWG. Second, partnerships would benefit by additional technical assistance in the form of planning and evaluation, regular diffusion of lessons learned, and greater understanding of the availability and accessibility of the broad array of resources, particularly at the federal level, for both community partnership building and community revitalization initiatives. Furthermore, partnerships could benefit from tools that enable them to understand the linkages between these government programs and how they could be accessed and used collectively to better meet environmental and revitalization goals. Although it is beyond the scope of the IWG to provide this type of technical assistance to partnership communities on a regular basis, the IWG can collectively help envision, oversee, and support information diffusion systems that enable partnerships to more efficiently and effectively develop and obtain desired outcomes for the partnership communities.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Background

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the federal government gave increasing attention to issues of environmental justice. Grassroots protests and government and academic research began to reveal how communities of color and low-income were faced with a disproportionate share of unwanted land uses and disparities in environmental protection. As a first response, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) opened the Office of Environmental Equity in 1992, which became the Office of Environmental Justice. An important effort that emerged from this office was the creation of the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council—a federal advisory committee that consists of a range of stakeholders that provide advice to EPA on environmental justice matters. In 1994, Executive Order 12898 was signed requiring all federal agencies to ensure environmental justice issues are addressed in all agency programs, policies, and procedures. In addition, the Order required the formation of a federal interagency workgroup, chaired by EPA, to better ensure coordination across federal agencies in resolving environmental justice issues. By 2000 several federal agencies, along with an increasing number of state governments, local governments and members of the business community,² had initiated programs or taken actions to remedy environmental justice issues.

The Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice

An important component of the federal effort to address environmental justice issues was the development of the “Integrated Federal Interagency Environmental Justice Action Agenda” (Agenda) released in May 2000 by the federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (IWG). The overarching goal of the Agenda is to build “dynamic and proactive partnerships among Federal agencies to benefit environmentally and economically distressed communities.” In the Agenda the IWG stressed that that by working more effectively together, federal agencies would “enhance identification, mobilization and utilization of Federal resources...[enabling] distressed communities to improve environmental decision-making and more efficiently access and leverage Federal government initiatives.”³

To help implement the Action Agenda, the IWG selected fifteen national demonstration projects in June 2000. To make the selections, the IWG considered several criteria which included the extent to which the projects: were community-based; had strong community interest; represented areas that were predominantly minority or low-income populations; had

² International City/County Management Association, *Report: Forum on Building Collaborative Models to Achieve Environmental Justice – May 17 & 18, 2001, Chevy Chase, Maryland*. pp.7-10.

<http://icma.org/go.cfm?cid=1&gid=3&sid=135> (scroll to “Environmental Justice” and click on “White Paper”).

³ Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice, *Integrated Federal Interagency Environmental Justice Action Agenda*. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Office of Environmental Justice, EPA/300-R-00-008. November 2000. p. 5. <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/resources/publications/ej/actionagenda.pdf>

sufficient resources to carry out activities; had previously taken steps to address or consider environmental justice issues; had the commitment of at least two federal agencies to participate; and were committed to using multi-stakeholder collaborative problem-solving as a tool for addressing environmental justice issues. Of the projects selected, eleven had specific local communities as focus areas; three had particular states or regions as their focus area and one focused on national tribal environmental justice policy. Some of the projects selected emerged as a direct result of the IWG designation process; others were already established and were selected to highlight their on-going commitments to multi-stakeholder collaboration.⁴ Some of the goals of the various projects included:

- Cleanup of a polluted waterway;
- Community empowerment to better address local environmental justice issues;
- Conversion of vehicular fleets to cleaner fuels;
- Community economic development;
- Comprehensive lead abatement;
- Local air quality improvement;
- Contaminated site cleanup; and
- Asthma rate reduction.⁵

No special IWG funding awards were given to the projects as a result of IWG designation.

Why Collaboration?

A critical component of these projects for the IWG were parties' commitments to collaborate with each other to address environmental justice issues of concern and federal agencies' commitments to coordinate with each other to help support the projects. After witnessing many years of environmental justice disputes end with less-than-ideal solutions and long-lasting negative relations between stakeholders, the IWG came to recognize the importance of encouraging a cooperative, problem-solving spirit across stakeholders. Once these issues are raised to the federal government, the IWG explains that, they typically "(1) cut across agency jurisdictions or areas of expertise; (2) involve many stakeholders holding mutually inconsistent perspectives about the nature of the issues confronting them; and (3) involve parties having longstanding, adversarial relationships."⁶ In response, the IWG argues that use of a multi-stakeholder collaborative effort can be an effective way to achieve sustainable, quality-of-life improvements for communities in which issues have taken "the form of intractable, multifaceted, and multi-layered disputes." Furthermore, the IWG explains that championing collaboration at local levels, with federal agencies serving as partners, is a realistic and necessary response to the on-going environmental justice issues facing affected communities.

Towards an Environmental Justice Collaborative Model

Less than a year following the designation of these projects, the International City/County Management Association hosted a forum, sponsored by the Ford Foundation. The Forum brought together numerous stakeholders to discuss opportunities for collaboration, identify elements for successful collaboration, and hear from different partners involved in three

⁴ Ibid. p. 8.

⁵ Ibid. pp. 8, 13-41.

⁶ Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Environmental Justice Collaborative Model: A Framework to Ensure Local Problem-Solving, Status Report*, EPA 300-R-02-001, February 2002. p. 5.

of the IWG's national demonstration projects. Following this forum, the IWG continued to champion collaboration as an important tool to address environmental justice issues. In its efforts to further promote an "environmental justice collaborative model" the IWG began outlining elements of success based upon the demonstration projects and past efforts that used multi-stakeholder collaborative problem-solving. The IWG grouped elements of success into five categories that include: issue identification and leadership formation; capacity- and partnership-building; strategic planning and vision; implementation; and identification and replication of best practices.⁷

Since the designation of the national demonstration projects, groups dedicated to issues of environmental justice have endorsed this collaborative approach to problem-solving. In 2001, the National Environmental Policy Commission's *Report to the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Environmental Justice Braintrust* stated, "The IWG demonstration projects are particularly significant. They point to the potential to problem-solve across stakeholder groups in a constructive, collaborative manner, building relationships, avoiding duplicated efforts, and leveraging instead of wasting resources."⁸ Furthermore, in June 2002, EPA's National Environmental Justice Advisory Council recommended that EPA support advancement of the IWG's Action Agenda and "its collaborative interagency problem-solving model as exemplified in the fifteen demonstration projects."⁹ In April 2002, the IWG announced a second round of nominations for projects working to address environmental justice concerns, and expects to make selections by early 2003. As part of the criteria for selection, the IWG asked proposal sponsors to discuss how their project exhibited elements of success mentioned in the paragraph above.¹⁰

Roots of the Environmental Justice Collaborative Model

The emerging Environmental Justice (EJ) Collaborative Model is being built on lessons from the on-going national demonstration projects as well as upon on lessons from many existing comprehensive, collaborative efforts, such as the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative in Boston, Massachusetts, and the programs of the Bethel New Life Community Development Corporation in Chicago, Illinois.¹¹ Other important influences include the National Advisory Council on Environmental Policy and Technology's Integrative Environmental Justice Model Demonstration Approach, developed in 1993; the City of Clearwater, Florida's effort to develop a model environmental justice strategic plan for brownfields redevelopment, begun in 1996;¹² and lessons from a document entitled *Community Collaborative Wellness Tool*.¹³ What sets the IWG's approach apart from these efforts is the IWG's emphasis upon systematically promoting multi-stakeholder collaboration as a tool for addressing environmental justice issues on a national scale. Through the IWG's national pilot projects and soon-to-be announced revitalization projects, the concerted effort by federal agencies to serve as partners in these projects, and enhanced federal participation and coordination, the IWG expects that distressed

⁷ Ibid. p. 5.

⁸ Qtd. in ibid. p. iv.

⁹ National Environmental Justice Advisory Council; A Federal Advisory Committee to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "June 25, 2002 Letter to EPA Administrator," in *Integration of Environmental Justice in Federal Agency Programs: A Report developed from the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council Meeting of December 11-14, 2000*. May 2002.

¹⁰ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "Federal Register Notice on Environmental Justice Revitalization Projects sponsored by the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice," 24 April 2002. http://www.epa.gov/compliance/resources/publications/ej/iwg_frn_ej_revit_proj.pdf.

¹¹ Charles Lee, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Office of Environmental Justice, Associate Director for Policy and Interagency Liaison, Electronic Communication, 2 April 2002.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ *Environmental Justice Collaborative Model: A Framework to Ensure Local Problem-Solving, Status Report*. p. 8.

communities will be enabled to more easily access *existing* federal and other resources that enhance environmental protection and community revitalization.

Collaboration Explored in Brief

Before reviewing the collaborative projects in more detail, it is helpful to discuss briefly the term collaboration. In her comprehensive treatment of the subject, Barbara Gray defines collaboration as “a process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible.”¹⁴ Collaboration, according to Gray, is typically used to resolve conflicts or advance shared visions, and it can be used in a variety of settings including “joint ventures among businesses, settlement of local neighborhood or environmental disputes, revitalization of economically depressed cities, and resolution of major international problems.”¹⁵ According to Gray, the collaborative process typically consists of three phases: (1) the problem-setting phase, in which parties join together to discuss concerns; (2) the direction-setting phase, in which parties use organizational techniques such as agendas and subgroups to work towards and reach an agreement; and (3) the implementation phase, in which the parties generate outside support for their agreement and monitor it to ensure its proper implementation.¹⁶ Gray associates several benefits with collaboration, which are listed below:¹⁷

The Benefits of Collaboration (from Gray)

- Broad comprehensive analysis of the problem domain improves the quality of solutions.
- Response capability is more diversified.
- It is useful for reopening deadlocked negotiations.
- The risk of impasse is minimized.
- The process ensures that each stakeholder’s interests are considered in any agreement.
- Parties retain ownership of the solution.
- Parties most familiar with the problem, not their agents, invent solutions.
- Participation enhances acceptance of solution and willingness to implement it.
- The potential to discover novel, innovative solutions is enhanced.
- Relations between the stakeholders improve.
- Costs associated with other methods are avoided.

Figure 1. *The Benefits of Collaboration (from Gray)*

Gray also points out several realities associated with collaboration. First, collaboration will not always work, as, for instance, when one party holds significantly higher power relative to the other participants. Second, collaboration may not always resolve complex, multiparty issues, especially when parties perceive the dispute as centering on a distinctly defined set of gains and losses. Furthermore, collaboration can be difficult when the parties’ perceptions of a threat “have deep psychological and emotional roots.” To overcome this challenge, Gray suggests that collaboration must pay careful attention to the design of stakeholder meetings. In addition, Gray suggests that effective collaboration requires a significant investment of time by the participants, and “the skill and forbearance of a convening organization and/or a skilled third party.”¹⁸

¹⁴ Barbara Gray, *Collaborating: Finding Multiparty Ground for Multiparty Problems*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1989), p. 5.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 6-7.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 57.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 21.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 23-25.

In a more recent examination of the topic, Steven Daniels and Gregg Walker describe collaboration as a process involving “interdependent parties identifying issues of mutual interest, pooling their energy and resources, addressing their differences, charting a course for the future, and allocating implementation responsibility among the group.”¹⁹ They also describe several important features of collaboration, which are listed below.²⁰

Key Features of Collaboration (from Daniels and Walker)

1. *It is less competitive* and more accepting of additional parties in the process because they are viewed more as potential contributors than as potential competitors.
2. *It is based on joint learning and fact-finding*; information is not used in a competitively strategic manner.
3. *It allows underlying value differences to be explored*, and there is the potential for joint values to emerge.
4. *It resembles principled negotiation*, since the focus is on interests rather than positions.
5. *It allocates the responsibility for implementation* across as many participants in the process as the situation warrants.
6. *Its conclusions are generated by participants* through an interactive, iterative, and reflexive process. Consequently, it is less deterministic and linear.
7. *It is an ongoing process*; the participants do not meet just once to discuss a difference and then disperse. However, collaborations may have a limited life span if the issues that brought the participants together are resolved.
8. *It has the potential to build individual and community capacity* in such areas as conflict management, leadership, decision making, and communication.

Figure 2. Key Features of Collaboration (from Daniels and Walker)

The authors argue for the use of collaboration as an important public policy tool to address natural resource conflicts—one that can effectively balance two competing societal public policy goals of “technical competence and participatory process.”²¹ They also carefully point out, however, that collaboration is a challenging endeavor. They explain that to collaborate, experts must learn to communicate without the use of jargon and to admit that their views reflect “fundamental value preferences.” Also, to collaborate, citizens must make a substantial investment of their own time, acknowledge contrasting “worldviews and political preferences” and take care to make only reasonable demands of agency staff and tax dollars.²² Moreover, they explain that whether parties begin to collaborate hinges entirely with the participants, since “there is no practical way or ethical reason to force them to interact collaboratively.” They add to this by stating, “Collaboration cannot be forced, scheduled, or required; it must be nurtured, permitted, and promoted.”²³ As with Gray, Daniels and Walker also emphasize the importance of design in collaboration. They note that, “A process is not collaborative just because someone labels it so, but the collaboration emerges from the interactions of the participants, which, in turn, is encouraged, by the thoughtfulness of the design.”²⁴

¹⁹ Steven E. Daniels and Gregg B. Walker, *Working Through Environmental Conflict: The Collaborative Learning Approach*. (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2001). p. 10.

²⁰ Ibid. p. 63.

²¹ Ibid. pp. 10, 4.

²² Ibid. p. 11.

²³ Ibid. p. 57.

²⁴ Ibid. p. 12.

Goals of the Evaluation

Although the EJ Collaborative Model is still emerging, since the launch of the Action Agenda, the IWG has been committed to learn from the national demonstration projects. By better understanding how these projects use collaborative processes, the IWG hopes to continue developing a collaborative model that other communities addressing environmental justice issues can more easily apply in the future. In the fall of 2000, the IWG began exploring the possibility of having the Evaluation Support Division in EPA's Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation conduct an evaluation of some of the on-going projects. Starting in November 2000, EPA's Evaluation Support Division began working with the IWG to begin to frame the evaluation questions, with the expectation that findings from individual project evaluations would serve as the basis for a cross project assessment.

Recognizing early on that some stakeholders may be reluctant to participate in a government-sponsored evaluation, especially given that projects were voluntary, challenging issues were being addressed and, many projects were still in the early stages, the evaluation team took three steps. First, the team composed a set of environmental justice evaluation guiding principles (see Appendix B) intended to describe what an evaluation is, why it is useful, how it can be done in a manner that is respectful of the community, and how evaluation results can be used to empower the participants involved. Second, the team sought a high degree of input from a range of groups including the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council, the IWG, demonstration project leaders, program evaluators, business representatives, academia, and environmental justice activists.²⁵ Finally, the team gave project leads the opportunity to review and comment on the questions in advance to obtain assurances that (1) the evaluation purpose was clear and acceptable to the community, (2) data collection techniques were considerate of interviewees' time, and (3) interview questions were structured such that participants could provide the most accurate information.

Although the primary focus of the effort did not change based upon stakeholder input, the team did choose to develop case studies of the projects rather than individual evaluations for the six projects reviewed. The six case studies were then analyzed to address the following topics:

- Partnership process, activities, and outcomes;
- Key factors influencing partnership success;
- Value of multi-stakeholder collaborative partnerships to address environmental justice issues; and
- Value of federal agency involvement in these efforts.

The information derived for this assessment is intended to assist individuals participating in, or assembling, a collaborative effort centered on issues of environmental justice. The evaluation provides specific lessons to avoid obstacles and enhance collaborative efforts. It also serves as one model for evaluating projects using a collaborative approach in the future. Additionally, the evaluation should enable champions and users of collaboration for environmental justice work to further envision ways to develop the EJ Collaborative Model's

²⁵ In addition to providing both the NEJAC and the IWG the opportunity to comment on the evaluation approach, two facilitated national conference calls were conducted in 2001 to better inform the direction of the evaluation. To view proceedings of the national conference calls go to: <http://www.epa.gov/evaluate/ncc.htm>.

conceptual framework and better articulate short- and long-term environmental, public health, and socio-economic outcomes one would expect to see when the Model is ideally applied.

Brief Discussion of Following Chapters

The following chapter, *Chapter Two*, describes the evaluation methodology used to conduct this assessment and how the evaluation team derived its findings and conclusions. *Chapter Three* provides a brief overview of the six partnership case studies. *Chapter Four* examines partnership opportunities for involvement as well as interviewees' perspectives regarding this topic. This chapter also discusses partnership activities, participants' perspectives regarding outcomes from these activities, and participants' satisfaction with the outcomes of partnership activities thus far.

Chapter Five discusses the most common successes and challenges voiced by interviewees across the partnerships. *Chapter Six* examines key factors influencing partnership progress and success. *Chapter Seven* looks at the different styles, policies, and procedures of the partner organizations that are impacting the progress of the partnerships. *Chapter Eight* describes interviewees' perspectives regarding the value of using collaborative approaches to address environmental justice issues, whether or not the issues of the affected community would have been addressed without use of a collaborative approach, and whether or not such an approach could be used again in the future by the affected community to address similar issues.

Chapter Nine looks at federal involvement in the partnerships reviewed. In particular the evaluation team describes interviewees' perspectives regarding the value of federal involvement in collaborative partnerships for affected communities and the value of federal involvement in collaborative partnerships for federal agencies. In addition, the team discusses whether or not federal agencies are coordinating more effectively with each other as a result of their participation in these efforts, and provides interviewee' recommendations for federal agencies to best participate in EJ collaborative efforts in the future. *Chapter Ten* provides a set of core findings and recommendations regarding how to best learn from and improve on-going and future multi-stakeholder collaborative partnerships seeking to address environmental justice issues in communities.

Evaluation Methodology

This chapter describes the data used to inform this report and the six case studies, and the types of analyses conducted. The data used to inform this report is based upon the information provided in the six case studies. Data used to develop the case studies was generated through a combination of data collection approaches, including phone interviews, face-to-face interviews, and document review. Interview data was collected through use of a semi-structured, open-ended interview guide that was adapted when needed for the interviewees of different partnerships.²⁶ The evaluation team generally followed the interview guide; however, not all questions were asked of all interviewees. Interview questions were structured loosely on the program framework described below.

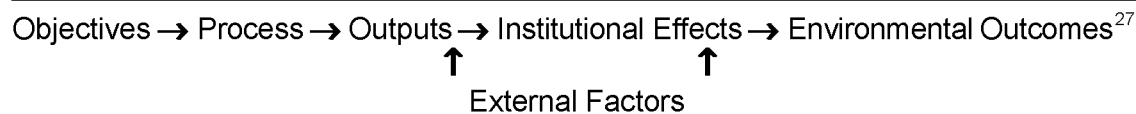


Figure 3. Steps in a Program Framework

A concerted effort was made to interview individuals that (1) possessed a strong understanding of the partnership they were associated with; and (2) accurately reflected the diversity of partnership interests. The evaluation team made the decision not to interview persons unaffiliated with individual partnerships. Such an effort would have required resources well beyond our scope. However, even by limiting the interviewee pool in this way, the evaluation team fully expected to uncover a diversity of responses within single partnerships.

To identify interviewees, the evaluation team typically developed a draft interviewee list based upon an initial review of partnership documents. A chart describing the types of organizations participating in each of the six partnerships reviewed, based upon a listing in the December 2000 IWG Demonstration Projects Interim Report, is included below.

²⁶ The six projects reviewed all had varying titles. Stakeholders referred to their projects as partnerships or projects, and in some case cases stakeholders used both terms interchangeably. Furthermore, in one project, partners referred to the project effort as a collaborative. For consistency, the evaluation team primarily refers to the projects as partnerships.

²⁷ For the purposes of this figure “environmental outcomes” are also meant to include public health and quality of life outcomes.

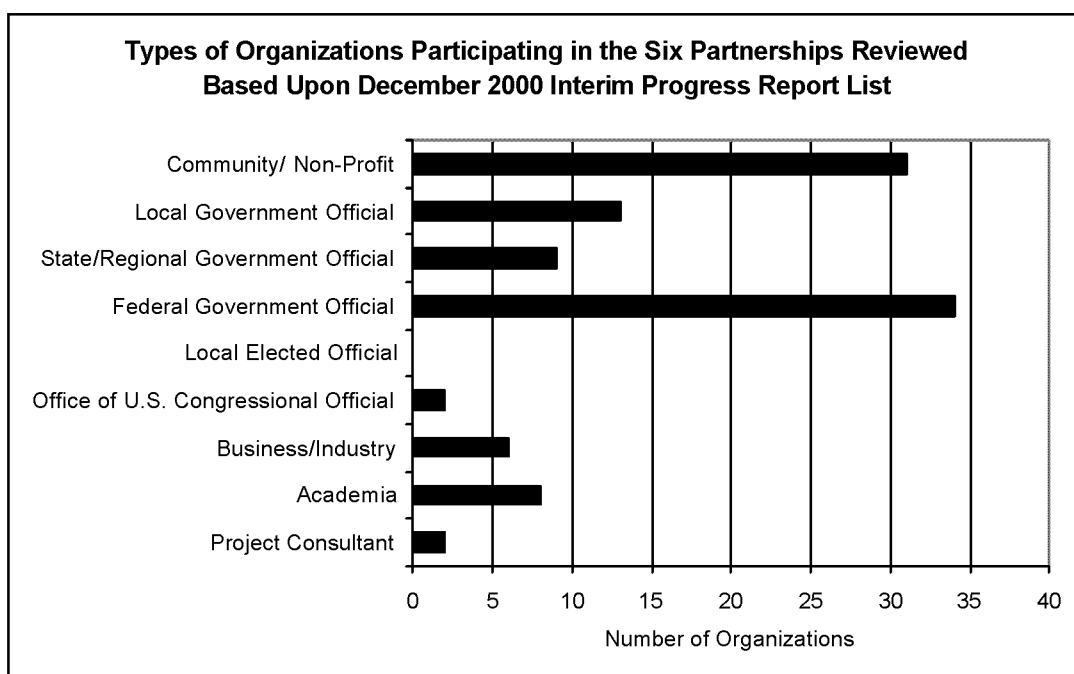


Chart 1. Types of Organizations Participating in the Six Projects Reviewed Based Upon December 2000 Interim Progress Report List

Partnership leaders were then asked to provide feedback on the potential interviewees and suggest more suitable candidates if necessary. In total, the evaluation team conducted 66 separate interviews and a total of 79 individuals participated. Care was taken to work within the constraints of the federal Paperwork Reduction Act. The distribution of interviewee type is included below.

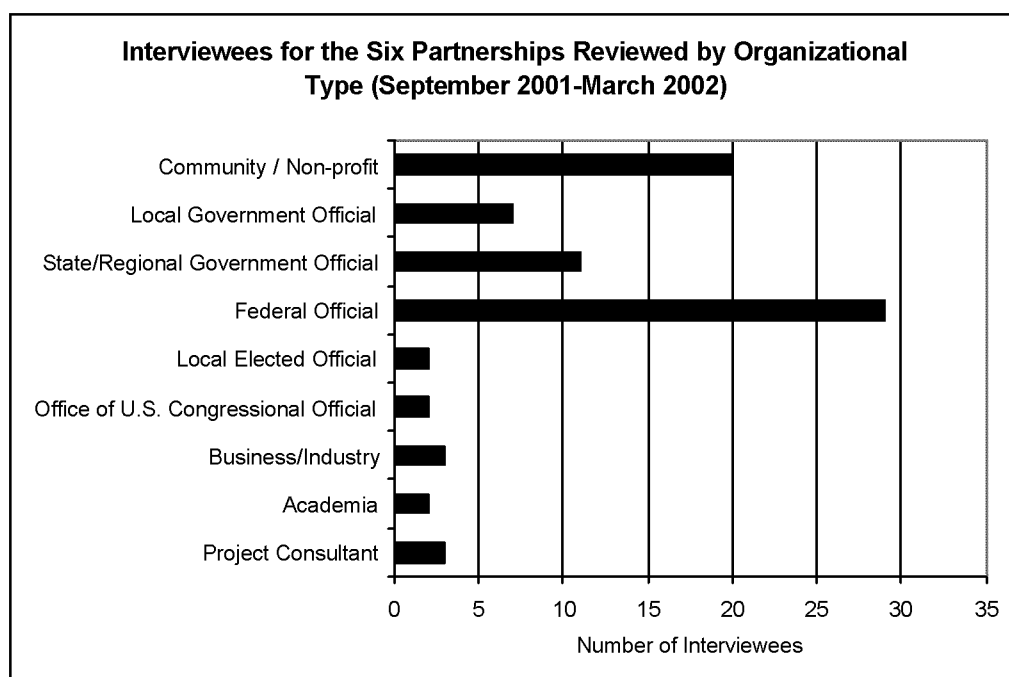


Chart 2. Interviewees for the Six Partnerships Reviewed by Organizational Type (September 2001–March 2002)

As evident from the table, representatives of community organizations and federal agencies represented the bulk of the interviewees. When establishing the interviewee list at the on-set, community organizations and federal agencies were most often the main participants in the partnerships. Given the high degree of federal involvement in these projects, the distribution of interviewees by federal agency is also presented.

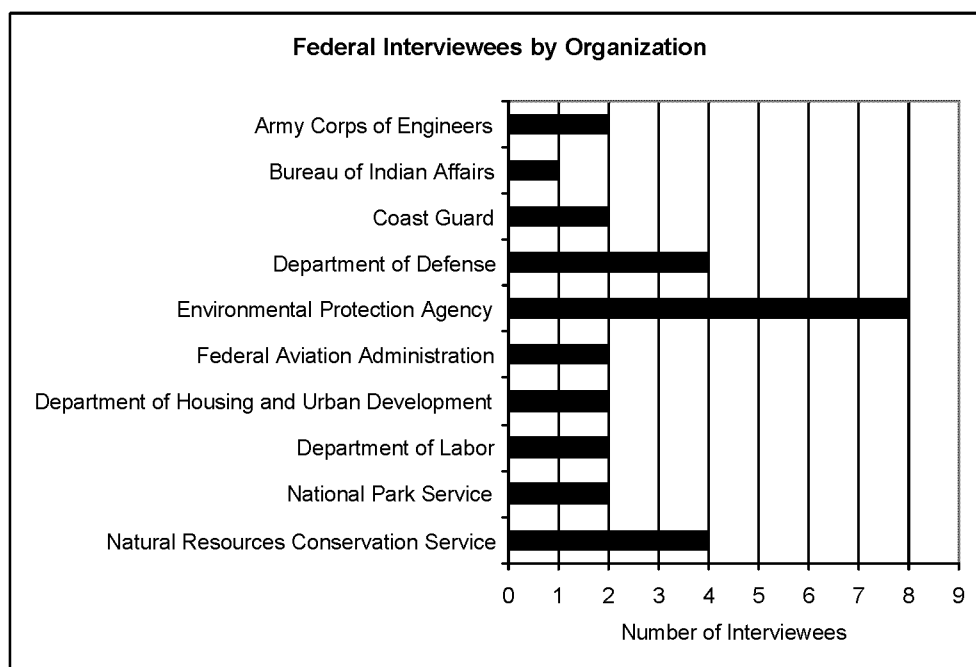


Chart 3. Federal Interviewees by Organization

Interviews were primarily conducted between mid-September and the first week of October 2001. However interviews for two partnerships were conducted between late November 2001 and April 2002. In addition, the evaluation team reviewed 15 to 75 documents, depending upon availability, to develop each case study. These documents included written community histories, formal project reports, fact sheets, site assessments, environmental management plans, community planning documents, and newspaper articles.

Case studies were structured to allow for cross-case analysis and included the following sections: (1) community history, (2) partnership background, (3) partnership goals and process, (4) partnership activities, (5) measuring partnership success, (6) partnership successes and challenges, (7) recommendations for improving the partnership, (8) lessons for other communities considering partnerships, (9) value of federal involvement, and (10) findings. Parts 1-4 were mostly descriptive and relied primarily on background documents, while parts 5-10 relied primarily on interviewee data. To conduct the analysis using interview data, responses to particular questions were reviewed to identify themes and patterns. Care was taken to ensure that the comments carefully reflected the sentiment of the interviewees' and the degree to which interviewees agreed with others on a particular topic.

Case study findings were based upon the interview data, the document review, and the evaluators' overall impressions of each partnership. Interviewees were also given two opportunities to review their partnership case study and provide comments regarding the case study's organization, content, accuracy, and readability. In addition, the evaluation team, on

occasion, contacted a few specific individuals associated with the partnerships to clarify certain questions related to partnership background and process. Case studies were written understanding that the descriptions and analyses of interviewee comments reflected interviewee perceptions about the partnerships at a single point in time. Moreover, the evaluation team recognized that the partnerships, and interviewee perceptions of them, would continue to evolve.

The case study partnerships were selected based upon several considerations including the extent to which they represented an adequate level of geographic variability and adequate variability in regards to the partnership types (both in terms of the partnership focus and the demographic characteristics of the affected community). In addition, attention was placed upon those partnerships that were more representative of those types of partnerships that the IWG expects will be more commonly implemented in communities in the future.

The focus of this report centers primarily on articulating the value, and key factors influencing progress and success of the partnerships reviewed, as opposed to specific outcomes articulated, for instance, in units of contamination cleaned, number of jobs generated, or degree to which overall quality of life has been improved. This was due to several factors. First, most of partnerships reviewed were at relatively early stages at the time of case study development. Second, although most of the partnerships have identified goals, many lacked fully developed theories that specified precisely what activities were associated with their partnership efforts and what specific outcomes they expected to bring about once the activities were implemented. Third, directly related to the second point, for most partnerships selected, no baseline data, other than that already generated through traditional programs, was available at the start of these projects.

Given the numerous, challenging issues that many of these partnerships work to address, and given the particularly challenging set of stakeholder relationships that these projects seek to transform into action-oriented collaboratives, these challenges are not surprising. Some partnerships developed under the expectation that collaboration was simply a more effective way to do business. For these, taking time to put in place a project monitoring and evaluation system would most likely have been seen as inefficient, and may have actually slowed effective partnering if the IWG required it in the early stages. By focusing on the added value of these efforts and factors that influence success, it is the hope of the evaluation team and the IWG to begin to better understand what can be expected when collaborative approaches are used by struggling communities, how they can best be applied, what type of evaluation system is feasible and doable for these partnerships, and how success can best be measured in the future.

Overview of Case Study Partnerships

This chapter provides a very broad overview of the six partnerships examined for this evaluation and concludes with a brief discussion outlining some of the partnerships' similarities and differences.

The Partnerships

The **Barrio Logan Partnership** is based primarily in an inner city community near downtown San Diego. The partnership formed in 2001 as part of the IWG designation after initial discussions between a senior EPA official and representatives of the Environmental Health Coalition, a local environmental justice organization with a long-standing history of working in the Barrio Logan community. Barrio Logan is faced with several challenges, most notably incompatible land-uses brought about through lack of proper zoning restrictions that led to the emergence of industrial land uses near residential homes. Through a structured, facilitated partnering process, the Barrio Logan partnership has brought long-standing adversaries together to discuss, form goals, and implement actions to address some of the numerous quality of life issues facing the community.

The **Bridges to Friendship Partnership** emerged in 1998 out of concerns that a major redevelopment effort in a distressed Washington, D.C. neighborhood would fail to benefit local residents and could eventually result in their displacement. Initiated by community organizations and officials at the Washington Navy Yard, these groups formed a structured but flexible partnership involving numerous community non-profits, several federal agencies, and the government of the District of Columbia to ensure that local residents would benefit from the redevelopment through better coordination, communication, and pooling of expertise and resources. With over forty partners today, partnership members view this coordinated approach as an effective way to conduct business and continue to search for opportunities to better serve local residents.

The **Metlakatla Peninsula Cleanup Partnership** is a unique emerging collaboration between the Metlakatla Indian Community (MIC), federal agency field staff in Alaska, and federal headquarters staff based primarily in Washington D.C. Its purpose is to ensure the cleanup of over 80 primarily government-contaminated sites on the MIC's home island in southeast Alaska. Through these coordinated efforts, the parties hope to cleanup the sites in a manner that is satisfactory to the Tribe, making more efficient use of resources, and map out a process for cleanup of complex multi-party sites. The issues are complex given the numerous agencies and other parties involved in the contamination, the different parties' policies and procedures for contaminated site cleanup, and disagreements over who should cleanup the sites and to what level. The partnership effort began in 2000 after the designation by the IWG as a national demonstration pilot and built upon an on-going local collaboration primarily between the MIC and Alaska federal agency field staff.

The **Metro East Lead Collaborative** is an effort that emerged after a local hospital and government officials determined that high lead levels in children in East St. Louis and surrounding communities may be a result of lead-contaminated soil. Recognizing the need for a comprehensive approach to reduce the threat of lead-poisoning, in early 1999, an EPA representative brought several groups already at work on lead and related issues together to form a structured partnership. Although initially focused on East St. Louis, the project soon expanded its focus to other nearby neighborhoods. In addition, the enthusiasm over the partnership's lead-reduction efforts spurred the partnership to begin simultaneously addressing brownfields redevelopment.

The **New Madrid Tri-Community Partnership** resulted in 1998 after local residents from one rural community in southern Missouri requested the assistance of the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to help it tackle numerous social, economic, and environmental challenges. Responding to the call, NRCS joined together with EPA, a regional non-profit, and two additional communities in the area to begin addressing common residential concerns. Soon after the partnership was designated by EPA as a Child Health Champion national demonstration project, these groups began taking a structured approach to addressing asthma, lead, and water quality issues in the three communities. Since then, the partners have made significant progress meeting the objectives outlined under their program.

The **ReGenesis Partnership** emerged in 1999, after the leader of a 1,400-member group representing two distressed and adjacent neighborhoods in Spartanburg, South Carolina brought together numerous stakeholders in an effort to cleanup and revitalize the area. By building a shared vision for redevelopment, the energy and enthusiasm surrounding the effort brought together approximately 70 organizations representing a range of interests, which includes the cleanup and redevelopment of two Superfund equivalent sites, the building of a health clinic, a recreational greenway, new road construction, and new affordable housing. This loosely structured partnership is headed by Harold Mitchell, the leader of ReGenesis, and guided by a core group including Mitchell, and representatives of the City, the County, and EPA's regional office based in Atlanta.

Partnership Similarities and Differences in Brief

Across the six partnerships reviewed are both similarities and differences. First, the partnerships started at different points in time. Some started as early as 1998 and others as late as 2000. Second, some partnerships were initiated by communities or community-based organizations while others were initiated by federal agencies. Most partnerships have identified issues, formed goals, and are taking actions or planning actions to address these issues. Most have well-defined operating structures, however only one regularly relies on a professional facilitator. The partnership coordination mechanisms range from tight to loose, and the scope of solutions sought by each of the partnerships vary from specific to comprehensive. In all partnerships diverse stakeholders are participating, however, most stakeholders represent community or government-based organizations. Finally, all partnerships have varying levels of community involvement.

Partnership Title	Partnership Location	Demographics of Affected Community	Geographic Characteristics	Year Initiated	Partnership Focus
Barrio Logan	San Diego, California	Predominantly Latino/Low income	Inner city	2000	Address immediate health concerns/ Boost overall quality of life
Bridges to Friendship	Southeast / Southwest Washington, D.C.	Predominantly African American/Low income	Inner city	1998	Increase overall resident employment/ Boost overall quality of life
Metlakatla Peninsula Cleanup	Southeastern Alaska	Native American/Low income	Rural/Island	2000	Cleanup contaminated sites
Metro East Lead Collaborative	East St. Louis/St. Clair County, Illinois	African American/Low income	Inner City	1999	Improve children's health by reducing lead poisoning
New Madrid Tri Community	New Madrid County, Missouri	African American/ Caucasian/Low income	Rural	1998	Address childhood lead poisoning, asthma and allergies, and water contaminants
ReGenesis	Spartanburg, South Carolina	African American/Low income	Urban/Rural	2000	Address and revitalize contaminated sites

Table 1. Case Study Partnerships Summary

Partnership Involvement Approaches, Activities, and Outcomes

Our organization's priorities are integrated into the partnership. [We've] been able to feel good about participating, input, and cooperation.

– Interviewee, ReGenesis Partnership

We're talking about safety, housing, trucks, and all the things that are important to the community.

– Interviewee, Barrio Logan Partnership

Impact so far is enthusiasm...there was a time when people felt hopeless about their future. Now people feel positive about their future

– Interviewee, ReGenesis Partnership

This chapter looks at the case study partnerships in terms of their approaches for involving different parties, activities conducted, and outcomes generated by these activities.

Partnership Involvement Approaches

Each partnership developed in a unique fashion and each has its own style for involving partner members in partnership discussions and for involving the affected community. Despite differences, some general patterns across the partnerships exist. First, partnership organizers and leaders generally sought a high degree of involvement from a broad spectrum of organizations, including federal, state, and local agencies, community-based organizations, other non-governmental organizations, business and industry. Second, except for the Barrio Logan partnership, partnership leaders allowed interested organizations to continually join and did not appear to limit participation by any one organization. In the Barrio Logan partnership, certain parties were not admitted to the partnership out of concerns that encouraging involvement of parties reluctant to be involved in collaborative processes, or historically involved in a very adversarial relationship with the affected community, would be detrimental to the overall process. In another strategic decision, the leaders of the Barrio Logan partnership developed a criterion that prevented potential organizations from joining the partnership if they were unwilling to contribute resources to the partnership effort. These parties were, however, allowed to observe the proceedings of partner meetings.

Third, each partnership had at least a base level of community involvement. This came in the form of involvement of residents from the affected community, who were usually affiliated with grassroots organizations, or involvement of representatives of local, non-profit organizations that may or may not have a high degree of community support, and may or may not be directly based in the affected community. Fourth, most partnerships periodically host broad forums in which all partners can provide input regarding partner activities. Furthermore, four of the six partnerships have, at least once, assigned partner members to smaller committees to focus greater attention on specific concerns of the affected communities. Finally, most partnerships have at least one individual or a group of individuals that regularly perform partnership leadership and coordination functions.

Satisfaction with Partnership Opportunities for Involvement

A total of 62 of 79 interviewees addressed a question regarding their satisfaction with their ability to participate in the partnership decision-making process. Interviewee responses were sorted into four response categories: yes, somewhat, no, and unclear. In addition, some interviewees were either not asked the question or did not address the question when asked. Responses are provided in the chart, and then discussed more below.

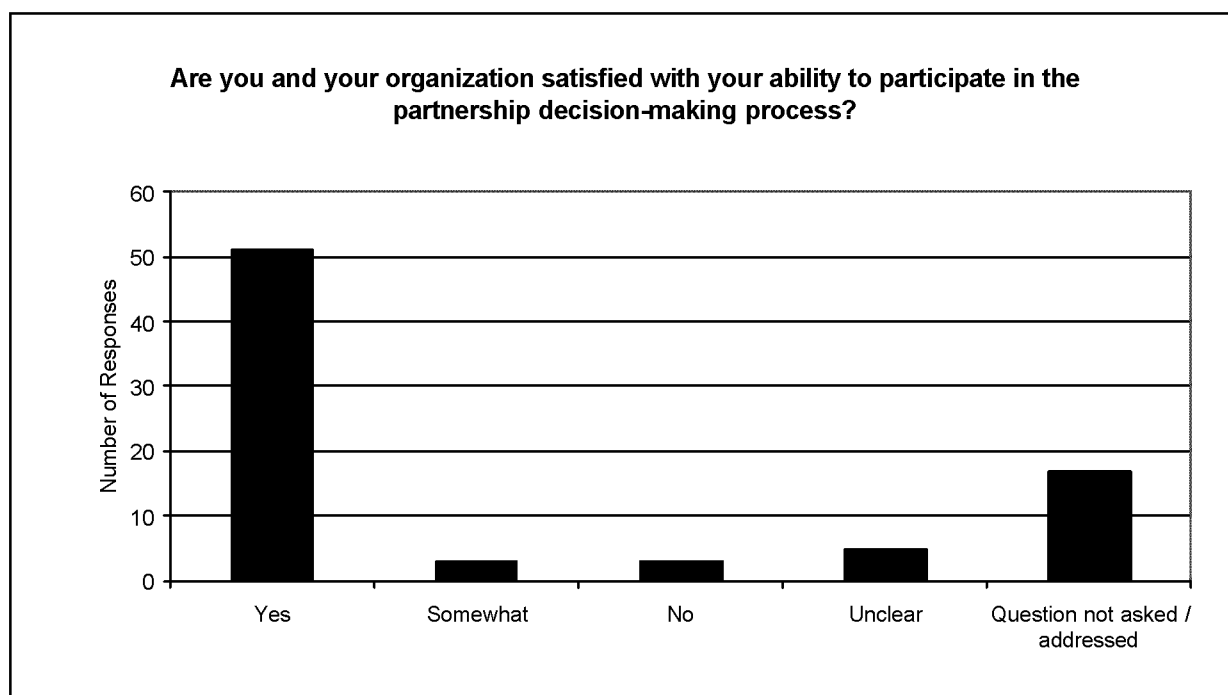


Chart 4. Satisfaction with Participation in the Partnership Decision-making Process. Note: 62 interviewees answered this question. An additional seventeen interviewees were not asked or did not answer the question, seven of which represented the Metlakatla partnership (see footnote 28). The remaining ten interviewees include four with ReGenesis, four with New Madrid, and two with Barrio Logan.

Of those interviewees addressing the question, 82 percent (51 of 62) indicated that the partnerships they were involved in allowed them and the organizations they represent to sufficiently participate in the partnership decision-making process. Five percent (3 of 62) indicated they were only somewhat satisfied. Another five percent (3 of 62) were not satisfied, and eight percent (5 of 62) gave responses that were unclear. Across five of the six partnerships, most interviewees indicated they were satisfied with partnership opportunities for

involvement. One partnership (Metlakatla) did not reflect this trend.²⁸ From this data, it appears as though partnership mechanisms for involvement have been effective at allowing partners to be adequately involved in partnership decision-making processes.

For the interviewees indicating that they were satisfied with the decision making process, a Barrio Logan interviewee noted that the process has given everyone a voice. A ReGenesis interviewee explained that stakeholders involved were willing to listen to parties representing different views. Some interviewees who responded yes, however, provided caveats to their responses. For instance, three Barrio Logan interviewees indicated that it was relatively early in the process to be making such a determination. Two Bridges to Friendship interviewees expressed a desire to have more participation from other groups. A New Madrid interviewee remarked that she/he would liked to have seen more scientific input used when determining which priorities the affected community would address. Finally, a ReGenesis interviewee explained that she/he does not think that his/her federal agency should have a say in the process since the partnership is community-, not federally-, driven.

For the interviewees indicating they were only somewhat satisfied with the decision making process, a Metro East interviewee explained that there was still much more that could be done to assist the affected community in terms of partnership communication with residents. Similarly, a second Metro East interviewee expressed a desire to have greater community involvement. *For those indicating that the decision making process did not sufficiently allow for their input,* a Metlakatla interviewee expressed concern that community concerns were not being adequately heard. Another interviewee, representing the same partnership, explained that it appeared as though other partner members were making decisions without appropriate consultation with the affected community. Finally, an interviewee representing the ReGenesis partnership similarly expressed concern that during the partnership's initial stage his/her organization was not given adequate opportunity to understand the vision of the partnership nor how his/her organization could adequately contribute to the partnership.

Of the seventeen interviewees that either were not asked, or did not address, the question, seven represented the Metlakatla partnership (70 percent of total Metlakatla interviewees). The remaining ten include four from the ReGenesis partnership (25 percent of total ReGenesis interviewees), four from the New Madrid partnership (31 percent of total New Madrid interviewees), and two from the Barrio Logan partnership (14 percent of total Barrio Logan interviewees).

Perspectives on Whether Partnerships Adequately Address Participant Concerns

Interviewees were also asked whether their respective partnerships adequately address their concerns and the concerns of their organizations. This topic is similar to the previous one, and therefore requires further explanation. Partnerships can involve interested parties in

²⁸ The evaluation team was aware in advance of the interviews that the Metlakatla partnership was struggling to move forward on a set of issues related to the cleanup of multi-party contaminated sites. Challenges stem from the involvement of numerous organizational representatives (some of whom aren't based in Alaska), the complex nature of the issues under discussion, the competing cleanup policies of different organizations, lack of a centralized coordination and leadership function, and insufficient communication between parties. Before and while the interviews for this evaluation were taking place, Metlakatla partnership members were undergoing an intensive alternative dispute resolution (ADR) process in order to strengthen the overall partnership effort. The ADR process involved a series of interviews and meetings between Metlakatla partner members and ADR professionals. Recognizing this, the evaluation team generally shortened its interview time with Metlakatla partners and limited itself from asking most Metlakatla interviewees the questions covered in this chapter.

several ways. Nevertheless, even with effective partner involvement mechanisms or partnership leadership, partner members collectively may downplay ideas put forth by certain parties if they feel, for instance, that implementation of those suggestions would diminish the partnership's overall ability to reach its goal. A certain level of resistance to ideas, as with any collaborative process, is to be expected. However, a partnership's overall effectiveness will diminish if a sizeable portion of its partners begins to perceive its ideas as carrying little, if any, weight in terms of influencing overall partnership direction.

A total of 54 interviewees addressed the question regarding this topic. Interviewee responses were sorted into five response categories: yes, somewhat, too early to tell, no, and unclear. In addition, some interviewees were either not asked the question or did not address the question when asked. Responses are provided in the chart, and then discussed more below.

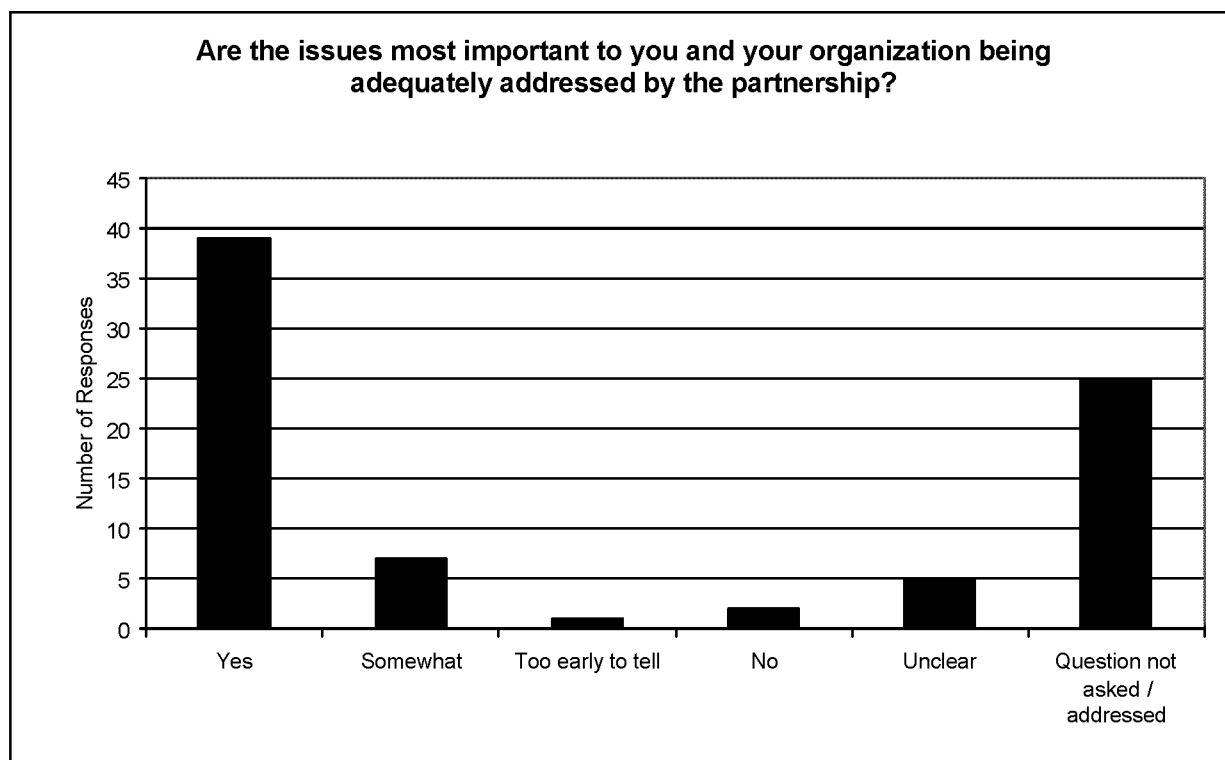


Chart 5. Satisfaction that Partnership is Addressing Partner Organizations' Main Issues. Note: 54 interviewees answered this question. An additional 25 interviewees were not asked or did not answer the question, including nine with the Metlakatla partnership, seven with ReGenesis, six with New Madrid, and three with Barrio Logan.

Of those interviewees addressing the question, 72 percent (39 out of 54) indicated that their respective partnerships are adequately addressing the issues of concern to them and their organizations. Thirteen percent of interviewees (7 of 54) indicated that they were only somewhat satisfied. Two percent of interviewees (1 of 54) indicated that it was too early to tell. Four percent of interviewees (2 of 54) indicated they weren't satisfied that the issues of concern to them were being adequately addressed, and nine percent (5 of 54) gave responses that were unclear. Four of the six partnerships roughly follow this same trend. In one partnership (Barrio Logan) where these trends were not consistent, just less than one-half of the interviewees addressing the question indicated they were satisfied, while the remaining half provided responses ranging from somewhat satisfied to unclear. For the second partnership (Metlakatla) not reflective of this trend, most interviewees were not asked the question. From this it appears

that, generally, the partnership members are making concerted efforts to listen and address each other's issues of concern.

For the interviewees responding that their issues were adequately being addressed, a Barrio Logan interviewee explained that, "We're talking about safety, housing, trucks, and all the things that are important to the community." Similarly, a Bridges to Friendship interviewee noted that what was important to her/his organization—understanding and identifying issues that are important to the community, which include, jobs, environmental cleanup, and parking—was being addressed. An interviewee representing the Metro East partnership was pleased to see a partnership emphasis on community capacity building, which was demonstrated through local environmental job training in cleanup techniques for the community. An interviewee, representing the ReGenesis partnership, who also responded positively, remarked that, if anything, they had to slow the partnership down because it was coming together without all the necessary pieces in place.

For the interviewees responding that the partnership was only somewhat addressing their concerns, a Barrio Logan interviewee expressed concern that zoning issues weren't being adequately addressed. Another Barrio Logan interviewee wanted to see more progress on action. A Bridges to Friendship interviewee explained that she/he was satisfied, but could not say the same for his/her agency since she/he had to continually resell the concept to upper management. Finally, an interviewee, representing the Metlakatla partnership explained that the partners in the partnership have not been given sufficient opportunity to assess whether what they have decided to do will address the problems of the affected community. The 25 interviewees that either were not asked, or did not address, the question include nine interviewees from the Metlakatla partnership (90 percent of total Metlakatla interviewees), seven from the ReGenesis partnership (44 percent of total ReGenesis interviewees), six from the New Madrid partnership (46 percent of total New Madrid interviewees), and three from the Barrio Logan partnership (21 percent of total Barrio Logan interviewees).

Partnership Activities

To address issues facing the affected community, all the partnerships have identified, or are in the process of identifying, activities that must be implemented. Some partnerships have implemented, and continue to implement, various activities while others are still in the planning process, or simply waiting for necessary actions to take place (e.g., resolution over disputing policies for cleanup, cleanup of contaminated sites before redevelopment can begin, etc.). In addition to actions to achieve specific environmental, public health, or other socio-economic outcomes, partnership activities also include actions centered on partnership formation and the sharing of information. Partnership activities, based upon the partnerships reviewed, fall into seven non-exclusive categories listed below. The activities can be divided into two categories: partnership-building activities and community-focused activities. *Partnership-building activities* ensure that the partnerships can function effectively. *Community-focused activities* are specific efforts by the partnerships to improve the quality of life for the affected communities. In addition, partnership-building activities, indirectly, also have the potential to produce outcomes similar to those achieved through community-focused activities. For instance, partnerships that help repair existing, or enable new, linkages between the affected community and the regulatory or business community may result in greater attention to environmental and public health monitoring, or waste minimization efforts, for instance. These actions, could, in turn, result in reduced environmental and health risk.

Partnership-building activities

In most partnerships, members have spent time *identifying issues, forming goals, and planning actions* to best assist the affected community. Without such a plan, it is difficult for partner members to be clear about how their input and resources may be of assistance or confident that their participation will bring about any positive desired change. For instance, members of the New Madrid partnership spent time early exploring what could be done to assist the New Madrid communities. Following a designation by EPA's Office of Children's Health as a Child Health Champion national demonstration project, New Madrid partners debated which priority environmental health risks should be the focus of the effort and then, through the formation of an action plan, how the ones selected should be addressed. Through regular partnership forums and meetings between partnership steering committee members, ReGenesis partnership members have spent considerable energy making sure that they could agree how to implement a revitalization vision for the affected neighborhoods.

Directly related to this activity is the *coordination and sharing of information and resources between partners*. Without such coordination, implementation of the approaches to assist the affected communities would be difficult. Starting in March 2001, Barrio Logan partnership members would regularly meet once per month for a three-hour session. Central meeting activities included facilitated discussions between partners about different activities already underway in Barrio Logan and existing resources partners could provide that could benefit Barrio Logan. As another example, at a Metro East partnership meeting, partners shared their perspectives about how best to reach residents in the affected community who may have yards contaminated with lead. Because of this discussion, the agency tasked with informing residents completely changed its planned approach. Instead of sending a letter to residents suspected of having lead contaminated yards (and asking for them to contact the agency if they would like remediation assistance), this agency joined with other Metro East partnership organizations and went door-to-door in the affected community and explained to residents the full array of lead remediation services available to them.

Also related, *resolution of difficult issues between partners* is an important partnership activity. Without such effort to resolve differences, partnerships may be unable to function and implement concrete actions to assist the affected community. In the Barrio Logan partnership, few difficult issues have surfaced between parties. However, careful attention early on in the partnership by the partnership leaders and facilitator to create a setting that was conducive to effective partnering may have limited the need for this. For instance, the team carefully outlined partnership goals that partners had to agree on before joining. In addition, the team explained the specific process to be used through which difficult issues could be resolved. In the Metlakatla partnership, unless the numerous competing issues can be resolved in a collaborative manner, it is unlikely that several multi-party, contaminated sites will be cleaned within a reasonable time frame. An alternative dispute resolution team from EPA is helping the partners address these challenges. In the ReGenesis partnership, members of the core steering committee regularly disagree about appropriate actions for the revitalization of the affected neighborhoods, but they are usually able to reach mutually acceptable solutions. In addition, the leadership of ReGenesis, the non-profit organization driving the ReGenesis partnership revitalization effort, regularly meets outside of the partnership in a series of facilitated dialogue sessions with representatives of a local chemical plant that is based in the affected community to discuss ReGenesis' concerns about the plant and its potential impact on the revitalization effort.

Finally, most partnerships make concerted *efforts to secure funding and additional partners* to ensure the effective coordination of the partnership and implementation of certain

substantive activities and to bring additional energy and enthusiasm to the partnership. During its first year the Bridges to Friendship partnership was credited by its partners with helping garner over \$4 million in grant funding, which was distributed to individual partners, and used to help accomplish the partnership's goals. The Metro East partnership has secured over \$3 million from a variety of federal, state, county, and local agencies. The New Madrid partnership secured \$135,000 from EPA for the Child Health Champion national pilot project, plus additional assistance from EPA and several other organizations. In addition, the ReGenesis partnership secured over \$1 million through grants from federal sources.

Community-focused Activities

The partnerships have engaged in a variety of activities to assist the communities in which they are working. First, partnerships have *shared information with the affected community* about environmental and public health threats and ways to reduce their risk. In the Metro East partnership and the New Madrid partnership, such information sharing has been done primarily to educate community members about the risks of lead and/or asthma and describe immediate steps residents can take to protect themselves. For instance, the Metro East partnership organized a team of individuals representing three member organizations—EPA, Neighbors United for Progress, and the Community Development Block Grant Operation—that traveled door-to-door in the affected neighborhoods to inform residents of lead threats and help them obtain further assistance. Specifically, the team focused on: 1) educating residents about i) the threats of indoor and outdoor lead contamination, ii) opportunities for blood-lead screening, iii) opportunities for indoor lead remediation; and iv) opportunities for outdoor lead remediation; and 2) helping residents fill-out the appropriate forms during the visits to help them access these services. In the New Madrid partnership, community members as well as technical experts educated community members on the risks of asthma/allergies and lead through a series of risk-specific mini-workshops and a major health fair that reached approximately 2,000 adults and 800 children. In the Bridges to Friendship partnership, the focus of the information sharing has been to ensure that local people are made aware of job openings brought on by area wide redevelopment. For instance, it is collaborating with the Workforce Organizations for Regional Collaboration to track and make available information regarding employment opportunities for District of Columbia residents.

The partnerships also engage in *specific actions to reduce environmental and public health threats, and/or promote socio-economic development*. For instance, members of the Metro East partnership fully sampled and mapped the communities in which it was working to identify lead contaminated homes and industrial sites, as part of a larger multi-step effort to reduce lead risk to children living in the area. As a result of Metro East partnership efforts, by early October 2001, five homes had been completely remediated and 75 were identified and waiting to be completed. In addition, five industrial sites were in the process of being cleaned, and twenty others had been identified. The Bridges to Friendship partnership has instituted several job-training programs, including an environmental job training initiative, to ensure that local residents can participate in the area redevelopment. As of January 2002, the partnership's environmental job training program had graduated more than 300 students with a job placement rate of over 70 percent, according to one partner. The partnership has also organized business development seminars and fairs in order to provide contracting opportunities and technical assistance to local businesses. In addition, Bridges to Friendship partners including EPA, Covenant House Washington, the Low Impact Development Center, Community Resources, Inc., and the Sustainable Communities Initiatives have developed a low-impact development training program.

Finally, partnerships also engage in specific *community capacity building efforts*. For instance, in the New Madrid partnership ten community members were trained as peer facilitators in issues of asthma and lead so they could help lead mini-workshops to educate local residents about the risks associated with asthma and childhood lead-poisoning. To obtain approval as a community facilitator, the community members had to undergo training over period of 40-50 hours for each specific risk or until they showed mastery of the material. They also had to undergo a pre- and post-test to assess their learning. The Bridges to Friendship partnership has also facilitated job shadowing, internship, and elementary school programs along with life skills workshops for residents in the affected community.

Types of Activities Implemented by EJ Collaborative Partnerships	
<u>Partnership-building</u>	
▪	Identification of issues, formation of goals, and planning of actions to best assist the affected community
▪	Coordination, sharing, and pooling of information and resources between partners
▪	Facilitation and resolution of difficult issues between partners
▪	Identification of funding and additional partners
<u>Community-focused</u>	
▪	Sharing of information between partner organizations and affected community
▪	Specific actions (e.g., lead testing) to reduce environmental and public health threats, and/or promote socio-economic development
▪	Build community capacity

Figure 4. Types of Activities Implemented by EJ Collaborative Partnerships

Outcomes of Partnership Activities

Identifying the outcomes²⁹, or results, of partnership activities is a difficult task, given the myriad of issues being addressed and the myriad of approaches used to resolve them. In addition, for several of these approaches, only limited data on the outcomes is available. Moreover, many partnerships lack theories that specify precisely what activities are associated with their partnership efforts and what specific outcomes they expect to bring about once the activities are implemented. These impediments are further compounded by the fact that the different partnerships are at different stages in terms of developing goals and implementing activities. Nevertheless, it is important to understand, even at a broad level, what participants view as the outcomes of their activities, thus far, and whether or not they perceive these activities as having the intended effect for the affected communities.

Emerging from the data, participants perceive the partnerships as resulting in environmental and other quality of life improvements and increased pride and enthusiasm for

²⁹ During the interview process, interviewees were asked questions about both the outcomes of partner activities and the impact of activities for the affected communities. From the responses, it was clear that most interviewees viewed the partnership activities in terms of outcomes, not impact. Therefore, the term outcome is used throughout this discussion.

the communities. Furthermore, a number of interviewees cited the *implementation* of environmental and other activities as a direct outcome of partnership efforts. This may be due, in part, because many interviewees expressed that in the absence of their partnerships, the implementation of these activities simply would not have taken place; or that implementation of these activities logically results in reduced environmental and other risks for the affected community. This style of response will be important to keep in mind when evaluation teams work with partnerships to characterize the outcomes of partnership activities in the future.

For *implementation of environmental and other activities designed to reduce environmental and public health risk, and boost overall quality of life for affected communities*, interviewees mentioned a variety of activities. These include the cleanup of contaminated sites, the testing of some homes for lead, implementation of extensive job training and related programs, and the communication of environmental risks through brochures and environmental conferences. Representatives from the Barrio Logan, New Madrid, and ReGenesis partnerships also mentioned the *building of community pride and enthusiasm* as an outcome of partnership activities. Closely related to the fostering of community pride, interviewees from the Barrio Logan and New Madrid partnerships mentioned that partnership activities have *empowered communities*. For instance, a New Madrid interviewee remarked that the partnership she/he represented gave the people a lot of confidence to obtain the resources they need.

When discussing *improved environmental and other quality of life outcomes* for the affected communities, representatives from the New Madrid and ReGenesis partnerships explained how the partnerships have resulted in improved community awareness in regards to environmental and other public health risks. Particularly interviewees with the New Madrid partnership explained how partnership activities have boosted education of community members about environmental and health risks they face and how to respond. A New Madrid interviewee also explained more generally that, "A lot of the things [the communities] didn't have they now have. It has made living conditions a lot better." Another outcome, cited by interviewees across the Metlakatla, New Madrid, and Bridges to Friendship partnerships, revolved around how partnership activities have resulted in increased employment for local residents. For instance, a Bridges to Friendship interviewee cited an example where partnership activities resulted in the employment of several hundred people in the environmental profession. Finally, another Bridges to Friendship interviewee explained that partnership efforts have better ensured that development could take place in the affected area without forcing out low-income residents. A text box below includes a more extensive list describing what interviewees perceive as the outcome of partnership activities.

Outcomes of EJ Partnership Activities as Perceived by Interviewees

- Public health, environmental, socio-economic, and other quality of life improvements
- Implementation of public health, environmental, socio-economic, and other quality of life boosting activities
- Boost in community enthusiasm and/or pride
- Community empowerment
- Securing of additional resources
- Draws attention to problems in affected community
- Improved coordination of information and resources between partners
- Enables work to be accomplished at a quicker pace
- Enables communication between partners
- Enables more work to be done

Figure 5. Outcomes of EJ Partnership Activities as Perceived by Interviewees

Satisfaction with Outcomes of Partnership Activities

Interviewees were also asked whether they were satisfied with the outcomes of partnership activities so far. Interviewees responded to this question in terms of satisfaction with outcomes regarding (1) partnership efforts to begin laying the foundation for more substantive actions at a later date, (2) specific environmental and public health efforts taken by partner members to assist the affected communities; or (3) both. Interviewee responses were sorted into six response categories: yes, yes but would like to see more, somewhat, too early to tell, no, and unclear. In addition, some interviewees were either not asked the question or did not address the question when asked. Responses are provided in the chart, and then discussed more below.

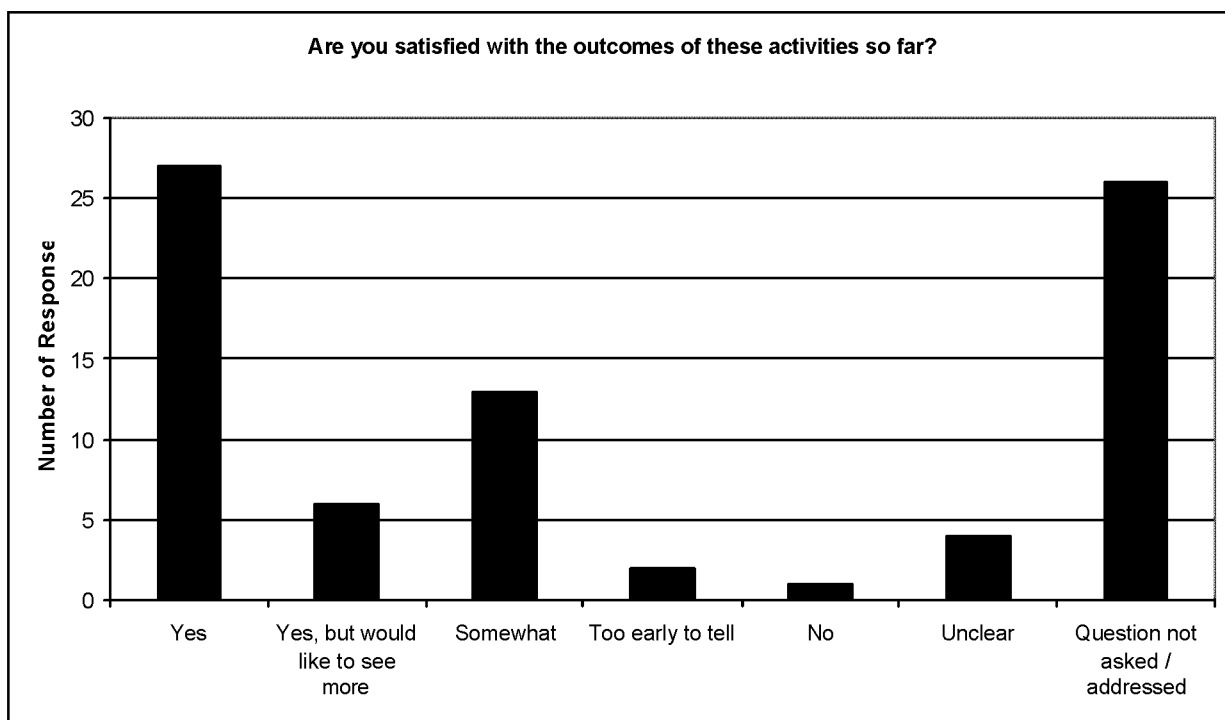


Chart 6. Satisfaction with Outcomes of Partnership Activities. Note: 53 interviewees answered this question. An additional 26 interviewees were not asked or did not answer the question, including ten with the Metlakatla partnership, six with ReGenesis, four with Bridges to Friendship, three with New Madrid, and three with Barrio Logan.

Of those interviewees addressing the question, 51 percent (27 of 53) indicated they were satisfied with the outcomes of their partnership activities so far. Eleven percent (6 of 53) indicated they were satisfied, but would like to see additional work done in the affected communities. Twenty-five percent of interviewees (13 of 53) indicated that they were only somewhat satisfied with partnership outcomes so far. Four percent (2 of 53) indicated that it was too early to tell. Two percent (1 of 53) indicated dissatisfaction, and eight percent (4 of 53) gave responses that were unclear. Across all partnerships except one, the majority of interviewees were satisfied to somewhat satisfied with partnership outcomes so far. In the Barrio Logan and ReGenesis partnerships, most of the interviewees indicated they were satisfied. A number of interviewees representing the Bridges to Friendship, Metro East, and New Madrid partnerships indicated they were either satisfied but would like to see more, or somewhat satisfied with the outcomes of partnership activities so far. Finally, the Metlakatla partnership was not reflective of the trends, as interviewees representing this partnership were not asked the question. Generally, across five of six partnerships, a majority of interviewees were satisfied with the outcomes of partnership activities so far. However, more than a third were either (1) satisfied with partner outcomes but would like to see more work done in the affected communities, or (2) only somewhat satisfied with partner activities.

For those interviewees indicating they were satisfied with the outcomes of their partnership activities so far, an interviewee representing a partnership far along in the implementation of partnership activities (Bridges to Friendship) noted that the partnership work has benefited the community. Another interviewee, representing another partnership advanced in meeting its objectives (New Madrid), explained that she/he was satisfied in terms of implementing the activities described in the partnership action plan. Furthermore, an interviewee representing another partnership somewhat advanced in implementing its activities (Metro East), explained that the partnership has been efficient moving forward to cleanup contaminated sites, and that without it, she/he was not sure how fast this would have occurred.

An interviewee, representing a partnership in the early stages of implementing partnership activities (ReGenesis), remarked that the partnership was focused on the right activities and that they would enhance the quality of life for the affected community. An interviewee representing a partnership that was just beginning to implement activities (Barrio Logan) explained that despite taking considerable time to start the partnership effort, she/he indicated that the group was working well and that she/he was very satisfied.

For those indicating that they were satisfied with partnership outcomes so far, but would like to see more, a Bridges to Friendship interviewee noted that she/he has been satisfied with what the partnership has been able to accomplish so far, but that she/he would never be fully satisfied. A New Madrid interviewee explained that as far as meeting his/her partnership objectives, she/he was satisfied. However, there would always be more to be done to assist the affected community. Finally, a Metro East interviewee remarked that she/he would never be fully satisfied, but was pleased with what they have been able to do so far.

For those indicating that they were only somewhat satisfied, interviewees expressed a variety of concerns that weighed against their feelings of satisfaction. For instance, a New Madrid interviewee explained that his/her organization's actions as part of the partnership were only able to address some of the affected community's concerns. A Bridges to Friendship interviewee and a New Madrid interviewee expressed concerns over challenges associated with specific partnership actions, not the partnerships overall. A Metro East interviewee and another New Madrid interviewee commented on their concerns about the affected communities' abilities' to continue with successes once the partnerships ended. Another Metro East interviewee expressed concerns over the lack of the partnership's pace. A ReGenesis interviewee voiced concern over the lack of resources dedicated to the partnership, noting that for efforts such as these, resources need to be dedicated to someone on the ground in the affected community, as is done for Brownfields Showcase Communities. Another Metro East interviewee remarked that she/he was satisfied with the outcome of partnership activities to an extent, but that additional federal participation was needed. Finally, a Barrio Logan interviewee expressed satisfaction for the partnership efforts thus far, but wanted the partnership to begin taking more concrete actions to assist the affected community.

For those indicating that they were not satisfied, a Bridges to Friendship interviewee and a Metro East interviewee explained that there was a long way to go in terms of having the desired impact on the affected community. A Barrio Logan interviewee remarked that his/her partnership should be further ahead. Finally, another Barrio Logan interviewee noted frustration with the lack of resources allocated as part of the national demonstration project designation. *The 26 interviewees that either were not asked, or did not address, the question* include ten interviewees from the Metlakatla partnership (100 percent of total Metlakatla interviewees), six from the ReGenesis partnership (38 percent of total ReGenesis interviewees), four from the Bridges to Friendship partnership (25 percent of total Bridges to Friendship interviewees), three from the New Madrid partnership (23 percent of total New Madrid interviewees), and three from the Barrio Logan partnership (21 percent of total Barrio Logan interviewees).

Partnership Involvement Approaches, Activities, and Outcomes

Summary Findings

- *Generally, partnership mechanisms for involvement have been effective at allowing partners to be adequately involved in partnership decision-making processes.*
- *Generally, the partner members are making concerted efforts to listen and address issues of concern to their partner members.*
- *Partnerships are implementing both partnership-building and community-focused activities.*
- *Interviewees perceive their partnership activities as having a range of positive outcomes, including the implementation of environmental protection and other efforts, and improvements in environmental quality, public health, and economic conditions.*
- *A majority of interviewees addressing the topic (27 of 53) were satisfied with the outcomes of their partnership activities so far. However, a number of interviewees were either (1) satisfied with partner outcomes but would like to see more work done in the affected communities, or (2) only somewhat satisfied with the outcomes of partner activities.*

Figure 6. Partnership Involvement Approaches, Activities, and Outcomes: Summary Findings

Partnership Successes & Challenges

Success is working together as partners. There is equal commitment from all the partners. No organization is treated different.

Challenge: trying to get the resources and the financial support. It is hard to use federal and private funds together.

– Interviewee, Bridges to Friendship Partnership

[Greatest success is the] number of resources we have been able to get together to get this done. Designating this as an EJ community allowed the community to secure resources and work together.

[One of the greatest challenges is the] communication and coordination of all the agencies.

– Interviewee, Metro East Lead Collaborative

This chapter takes a broad look at what interviewees have described as the greatest successes and greatest challenges of the partnerships they are involved in. Although, on occasion, the evaluation team takes time to highlight specific examples from certain case study partnerships to add context to the findings, the team's primary goal is to provide the reader with a macro-level understanding of some of the successes and challenges emerging from the partnerships.

Partnership Successes

When asked about the greatest successes facing the development and implementation of their respective partnerships, interviewees generated approximately 108 responses, which fell roughly into 22 different response categories. As shown in the chart below, responses ranged from spin-off activities generated because of the partnership to the formation/operation of the partnership itself. The four most commonly cited responses are discussed below.

Greatest Successes Across EJ Collaborative Partnerships	Number who identified as greatest success
Formation/operation of partnership	38
Strong involvement of community/community organizations	14
Implementation of partnership-specific environmental protection or socio-economic development activities	12
Decrease of duplicative activities	9
Able to more effectively perform public health and environmental protection activities	5
Community empowerment	3
Increased ability to generate creative ideas to resolve difficult issues	3
Too early to tell	3
Improved interagency understanding	2
Ability to accomplish much with minimal conflict	2
Securing, organization, and assignment of funding	2
Designation/visibility gained as a result of designation as an IWG national demonstration project	2
Dedication of partners	2
Types of partners involved	2
Partnership's ability to continue operating	2
Spin-off activities initiated because of partnership	1
Increase in community pride	1
Initiation of a team-building exercise	1
Federal agencies' improved understanding of community's needs	1
Community's improved understanding that fed agencies are concerned about them	1
Community's increased understanding of a military installation	1
Ability to put aside disagreements outside partnership and still participate in good faith	1

Table 2. *Greatest Successes Across EJ Collaborative Partnerships*. Note: approximately 75 interviewees provided a total of 108 responses. An additional four were not asked or did not answer the question, including three with New Madrid and one with Bridges to Friendship.

The most commonly referenced success, cited by 38 interviewees across five of the six partnerships (Barrio Logan, Bridges to Friendship, Metlakatla, Metro East, and ReGenesis), was the formation and operation of the partnerships themselves (35 percent of total response). In two of the partnership communities (Barrio Logan and Spartanburg (ReGenesis)), tensions between the community and other stakeholders were somewhat high before partnership formation and clearly, simply arriving at a point where substantive dialogue could occur between groups with often-adversarial histories was deemed very significant. Even in the other partnership communities where tension across stakeholders was not as apparent, the act of bringing diverse groups together to share knowledge, expertise, and resources and address challenging issues was considered to be a very important step. The second most commonly referenced success, cited by fourteen interviewees representing the New Madrid and ReGenesis partnerships, was the strong involvement of community organizations and/or residents from the affected community (13 percent of total response). This was most significant in the ReGenesis partnership, which is driven by a single community organization that has the strong support of almost the entire affected community.

The third most commonly noted success, cited by twelve interviewees representing three partnerships (Bridges to Friendship, Metro East, and New Madrid), was the implementation of partnership-specific public health, environmental protection, and/or economic development programs (11 percent of total response). These include the successful (1) implementation of an

extensive job-training program; (2) assessment of soil contamination, and the identification of twenty, and the cleanup of five, contaminated sites; and (3) lead testing of children. These interviewees clearly saw the emergence of their partnerships as the reason these activities had been undertaken. Metro East interviewees remarked that one of the partnership's greatest successes was its ability to ensure that public health and environmental protection activities are performed more effectively. Interviewees noted that by better understanding what each organization could provide, the partnership organizations were able to more effectively identify contaminated sites and children at risk from lead poisoning and more quickly initiate lead remediation activities. *The fourth most commonly referenced success, cited by nine interviewees representing the Bridges to Friendship and Metro East partnerships, was the reduction of duplicative activities performed by local organizations and agencies (8 percent of total response).* Interviewees from these partnerships saw the sharing of information and strategic targeting of resources as an integral component to ensure the most efficient delivery of services to the affected community.

Partnership Challenges

When asked about the greatest challenges facing the development and implementation of their respective partnerships, interviewees generated approximately 111 responses, which roughly fell into 19 different response categories. As shown in the chart below, responses ranged from understanding what constitutes success for the affected community to agreeing to and then implementing actions to address partnership goals. The four most commonly cited responses are discussed below.

Greatest Challenges Across EJ Collaborative Partnerships	Number who identified as greatest challenge
Maintenance and operation of the partnership	26
Implementation of partnership-specific environmental protection or socio-economic development activities	20
Communication issues	14
Ensuring greater community engagement	9
Enabling specific parties to work together	6
Organizational policies/procedures that prevent implementation of partnership activities	6
Trust issues	6
Agreeing to and then implementing actions to address the goals	5
Impact of 9/11	5
Insufficient community capacity	2
Partner recruitment	2
Partnership's lack of mandate or enforcement authority	2
Addressing peripheral issues, or ones that cannot be resolved in the short term	2
Understanding what constitutes success for affected community	1
Becoming accustomed to different organizational styles	1
Racial issues	1
Disparities in funding availability between parties	1
Lack of appropriate federal involvement	1
Lack of understanding regarding federal trust responsibilities	1

Table 3. Greatest Challenges Across EJ Collaborative Partnerships. Note: approximately 74 interviewees provided a total of 111 responses. An additional five were not asked or did not answer the question, including four with the New Madrid partnership and one with Bridges to Friendship.

The most commonly noted challenge, cited by 26 interviewees representing four of the six partnerships (Barrio Logan, Bridges to Friendship, Metro East, and ReGenesis), centers on maintenance and operation of the partnership (23 percent of total response). This challenge included grappling with such day-to-day issues as coordination, ensuring continuing cooperation amongst the different parties, maintaining partnership momentum, maintaining partnership focus, and keeping key decision makers involved. The maintenance of the partnerships is made difficult due to the numerous players, and some partnerships' efforts to simultaneously address several crosscutting issues. In short, the partnerships require a certain base level of coordination to function effectively. However, some of the partnerships struggled to maintain adequate coordination. For instance, the ReGenesis partnership pulled together an impressive number and array of partners to address several local issues. Despite this, however, the partnership lacked a centralized office and day-to-day coordinator that could be easily accessible to partners and welcome potential partners into the effort. Furthermore, lack of a coordinator function slowed the partnership's ability to identify on paper what the partnership goals were, who would provide support for what activities, and who specifically was participating in the partnership. The Bridges to Friendship partnership, supported by an impressive number and array of parties, benefited greatly from an executive director. However, instead of being able to regularly focus on strategic planning and ensuring continued cooperation of the partners, the executive director, lacking any paid coordinators, was required to spend significant time performing routine partnership administrative work. Contrasting with these examples, interviewees from the Metro East partnership voiced concerns about the coordination role being led by a non-local official. Modifications to this partnership's operating structure, resulting in more local coordination, have helped to address this challenge.

The second most commonly referenced challenge, cited by 20 interviewees representing four partnerships (Barrio Logan, Metlakatla, New Madrid, and ReGenesis), centered on implementation of partnership-specific environmental protection or socio-economic development activities (18 percent of total response). Implementation of environmental protection or socio-economic development activities is also cited as a success by several interviewees. The fact that this is noted as both a success and challenge, however, is not surprising given the number and diversity of activities the partnerships are seeking to implement. It is important to note, however, that when interviewees cited the implementation of activities as a challenge, they did not typically suggest that each partnership's specific problems would diminish the overall success of their respective partnerships. More typically, interviewees' comments suggested that although the problems were significant, they would eventually be resolved. Some of these issues included:

- Developing more effective zoning restrictions;
- Persuading reluctant parties to address their contamination cleanup responsibilities;
- Implementing water-related activities; and
- Completing a detailed comprehensive plan for a revitalization effort.

Some of the partnership-specific challenges emerged out of difficulties within the partnerships themselves. These included inadequate understanding across partners on ways to implement certain action items or disagreements by partners over which issues should be addressed. Others, however, were influenced by factors not directly associated with the partnership. This often stemmed from the nature of the issue. For instance, a clear roadmap for addressing a specific issue may simply not have existed at that time the partnership was ready to begin that activity. In addition, the partnership may have simply been awaiting critical components, such as funding or administrative support, that would then enable it to address the issue of concern and move forward with other partnership activities.

The third most commonly noted challenge, cited by fourteen interviewees representing four partnerships (Barrio Logan, Metlakatla, New Madrid, and ReGenesis), focused on communication issues (13 percent of total response). Although open communication between partners is clearly an essential ingredient to ensure the continued operation of a partnership, several interviewees saw it as a distinct challenge, even in partnerships where the overall satisfaction with the partnership was high. The Metlakatla partnership's effectiveness was inhibited, partly, by insufficient communication between parties, although more recently, actions have been taken to address this. Those working together had contrasting notions about the overall scope of the partnership effort and weren't fully aware of each other's underlying rationales for their different stances on issues. The New Madrid partnership, seen as a success by interviewees today, suffered initially because of the poor quality and lack of communication during the partnership's formation. One interviewee explained that outside partners showed insufficient respect for community-based knowledge and failed to communicate and dialogue with the community on the objectives of the effort. Furthermore, some ReGenesis partnership interviewees were frustrated because of the lack of communication from the partnership leadership regarding partnership activities. Although they felt positive about the partnership generally, the lack of partnership-specific information communicated to them on a regular basis left them feeling unclear about its overall direction and strength.

The fourth most commonly mentioned challenge, cited by nine interviewees representing three partnerships (Barrio Logan, Bridges to Friendship, and Metro East), centered on ensuring greater engagement with the affected community (eight percent of total response). Although in every partnership, several different parties are involved, with some including several community organizations, some partnerships have struggled to ensure that residents of the affected communities have a genuine voice in and/or knowledge of the partnership and its associate activities. For instance, the Metro East partnership has had only limited success in this area despite several approaches it has used to reach out to the community in which it works. For instance, one interviewee citing community engagement as challenge explained that people are uncomfortable in identifying contaminated sites when the federal government is involved. Another interviewee, representing the same partnership, explained that it has been difficult communicating with the local residents and persuading them to take action on health risks because the government makes them nervous. She/he added that parents are concerned that if they take action on the health risk of concern their children will be taken away. Furthermore, the interviewee explained that because parents cannot see immediate results from health protection efforts for their children, they forget about the health risks.

Partnership Successes and Challenges

Most Commonly Cited Successes

- *The formation and operation of the partnerships (35 percent of total response).*
- *The strong involvement of community organizations and/or residents from the affected community (13 percent of total response).*
- *The implementation of partnership-specific public health, environmental protection, and/or economic development programs (11 percent of total response).*
- *The reduction of duplicative activities performed by local organizations and agencies (8 percent of total response).*

Most Commonly Cited Partnership Challenges

- *The maintenance and operation of the partnership (23 percent of total response).*
- *The implementation of partnership-specific public health, environmental protection, and/or economic development programs (18 percent of total response).*
- *Communication issues (13 percent of total response).*
- *Ensuring greater engagement with the affected community (8 percent of total response).*

Figure 7. Most Commonly Cited Partnership Successes and Challenges

Key Factors Contributing to Partnership Progress and Success

Because of EHC and EPA's leadership and personality, they have caused the collaboration to go well. They were able to get people involved without being accusatory.

– Interviewee, Barrio Logan Partnership

Why dialogue overall? Everyone saw good leadership in Re-Genesis, the City, County, [South Carolina's environmental department], Rhodia, and IMC beginning/trying to see themselves as partners. All levels of government see it. Industry feels they can't be left out.

– Interviewee, ReGenesis Partnership

[DOD's representative] has been involved in the EJ pilot. He has been most helpful. Very important to have a key, active, and supportive partner.

– Interviewee, Metlakatla Partnership

This chapter outlines factors contributing to the progress and success of the partnerships reviewed. The evaluation team did not specifically ask interviewees to identify factors that contribute to overall progress and success; rather, the evaluation team, where appropriate, asked interviewees to identify factors contributing to certain successes and challenges. Therefore, the following discussion of key factors is based upon (1) the findings from the previous chapter on successes and challenges; (2) interviewees' identification of specific factors influencing these successes and challenges; and (3) the evaluation team's review of the six case studies. For the purposes of the following discussion, the evaluation team presumes a successful partnership to be one that is operating as a cohesive unit, that most of the parties involved with the partnership are satisfied with its operational procedures and its progress, that the partnership is implementing, or on path to implement, actions focused on achieving certain pre-set goals, and that the parties expect these actions will ultimately result in the environmental and other quality of life improvements desired by the affected community. As is generally the case with partnerships, they are dynamic; therefore references to the case study partnerships made to illuminate the discussions below refer to only a single point in time and should not be assumed to suggest the state of the partnerships today.

Distinct Partnership Identity

One factor that can significantly impact partnership progress and success is the extent to which a partnership develops a distinct partnership identity. This enables partners to better understand what the partnership is and how they can relate with the partnership. Furthermore, a strong partnership identity can help partners view themselves as belonging to something uniquely separate from their organization and make it easier to justify their involvement to their organization's management. A partnership's identity can be forged by its leaders and/or by the partners themselves. A partnership can establish its identity by developing a partnership name, formally inviting parties to participate in the partnership, regularly providing and updating partnership membership lists, publishing partnership newsletters or annual reports, collectively agreeing to goals and action items, regularly hosting full partner meetings, regularly providing partners with meeting summaries or highlights, and collectively implementing and monitoring partnership activities. These actions appear straightforward. But instances in which someone clearly is not sure whether they are members of a partnership or not, even though they desire to be part of the partnership, indicate that a partnership identity has not been fully established, and could impede critical additional support for partnership activities.

EPA and EHC took the lead on inviting people to participate and outlining what it means to be a partner.

–Interviewee, Barrio Logan Partnership

Existence and Strength of Leadership

A second factor that can significantly contribute to the progress and success of a partnership is existence and strength of leadership. Leadership is most critical during a partnership's formative stages. A partnership's existence may stem primarily from the leadership shown by a single person or small group of individuals. However, once the partnership forms, leaders are still critical. Leaders instill a more thoroughly defined identity onto the partnership and instill confidence that the partnership is and will continue to operate effectively. Moreover, a partnership without an easily recognizable leader makes it difficult for parties to understand their overall mission and stay unified. Furthermore, leaders are able to create linkages between people and organizations that may not necessarily be willing to participate or understand how their participation could assist the partnership or their individual organization. For instance, in the ReGenesis partnership, it was clear that one individual's tireless efforts to draw people and organizations and interpersonal skills stimulated the participation of numerous groups in the partner effort. In the Barrio Logan partnership, individuals representing two very different types of organizations were able to work together and join a diverse, and somewhat unlikely array of over fifteen organizations to work in concert for the affected community.

Leadership can also greatly influence the number and diversity of partners who choose to join and the number of activities the partnership eventually decides to undertake. For instance, in the ReGenesis partnership, partly due to strong

[The community organization] extended the olive branch and said we want you to be involved we want everyone to benefit.

–Interviewee, ReGenesis Partnership

So many leaders involved. [It] adds value and validity.

–Interviewee, ReGenesis Partnership

leadership, approximately 70 organizations made commitments to contribute to partnership redevelopment efforts. The Bridges to Friendship partnership, which benefits by the leadership of an executive director and a high level government official, has the involvement of approximately 40 different organizations.

Leadership too strongly embedded within a single, or small group, of individuals, however, may jeopardize the effectiveness of a partnership over a long-term period. If the leader must leave the partnership unexpectedly, a leadership vacuum may emerge that cannot easily be filled. Interviewees in at least two partnerships raised concerns regarding this. First, in the Barrio Logan partnership one of the leaders officially retired from his/her organization. Although the individual continued to participate in partnership meetings, concerns were raised about the ability of the partnership leadership to keep organizations working effectively together. However, the partnership's carefully crafted collaborative process, a cooperative spirit across the partners, and the continued support of the retired individual's organization enabled the partnership to steadily progress. In the Metro East partnership, concerns were raised that leadership was too centralized and the partnership would stumble if a key individual stopped participating. To overcome these concerns, other partner members enhanced their roles to support various partnership functions. Another consequence of strong centralized leadership, although not evident from these partnerships, may be the disengagement of some parties who become disillusioned when partner leaders don't allow for the transfer of leadership skills to other willing partners.

Partnership leaders should not be thought of as only those that initially bring the different parties together or serve as the actual or nominal partnership directors. Indeed, in several of the partnerships, as they evolved, it was evident that some individuals emerged to play critical leadership roles, taking chances by working in areas where they were clearly unaccustomed. Without such efforts, many of the partnerships, no matter the strength of the primary leader, coordinator, or director, would have not experienced the same degree of success.

Diversity of Partners

Another important factor is diversity of partners. Clearly one of the unique elements of the case study partnerships is the broad spectrum of different parties they draw together, some of which have had, and in some instances continue to have, adversarial relations, or at the very least were previously inexperienced at working together. Partnerships can make progress with a relatively small number of parties cooperating, but the options for addressing community concerns at a larger scale expand when a wide array of parties choose to work together. A robust partnership, although more challenging to coordinate from an administrative standpoint, can generate a wider set of genuine options for addressing community concerns and more effective sharing, and additional leveraging of, resources and knowledge. For instance, through the involvement and assistance of a broad range of partners, the ReGenesis partnership has planned several diverse actions to improve overall quality of life for the affected community. These include, the cleanup of contaminated sites, the

The more entities you have involved the better.

—Interviewee, Bridges to Friendship Partnership

[The key is to] get the elected representatives at the table, the council district, the city planning [agency], the state and city representatives—getting these folks in and partnering.

—Interviewee, Barrio Logan Partnership

building of a job training center, a technology center, and a public health clinic; the development of a parkway more easily linking the neighborhoods to the main community; the construction of a series of greenspaces and greenway trails; and the development of affordable, energy efficient housing. The Bridges to Friendship partnership relies upon its different partners to continually learn about additional large-scale employment opportunities to ensure that local residents are made aware of them. Furthermore, in the Metro East and New Madrid partnerships, in certain instances when specific partners were unable to provide resources to aid partnership activities, they successfully turned to other partner members for support.

In addition to the identification of resources, the participation of a wide array of parties can, but not necessarily, draw outside supporters to the partnership, such as federal, state, or U.S. Congressional officials. Moreover, involvement of these groups may compel other parties who have previously been hesitant to work with the affected community, to begin collaborating. Nevertheless, complete openness may limit effective collaboration between partners. To counter this concern, the Barrio Logan partnership carefully considered which organizations it would extend partnership invitations to in order to better ensure that the potential partners would be amenable to working together.

Local and/or Regional Government Involvement

The degree of local and/or regional government involvement is also a critical factor impacting partnership progress and success. The case study partnerships are focused on specific communities, and clearly, some form of local or regional involvement is needed for the partnership to function. However, partnership progress is greatly influenced by the degree to which local or regional officials, representing either agencies or elected representatives, choose to support the partnership effort. Substantive involvement at the local or regional level sends a clear message to both the affected community and external parties that the partnership has critical local support. In the ReGenesis partnership, the city and county governments, as well as city elected officials, have played noticeable partnership leadership roles. Although one entity became involved initially because of environmental liabilities present within the affected community, both entities participate on the partnership's steering committee and both exemplify a strong commitment to ensure that the partnership efforts will meet the needs of the affected community. In the Bridges to Friendship partnership, after federal funds were no longer available to support the partnership's director, the local government began funding the position. Although most partnerships have some degree of either local or state government involvement, some interviewees have suggested the desire to have greater local support. For instance, an

They've gotten the City, County and State to the table, and you can't improve on that...

—Interviewee, ReGenesis Partnership

Although the tribe did not instigate the EJ pilot project they were supportive of it since the tribe had already put together a plan about how all the [federal agencies] fit...

—Interviewee, Metlakatla Partnership

The official group that formed the campaign was comprised of six people from each town and the three mayors.... The people were appointed by the mayor. If people moved or dropped out, the mayor reappointed [new persons to participate]...

—Interviewee, New Madrid Partnership

interviewee with one partnership (Barrio Logan) that already has significant state level support expressed the need for substantive participation from a critical local agency. An interviewee with the Metro East partnership sought stronger support from local elected officials. Similarly, an interviewee representing the Metlakatla partnership expressed the need to have greater access to the local government to ensure local officials fully understand partner activities.

Federal Involvement

As with local and regional involvement, federal involvement has been critical to the progress and success of the partnerships thus far. Federal involvement can bring much needed resources to a partnership, but just as important, federal officials can bring additional broad-scale understanding of the issues, additional coordination and leadership skills, and added credibility for the partnership effort. In most of the partnerships reviewed, federal partners played critical roles in initiating partnership activities. Today, most of these continue to benefit from strong federal support, primarily in the form of coordination and leadership assistance. Federal partners also provide funding support through their traditional programs.

In addition to the many benefits of federal involvement, partnership members must also assess whether extensive federal involvement might, over the long-term, limit a partnership's sustainability. In two partnerships (Barrio Logan and Metro East) where federal involvement was important to the partnerships' development, concerns were raised about the partnerships' viability if participation by certain federal agencies' diminished. In

the New Madrid partnership, early reliance on a federal official to facilitate major partnership meetings led to slowed progress on a few occasions when the official could not make the meetings and community representatives did not want to proceed in the facilitator's absence. Although determining the proper mix of federal involvement in a community-based partnership is not easy, if indicators suggest to partnership members that discontinued participation of an important federal partner might impede future partnership progress, partnership members should take pro-active steps to address this. For instance, in the Metro East partnership, after concerns about being too dependent upon EPA's regional office in Chicago, a local partner assumed the partnership's coordination responsibilities. In addition, other members of the partnership began to take on enhanced partnership leadership roles. In the New Madrid partnership, to ease concerns about over-reliance on federal facilitation, the lead agency began co-facilitating major partnership meetings with a community representative.

To us [the value] has been [federal agencies'] expertise, the opening of their communication lines, making themselves available.

–Interviewee, Metro East Lead Collaborative

Federal involvement has been key to our work here.

–Interviewee, Metlakatla Partnership

The biggest thing to make this work was the IWG.

–Interviewee, ReGenesis Partnership

Community Engagement

Closely associated with the factors of leadership, partner member diversity, and local and federal involvement, is the factor of community engagement.³⁰ Ideally, partnerships serving a community will have the strong support of community residents. This can enable partner members, especially non-local partners, to feel confident that their membership in the effort, and more generally the overall partnership, is meeting the needs of the community. If no partner member belongs to an organization that represents a broad set of community residents, it is important to gain the support and active involvement of community support organizations in the area, even if they only serve a certain subset of the community. If this is not achievable, concerted outreach efforts will be needed to inform residents of partnership activities, how they can get involved, and where they can address any potential concerns they may have about the partnership. In most instances, unequivocal broad-based community support will probably be rare, but a combination of community engagement approaches can be critical for strengthening the overall partnership and enabling both partners and residents to better understand whether the partnership is having the desired impact in the affected community.

[The] community has led the way. This is kind of nice for me, since this is not always so often the case. They're telling us what they want.

–Interviewee, ReGenesis Partnership

It was a total community involvement. Agency made sure community, leaders, etc...were totally involved in the process. Made sure community was trained.

–Interviewee, New Madrid Partnership

Residents do not come to meetings. Members of collaborative have events that are out in the community. Members of the collaborative go out and share information.

–Interviewee, Metro East Lead Collaborative

[There are] real advantages to getting people involved in a positive way from the beginning.

–Interviewee, Barrio Logan Partnership

Communication

Not surprisingly, communication is another critical factor influencing the progress and success of a partnership. Although seemingly straightforward, its significance cannot be overstated. An effective partnership must allow the parties involved to speak freely and ensure that the ideas of the different partners will be treated with respect and given due consideration. Furthermore, effective partnerships must ensure that information between partners will be free flowing and that partners will have open access to the information, ideas,

You can't collaborate when you're screaming and hollering.

–Interviewee, ReGenesis Partnership

We made everything too polite and didn't tackle the hard issues early enough in the process.

–Interviewee, Metlakatla Peninsula Cleanup

³⁰ For the purposes of this discussion the term "community" primarily refers to residents living within the boundaries of the affected community, and secondarily, community organizations that either represent or primarily serve the affected community.

and action items discussed at partnership meetings. The degree to which carefully crafted communication policies are needed depend primarily upon the groups of parties working together. If there has historically been a high level of contention between several of the participating organizations, or if the parties have communication styles that are dissimilar, more time spent on developing communication guidelines may be necessary. The Barrio Logan partnership, through the assistance of a professional facilitator, spent several months developing a plan for ensuring an atmosphere in which partners could communicate constructively, even sponsoring a pre-session on how to work together effectively. Although some concern was raised over the time devoted to this, the number satisfied with the partnership effort thus far strongly suggests that such an investment to ensure effective communication was well-worth it. In the Metlakatla partnership, a team of federal officials skilled in alternative dispute resolution has been working with partner members to address persistent issues of concern. In the ReGenesis partnership, two parties have been undergoing facilitated dialogue sessions to address persistent issues of concern. The final outcome of these sessions will influence the extent to which the overarching vision of the partnership will be achieved.

Agreed Upon Goals and Activities

The extent to which a partnership develops *agreed upon goals and activities* is another important factor influencing success. Such an effort can help partners (1) understand the potential scope of the partnership; (2) understand how they can best participate in the partnership; (3) make more efficient use of partner members' time and resources; and (4) enable partners to understand how they each individually and collectively may impact the quality of life for the affected community, which can, in turn, help generate additional high level support for an organization's involvement. As with the factor of communication, identifying goals and activities appears to be a relatively straightforward process, but this is not necessarily the case, and for some, partners may be content in only half-heartedly identifying goals and activities in order to avoid conflict. The extent to which goals and activities can be determined relatively early can boost the likelihood that the overall effort will be successful.

We met and discussed how to get things accomplished, then set goals on what we'd like to see accomplished. From here we selected priorities, then set specific goals.

–Interviewee, New Madrid Partnership

First, set vision. [Then] construct your collaboration to meet that vision. Once you do this nothing should stop you since resources and vision are there.

–Interviewee, Bridges to Friendship Partnership

You need achievable goals to feel successful.

–Interviewee, Barrio Logan Partnership

Flexible, Overarching Vision

Although agreed upon goals and activities are critical, development of a flexible, overarching vision describing what a partnership hopes to achieve can also influence partnership progress and success. Clearly defined goals and activities can set a partnership down a clear path to success. Unfortunately, after or while attempting to achieve these goals, the partners may find that what they originally set out to do at some point proves insufficient for generating the type of benefits needed to assist the affected community. Conversely, the partners may come to discover that because of their initial successes, they now want to

continue partnering in order to generate even greater benefits for the affected community. Either way, a flexible overarching vision can allow partners to more easily change or add to their approach over time and prevent partners from expecting that once a certain goal is achieved all of the key concerns of the community will have been essentially addressed. Furthermore, a flexible vision can enable new parties to join a partnership and make a case for how the resources they offer can also be used to achieve the same desired endpoints even if the new partners' suggested activities don't correspond exactly with the partnership's pre-set activities. Nevertheless, partnerships must take care to ensure that partnerships visions are not so broad or so flexible as to prevent parties from participating out of concern that the partnership lacks focus or achievable goals.

This is not something we ever see ending. We plan on keeping partnerships with the communities open. We are here to stay and the partnerships are part of our world.

–Interviewee, Bridges to Friendship Partnership

The foundation has to be set. Capture that vision. Capture the different angles.

–Interviewee, ReGenesis Partnership

Administrative Structure

An administrative structure is also a critical determinant of partnership effectiveness. Partnerships, like motorized equipment, must be well maintained in order for them to function properly. Partnerships certainly need leaders, but they also need persons to assist in the everyday tasks of identifying, reserving, and preparing meeting space, preparing and distributing agendas, developing meetings summaries or highlights, updating mailing lists, contacting people in preparation for meetings, and responding to requests for information about the partnership by potential partners or other interested parties. Many of these activities must also be replicated at partnership subcommittee levels depending upon the partnership's overall scope. Such requirements can take a significant amount of time and money.

[Our biggest challenge has been] figuring out how to pay for that administrative core.

–Interviewee, Bridges to Friendship Partnership

It's overwhelming when people from so many agencies [are involved]... and everyone has something to say.... [We need] some way of re-cap to tell what we just heard.

–Interviewee, ReGenesis Partnership

Some case study partnerships had persons that primarily performed coordinator functions. For others, however, it was not always clear who primarily was in charge of the coordination role. Although different approaches are available, it's clear that the extent to which a partnership has a group dedicated to performing coordination tasks, whether it be through paid staff or volunteers, the more focused a partnership can be on its primary focus areas.

Implementation of Environmental and Public Health Protection or Socio-economic Development Activities

A partnership's progress and success is also influenced by the degree of its implementation of environmental and public health protection or socio-economic development activities in the affected community. Partnerships in early stages may not be ready to implement such efforts and clearly, actions to enhance quality of life issues in the affected

community should not be taken without proper consideration. Nevertheless parties in environmental justice partnerships are often interested in action within a short timeframe. To the extent that even small partnership-related activities can be conducted at relatively early stages of the partnership, this should: (1) help partners understand and learn how they can best implement activities as a partnership; (2) build momentum within the partnership; (3) serve as a catalyst for larger-scale efforts at a later stage; and (4) better pave the way for overall partnership success. In the Barrio Logan partnership where goals were carefully defined up-front, some interviewees expressed frustration at not yet taking action. The Metro East partnership, buoyed by successes at the early stages of its efforts, expanded its goals to address larger-scale issues after experiencing some initial successes. The complexity of the issues and the stakeholder relationships undoubtedly limit the pace at which activities can be implemented, but partner desires for action should be carefully weighed against the timeframe the partnership sets to begin activity implementation.

You need to show a change in the community. [You] need some permanent change to keep the community involved and interested.

–Interviewee, Barrio Logan Partnership

Development and Use of an Evaluation Framework

A final factor influencing success is the extent to which a partnership develops and uses an evaluation framework beginning and throughout the stages of a partnership. The New Madrid partnership, through contractor assistance developed a framework and used evaluative tools for measuring and assessing performance and success. In addition, the Bridges to Friendship partnership initiated several efforts to monitor and evaluate the Partnership to help partners determine success of its activities. However, these efforts were unsuccessful due to Bridges to Friendship's severe limitations on the administrative resources of the partners and the partnership as a whole. Most interviewees representing partnerships that lack evaluation frameworks feel strongly that their partnerships are moving in a successful direction. Nevertheless, an evaluation framework developed alongside a partnership's goals and activities can enable the partnership to better specify what they realistically expect to achieve and what precisely they need to do to achieve these goals. Furthermore, once the partnership begins implementation, they can help partners and outside supporters better understand what the partnership is and is not achieving and what may be contributing to these outcomes. Although, such an effort may initially seem burdensome, it should bear fruit later on as parties can better understand whether their efforts are having the intended effects, more easily make mid-course corrections, better make the case for additional support, and more confidently set the stage for larger-scale efforts.

I don't think they've come up with a definable set of measures, but we need to develop this. It needs to be on the agenda.

–Interviewee, ReGenesis Partnership

The meaningful discussion on measurement will be when we get the initiatives laid out. How should we measure it?

–Interviewee, Barrio Logan Partnership

Key Factors Influencing Partnership Progress and Success

- *Distinct partnership identity*
- *Existence and strength of leadership*
- *Diversity of partners*
- *Local and/or regional government involvement*
- *Federal involvement*
- *Community engagement*
- *Agreed upon goals and activities*
- *Administrative structure*
- *Implementation of environmental and public health protection or socio-economic development activities*
- *Flexible, overarching vision*
- *Development and use of an evaluation framework*

Figure 8. Key Factors Influencing Partnership Progress and Success: Summary Findings

Organizational Styles, Policies, and Procedures Influencing Progress and Success

It's hard for me to say that [barriers have been] broken down. There is willingness to work together, but that doesn't mean barriers are broken.

– Interviewee, Barrio Logan Partnership

The reason why organizational styles make things difficult is the same reason why organizations are joining the collaborative.

– Interviewee, Bridges to Friendship Partnership

[We get] different reactions [from the] different agencies that we work with. They aren't always exactly aware of what another is doing.

– Interviewee, Metlakatla Partnership

For us as a partner agency, conflicting, existing ethics rules and statutes may limit our abilities to play as effective partners.

– Interviewee, ReGenesis Partnership

In addition to understanding specific factors contributing to progress and success in collaborative partnerships used to address environmental justice issues, the evaluation team was also interested in learning whether the styles, policies, and procedures of the different organizations impacted the progress and success of the partnerships reviewed. Disagreements are expected when numerous, often competing, parties begin to work together, form agreements, and implement activities. The evaluation team's intent, however, behind examining whether organizational styles influenced progress, was not to suggest that absence of conflictual styles was positive, and presence was negative. Rather, the intent was to understand to what level different styles impacted progress and success, and to learn what those more general and specific barriers were that appeared to cause at least some undesired effect on partnership progress.

Interviewees were decidedly mixed regarding whether the different organizational styles have, indeed, impacted progress and success. Of the interviewees addressing the question (57), *roughly half of the interviewees indicated that the different styles had impeded progress,*

while the other half indicated that styles had not. Across three partnerships (Barrio Logan, Bridges to Friendship, and ReGenesis) interviewee responses roughly followed this same pattern. Across two partnerships (Metlakatla and New Madrid) interviewees indicated that organizational styles had impeded progress, while interviewees with the Metro East partnership indicated that organizational styles had not. The key finding, however, was that *no organizational styles, policies, and procedures were identified that interviewees expressed would irreversibly harm the functioning of the partnerships.* Nevertheless, interviewees did identify some organizational styles that had or continue to have an undesired effect on participation in partnerships and implementation of some partnership activities. Another important lesson from the data analysis is that *organizational barriers to collaboration exist not only between organizations but within them as well.*

Despite mixed signals from interviewees regarding the effect of the differing organizational styles, that interviewees perceived challenges stemming from the differences should come as no surprise. In fact, several interviewees remarked that it was partly because of differing organizational styles and procedures that organizations chose to work together in formal collaboration. For instance, in the Metro East partnership several interviewees remarked that the nature of a collaborative process is to overcome procedural restrictions. As an example, one federal partner in the Metro East partnership lacked jurisdiction to test the blood lead levels of children. In response, two local partners took steps in concert to ensure that the testing would proceed. Similarly, in the New Madrid partnership, once it was discovered that one federal partner could not legally purchase equipment necessary to implement a certain partnership activity, another federal partner stepped in to complete the purchase.

Nevertheless, differing organizational styles, policies, and procedures that act as barriers to effective collaboration do exist. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that for every group of stakeholders that was able to come together and work as a collective unit for the affected community, there are groups that were never able to overcome different organizational styles to the extent where they could consider themselves to be a genuine partnership. As different groups continue to formally collaborate in the future to address environmental justice issues in distressed communities, additional collaborative barriers will likely be identified. Types of barriers noted by interviewees are described in the following figure and then discussed in more detail below.

**Organizational Styles, Policies, and Procedures
Limiting Effective Collaboration in EJ Collaborative Partnerships**

- Internal policies (e.g., inability of a federal agency to fund certain partnership work, inability of a federal agency to sit on a non-profit board, inability of federal agency to formally support a partnership activity not directly related to agency mission, purchasing limitations, partnership activity implementation limitations, office protocol)
- Lack of internal organizational support
- Resource disparity across participating organizations (e.g., inability of affected community to fully manage partnership demands)
- Competing organizational styles (e.g., inclusive versus top-down style decision making, regulatory-based versus technical assistance-based approaches to assistance, agency-driven versus locally-driven approaches to assistance)
- Competing organizational policies (different agency policies for addressing an environmental issue)
- Inconsistent intra-organizational procedures
- Historically adverse relationships
- Conflicts of interest (e.g., partner member sits on two or more different boards of organizations belonging to a single partnership)

Figure 9. *Organizational Styles, Policies, and Procedures Limiting Effective Collaborative in EJ Collaborative Partnerships*

In most partnerships, examples were found where agencies were prevented from engaging in certain partnership activities or supporting a partnership in a certain way because of *internal policies*. For instance, in the Bridges to Friendship partnership, several interviewees were concerned that the participating federal agencies could neither legally finance an executive director position nor provide contractual support for the partnership. In addition, interviewees representing the same partnership expressed concern over a federal restriction that prohibits federal employees from participating on a non-profit organization's executive board. Furthermore, one interviewee with the Bridges to Friendship partnership cited concerns that a federal agency was not able to provide a grant to a non-profit partner because of statutory restrictions. Related to funding, in the Metlakatla partnership, federal restrictions on local hiring limited the extent to which the federal agencies could fully support an important goal for the affected community.

Similarly, in the ReGenesis partnership, an interviewee explained that agency rules prevented him/her from developing a formal letter directly endorsing the partnership. Interviewees, representing the Metlakatla and ReGenesis partnerships already referenced, also expressed that travel restrictions had prevented them from participating as effectively in partnership activities. Also related to internal policies, traditional agency protocol can also impede partnership progress. For instance, in the Bridges to Friendship partnership, disputes arose over how one critical agency should best participate. Official agency protocol dictated

that regional agency staff should participate on a regular basis, however, closer proximity of headquarters staff to the affected community called this protocol into question.

Directly related to internal policies, *lack of internal support* can also cause difficulties for some organizations seeking to participate effectively in partnerships. For instance, an interviewee with the ReGenesis partnership explained that federal representatives often don't participate more constructively because it is not always clear how their participation will directly relate to their agency's mission. Similarly, if a partnership is not given a high status within a participating organization, management may not make available the necessary funding for travel, potentially limiting the full effectiveness of partnership meetings. *Resource disparities across organizations* can also impede partnership progress. For instance, in the Metlakatla partnership, some organizations had difficulties advancing partnership goals, in part, because the affected community did not have the workforce necessary to consistently provide feedback needed to address partnership concerns.

Competing organizational approaches can also act as impediments to partnership success. For instance, the New Madrid partnership struggled at times because the two key federal partners actively involved had very different styles. One agency had a history of technical assistance, while another had a history of regulatory enforcement, which shaped each agency's approach to community-assistance. Furthermore, the former had traditionally encouraged a "locally-led process" for community-based projects it was involved in, while the latter had tended to play a more "hands-on" role in similar type efforts. *Competing organizational policies* can also prove challenging for a partnership to overcome. For instance, the Metlakatla partnership is still struggling to overcome the often-conflicting requirements of several federal agencies' policies regarding contaminated site cleanup. In addition, *inconsistent intra-organizational procedures* may also stall partnership progress. In this instance, an interviewee with the ReGenesis partnership explained that different requirements within an organization regarding the development of a grant for a central partnership redevelopment activity hindered his/her ability to properly develop it.

Although not driven by a single policy or procedure, *historically adverse relationships* may also contribute to the inability of partnership organizations to participate effectively. For instance, in the Bridges to Friendship partnership, historically strained relations between federal government and local government officials, two critical components to the partnership effort, had made it difficult for them to work together, according to one interviewee. *Conflicts of interest* may also cause difficulty for a partnership. For instance, one interviewee with the New Madrid partnership explained that problems arose when one partner was active on two different boards of organizations that both belonged to the New Madrid partnership.

Current and new collaborative partnerships that address environmental justice issues will certainly face some of these same challenges described above in the future. The key for these efforts will be the approaches the partners take to understand these challenges, prevent them, solve them, and/or work around them. In several of the instances described above, the partnerships were able to work through the challenges using a variety of means. For example, in the instance of the two competing styles of the two federal agencies, differences were partly resolved through communication, setting ground rules, the close involvement of a regional planning organization, and good faith efforts to address each other's concerns. In the instance mentioned above where the agency interviewee could not submit a letter from his/her agency formally supporting the agency, the interviewee spent time talking to his/her ethics official about options for showing support without violating any ethics rules. The conversation was critical because the organization had not previously been in a position where it needed to support a

collaborative partnership in such a formal manner and the ethics official was not at first clear how, or if, such a show of formal support could be done. In addition, regarding the Barrio Logan partnership, when asked about organizational barriers inhibiting partnership progress, instead of citing organizational barriers, most interviewees expressed support for either the partnership facilitator, or the formal partnership agreement, developed in conjunction with the facilitator and the two organizations that founded the partnership, to help guide collaboration between partners. This suggests that *a well-structured process for collaboration can help partners transcend many of the organizational barriers that could limit a partnership's progress and success.*

Organizational Styles, Policies, and Procedures Influencing Progress and Success

Summary Findings

- *Roughly half of the interviewees indicated that the different styles had impeded progress, while the other half indicated that styles had not*
- *Interviewees did not identify any organizational styles, policies, or procedures that would irreversibly harm the functioning of the partnerships.*
- *Organizational barriers to collaboration exist not only between organizations but within them as well.*
- *Some types of organizational barriers impacting partnership progress include internal policies, lack of internal support, resource disparity across participating organizations, and competing organizational styles.*
- *At the initial stages of a partnership, a well-structured process for collaboration can help partners transcend many of the organizational barriers that could limit a partnership's progress and success.*

Figure 10. Organizational Styles, Policies, and Procedures Influencing Progress and Success: Summary Findings

The Value of Collaborative Partnerships to Address EJ Issues

The value is we've set the stage and foundation of synergizing for addressing the community issues. [The partnership] is in a position to affect some changes with the city or city council that will have some long-range impacts in the community.

– Interviewee, Barrio Logan Partnership

[This project] is very innovative...This project has put the people in touch with the heads of agencies. It is very good at cutting through the normal bureaucracy, hierarchy. People that are interested in participating are in touch with "power brokers" in the federal agencies.

– Interviewee, Bridges to Friendship Partnership

[Participation in the collaborative effort] makes it easier for the Tribe. It is like "one-stop shopping." There is no need to "have it out" with individual federal agencies. It saves everyone time and facilitates the overall cleanup.

– Interviewee, Metlakatla Partnership

The value has been different agencies getting together being able to partner and plan different events. You get to...come together and learn what others have been able to do.

– Interviewee, Metro East Lead Collaborative

[Participation in the collaborative effort] widened horizons in identifying issues and problems facing the community. [It] provides support and resources for working with and dealing with problems.

– Interviewee, New Madrid Partnership

In this chapter responses to three questions are reviewed. What is the value of using multi-stakeholder collaborative approaches to address environmental justice issues? To what extent would the issues facing the affected communities have been addressed without use of a collaborative approach? And to what extent can the collaborative processes be used again in

the affected communities to address environmental justice issues that may arise in the future? Results are based directly on interviewee responses to these three questions.

Value of Collaborative Approaches to Address EJ Issues

When asked about the value of using collaborative approaches, interviewees generated approximately 80 responses, which fell roughly into 20 different response categories. As shown in the table below, these range from better equalizing power relations between organizations seeking to assist affected communities to improved sharing of information, which stands out as the most commonly cited response (identified by 21 different interviewees). The four most commonly cited responses are discussed below.

Value of Collaborative Approaches to Address EJ Issues	Number who identified value
Improved sharing of information/resources/expertise	21
Efficiencies gained (e.g., reduction in duplication of services)	14
Securing, or potential leveraging, of additional resources	9
Better understand needs of affected community	7
Organizational empowerment	5
Provides greater opportunity for community development	4
Better equalizes power relations	3
Provides greater opportunity for community involvement	3
More effective outreach to community	2
Environmental and other improvements	2
Breakdown of negative stereotypes surrounding small businesses	1
Process too slow	1
Encourages more groups to participate	1
Encourages organizations to engage in additional community involvement activities	1
Allows organizations to see “connectivity” across issues	1
Greater diversity of experience from which to draw from	1
Fosters better understanding of involvement	1
Valuable approach for non-traditional communities	1
Greater appreciation by local community that federal government is addressing its responsibilities	1
Good vessel for environmental justice	1

Table 4. Value of Collaborative Approaches to Address EJ Issues. Note: approximately 66 interviewees provided a total of 80 responses. Interviewees occasionally provided more than one response. An additional thirteen were not asked or did not answer the question, including five with the New Madrid partnership, four with ReGenesis, three with Metlakatla, and one with Bridges to Friendship.

The most frequently cited response regarding the value of collaborative approaches, identified by 21 interviewees representing five of the six partnerships (Barrio Logan, Bridges to Friendship, Metlakatla, New Madrid, and ReGenesis), focused on improved sharing of information, resources, and/or expertise (26 percent of total response). According to the responses, the sharing of information, resources, and/or expertise can produce several benefits for the affected community and the partners involved. First, the sharing of information can improve understanding between the different organizations participating in a partnership. For instance, whereas previously organizations may have limited interactions with others groups or the community, working collaboratively enables the different organizations, particularly public agencies, to see where each stands on different issues. This can then further enable the different organizations to more fully understand what each organization can and cannot do, and their areas of expertise and limitations. Similarly, by better understanding the different

organizations, partners can engage in more effective planning to assist the affected community. One interviewee with the Barrio Logan partnership remarked that two state and local agencies working on a problem seemed to be natural allies, and participating in the collaborative effort enables them to see how they can work together. Furthermore, by the sharing of information and pooling of resources, partners can expand their options in case a key partner cannot provide the necessary resources. For instance, in the New Madrid partnership one agency was legally prohibited from purchasing equipment to help implement partnership activities. To alleviate this, the partnership simply turned to another partner member for which the activity directly fit the organization's mission and obtained the needed support. Finally, by sharing information, partners can begin to address multiple stages of a problem, and not be limited to the primary focus areas of a few organizations.

The second most commonly cited response regarding value of collaborative approaches to address environmental justice issues, cited by fourteen interviewees once again representing five of the six partnerships (Barrio Logan, Bridges to Friendship, Metlakatla, Metro East, and ReGenesis), revolved around the efficiencies gained through collaboration (18 percent of total response). Although this response is closely related with the sharing of information, the number providing responses directly associated with increased efficiencies merited a separate discussion. According to interviewees, collaborating can limit redundancy of services and resources specified for the affected community resulting in more effective service delivery and cost savings. By collaborating, two agencies involved in the Metlakatla partnership effort saved approximately \$750,000 between 1999 and 2001. According to another interviewee involved with this same effort, the biggest savings, however, will be for the affected community, who, by partnering, will greatly reduce its overall transaction costs needed to communicate with several different outside organizations. In the Metro East partnership, interviewees remarked that partnering has enabled them to more effectively organize their resources and better pinpoint how each can contribute to solving a large and complex problem facing the affected community, instead of each facing the challenge on their own.

The third most commonly referenced response, cited by nine interviewees representing three of the six partnerships (Barrio Logan, New Madrid, and ReGenesis), centered on the securing and leveraging of additional resources (11 percent of total response). Although similar to the sharing of information, resources, and expertise, this is a distinct value of collaborating. By working together, partners can more easily identify a wider range of options for additional resources beyond the sources accompanying the immediate partner organizations. One interviewee with the Barrio Logan partnership remarked that if the partnership she/he was associated with could focus their energies they could lever the partnership to secure additional resources. Moreover, collaboration across parties can also result in additional parties wishing to participate and/or contribute resources to the effort. Witnessing effective cooperation across several different, and sometimes competing, groups, other parties may be more willing to participate than they would if only a limited set of organizations were working on the issue.

The fourth most commonly mentioned response regarding the value of collaborative approaches, cited by seven interviewees once again representing three of the six partnerships, (Barrio Logan, Bridges to Friendship, and New Madrid) revolved around better understanding the needs of the affected community (nine percent of total response). In several of the collaborative efforts, major partnership meetings are held in or near the affected community the partnership seeks to assist. This generally requires non-local partners to physically come to the affected community, in some cases commuting several hours to attend the meetings. This act, according to some interviewees, enables these partners to better understand the needs and residents of the community. In addition, the partnerships, because of their inclusiveness, can

result in forums that make it easier for the affected community to voice its concerns. One partnership (Bridges to Friendship), focused on ensuring that local residents benefit fully from local revitalization efforts, is sponsoring a series of public dialogues to provide those in the community, as well as other organizational representatives, the opportunity to speak candidly about local concerns regarding a sensitive subject.

Addressing Issues Without Use of a Collaborative Approach

Interviewees were also asked whether the issues affecting their community would have been addressed if a collaborative approach had not been used in the affected communities. Without control populations, it is difficult to know with a high degree of certainty whether the issues genuinely would or would not have been addressed. Interviewees' responses do, however, provide a clearer understanding of the level of value the partners place upon collaborative efforts. A total of 66 interviewees addressed this question. Responses were sorted into six response categories: yes, not to the same extent if at all, not without a court order, unclear, yes but would have taken longer, and yes. In addition, some interviewees were either not asked the question or did not address the question when asked. Responses are provided in the chart, and then discussed in more detail below.

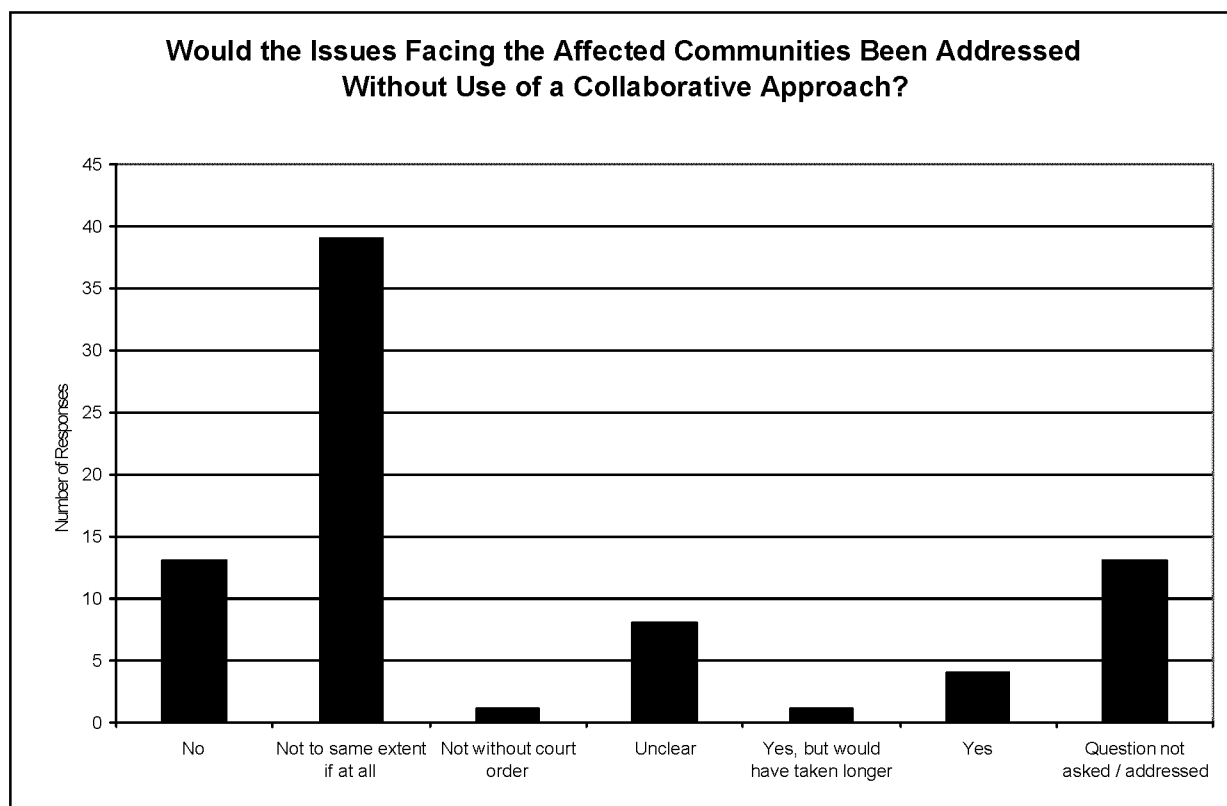


Chart 7. Addressing Issues Without Use of Collaborative Approach. Note: approximately 66 interviewees addressed this question. An additional thirteen were not asked or did not answer the question, including five with the New Madrid partnership, four with Barrio Logan, two with ReGenesis, one with Bridges to Friendship, and one with Metlakatla.

Of those interviewees asked, twenty percent (13 of 66) said unequivocally no, the issues would not have been addressed, while six percent (4 of 66) said unequivocally yes, the issues would have been addressed. Fifty-nine percent (39 of 66), however, remarked that the issues would not have been addressed to the same extent if at all, and two percent (1 of 66) indicated

that the issues would not have been addressed without a court order. Twelve percent (8 of 66) were unclear, and two percent (1 of 66) indicated that the issues would have been addressed but it would have taken longer to address them. Across four of the six partnerships (Bridges to Friendship, Metro East, New Madrid, and ReGenesis), far more interviewees indicated that either the issues would not have been addressed, or would not have been addressed to the same extent if at all, than those providing other responses. For the remaining two partnerships, in one (Barrio Logan), the same number that indicated the issues would not have been addressed, or not to the same extent if at all, also indicated they were either unclear whether the issues would have been addressed, or that, in fact, the issues would have been addressed. In the second (Metlakatla), only slightly more interviewees indicated that the issues either would not have been addressed, or not to the same extent if at all, than the interviewees indicating they were unclear, or that the issues would have only been addressed through issue of a court order.

Most of interviewees see use of collaborative approaches in their community as critical for addressing environmental justice issues in the communities in which they work. Without use of such approach, interviewees cited several concerns that could emerge. For instance, approaches to address the issues would be too fragmented or inconsistent to result in the appropriate outcomes. Deleterious disputes would arise over organizations' competing over the allocation of resources. Some parties may have ended up arguing over the issues in court. Environmental protection or public health-related efforts would not have received as much support from the affected community nor would results have been as satisfactory. Furthermore, these efforts would not have been as effective or as extensive. Finally, some critical parties may have simply chosen not to become involved with the effort. For example, one interviewee associated with the Metlakatla partnership explained that without use of a collaborative approach, one federal agency would not have been as extensively involved in the partnership, and another may have avoided working with the community until later in the future. She/he further explained that, without use of a collaborative approach, the agency would have failed to take advantage of local community knowledge and avoided hiring local residents to assist in the environmental protection effort.

For those indicating yes, the issues would have been addressed even without a collaborative approach, a set of interviewees with Bridges to Friendship explained that, in their community, residents were already empowered and many issues were already being addressed. An interviewee with the Barrio Logan partnership explained that different agencies would address the different issues, while another Barrio Logan interviewee remarked that the issues would be dealt with through a piecemeal approach. For most of those indicating that it was unclear whether the issues would be addressed without use of a collaborative approach, interviewees explained that it was simply difficult to tell. One interviewee with the Metro East partnership explained that it is impossible to know how much these organizations would have accomplished separately. More ambiguously, an interviewee with the Metlakatla partnership explained that every once in a while his/her agency has thoughts about withdrawing from the partnership, but then, according to the interviewee "reality hits home." The thirteen interviewees that either were not asked, or did not address, the question, include five from the New Madrid partnership (38 percent of total New Madrid interviewees), four from the Barrio Logan partnership (29 percent of total Barrio Logan interviewees), two from the ReGenesis partnership (13 percent of total ReGenesis interviewees), one from the Bridges to Friendship partnership (6 percent of total Bridges to Friendship interviewees), and one from the Metlakatla partnership (10 percent of total Metlakatla interviewees).

Using Collaborative Processes to Address Similar Issues Facing the Affected Communities in the Future

Interviewees were also asked the extent to which collaborative processes used in their partnerships could be used again to address similar issues that the affected community may face in the future. A total of 64 interviewees addressed this question. Interviewee responses were sorted into four response categories: yes, yes but with qualifications, no, and don't know. In addition, some interviewees were either not asked the question or did not address the question when asked. Responses are provided in the chart, and then discussed more below.

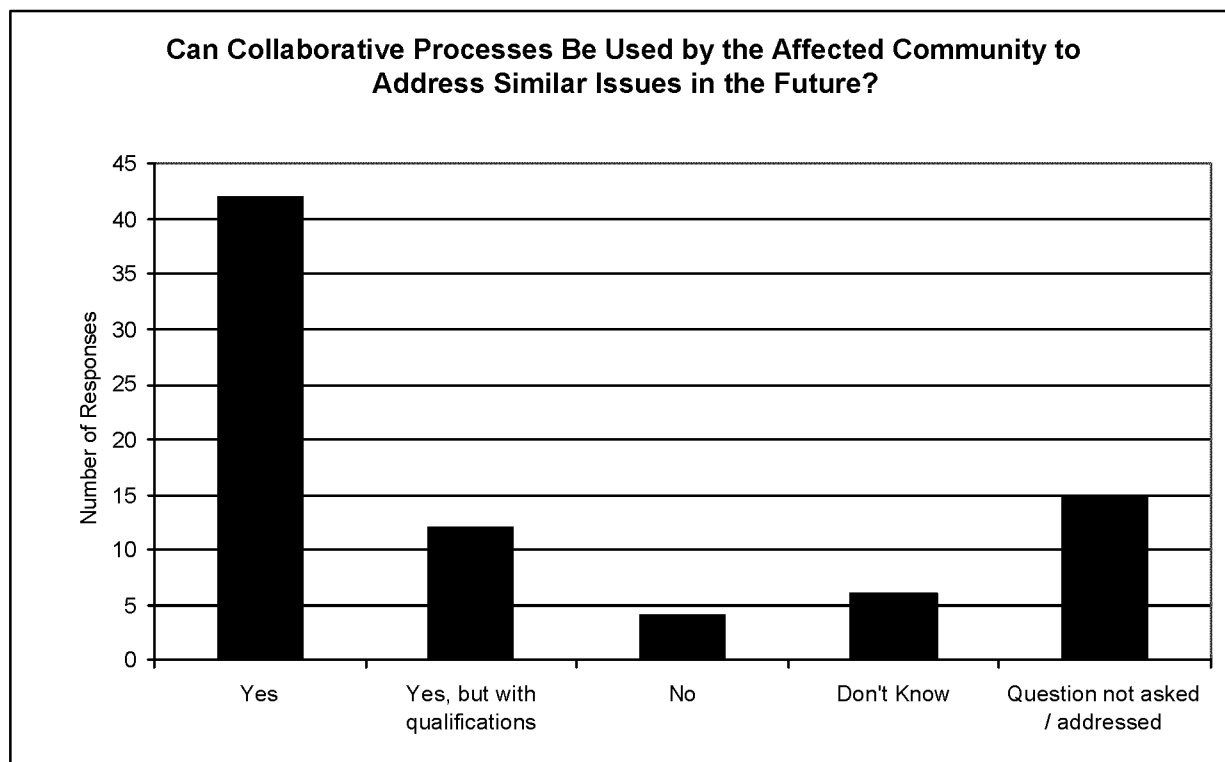


Chart 8. Using Collaborative Processes to Address Issues Facing the Affected Community in the Future. Note: approximately 64 interviewees addressed this question. An additional fifteen were not asked or did not answer the question, four with the Metlakatla partnership, four with New Madrid, three with ReGenesis, two with Bridges to Friendship, and two with Metro East.

Of those addressing the question, 66 percent of interviewees (42 out of 64) remarked that the collaborative processes could be used again by the affected communities to address similar issues in the future. Nineteen percent (12 of 64) indicated these processes could be used again, if certain issues were addressed. Six percent (4 of 64) remarked that they couldn't be used, and nine percent (6 of 64) indicated that they did not know. Across four of the six partnerships (Bridges to Friendship, Metro East, New Madrid, and ReGenesis), those indicating that the process could be used again, or used again with qualifications, greatly outnumbered those indicating that the process could not be used again, or that they didn't know. For the Barrio Logan partnership, those indicating that process could be used again, or used again with qualifications, only moderately outnumbered those indicating that the process either could not be used again, or that they didn't know. In the Metlakatla partnership, those indicating that the process could be used again, or used again with qualifications only slightly outnumbered the others indicating otherwise.

For those indicating yes, similar collaborative processes could be used again, interviewees from the Bridges to Friendship partnership remarked that this type of collaboration is the new way government should do business. One of these interviewees explained that the “collaborative [approach] is the only way to overcome classic bureaucratic barriers blocking good things from happening.” Interviewees also explained how they and others are already using or planning to use similar collaborative processes to address other issues. For instance, interviewees from the Metro East partnership explained that they had recently been strategizing how to apply the same approach they were currently using to address issues associated with asthma. Other interviewees, representing the same partnership, explained that the collaborative approach was already serving as the framework to address similar issues in another nearby community. An interviewee with the ReGenesis partnership expressed enthusiasm that this approach could be effective for communities facing Brownfields redevelopment issues.

In addition, *a number of interviewees felt that similar collaborative processes would only be helpful if certain conditions were available*, such as strong leadership, particularly local leadership, participation of the appropriate people, and evidence that the existing processes produce results. Related, an interviewee with the Bridges to Friendship partnership remarked that the collaborative approach is still untested. *For the four interviewees remarking that the collaborative approach could not be used again* concerns centered on challenges with existing partnerships, including over-dependence upon a few key leaders, over-dependence on federal assistance, and inability for partners to break out of “bureaucratically-trained” mindsets. *The fifteen interviewees that were not asked, or did not address, the question*, include four from the Metlakatla partnership (40 percent of the total Metlakatla interviewees), four from the New Madrid partnership (31 percent of total New Madrid interviewees), three from the ReGenesis partnership (19 percent of total ReGenesis interviewees), two from the Bridges to Friendship partnership (13 percent of total Bridges to Friendship interviewees), and two from the Metro East partnership (20 percent of total Metro East interviewees).

The Value of Collaborative Partnerships to Address EJ Issues

Summary Findings

- *EJ collaborative approaches add value by:*
 - *improving the sharing of information, resources, and/or expertise between organizations (26 percent of total response);*
 - *creating efficiencies (18 percent of total response);*
 - *securing and leveraging of additional resources (11 percent of total response); and*
 - *helping organizations better understand the needs of the affected community (9 percent of total response).*
- *Of those addressing the question, nearly 80 percent of interviewees (52 of 66) indicated that the issues facing the affected communities either would not have been addressed, or would not have been addressed to the same extent, if at all, without use of this approach.*
- *Of those addressing the question, 66 percent of interviewees (42 out of 64) remarked that the collaborative processes could be used again by the affected communities to address similar issues in the future.*
- *Of those addressing the question, 19 percent (12 of 64) indicated that collaborative processes could only be used again if certain conditions were available, such as strong leadership - particularly local leadership, participation of the appropriate people, and evidence that the existing processes produce results.*

Figure 11. *The Value of Collaborative Partnerships to Address EJ Issues: Summary Findings*

Federal Involvement in EJ Collaborative Partnerships

Most federal agencies are looking to say, “We are partnering.” They want to be part of coalitions, joint efforts, leveraging resources, making communities aware of how to apply for resources. Clearly they want to be a part of things like this if they have staff time to do it.

– Interviewee, Barrio Logan Partnership

[Federal involvement has had a] fantastic effect. The Navy started the collaborative. This was the crucial piece that enabled change and excited community based organizations.

– Interviewee, Bridges to Friendship Partnership

[Participation in the collaborative efforts] has helped [federal agencies] to be more community based. They have formed relationships with the private sector. They have gotten out and seen the community. It informs their work with hands on experience. They see who is benefiting from their mandates.

– Interviewee, Bridges to Friendship Partnership

Having federal agencies involved gave participants confidence that someone else knows what we're doing; and if we need more resources we know where to go

– Interviewee, New Madrid Partnership

In the first set of partnerships highlighted by the Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (IWG) as national demonstration projects, federal agencies played important roles in helping partnerships meet their goals. Furthermore, an overarching goal of the IWG is to enable federal agencies to be more effective players in locally based problem-solving efforts centered on issues of environmental justice. Therefore, in this chapter the evaluation team examines four questions. What is the value of federal involvement in environmental justice (EJ) collaborative partnerships for affected communities? What is the value of participating in collaborative partnerships for federal agencies? To what extent has participating in collaborative partnerships improved federal agencies' abilities to coordinate across agencies? And finally, how should federal agencies tailor their roles in order to best

participate in collaborative approaches to address environmental justice issues? Results are based directly on interviewee responses to these four questions.

Value of Federal Involvement in EJ Collaborative Partnerships for Affected Communities

When asked about the value of federal involvement in EJ collaborative partnerships for affected communities, interviewees provided roughly 73 different responses, which fell roughly in 16 different response categories. As shown in the chart below, these range from better ensuring that money is not misspent to bringing credibility, trust, and legitimacy to the partnership. The two most commonly cited responses are discussed more below.

Value of Federal Involvement in EJ Collaborative Partnerships for Affected Communities	Number who identified value
Provide or enhance credibility/legitimacy/trust	26
Provide resources and/or expertise	25
Results in greater information sharing between partners	3
Key reason for partnership creation	2
Fosters more holistic approach to problem solving	2
Better access to decision makers	2
Improves community understanding of environmental issues	2
Boosts community enthusiasm	2
Strong interpersonal skills of specific federal employees	2
Brings attention to specific activities which should take place	1
Work accomplished at a more rapid pace	1
Enhances community's appreciation for federal regulators	1
Increases community's organizational capacity	1
Project has larger impact	1
Boosts image of affected community	1
Essential for bringing industry on board	1

Table 5. Value of Federal Involvement in EJ Collaborative Partnerships for Affected Communities. Note: approximately 60 interviewees provided a total of 73 responses. Interviewees occasionally provided more than one response. An additional nineteen interviewees were not asked or did not answer the question, including six with the New Madrid partnership, five with Metlakatla, three with Bridges to Friendship, three with ReGenesis, and two with Metro East.

The first most frequently noted response, cited by 26 interviewees representing five of the six partnerships (Barrio Logan, Bridges to Friendship, Metro East, New Madrid, and ReGenesis), centered on providing or enhancing the credibility, legitimacy, and/or trust surrounding a partnership effort (36 percent of total response). Federal involvement can validate that community member concerns are real, including concerns regarding environmental justice. Local officials may not appreciate the magnitude of local environmental and public health concerns without additional outside perspective. Second, federal involvement can enhance confidence of local partners seeking to address their concerns that they are, indeed, using the best remedies for addressing them. For instance, one interviewee with the New Madrid partnership remarked that without external assurance from federal agencies, communities could feel nervous about addressing environmental issues for fear of opening up a “Pandora’s box.” With federal involvement, however, she/he noted that communities feel confident they can move forward. Third, federal participation can encourage regional and local officials to reassess whether they should consider becoming involved. By participating, federal agencies can tip the balance in favor of local and regional participation if the local officials perceive that their own non-participation will result in negative attention or that federal

involvement gives greater political support to participate than before. In addition, federal participation can bring additional accountability to the partnership. An interviewee with the Barrio Logan partnership explained that federal involvement indirectly encourages local agencies to be more accountable to the effort. Another interviewee with the ReGenesis partnership explained that federal involvement better ensures that partnership resources will not be misspent. Related, she/he explained that federal participation has enabled the partnership to earn the trust of banks near the affected area.

The second most frequently mentioned response regarding the value of federal involvement, identified by interviewees representing six of the six partnerships, focused on providing resources and/or expertise (34 percent of total response). Interviewees, in particular, cited the sharing of information and support through funding by federal officials as critical. Sharing of information also includes sharing expertise, giving advice, and providing technical assistance. In addition, two interviewees from two different partnerships (New Madrid and ReGenesis) cited federal officials' understanding of the broad range of federal resources that the partnerships could access as an important element of information sharing, with one noting, for instance, that enabling the community to identify the broad range of resources available at the federal level, covering everything from transportation to issues of public health, was a key part of the community's holistic approach to revitalization. Also noted by two interviewees from two different partnerships (Metro East and New Madrid), was a strong willingness by federal officials' to make themselves accessible to other partner members and regularly respond to questions. Also critical was the support of partnership activities through federal funding. Interestingly, none of the partnerships received direct funding support by the IWG for being selected as demonstration projects. However, different partnerships obtained fiscal support for a variety of partnership-related activities primarily through traditional federal programs. Two interviewees from two different partnerships (New Madrid and ReGenesis) explained that their efforts would not have been possible without the funding provided at the federal level. In addition, other resources made available by federal partners, cited by interviewees as important, included training, outreach, and documentation. Finally, interviewees from the Metro East partnership remarked that federal officials helped maintain open lines of communication.

Value of Federal Involvement in EJ Collaborative Partnerships for Federal Agencies

When asked about the value of federal involvement in EJ collaborative approaches for federal agencies, interviewees provided roughly 73 different responses, which fell roughly into 15 different response categories. As shown in the chart below, these range from providing a better sense of how to participate in communities to better appreciating that communities with significant environmental problems may still be unidentified. The three most commonly cited responses are discussed more below.

Value of Federal Involvement in EJ Collaborative Partnerships for Federal Agencies	Number who identified value
Lessons regarding how best to work with affected communities	36
Opportunity to be more effective in working with communities	8
Lessons about partnering	4
Greater job satisfaction	4
Right to claim success in working with one community	3
Opportunity to be innovative	3
Opportunity to better understand environmental justice issues	3
Opportunity to build relationships	3
Opportunity to gain the goodwill of the community	2
Improved understanding of regional environmental and public health issues	2
Understanding that communities with significant environmental problems may still be unidentified	1
Lessons about core agency programs	1
Opportunity to influence action	1
Opportunity to share lessons with other communities	1
Opportunities to show that federal partners are working to address EJ issues	1

Table 6. *Value of Federal Involvement in EJ Collaborative Approaches for Federal Agencies.* Note: approximately 63 interviewees provided a total of 73 responses. Interviewees occasionally provided more than one response. An additional sixteen were not asked or did not answer the question, including four with the New Madrid partnership, four with ReGenesis, three with Metlakatla, three with Metro East, and two with Bridges to Friendship.

The most frequently identified response, cited by 36 interviewees across all six partnerships, centered on lessons learned about how best to work with affected communities (49 percent of total response). Interviewees indicated that participation in the collaborative partnerships has enabled federal partners to better understand affected communities and their specific threats and how and when to work with them to address their concerns. For instance, an interviewee with the Barrio Logan partnership noted that, “Being there, seeing the problems these communities face, the struggles they endure—they can see firsthand how they can be a resource to solving local problems.” As a specific example of this, an interviewee with the Metro East partnership explained that federal partners learned that for one public health effort, use of television and radio as an outreach mechanism, instead of mass mailings, was the best way to reach people in the affected community regarding certain public health risks. Similarly, an interviewee with the Metlakatla partnership remarked that federal agencies “have gained the understanding that Indian communities do not think like the rest of the world. The federal agencies now know that they must deal with the cultural and the spiritual identity as well as idiosyncrasies of tribal communication.” Other lessons gained centered on learning how to listen to community members and assess community capabilities. For instance, a Metro East interviewee noted that “we have opened their eyes and they can see our handicaps.” In addition, interviewees remarked that participation has enabled federal interviewees to better understand how their policies affect communities and consequently design more effective ones. For example, another Metlakatla interviewee indicated that federal agencies have gained awareness of the difficulties tribal communities have in dealing with multiple agencies. She/he added that, “We now understand their perspective and realize some of their frustrations when comparing the different requirements of the federal agencies. It has helped us rethink and focus on our communication.”

The second most commonly cited response, identified by eight interviewees representing three partnerships (Barrio Logan, Bridges to Friendship, and Metlakatla), suggested that participation in the collaborative partnerships enabled federal agencies to be

more effective in working with communities (11 percent of total response). This finding is different from lessons learned about how best to work with affected communities in that the lessons are seen as a guide regarding how to conduct future work with communities more effectively. The eight interviewees identified with the second finding already believe that collaboration is an effective way to work with communities and, therefore, viewed the opportunity to collaborate as a means for increasing the chances of success for their efforts. For instance, three interviewees with the Bridges to Friendship partnership remarked that, by collaborating, federal agencies are able to have a greater positive impact in the affected community, while another interviewee representing the same partnership remarked that the collaborative process has helped federal agencies identify the activities of other federal agencies in the community and therefore reduce redundancy of services provided. Similarly, an interviewee with the Barrio Logan partnership mentioned that the collaborative process enables federal agencies to be more strategic.

Increase in Collaboration Across Federal Agencies as a Result of Collaborative Partnerships

Interviewees were also asked whether the EJ collaborative partnerships have resulted in improved coordination across federal agencies. Federal coordination is not a prerequisite for a successful local collaboration. For instance, two federal agencies may both participate effectively in a partnership without engaging in any unique coordination efforts between each other. However, in some instances, federal agencies may limit the success of the partnership if there is not effective coordination between them. This can be especially true when the federal agencies are expected to play important leadership roles within the partnership or when each agency sponsors activities that may compete with one another. Of the six partnerships reviewed, some federal partners in the Metlakatla and New Madrid partnerships made use of separate formal agreements requiring that they work together.

The question of whether the EJ collaborative partnerships have resulted in improved coordination across federal agencies is undoubtedly more difficult for non-federal interviewees to address since they usually cannot witness day-to-day conversations and interactions between federal agencies, most of which are stationed outside the affected communities. Nevertheless, improved coordination should be somewhat apparent at regular partnership meetings and in the work of various partnership subcommittees. Furthermore, what may seem as improved coordination to federal partners working together in a partnership may not necessarily be viewed as such by non-federal partners. Therefore, federal as well as non-federal perspectives regarding this topic are valuable. A total of 55 interviewees addressed this question. Interviewee responses were sorted into three response categories: yes, no, and don't know. In addition, some interviewees were either not asked the question or did not address the question when asked. Responses are provided in the chart, and then discussed in greater detail below.

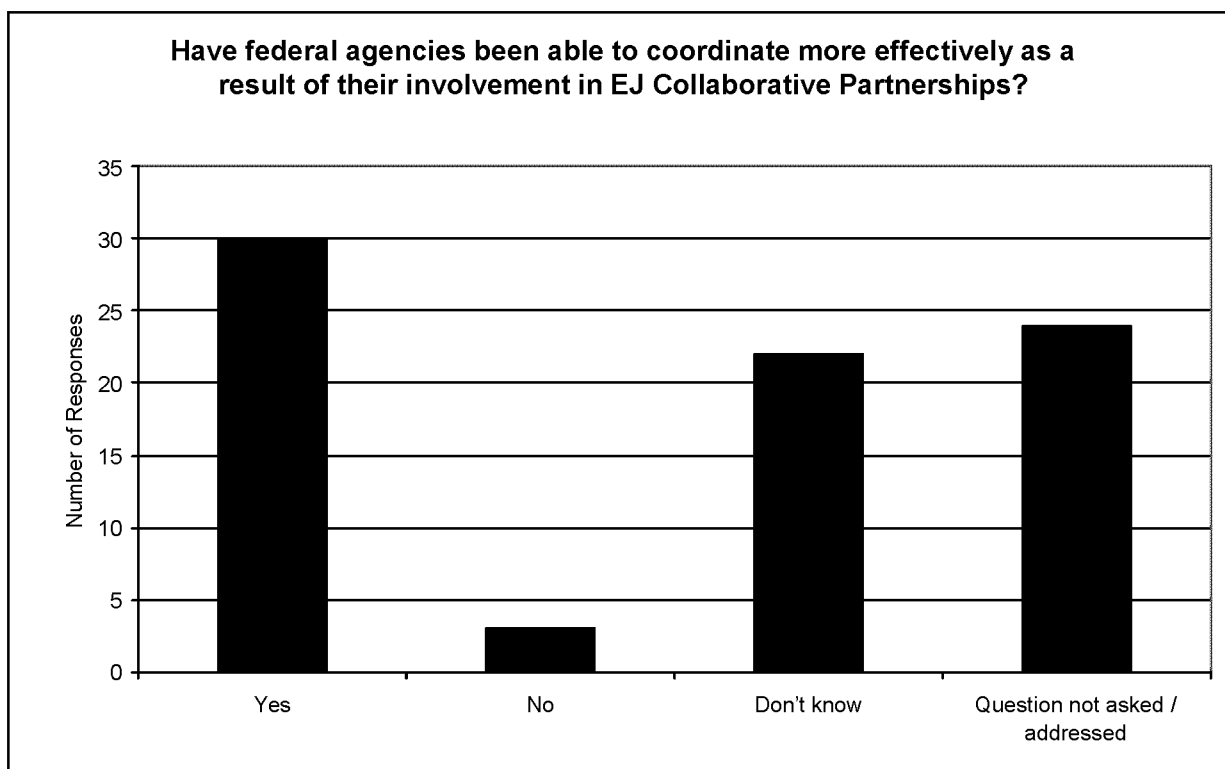


Table 7. Coordination Across Federal Agencies as a Result of Involvement in EJ Collaborative Partnerships. Note: approximately 55 interviewees addressed this question. An additional 24 were not asked or did not answer the question, including eight with the ReGenesis partnership, seven with New Madrid, five with Bridges to Friendship, three from Metlakatla, and one with Barrio Logan.

Interviewees were decidedly mixed regarding whether federal coordination as a result of collaborative efforts has increased. Of those addressing the question, 55 percent of interviewees (30 of 55), representing all six partnerships, indicated that coordination had improved. Forty percent of interviewees (22 of 55), representing four partnerships (Barrio Logan, Metlakatla, New Madrid, and ReGenesis), indicated that they were unclear whether improved coordination had occurred, and five percent of interviewees (3 of 55), representing two partnerships (Barrio Logan and ReGenesis), indicated that coordination had not increased. In two of the six partnerships (Bridges to Friendship and Metro East), the interviewees indicating that coordination had increased clearly outnumbered those indicating that coordination had not increased, or that they were unaware of increased coordination. In two other partnerships (Barrio Logan and ReGenesis), most of the interviewees indicated that they were unclear whether increased coordination between federal agencies has resulted from participation in the collaborative partnerships. Finally, in the remaining two partnerships (Metlakatla and New Madrid), roughly the same portion of interviewees indicating that increased coordination had occurred also indicated that they didn't know whether increased coordination had occurred.

For those responding yes, interviewees mentioned that federal partners are gaining contacts, sharing information, and/or coordinating strategically. A federal interviewee with the Bridges to Friendship partnership remarked that, "Every time agencies get together and understand how they can relate and what resources they each can bring to the table they are more likely to do it again." Interviewees also remarked that participation in the partnership effort has enabled federal agencies to coordinate more extensively with staff, mid-level managers, or between agency field and headquarters levels. Furthermore, a federal interviewee with the

Metro East partnership commented that his/her federal agency has improved its relations with state agencies as a result of the partnerships. In addition, a federal interviewee with the Bridges to Friendship partnership and a federal interviewee with the New Madrid partnership remarked that participation in the collaborative efforts has resulted in additional collaboration with federal agencies on other efforts. Some responding yes, did, however, caveat some of their responses. For instance, another federal interviewee with the Bridges to Friendship partnership explained that although partnering has increased coordination between federal agencies, it hasn't directly resulted in improved coordination within his/her agency. Finally a federal interviewee with the ReGenesis partnership explained that federal agencies could still improve their federal collaboration.

For those responding that they didn't know, one non-federal interviewee with the Barrio Logan partnership explained that federal partners were probably sharing information, while some interviewees stated they simply did not see any coordination. Another non-federal interviewee with the ReGenesis partnership noted that, early on in the partnership effort, it appeared that several federal agencies planned to participate, but since then, several have disengaged. A federal interviewee with the New Madrid partnership, however, felt that if there was any coordination between the participating federal agencies, it was due mainly to the personalities involved, and that there was no indication that this type of collaboration could be conducted in the future. The interviewee further added that most extensive collaboration appeared to be between the federal agencies and the affected communities, not between the federal agencies themselves. *The 24 interviewees that either were not asked, or did not address, the question*, included eight from the ReGenesis partnership (50 percent of the total ReGenesis interviewees), seven from the New Madrid partnership (54 percent of the total New Madrid interviewees), five with the Bridges to Friendship partnership (31 percent of the total Bridges to Friendship interviewees), three from the Metlakatla partnership (30 percent of the total Metlakatla interviewees), and one with the Barrio Logan partnership (7 percent of the total Barrio Logan interviewees).

Interviewee Recommendations for Improving Federal Involvement in Partnerships

When asked how federal agencies should tailor their roles in order to best participate in collaborative approaches to address environmental justice issues, interviewees provided roughly 89 different responses, which fell roughly into 31 different response categories. As shown in the chart below, responses ranged from better focusing federal resources to setting ground rules. However, only one recommendation stood out, and even this was only cited across two partnerships. The fact that relatively few common recommendations were provided may suggest that, generally, the interviewees feel positive about the role federal agencies in these partnerships so far. The four most commonly cited responses are discussed in more detail below.

Interviewee recommendations for how federal agencies should tailor their roles to best participate in EJ collaborative approaches	Number who identified recommendation
Provide direct support	16
Provide one point of contact for each federal agency	7
Be creative	6
Enable community to play key roles in development and/or implementation of partnerships	6
Improve accessibility of federal resources for affected communities	5
Require an evaluation component	4
Better focus federal resources	4
Understand the needs of the community	4
Establish single points of contact for the partnership	4
Participate in a hands-on manner	4
Allow certain partners to take a stronger leadership role in partnership	3
Do more effective job of marketing value of collaborative approaches	3
Structure agency organization in such a way to facilitate participation in partnerships	2
Provide flexibility for those non-profit regulations that limit federal involvement	2
Ensure participation of local federal agency representatives	2
Learn more about the different resources each federal agency has available	2
Build in requirements to allow facilitators to be removed	1
Ensure that all levels of agency support the partnership	1
Recognize that you are part of the community	1
Establish unifying procedures when participating agencies have different procedures for addressing a common issue	1
Empower local community to lead partnership	1
Ensure that a community person is available to coordinate with federal agencies	1
Use a collaborative model that fits the affected community	1
Avoid taking partnership issues personally	1
Don't change roles, use the expertise you already have	1
Get involved early in the partnership	1
Ensure that agency officials have the maturity and skills to participate effectively	1
Continue the Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice	1
Require more than one federal agency to be involved	1
Stay committed to the partnership	1
Set ground rules	1

Table 8. Recommendations for Improving How Federal Agencies Participate in EJ Collaborative Approaches. Note: approximately 66 interviewees provided a total of 89 responses. Interviewees occasionally provided more than one response. An additional thirteen were not asked or did not answer the question, including four with the New Madrid partnership, three with Bridges to Friendship, three with Metro East, and three with ReGenesis.

The most commonly noted recommendation, cited by sixteen interviewees representing two different partnerships (Barrio Logan and Metro East), was that federal agencies should provide direct support for partnership efforts (18 percent of total response). Most often, direct support meant funding. However, other interviewees suggested that federal partners should provide direct support in terms of facilitation services, translation services, staff time and expertise, and administrative services such as issue follow-up, overhead production, and organization of tours. The second most commonly mentioned recommendation, cited by seven interviewees across three partnerships (Bridges to Friendship, Metlakatla, and ReGenesis), was that single points of contact should be provided for each participating federal agency (8 percent

of total response). Interviewees with the Bridges to Friendship partnership remarked that a single point of contact should be designated within each participating agency that can represent the agency in all the partnership activities while regularly highlighting the partnership mission to agency management. An interviewee representing the ReGenesis partnership explained that it was difficult to understand the different work of one federal agency in the affected community, noting that the agency had three to four main points of contact. Recognizing some of the difficulties this posed for the affected community, as discussed above, a federal interviewee explained that his/her agency was working to ensure better internal coordination of all agency employees working directly on partnership issues in the affected community.

The third most commonly noted recommendation, cited by six interviewees representing interviewees from two partnerships (Bridges to Friendship and New Madrid), was that federal agencies should be creative when engaging in partnerships (seven percent of total response). Two interviewees with the New Madrid partnership emphasized the need for agencies to rely on more than statistics when determining how to best help communities. In addition, one of these same interviewees stressed not letting regulations prohibit involvement. Finally, two interviewees with the Bridges to Friendship partnership expressed the need to be able to take risks and cope with failure when involved. *The fourth most commonly cited recommendation, also identified by six interviewees representing two different partnerships (Barrio Logan and New Madrid), was that federal agencies should enable the affected community to play key roles in the development and/or implementation of partnerships (seven percent of total response).* For instance, an interviewee with the Barrio Logan partnership recommended that partnerships, such as IWG demonstration projects, be developed simultaneously with the community—defining goals and identifying problems. An interviewee with the New Madrid partnership urged federal agencies to allow affected communities to lead the partnerships.

The fifth most commonly noted recommendation, cited by five interviewees also representing two partnerships (Metro East and ReGenesis), was that federal agencies should improve the accessibility of federal resources for affected communities involved in partnership efforts (six percent of total response). For example, interviewees from both partnerships suggested that federal agencies should better advertise how to apply for funds under existing federal programs. Furthermore, an interviewee with the ReGenesis partnership suggested that federal agencies should make these resources more user-friendly. She/he added that this could be done in a number of ways, including asking each agency to support one person in each region and state who could effectively talk about available resources with communities. These persons could then be listed in a directory, similar to what the Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice currently makes available describing federal contacts.

Federal Involvement in EJ Collaborative Partnerships

Summary Findings

- *Interviewees indicated that federal agencies play key roles in EJ Collaborative Partnerships by:*
 - *providing or enhancing the credibility, legitimacy, and/or trust surrounding a partnership effort (36 percent of total response); and*
 - *providing resources and/or expertise (34 percent of total response).*
- *Participation in EJ Collaborative Partnerships enables federal agencies to:*
 - *learn how best to work with affected communities (49 percent of total response); and*
 - *work more effectively with communities (11 percent of total response).*
- *Of those interviewees addressing the question, 60 percent (30 of 55), indicated that federal coordination had improved as a result of participation in the partnerships; while 40 percent (22 of 55), indicated that they were unclear whether improved coordination had occurred.*
- *Federal agencies could best benefit EJ Collaborative Partnerships by:*
 - *providing direct support for partnership efforts (18 percent of total response);*
 - *designating single points of contact for each participating agency (8 percent of total response);*
 - *being creative in how they work with partnerships (7 percent of total response);*
 - *enabling the affected community to play key roles in the development and/or implementation of partnerships (7 percent of total responses); and*
 - *improving the accessibility of federal resources for affected communities (6 percent of total response).*

Figure 12. Federal Involvement in EJ Collaborative Partnerships: Summary Findings

Core Findings and Recommendations

This chapter describes core findings regarding the use of multi-stakeholder collaboration to address environmental justice issues in the six partnerships studied for this report. Findings, based upon a review of the previous six chapters and the six partnership case studies, describe the value of multi-stakeholder collaboration, value of federal involvement, and specific factors contributing to progress and success of the different partnerships. A conclusion and then recommendations follow. The recommendations are intended for those actively participating in or overseeing the partnerships, as well as institutions at all levels responding to environmental, public health, and socio-economic challenges associated with community revitalization. Such institutions include community organizations, faith groups, other NGOs, local, state, federal and tribal governments, philanthropic foundations, and the business community.

Core Findings

Multi-stakeholder collaboration can act as a transformative mechanism for enabling communities and associated stakeholders to constructively address complex and long-standing issues concerning environmental and public health hazards, strained or non-existent relations with government agencies and other institutions, and economic decline. Multi-stakeholder collaboration in the environmental justice context can be transformative in two ways. First, it can provide disadvantaged communities with an opportunity to openly discuss concerns and potential solutions to issues affecting them in a manner that genuinely suits the affected community's needs. Second, it can provide public service organizations, including government agencies and community-based organizations, with an effective forum to coordinate, leverage, and strategically use resources to meet complex public health, environmental, and other socio-economic challenges facing disadvantaged communities. The power of the collaborative approaches used in the six partnerships is reflected in the fact that nearly 80 percent of the interviewees addressing this topic (52 of 66) indicated that the issues facing the affected communities either would not have been addressed, or would not have been addressed to the same extent, if at all, without use of a collaborative approach.

The partnerships are generating a variety of positive outcomes for the affected communities. The partnerships' most significant outcome has been the creation or enhancement of relationships through which numerous, diverse, and sometimes competing, stakeholders can come together and engage in constructive dialogue to overcome concerns regarding environmental and public health protection, socio-economic conditions, and historical animosities, and greatly reduce the likelihood of similar concerns arising in the future. Through these collaborative partnerships, community organizations and residents strengthen their capacity and confidence to work with agencies and institutions that are intended to serve the public. In addition, this collaboration helps build or reinforce critical bridges between institutions and the affected communities, which are important ingredients for local environmental protection

and redevelopment. The partnerships are also obtaining strong support and/or involvement from members in the affected communities. Moreover, they are better ensuring the implementation and/or the *more effective* implementation of specific public health, environmental protection, and other economic development programs.

The partnerships are also enabling the many institutions seeking to provide community assistance to work more effectively with the affected communities. Targeted programs designed to assist communities are made more effective and best applied when sponsoring officials can more efficiently navigate challenging stakeholder relationships and understand how their program may fit the affected community's overall needs. Working through a forum that is already strongly supported by the community and involves numerous and diverse stakeholders can reduce service providers' needs to develop separate, independent relationships within the affected community necessary to more effectively implement their programs. *Recognizing a community's vision for redevelopment can also enable service providers and program managers to tailor their programs and services to better suit community needs, and save resources in the process.* Furthermore, by participating in forums with the affected communities where ideas and information can be easily exchanged, these providers can reduce redundancy, share expertise, and more easily recommend other entities who can provide assistance if they, themselves, cannot provide the desired services.

Despite positive outcomes, and participants' high levels of satisfaction for the partnerships to date, *several of these partnerships have and continue to face challenges to improve situations for the affected communities.* Most notably, parties struggle with the maintenance and operation of their partnerships, grappling with such day-to-day issues as coordination, ensuring continued cooperation amongst the different parties, maintaining partnership momentum, maintaining partnership focus, and keeping key decision makers involved. Furthermore, several partnerships are facing challenges with the implementation of specific activities, such as developing more protective zoning regulations and ensuring that all responsible parties participate in the cleanup of contaminated sites. In addition, some partnerships are still learning how best to engage the affected communities they are working in to ensure that all residents have a genuine voice in and/or sufficient knowledge of the partnership efforts and its activities. Finally, one partnership, although committed to working out differences, has struggled to bridge diverse perspectives amongst participating stakeholders regarding the ultimate purpose of the partnership and work cooperatively to address the affected community's key environmental concern.

Organizational styles, policies, and procedures of the different partner members have contributed to challenges for the partnerships. For instance, in one partnership where two federal agencies played key roles, their contrasting approaches to community assistance placed stress on the partnership in its early stages. In another partnership, concerns over roles federal agencies can play in partnerships that obtain a 501(c) 3 status has continued to frustrate partner members. Nevertheless, *the partnerships are successfully managing the challenges caused by the various organizational styles, policies, and procedures of the different partner members' organizations.* No barriers were identified that would irreversibly harm the functioning of the partnerships. Even in the one partnership that was clearly struggling to overcome organizational and other differences, most partners remained confident that on-going challenges would be resolved. Moreover, representatives from at least two partnerships see overcoming organizational differences as one of these collective efforts' greatest strengths.

In addition to the many important contributions made by a wide range of stakeholders, *federal agencies have and continue to play key roles in these partnerships.* First, federal

agencies have assisted in the creation or continued implementation in all the partnerships by generating or seizing opportunities and by providing energy and enthusiasm. Second, they have supplied the partnerships with critical resources, knowledge, and expertise. Finally, federal agencies have provided or enhanced the credibility, legitimacy, and/or trust surrounding the partnership efforts. This has been done by validating community concerns regarding issues of environmental justice, offering assurances that certain locally-based solutions to address these issues, are, in fact, appropriate, encouraging reluctant regional and local officials to consider becoming involved in these efforts, and bringing a greater overall degree of accountability to the partnerships.

Despite the positive roles of federal agencies, cooperation and coordination in support of partnership efforts within and between federal agencies could be enhanced and made more apparent to non-federal partners. Of those addressing this topic, 55 percent of interviewees (30 of 55) indicated that coordination had improved. Forty-five percent (25 of 55), however, were less positive. Some interviewees don't see any cooperation, and some are unclear about the cooperation. Some federal representatives, however, are exhibiting signs of improved coordination. One federal agency has developed an internal team to better coordinate the many agency-led activities taking place in the partnership community. In two other partnerships, memorandums of understanding were established to improve coordination and cooperation between some participating federal agencies. Moreover, at least one federal representative at the regional level has begun meeting with representatives of different federal agencies to discuss ways in which they can coordinate on additional partnerships centered on issues of environmental justice.

Much of the success of these efforts can be attributed to individuals, either at the community, regional, NGO, or government level, who took it upon themselves, at real risk of failure, to pull diverse groups together. Pulling partnerships together, especially when the goal is to address challenging environmental problems and social relationships, and/or help a community revitalize, can be a difficult endeavor. This challenge is magnified when organizations are not accustomed to working in a coordinated manner, and when resources for maintaining the partnerships are not always readily available. Such an effort requires not only leadership skills, patience, and the ability for creative thinking, but also strong interpersonal skills that naturally lend themselves to stakeholder bridge building. In many instances, such a combination of skills in one individual may not be available; nevertheless it confirms the need for communities and other institutions desiring to use collaborative partnerships to look for these qualities in persons to lead or co-lead these efforts.

Core Findings Regarding the Use of EJ Collaborative Partnerships

- *Multi-stakeholder collaboration can act as a transformative mechanism for enabling communities and associated stakeholders to constructively address complex and long-standing issues concerning environmental and public health hazards, strained or non-existent relations with government agencies and other institutions, and economic decline.*
- *The partnerships are generating a variety of positive outcomes for the affected communities.*
- *The partnerships are also enabling the many institutions seeking to provide community assistance to work more effectively with the affected communities.*
- *Recognizing a community's vision for redevelopment can also enable service providers and program managers to tailor their programs and services to better suit community needs, and save resources in the process.*
- *Several of these partnerships have and continue to face challenges to improve situations for the affected communities.*
- *Organizational styles, policies, and procedures of the different partner members have contributed to challenges for the partnerships.*
- *The partnerships are successfully managing the challenges caused by the various organizational styles, policies, and procedures of the different partner members' organizations.*
- *Federal agencies have and continue to play key roles in these partnerships*
- *Despite the positive roles of federal agencies, cooperation and coordination in support of partnership efforts within and between federal agencies could be enhanced and made more apparent to non-federal partners.*
- *Much of the success of these efforts can be attributed to individuals, either at the community, regional, NGO, or government level, who took it upon themselves, at real risk of failure, to pull diverse groups together.*

Figure 13. Core Findings Regarding the Use of EJ Collaborative Partnerships

Conclusion

This evaluation looks at the value of using collaborative partnerships to address environmental justice issues in predominantly low-income or minority communities. The evaluation is built upon six case studies that were written primarily between December and July 2002. Through this effort, the evaluation team and the federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice sought to set a high standard for evaluating environmental justice collaborative partnerships. The evaluation team strived to accurately convey the spirit of what partnership stakeholders believed to be the main successes and challenges of their collaborative efforts, as well as what they expressed to be the overall value of using collaboration to address complex local issues. In addition, the evaluation team sought to

provide a broad and insightful understanding of EJ collaborative partnerships in terms of what they are achieving, factors contributing to their progress and success, specific organizational barriers that may be limiting collaboration, and the role of federal involvement in these efforts.

Evaluation findings indicate that the partnerships are producing a variety of important results, including the improved opportunity for local residents and community organizations to have a genuine say in efforts to revitalize their communities, enhancement of relationships between stakeholders, implementation of environmental protection and other programs, and improved delivery of community assistance by public service organizations. In regards to overall value of collaboration, most interviewees indicated that the issues facing the affected communities either wouldn't have been addressed, or wouldn't have been addressed to the same extent, if at all, without use of a collaborative approach. Interviewees also saw federal involvement in these efforts as critical. In addition to the many positive points voiced, interviewees also noted the partnerships are facing some challenges, including difficulties associated with partnership maintenance and operational support, and the implementation of partnership-specific initiatives. Despite these and other challenges expressed, most interviewees voiced very favorable impressions of the partnerships to which they were associated. Much additional work will be needed in the future to more fully understand the strength of multi-stakeholder collaboration for resolving local environmental justice issues. However, evidence from this evaluation suggests that use of these approaches, as demonstrated within these partnerships, can be an effective means for addressing environmental justice issues in communities.

Core Recommendations

To advance the use of multi-stakeholder collaborative partnerships as a means for addressing environmental justice issues in communities, the evaluation team recommends the following:

For institutions at all levels responding to environmental, public health, and socio-economic challenges associated with community revitalization...

Expand use of multi-stakeholder collaboration as a tool for addressing EJ issues in distressed communities. Use of collaborative approaches can effectively enable disadvantaged communities and associated stakeholders to constructively address complex and long-standing issues concerning environmental and public health hazards, strained or non-existent relations with government agencies and other institutions, and economic decline. Participation in these efforts not only better ensures that the nation's least advantaged populations' concerns are heard and addressed; it can also better ensure the effective delivery of community development services. *Government at all levels, community organizations, faith groups, other NGOs, philanthropic foundations, and the business community should review opportunities to initiate, support, and participate in multi-stakeholder collaborative partnerships.* Assistance need not only take the form of financial resources and expertise, it can take the form of personal interaction with the affected community as partners, improved coordination across organizations, and enhanced coordination within organizations.

For those organizations and institutions actively participating in, supporting, or overseeing EJ collaborative partnerships...

Identify long-term opportunities with organizations and institutions to build the administrative and coordination capacity of the collaborative partnerships. Partnerships reviewed for this study have creatively found ways to remain functioning and ensure continued coordination. However, energy continually devoted to the performance of administrative functions by partnership leaders is energy lost to further meet, discuss ideas, develop strategies, and/or oversee the implementation of partnership actions. Furthermore, strong assurances of long-term administrative and coordination support can go far in terms of reducing overall anxiety of partners and especially partnership leaders. Finally, a well-established administrative and coordination function can potentially assure potential partners that the partnership is a solid operation worthy of additional support.

Promote community-based leadership and organizational development at the local level for communities using multi-stakeholder collaboration to address EJ issues. It is much easier for partnerships using multi-stakeholder collaboration to implement actions that support the affected community if the community has a strong voice in partnership affairs. The community's voice is best heard if the partnership includes representatives of community groups that have broad local support. Such representation can better enable partner members to understand the needs of the affected community and then move forward in confidence to assist in addressing the community's concerns. Similarly, strong local leadership can make it much easier for the partnership to interact and communicate with the affected community. Obtaining unified support from a community, however, can be very difficult, especially in less-homogenous communities and in areas that lack a strong-sense of identity centered within a recognizable geographic space. In order to obtain greater community involvement in partnerships lacking a strong voice from the community, efforts should be made to encourage community organizations and their leaders to emerge from within the affected community and work with the partnership as partner members. This could be done through: (1) strategic use of grants to either build or enhance the capacity of existing community-based organizations to participate; (2) sharing of lessons learned from local leaders representing EJ collaborative partnerships about how to better ensure local leadership; and (3) informal and formal requests from partner members asking local community-based organizations for their direct involvement.

Focus attention on the environmental, public health, and socio-economic outcomes produced by EJ collaborative partnership activities. What are the most significant outcomes of EJ collaborative efforts for the affected communities? This question is not easily answered. But the focus of these partnerships should ultimately rest on whether partnership activities produce the desired outcomes for the communities they seek to assist, both in the short- and long-term. A myriad of factors can determine whether a community can overcome the challenges associated with enhanced environmental protection and community revitalization. And no partnership will be able to fully address all of them (e.g., the economy). However, close attention given both upfront and throughout a partnership's life cycle to several items should move the partnership that much closer to generating the type of results desired by the affected community. Items to consider include: (1) the identification of short- and long-term goals; (2) the implementation of activities and leveraging of resources in pursuit of these goals; and (3) the careful linking of goals, activities, and environmental, public health, and socio-economic outcomes. To help do this, partner members should early on consider using community visioning, strategic planning, performance measurement, and evaluative tools.

For the academic community...

Systematically promote rigorous academic study and intellectual discourse around the use of collaborative models to address EJ issues. Although efforts by the IWG and partner

leaders to articulate an EJ Collaborative Model will greatly improve public understanding of collaborative approaches to address environmental justice issues, much additional work is needed to more fully understand their value at both the national and community level. This could take the form of additional program evaluations and other research efforts. Moreover, this could involve academic symposiums and even new coursework that examine both the theory underlying EJ collaborative approaches, its current application, and potential for use on a broader scale. Such an effort should involve scholars focused on collaborative inquiry, dispute resolution and mediation, environmental planning and policy, environmental justice, sustainable communities and ecosystems, and others.

For the IWG...

Link those involved in EJ collaborative partnerships into a national structure that encourages cross-partnership learning and builds additional support. Partners operating in isolation may feel that their work is overwhelming and that they are continually charting new territory. This could be at least partly overcome if partner members are made to recognize that they are part of a process that is being used in places across the country to address complex environmental, public health, and socio-economic issues in the midst of challenging stakeholder relationships. Efforts to create a national structure could include: (1) continuing the on-going effort by the IWG to promote a national dialogue on use of EJ collaborative approaches; (2) hosting annual regional and national conferences for partnership members and others interested in such approaches to discuss partnership progress and successes; and (3) distributing a national newsletter to partnership members that provides updates on partnership progress, partnership resources, and recommendations for overcoming partnership obstacles to success.

Fully develop the EJ Collaborative Model. This would have several benefits. First, a carefully articulated model would provide a clearer understanding for parties interested in collaboration of how, and under what circumstances, collaboration can take place, and what benefits effective collaboration could produce in addressing environmental justice issues. Second, such a model would enable the IWG, and leaders of the EJ collaborative partnerships, to learn from EJ collaborative efforts in a more systematic fashion. Using similar yardsticks would enable the IWG to more easily learn from and assess individual collaborative efforts as well as EJ collaborative partnerships at a broader level. The full development of the EJ Collaborative Model could include: (1) identification of the Model's main components: background components (e.g., need, local leadership), formative components (e.g., partnership building, partnership dialogue, identification of goals to be achieved), and action components (e.g., implementation of key actions, monitoring, and evaluation); (2) identification of basic outcomes to be achieved: social (e.g., enhanced relationships, enhanced local capacity, decreases in crime), economic (e.g., enhanced access to jobs, affordable housing, commercial districts, and transportation), environmental (e.g., improved air and water quality, cleanup of contaminated sites, reduced overall health risk, reduced illegal dumping), other quality of life (e.g., enhanced access to green space), and institutional (e.g., creation of sustainable mechanism for local-problem solving, enhanced capability of public service organizations to effectively assist distressed communities); (3) a discussion that clearly explains the links between collaborating and the expected outcomes of collaborating (e.g., how collaboration will result in reduced environmental health risk for community residents) (4) identification of indicators that can be used to determine the extent to which outcomes are being achieved; (5) identification of agreed upon questions to systematically identify key factors contributing to partnership progress and success; and (6) development of a user-friendly data gathering plan –

one that will not pose a significant burden on partner members and that can be easily used to improve partnership performance.

Review opportunities to forge stronger links between established government environmental programs that are critical to the cleanup and revitalization of disadvantaged communities. These include federal initiatives such as DOE's Brightfields, EPA's Brownfields, DOE's Clean Cities, DOE's Rebuild America, EPA's Smart Growth Index, EPA's Superfund, and others. These programs produce results acting independently. In order to fully meet the needs of communities challenged by numerous environmental, public health, and socio-economic issues, EJ collaborative partnerships would greatly benefit if the leaders and coordinators of these programs either enhance or begin formal partnerships with each other. Community members can become easily overwhelmed with the numerous different national government initiatives, and can become dismayed when agencies appear to lack coordination on programs that in theory seem naturally complementary. Formal coordination efforts could include periodic assessments of (1) how cooperation by government program coordinators can be improved, (2) how related government programs could be tailored to more easily complement one another, and (3) how the public regularly obtains access to and uses these programs. In addition, opportunities for linkages between existing non-federal environmental and community revitalization initiatives that could benefit EJ collaborative partnerships should be reviewed and outlined to partnership members.

The IWG has played an important leadership role in supporting, nurturing, and promoting EJ collaborative partnerships. However both current and future partnerships would benefit by expanded IWG support. First, each IWG-sponsored partnership would benefit by having a designated champion within the IWG. This would enable partnership concerns to be regularly articulated and then debated by senior officials representing several federal agencies who are already familiar with environmental justice issues and the use of collaborative approaches for addressing them. Second, partnerships would benefit by additional technical assistance in the form of planning and evaluation, regular diffusion of lessons learned, and greater understanding of the availability and accessibility of the broad array of resources, particularly at the federal level, for both community partnership building and community revitalization initiatives. Regarding community partnership building resources, partner members could benefit from greater information on and access to: (1) leadership and organizational capacity-strengthening opportunities, (2) partnership training, (3) environmental justice training, (4) alternative dispute resolution services, and (5) training for strategic planning and evaluation. Regarding community revitalization resources, partnerships could benefit from information regarding environmental, economic development, transportation access, housing, and crime prevention programs. Furthermore, partnerships could benefit from tools that enable them to understand the linkages between these programs and how they could be accessed and used collectively to better meet environmental and revitalization goals. Although it is beyond the scope of the IWG to provide this type of technical assistance to partnership communities on a regular basis, the IWG can collectively help envision, oversee, and support information diffusion systems that enable partnerships to more efficiently and effectively develop and obtain desired outcomes for the partnership communities.

Core Recommendations Regarding the Use of EJ Collaborative Partnerships

For institutions at all levels responding to environmental, public health, and socio-economic challenges associated with community revitalization...

- *Expand use of multi-stakeholder collaboration as a tool for addressing EJ issues in distressed communities. Government at all levels, community organizations, faith groups, other NGOs, philanthropic foundations, and the business community should review opportunities to initiate, support, and participate in multi-stakeholder collaborative partnerships.*

For those organizations and institutions actively participating in, supporting, or overseeing EJ collaborative partnerships...

- *Identify long-term opportunities with organizations and institutions to build the administrative and coordination capacity of the collaborative partnerships.*
- *Promote community-based leadership and organizational development at the local level for communities using multi-stakeholder collaboration to address EJ issues.*
- *Focus attention on the environmental, public health, and socio-economic outcomes produced by EJ collaborative partnership activities.*

For the academic community...

- *Systematically promote rigorous academic study and intellectual discourse around the use of collaborative models to address EJ issues.*

For the IWG...

- *Link those involved in EJ collaborative partnerships into a national structure that encourages cross-partnership learning and builds additional support.*
- *Fully develop the EJ Collaborative Model.*
- *Review opportunities to forge stronger links between established government environmental programs that are critical to the cleanup and revitalization of disadvantaged communities.*
- *Expand support for both current and future EJ collaborative partnerships.*

Figure 14. Core Recommendations Regarding the Use of EJ Collaborative Partnerships

Appendices

A -List of Interviewees

B -Evaluation Guiding Principles

C -Copy of Interview Guide

Appendix A

List of Interviewees

Barrio Logan Partnership

Don Ames~	California Air Resources Board
Norma Chavez	Metropolitan Area Advisory Council on Anti-Poverty Project
Susana Concha-Garcia~	American Lung Association of San Diego & Imperial Counties
Paula Forbis	Environmental Health Coalition
Clarice Gaylord	formerly with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Steven Gold	San Diego Attorney's Office
James Justus	Inner City Business Association
Jerry Martin~	California Air Resources Board
Lane McVey	National Steel and Shipbuilding Company
David Merk	Unified Port District
Lewis Michaelson	Katz and Associates
Frank Riley	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Sonia Rodriguez~	Mercado Tenants Association
Charles "Muggs" Stoll	California Department of Transportation

Bridges to Friendship Partnership

Richard Allen	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Uwe Brandes	District of Columbia
Brian Christopher	Alice Hamilton Occupational Health Center
Gentry Davis~	U.S. National Park Service
Camille Destafny	U.S. Navy
Judith Dobbins~	Covenant House D.C.
Christine Hart-Wright	Strive DC, Inc.
Linda Jackson	Building Bridges Across the River
David Ouderkirk	U.S. Navy
Randy Parker~	U.S. Department of Labor
Reginald Parrish	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Mike Shannon~	Covenant House D.C.
Maxine Snowden~	U.S. National Park Service
Mike Wallach	Anacostia Economic Development Corporation
Babette Williams~	U.S. Department of Labor
Admiral Christopher Weaver	U.S. Navy

Metlakatla Peninsula Cleanup Partnership

Jeff Benson~	Metlakatla Indian Community
Garth Beyette	Federal Aviation Administration
Robert Deering~	U.S. Coast Guard
Frank Esposito~	U.S. Coast Guard
Jere Hayslett	Federal Aviation Administration
Robert Johnson	Army Corps of Engineers
Cliff Mahooty	U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
Felicia Wright	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Len Richeson	U.S. Department of Defense
Callie Ridolfi~	Ridolfi Engineers

~Denotes that individual participated in a group interview.

Metro East Lead Collaborative

Chris Anderson	East St. Louis Community Development Block Grant Operation
Tony Camillo	St. Mary's Hospital
Noemi Emeric	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Dave Eustis	Southwestern Illinois Resource Conservation and Development
Blair Forlaw	East-West Gateway Coordinating Council
Tom Miller	Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Rebecca Perkins	Neighbors United for Progress
Deb Roush	Army Corps of Engineers
Joan Scharf	St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department
Lue Walters	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA)

New Madrid Partnership

Walter Bone~	Great Rivers Alliance Natural Resource Districts
Victor Blackburn~	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA)
Mary Evans~	Community Facilitator
Gwen Farr	Community Health Team
Darvin Green	Lincoln University Cooperative, Community Development Corp.
Adrienne Hunter-Wells~	Community Coordinator
Laura McKeever~	Great Rivers Alliance Natural Resource Districts
Rose Minner	Community Facilitator/Community Team Member
Althea Moses	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Willie Pittman~	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA)
Fred Reeves	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA)
Ervin Schaedler~	Great Rivers Alliance Natural Resource Districts
Louise Typler	Headstart

ReGenesis Partnership

Doug Bracket	Spartanburg Technical College
George Fletcher~	Fletcher Consulting
John Funderburk	Upstate Assistant for U.S. Senator E.F. Hollings
Mike Garret	City of Spartanburg
Dr. David Goolsby	South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
Brian Holtzclaw	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Ralph Howard	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Kelly Long	Office of U.S. Congressman Jim DeMint
Harold Mitchell	ReGenesis
Cynthia Peurifoy	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Lewis Pilgrim	Arkwright Neighborhood Association
Robert Reed~	Councilman for City of Spartanburg
Elena Rush	Spartanburg County
James Talley~	formerly Mayor of City of Spartanburg
Jim Trafton	Rhodia, Inc.
Brad Wyche~	UpState Forever

~Denotes that individual participated in a group interview.

Appendix B

Guiding Principles for Evaluation of EJ Collaborative Model

This section describes eleven Guiding Principles that serve as a starting point when preparing to conduct evaluations involving communities and issues of environmental justice. The Guiding Principles are intended to inform those leading and participating in environmental justice evaluations about what evaluation is, why it is useful, how it can be done in an appropriate manner, and how evaluation results can be used to empower those participants involved. Emphasis is primarily placed on the need to be transparent, open, and sensitive to community needs and concerns when working with communities involved in any aspect of an environmental justice evaluation. Although, these principles are meant to reference Interagency environmental justice projects since it is the analysis of these projects (via case studies) that will form the basis for evaluating the environmental justice collaborative model, we hope that these principles will be used and modified by other organizations engaged in environmental justice evaluation efforts in the future. We expect that as the evaluation progresses, the Guiding Principles will need to be refined to reflect lessons learned. The eleven principles are listed briefly below and are explained in more detail on the following pages.

Guiding Principles

1	Evaluation is a learning experience. Evaluations are conducted to hear about the successes AND shortcomings of projects so that interested parties may better understand which efforts deserve duplication and which could benefit from change.
2	Evaluation should proceed from a sound understanding of the conditions, issues, and goals of the community that the project is seeking to serve.
3	Evaluation should be flexible –custom fit to the scope, time frame and objectives of the project.
4	Evaluation should closely involve all participants in each step of the evaluation process to the greatest extent feasible.
5	Evaluation should be regarded as an opportunity for project participants to advance existing relationships between partners and develop new ones with evaluators
6	The evaluator shall respect the needs and concerns of the interviewee.
7	Evaluation should allow for data to be collected and shared in ways transparent and understandable to those participating in the evaluation.
8	The evaluation should collect data using both quantitative and qualitative measures of success and ask project coordinators how they are measuring success.
9	Evaluation efforts should engage project participants in critical dialogues before, during and after the evaluation to discuss how evaluation results can be used.
10	Evaluation provides data that can help inform government agencies and their partners how to effectively address environmental justice issues at the local level.
11	Evaluation can identify and explore the value of new approaches and innovations.

1. Evaluation is a learning experience. Evaluations are conducted to hear about the successes AND shortcomings of projects so that interested parties may better understand which efforts deserve duplication and which could benefit from change.

Evaluation and case study development should be viewed as a unique opportunity to learn valuable information about a particular project. Evaluation can help participants better understand the successes and shortcomings of their project. The goal of an evaluation is not to determine success or failure but rather to determine how well a project is addressing and

remedying the problems it originally sought to address. It should be expected that evaluation of any project would describe aspects that have worked well and aspects that have proven problematic. Rather than view any problematic area as a failure, identification of these areas should be seen as an opportunity for project improvement. In addition, the lessons learned through an evaluation may prove valuable to others involved in similar efforts in other communities.

2. Evaluation should proceed from a sound understanding of the conditions, issues, and goals of the community that the project is seeking to serve. Evaluation of an environmental justice project should proceed with the understanding that the impacted community is the focal point. Any study whose evaluators do not ground their analysis by first working hard to develop a deep understanding of the participating community's conditions, issues, and goals will do a disservice to all those seeking to benefit from the evaluation.

3. Evaluation should be flexible –custom fit to the scope, time frame and objectives of the project. When developing an evaluation every effort should be made to ensure that the questions asked will enable participants to provide the information needed to properly characterize their project. Special attention should be placed on a project's scope, timeframe, and objectives. No two environmental justice projects are completely alike. For example, one project may have as its objective a discreet series of activities such as workshops conducted over a relatively short period of time aimed at influencing an immediate, focused, policy decision. Another may seek to achieve more broad, long-term objectives, such as encouraging sustainable development at the local level. To properly clarify important distinctions between projects, case studies will often be needed in addition to straightforward analysis.

4. Evaluation should closely involve all participants in each step of the evaluation process to the greatest extent feasible. Evaluation is a cooperative exercise that should closely involve all project participants in each step of the evaluation process—evaluation development, data collection, and communication of results—to the greatest extent feasible. Participants have the greatest understanding of a project's objectives and must be consulted in order to develop questions that will enable interviewees to provide the most useful information.

Project participants must also be involved to collect data and to share their experiences. Evaluation involving only a handful of participants will not provide a comprehensive account of a project. Involving participants in questionnaire development, data collection and information sharing will not only provide for a more effective evaluation but will also help pave the way for greater acceptance of the evaluation regardless of the evaluation results.

Finally, project participants must be involved in communication of results and case studies. Participants have a keen understanding of the impact the evaluation results may have on their project and can provide valuable information in determining how results should be communicated to ensure that results are used in the most constructive manner. In addition, letting participants know up-front they will be involved in the communication of results should enhance support for the evaluation.

5. Evaluation should be regarded as an opportunity for project participants to advance existing relationships between partners and develop new ones with evaluators. Environmental justice projects are unique in that they often involve stakeholders at many levels to address cross-cutting issues. Collaborative efforts often face many difficult hurdles. As such, the evaluation of a project should be viewed as an opportunity for project participants to advance existing relationships between partners and to develop new ones with evaluators. The

dialogue that emerges from interaction between participating groups throughout the evaluation experience will ultimately serve to enhance the final evaluation product and lay the groundwork for future evaluation within the community.

6. The evaluator shall respect the needs and concerns of the interviewee. The evaluator should keep several points in mind when preparing for and conducting interviews. First, the interview process must not be cumbersome. An interview process that is disrespectful of the interviewees' time or overly complex will only serve to impede the discovery of information and sour the communicative relationship between the evaluator and interviewee. The evaluator should also take pains to ensure that the interview setting does not intimidate the interviewee. Care regarding this should be considered on two levels—the physical environment and proximity during the interview to individuals with whom the interviewee does not have amicable relationships. Finally, privacy concerns of the interviewee must be respected. As an evaluator, it may be necessary to keep certain information private both (1) as a matter of courtesy and common sense—as some things are simply inappropriate to release to the public—and (2) as a means to obtain the most accurate information possible. The evaluator should address privacy concerns with the interviewees throughout the interview process.

7. Evaluation should allow for data to be collected and shared in ways transparent and understandable to those participating in the evaluation. Data will be collected and shared in an open and honest manner. When conducting an evaluation, project partners should be informed at the beginning of the evaluation what the evaluation is and why it's being performed, what information will be needed, who will be contacted to provide that information (to the extent privacy concerns are not violated), how that information will be analyzed, and how the results of the evaluation will be communicated to the public.

Every effort should be made to effectively document thoughts, experiences, and concerns of the project participants and other community members. In addition, every effort should be made to document changes in the evaluation process, as it occurs, to avoid misunderstandings, overlap, and ambiguity and minimize frustration for those conducting and/or participating in the evaluation.

Finally, in regards to sharing results, care should be taken to ensure that results are clearly communicated. Participants should then be given adequate time to review and provide feedback on them. In turn, the evaluators should give focused attention to feedback on evaluation results received from participants and clearly explain to them if, in certain instances, their comments do not influence the final product.

8. The evaluation should collect data using both quantitative and qualitative measures of success and ask project coordinators how they are measuring success. In evaluation, an inherent tension exists between quantitative and qualitative analysis. In some situations it is appropriate to have both statistical data and subjective interpretation. The evaluation should attempt to strike a healthy balance between collecting both types of data, yet recognize that many of the key elements of these projects will be hard to capture quantitatively. In addition, the evaluation should ask project coordinators how they're measuring project success. Information regarding how projects are measuring success should be used to inform the data collection needs and enhance the findings of the formal evaluation.

9. Evaluation efforts should engage project participants in critical dialogues before, during, and after the evaluation to discuss how evaluation results can be used. To go beyond simple assurances that the evaluation will indeed be helpful, before and after the

evaluation is conducted, agency leads and other participants should engage in substantive dialogues about specific ways the evaluation results can be used.

10. Evaluation provides data that can help inform government agencies and their partners how to effectively address environmental justice issues at the local level.

Government agencies and their private partners are constantly trying to improve how they develop and enact policies to address pressing economic, social, and environmental problems. However, it can be difficult to begin developing policies if there is a lack of data that can justify them doing so. Evaluation data on environmental justice projects can help inform Federal, State, Tribal, and local government agencies and their community partners how to effectively address environmental justice problems at the local level. Evaluation data on environmental justice projects can also inform Federal, State, Tribal, and local government agencies on ways to improve Federal, State, Tribal and local environmental protection policies.

11. Evaluation can identify and explore the value of new approaches and innovations.

Many environmental justice projects are engaged in new, innovative approaches to environmental problem solving. Evaluation can play an important role in validating the importance of new approaches to solve pressing economic, social, and environmental problems. New problem-solving initiatives often receive several questions about whether such initiatives are producing the intended results. This is especially the case for local problem-solving initiatives involving multiple stakeholders. Evaluating environmental justice projects can provide the data needed to properly characterize the value of these new approaches and determine whether these approaches should be expanded in the future.

Appendix C

Copy of Interview Guide

Evaluating the Environmental Justice Collaborative Model **Interview Guide**

Background

The Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (IWG) made the development of a collaborative problem-solving model a priority last year by promoting fifteen environmental justice demonstration projects. To better assess the value of the collaborative model and capture lessons learned to benefit future partnerships, the IWG committed to the development of an evaluation methodology.

To assist the IWG in carrying out this important task, the EPA Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation's Evaluation Support Division is preparing case studies of selected demonstration projects. These case studies seek to identify lessons learned in a number of important areas to gain a better understanding of this emerging collaborative model. The _____ project/partnership/collaborative has been selected to be a candidate for the case study effort.

To gather the information needed to develop the case studies and assess the overall value of the collaborative model, the Evaluation Team has created a series of interview questions to discuss with stakeholders participating in the _____ project/partnership/collaborative. Your responses to these questions will provide lessons that the Evaluation Team can use to better understand:

- key factors contributing to project success and challenges;
- the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder collaborative partnerships to address environmental justice issues; and
- the effectiveness of Federal agency involvement in these projects.

The guide includes standard questions we plan to draw from in our interviews with partners from each of the participating projects. We may also ask a limited set of additional questions that are more specific to your project. The interview will take approximately 60-90 minutes.

Your responses to these questions will be used solely by the Evaluation Team to develop the evaluation/case study report. Your name or organization will not be directly associated with any quotations used or narrative developed unless you specifically grant permission. Our notes from your interview can only be made available to outside parties through a Freedom of Information Act request; however, formal requests for interview notes are very rare.

We appreciate your assistance in this effort, and look forward to speaking with you.

1. General Background

- a. Briefly describe the main issues facing the affected community that brought the _____ project/partnership/collaborative together?

- b. How long have you been a part of the _____ project/partnership/collaborative?
- c. Why did you decide to join the _____ project/partnership/collaborative? What is your role with the project/partnership/collaborative? (e.g., facilitator, project coordinator, participant)
- d. Briefly describe how the _____ project/partnership/collaborative came about.
 -When was the project/partnership/collaborative started?
 -What stage of development is the project/partnership/collaborative in now? (e.g., early, middle, or late stages)

2. Background on Collaborative Process

- a. Please describe generally how the _____ project/partnership/collaborative works?
 -How often do you and your project/partnership/collaborative partners meet?
 -How do you make decisions as a group?
 -How were you and others asked to participate?
 -How does the group address difficult issues that arise between members?
- b. Have the organizational styles and procedures of the different organizations limited effective collaboration between partners? How do you and your partners break down organizational barriers?
- c. How does the _____ project/partnership/collaborative allow for meaningful community involvement? (e.g., are meetings open to the public, are meeting's structured so that community participants can effectively participate, are technical issues clearly explained) How has input from the affected community been used in prioritizing action plans during the planning process?
- d. To what extent has the _____ project/partnership/collaborative resulted in greater collaboration with Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments and organizations?

3. Satisfaction with Collaborative Process

- a. Have you and your organization been satisfied with your ability to participate in the project decision-making process? Please explain.
- b. Are the issues most important to you and your organization being adequately addressed by the _____ project/partnership/collaborative? Why or why not?

4. Project Activities and Results

- a. What are the main activities the _____ project/partnership/collaborative has undertaken so far? (e.g., air quality monitoring, brownfields redevelopment, community visioning workshops, etc.)
- b. To what extent has the organization you represent been able to dedicate resources to help implement these activities? (e.g., volunteer time/expertise, staff time/expertise, \$, technical assistance)
- c. What impacts have these activities had at addressing the main issues facing the affected community?

d. Are you satisfied with the outcomes of these activities so far? Please explain.

5. Project Successes and Challenges

a. How does the _____ project/partnership/collaborative plan to measure the success of these activities?

b. What has been the greatest success of the _____ project/partnership/collaborative so far? What have been the main reasons for this success?

c. What has been the biggest challenge of the _____ project/partnership/collaborative so far?

-What have been the main reasons for this challenge?

-Has your group been able to overcome this challenge? How?

6. Value of Collaborative Process to Affected Community

a. What has been the overall value of using a collaborative process to address the main issues facing the affected community?

b. Do you feel that the collaborative process used in the _____ project/partnership/collaborative can address similar issues that the affected community may face in the future? Please explain.

c. How would the main issues facing the affected community have been addressed if the _____ project/partnership/collaborative had not been formed?

d. What would you recommend to improve how the _____ project/partnership/collaborative works in the future?

e. What additional lessons can you share with other communities interested in using a collaborative process?

7. Value of Federal Involvement

a. Have participating Federal agencies identified conflicting requirements in their statutes or regulations that have been barriers to the success of the _____ project/partnership/collaborative?

b. What has been the effect of having Federal partners participate in the _____ project/partnership/collaborative for the affected community?

c. What do you think the Federal agencies have gained by participating in the _____ project/partnership/collaborative?

d. Have participating Federal agencies been better able to coordinate their activities as a result of the _____ project/partnership/collaborative?

e. What would you recommend so that Federal agencies best tailor their roles to participate in collaborative processes?