EPA'S COLLABORATION NETWORK NEWS

"Public Involvement brings the pieces together"

Winter 2008

Every issue is fun to prepare because in going through news release and notices I find gems that interest me and that I hope will engage you as well. This ninth newsletter has a particularly long list of new materials that may be helpful to readers of *Network News* as well as several feature articles.

Do share this e-newsletter with others who can use what it contains to improve their collaborative work Please help me make future issues better by contributing to them. If you discover an excellent new publication orl training, are involved in a regional or national event of interest to practitioners and would like to report on or publicize it, have a success story or a not-quite-successful project that taught you lessons that others can learn from -- send me an e-mail about it @ bonner.patricia@epa.gov. [To be added to or deleted from the distribution list, please use the same e-mail.].

Please let me know what kinds of articles and information would make the newsletter work for you. Or, better yet, take a chance – send a draft article for the next issue. I look forward to reading it and sharing it with practitioners around the nation and the world.

In This Issue:

What's New

E-PARC http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/parc/eparc/ Check this site for "free on-line resources for those who teach collaboration, public management, collaborative governance and collaborative problem solving around the world" It's a service of the Program on the Analysis and Resolution of Conflicts, the Maxwell School, Syracuse University.

Public servants at all levels (elected, appointed, and career) find themselves working in networks to solve problems that cannot be solved, or solved easily, by single organizations. These collaborative managers are no longer just unitary leaders of unitary organizations. Instead, they find themselves facilitating and negotiating with public, private, and nonprofit organizations and individuals, as well as with the public.

The need for quality teaching and training materials concerning collaborative ways to creatively solve our most pressing public policy problems has become increasingly apparent. **E-PARC** is the Program's response to this need. On this website you will find materials ranging from case studies of real-world occurrences of public collaborative problem solving in different cultures, to constructed simulations that actively engage students in collaborative problem solving processes.

Two Water Outreach Resources are now available on CD/DVD free through the National Service Center for Environmental Publications (NSCEP). Call toll-free 1-800-490-9198 or e-mail nscep@bps-lmit.com.

Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox is now out as a CD edition (publication # 841-C-05-003). The popular online resource released last year is now available to you even when you are untethered from the information superhighway. With nearly 700 MB of multimedia files, this is a slightly scaled down version of all the resources available at www.epa.gov/nps/toolbox.

Getting in Step: A DVD Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns (publication # 841-C-07-001) is now available. This 2003 classic includes chapter menus and closed captioning and runs 35 minutes.

"Engaging Citizens in Measuring and Reporting Community Conditions: A Manager's Guide" is an October 2007 report from the IBM Center for the Business of Government by Dr. Alfred Tat-Kei Ho, Associate Professor of Public Health at the School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis [800 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, In 46202, (317) 278-4898, alfred@ho.net]

The purpose of this report is to present specific guidelines to local public managers as well as nonprofit leaders on how they can work with each other and with citizen representatives to use public input to guide community conditions measurement and reporting. The report challenges the traditional notion of "performance management," in which public managers dictate what indicators should be used and how data should be analyzed and presented, and suggests that public engagement should play a larger role in the process. Two models of public engagement

are recommended: the “partnership” model emphasizes equal sharing of power between citizen representatives and public officials in deciding what and how performance indicators should be used.

Dr. Ho presents two case studies - one from Des Moines, Iowa; the other from Boston, Massachusetts - where government agencies and citizen groups reported their own or their government's performance, respectively. While each of these cases reflects different strategic approaches, they both attempt to bring together what government does and what citizens see as being important in their community. In his report, Dr. Ho examines "how government officials can engage the public more directly in performance measurement and reporting efforts and how they can communicate more effectively about the efforts and accomplishments of public policies and programs." The goal is to "make performance measurement and reporting more relevant and meaningful to taxpayers."

You can download the report or read a summary @ http://www.businessofgovernment.org/main/publications/grant_reports/details/index.asp?gid=301. View the report @ http://www.businessofgovernment.org/pdfs/Horeport.pdf

"A Manager's Guide to Resolving Conflicts in Collaborative Networks" , another IBM Center for the Business of Government report released in February 2008, may be of interest to readers. Authors Rosemary O'Leary and Lisa Bingham, expand on previous Center reports by adding an important practical tool for managers in networks: how to manage and negotiate the conflicts that may occur among a network's members. The approach they describe—interest -based negotiation --has worked in other settings, such as bargaining with unions. Such negotiation techniques are becoming crucial in sustaining the effectiveness of networks, where successful performance is defined by how well people collaborate and not by hierarchical commands.

At a recent national conference on collaborative public management convened by the two authors of this report, leading public administration scholars and practitioners present concluded after two and a half days of deliberation and debate that given the prevalence of networks, the most important skills needed for today’s managers are negotiation, bargaining, collaborative problem solving, conflict management and conflict resolution. The purpose of this report is to help managers manage and resolve conflicts in collaborative networks.

You can download the report or read a summary @ http://www.businessofgovernment.org/main/publications/grant_reports/details/index.asp?gid=302 or view the full report @ http://www.businessofgovernment.org/pdfs/OlearyBinghamReport.pdf

On January 30, 2008, the Worldwatch Institute issued its 25th annual **State of the World report, “Innovations for a Sustainable Economy."** The Institute also held a program featuring many of the authors of the chapters in this report. One of the speakers was Dan Esty, a former EPA official, who had written the Foreword. The report addresses many issues that concern environmental professionals and the public. Worldwatch has also posted audio versions of the talks at the January program at http://www.worldwatch.org/node/5572.

In the report, researchers with the Worldwatch Institute and other leading experts highlight an array of economic innovations that offer new opportunities for long-term prosperity. For example:

- In 2006, an estimated $52 billion was invested in wind power, biofuels, and other renewable energy sources, up 33 percent from 2005. Preliminary estimates indicate that the figure soared as high as $66 billion in 2007.
- Carbon trading is growing even more explosively, reaching an estimated $30 billion in 2006, nearly triple the amount traded in 2005.
- Innovative companies are revolutionizing industrial production while also saving money: for example, chemical giant DuPont cut its greenhouse gas emissions 72 percent below 1991 levels by 2007, saving $3 billion in the process.

EPA to Reopen Libraries -- In a Joint Explanatory Statement to Accompany Consolidated Appropriations Amendment was the following:

"The amended bill includes $1,000,000 above the request to restore the network of EPA libraries recently closed or consolidated by the administration, instead of $2,000,000 as proposed by the Senate. The Agency is directed to submit a report to the Committees on Appropriation regarding actions it will take to restore publicly available libraries to provide information and data to each EPA region within 90 days of enactment of this Act."

The paragraph is on page 35 of the joint statement @ http://www.houserules.house.gov/110text/omni/jes/jesdivf.pdf

The Center for Watershed Protection has three documents available as free downloads @ http://www.cwp.org/PublicationStore/USRM.htm An Integrated Framework to Restore Small Urban Watersheds, Methods to Develop Restoration Plans for Small Urban Watersheds and Urban Stormwater Retrofit Practices

Green Scene Podcasts -- Whether you're watching online or listening on your MP3 player, Green Scene Podcasts are a way to explore environmental issues with EPA's top experts. Through EPA's latest downloadable tool, Agency officials discuss how EPA is helping protect our nation's environment while providing useful tips and information on how to make a difference in local communities. Discussions will take place biweekly and run about five minutes. The Green Scene Podcast box is located on EPA's home page at http://**www.epa.gov**. All discussions are archived and posted at http://**www.epa.gov/newsroom/greenscene** .

Webcasts Give Free Watershed Training -- EPA's Watershed Academy sponsors free monthly Webcasts for watershed practitioners from around the globe. The seminars, featuring expert instructors, help train local watershed organizations, municipal leaders, and others about watershed topics. Participants log on to the web or join by phone. You must register in advance to participate. Dozens of past Webcasts are also available. They cover topics such as social marketing, effective outreach, low impact development, pollutant trading, water quality monitoring, stormwater management, and watershed planning. For details, past session archives, and current offerings, go to www.epa.gov/watershedwebcasts .

Update on the Case Foundation's Make it Your Own Grants – There were nearly 5,000 applications for the Make It Your Own Awards - the Case Foundation's new civic engagement grants program. Clearly, people want to make a difference in their communities.

The top 100 breakthrough ideas have recently been named and posted to the web site. All applicants received an online fundraising tool. A panel of judges will soon select the top 20 finalists and each finalist will be awarded a $10,000 grant. The final four will be selected by visitors to the Awards website and each will receive an additional $25,000 grant. Be sure to visit and vote! http://casefoundation.org/make-it-your-own/features/stories/fundraising

Webcasts Give Free Watershed Training -- EPA's Watershed Academy sponsors free monthly Webcasts for watershed practitioners from around the globe. The seminars, featuring expert instructors, help train local watershed organizations, municipal leaders, and others about watershed topics. Participants log on to the web or join by phone. You must register in advance to participate. Dozens of past Webcasts are also available. They cover topics such as social marketing, effective outreach, low impact development, pollutant trading, water quality monitoring, stormwater management and watershed planning. For details, past session archives, and current offerings, go to www.epa.gov/watershedwebcasts .

2008 Symposium on Innovating for Sustainable Results: Integrated Approaches for Energy, Climate and the Environment. Presentations given/materials distributed during the January 7 -10 symposium are now up on the website, which can be accessed using the following link: http://www.excelgov.org/sustainableresults

More presentations will be added to the website as they are received, so do check back periodically for updates. Sponsors also plan to post the filmed plenary sessions on the website. If you have any questions, please send an email to cmurray@excelgov.org, or call (202) 728-0418.

Collaborative Versus Technocratic Policymaking: California's Statewide Water Plan – David Booher of the Collaborative Democracy Nework calls this "one of the first studies to directly compare collaborative planning methods with more traditional methods." The 79-page report was published by the Center for Collaborative Policy at California State University Sacramento and can be downloaded as a pdf from: http://www.csus.edu/ccp/publications/collab_vs_techno_abstract.htm .

Training available from the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution Morris K. Udall Foundation -- If you initiate, design, participate or lead collaborative problem solving or conflict resolution processes and are looking for training to be more effective in resolving environmental conflicts, then the U.S. Institute training may fit your needs. You will learn by doing, not as a passive learner. You'll learn how to use collaborative approaches that promote workable solutions to environmental disputes.

Visit the Training page at www.ecr.gov to view the 2008 course catalog and course descriptions, to waitlist yourself to receive notification when new offerings are scheduled, or to register for open enrollment sessions of:

- Collaborative Competencies - open sessions - April in Washington DC
- Advanced Multi-Party Negotiation of Environmental Disputes - open sessions - March in Washington DC

Other training opportunities include:

- Introduction to Managing Environmental Conflict
- Facilitative Leadership
- Collaboration in NEPA
- Laying the Groundwork for Effective Government-to-Government Negotiation

New publications from ICMA

Though all of these items focus on local government, the problem they address is the same one facing federal and state governments: managers are retiring in large numbers.

-- **Local Governments Preparing the Next Generation: 28 Case Studies** [http://icma.org/main/bc.asp?bcid=810&hsid=9&ssid1=2697&ssid2=2867] – This guidebook highlights programs being used by local governments who believe it is their responsibility to mentor young and mid-career professionals. It is ICMA's goal for this guidebook to be a resource for cities to use when building their own programs designed to prepare the next generation.

-- **Preparing the Next Generation — A Guide for Current and Future Local Government Managers**
[http://icma.org/main/bc.asp?bcid=525&hsid=9&ssid1=2697&ssid2=2702]
This guide was developed to inspire young and mid-career professionals and to help the senior public manager prepare, develop, and motivate the next generation. The guide compiles information and data obtained from interviews, survey research, and best practices identified by a working group from the City Managers Department of the League of California Cities and others through a partnership with the California City Management Foundation and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). This resource highlights the personal views and experiences of a select group of city and county administrators who believe it is their responsibility to mentor and support aspiring managers. The guide conveys

- The exciting essence of public service—what it means to work in local government
- The rewards of performing the top job in a local government organization
- The role of elected officials in attracting new talent to local government
- Perspectives of executive recruiters who evaluate up-and-comers
- Strategies for assistants who want to develop powerful partnerships with their managers
- Self-development strategies for aspiring managers
- Best practices for senior managers in preparing the next generation.

Preparing the Next Generation provides the language—in the form of firsthand accounts from seasoned professionals—that managers can use to attract and retain gifted and talented young adults and qualified individuals from other fields to careers in local government management [or other levels of government service].

-- Prepared by Frank Benest, City Manager in Palo Alto, CA, **39 Best Practices for Preparing the Next Generation** http://jobs.icma.org/documents/next/chapter10.pdf, is chapter 10 of the Preparing the Next Generation Guide. This chapter describes the best practices of city and county managers who have focused on their developmental role in preparing the next generation. The best practices are catalogued in 4 areas: personal attitude, specific practices, structured programs and other.

"Champions of Participation" is now available – Though opportunities for engagement continue to emerge in the UK and internationally, a challenge remains: to embed participatory practice

within local governments so that the changes work and are also long lasting. This was the focus of a five-day June 2007 workshop held in the UK, led by the Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability (DRC), LogoLink, and the Institute of Developme nt Studies. Local officials and other leaders from 15 different countries took part in the event. The resulting report @ (http://www.drc-citizenship.org/docs/publications/reports/Championsofparticipationreport.pdf) is a summary of the state of innovation in democratic governance worldwide.

Achieving the Promise of Authentic Community-Higher Education Partnerships: Community Partners Get Organized! This new report about community partner perspectives on community-higher education partnerships is one of the many outcomes of the April 2006 Community Partner Summit. In addition to offering key ingredients and a framework for authentic community-higher education partnerships, the report details a vision for these partnerships articulated by the Summit's community partner participants, along with strategies and recommendations on how to achieve this vision. The report also describes the work that has been done by these community partners and **Community-Campus Partnerships for Health** (**CCPH**) since the Summit in the areas of peer mentoring, policy development and advocacy. Download the report from the Community Partner Summit webpage at http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/cps-summit.html#Products.

Learn more about the work that's continued since the Summit, including opportunities to get involved, at http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/cps.html. If you know of community partners, whether new to community-higher education partnerships or more experienced, who may be interested in connecting with their peers, please put them in touch with CCPH Program Director Kristine Wong by email at kristine@u.washington.edu or phone at (206) 543-7954.

EPA has several websites designed to educate and assist those who want to "green" their meeting. If you plan and organize meetings, these sites may be helpful:
http://www.epa.gov/oppt/greenmeetings/pubs/current_init.htm - This website focuses on the Agency's initiatives pertaining to Green Meetings, Green Hotel, Green Hotel Standards, and other related Agency programs.
http://www.epa.gov/oppt/greenmeetings/pubs/tool.htm - This website highlights tips, tools, and resources to assist in making environmentally responsible choices when oganizing a conference or meeting.

http://www.epa.gov/oppt/epp/pubs/meet/greenmeetings.htm - This website provides practical information about environmental aspects of meeting planning and management. It also highlights the Agency's five guiding principles used to make environmentally preferable purchases:

1. Include environmental factors as well as traditional considerations of price and performance as part of the normal purchasing process.
2. Emphasize pollution prevention early in the purchasing process.
3. Examine multiple environmental attributes throughout a product's or service's life cycle.
4. Compare relative environmental impacts when selecting products and services.
5. Collect and base purchasing decisions on accurate and meaningful information about environmental performance.

Featured Upcoming Events

The **International Institute for Indigenous Resource Management** is sponsoring two events in Denver, Colorado during March.

-- On March 18-20, 2008, it will hold its **Third Annual Tribal Energy Policy Roundtable** to bring together high level tribal, industry, and government leaders and experts in the many fields of energy, environment, science and technology, and policy in a series of facilitated dialogues to:

- examine the emerging global, national, regional, and tribal environment in which tribal energy and development policies will be made
- identify the impacts of energy, social, and technological adaptations to climate change and increased global competition for energy resources
- establish a framework for rationalizing tribal energy policy.

Find registration and logistics information @ http://www.iiirm.org/Events/Conferences%20and%20Roundtables/2008_3rd_tribal_energy_conf/3rd_tribal_energy_conf_main.htm

-- On March 24-25, 2008 the Institute will be again holding its popular workshop on **The National Environmental Policy Act in Indian Country**. For preliminary agenda and registration information, click here http://www.iiirm.org/Events/Workshops/Workshop%20Announcements%20and%20Agendas/2008%20March%20NEPA%20Denver/2008%20March%20NEPA%20Workshop%20Agenda.pdf.

The **International Association for Public Participation** (IAP2) inviting you to attend its international conference to be held in Glasgow, Scotland at the University of Strathclyde, August 27 – 29, 2008. The conference is entitled**: "Public Participation and Corporate Social Responsibility: from why to how."** The themes of the conference are built around the following questions:

- What structures and processes do we need to ensure greater accountability of business and industry?
- How can trust in organizations be built through participation and engagement?
- What innovative ways are there for governments and organizations to engage with citizens around contentious and divisive issues?
- What processes and techniques are needed to ensure that the most marginalized and excluded members of society are able to effectively engage in decision making processes?
- How can business successfully involve the public in developing new products and processes?
- Where are we heading in this new interface of public participation and corporate and organizational responsibility?

For more information, contact: "Diane Coyle" diane.coyle@strath.ac.uk

Registration is now open for the "Making Every Voice Matter" national conference hosted by Everyday Democracy (formerly the Study Circles Resource Center) on June 12-- 14, 2008 at the Denver Renaissance Hotel.. The preliminary conference program is also now available.

Cities and towns across the country are giving people a voice in decisions that affect their lives. From building racial equity to improving education to reducing poverty, everyday people are at the center of creating community change. Everyday Democracy's 2008 national conference will provide a space for these communities to share and learn what it takes to make every voice matter in creating and sustaining change. Sessions will cover a variety of topics, including:

- Creating equitable opportunity and access among racial and ethnic groups. Better understand "embedded racism" and its affects on a community's effort to address a public problem. Learn how communities are creating pathways to promote racial equity.
- Moving the dialogue to action**.** Talking the talk isn't enough. You have to walk the talk. Learn the importance of building change into a program's goals and supporting program actions.
- Resourcing and evaluating program efforts**.** Get help in identifying possible assets and resources needed to accomplish program action ideas. Understand the impact of a program by using concrete evaluation tools.
- Enhancing a dialogue-to-change effort by using various civic processes. Expand your toolbox to include other processes to achieve change.

The 2008 National Environmental Partnership Summit: "Accelerating Environmental Performance: Pathways to Action" will beheld at the Sheraton Baltimore City Center Hotel [101 West Fayette Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201] from March 19- 22, 2008.

Early Registration closes March 7, 2008. Full week registration fees will increase from $395 to $495 for Government, Academic and NGO, and from $600 to $700 for Industry after March 7, 2008. Registration is here: http://www.environmentalsummit.org/register.cfm

Keynote speakers include: Philippe Cousteau Jr. Co-Founder, President and Chief Executive Officer of EarthEcho International, a Washington, D.C. based environmental advocacy group that focuses on the Earth's oceans, and Bob Willard, leading corporate sustainability expert and author of several books including, "The Sustainability Advantage: Seven Business Case Benefits of a Triple Bottom Line".

161 proposals for sessions by more than 100 organizations and EPA offices were submitted for review, selection and session design by teams of your peers! The conference will feature 9 tracks that will be woven into a total of 6 breakouts of 7 sessions each. An additional 10+ p2, CA, and performance track working sessions will be held Wednesday morning - that means over 52 sessions to choose from, to learn first hand what your colleagues from around the country are doing right now.

Trainings, Site Visits, P2, CA, and Performance Track meetings will span the entire Summit week and include a wide range of opportunities. For more information visit the Summit agenda online: http://www.environmentalsummit.org/agenda.cfm For more information, telephone: 443-904-0752 or visit : http://www.environmentalSummit.org/

"Learning Democracy by Doing, **Alternative Practices in Citizenship Learning and Participatory Democracy,"** organized by the Transformative Learning Centre (TLC), Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto (OISE/UT) will be held in Toronto, Canada, October 16-18, 2008. This international conference aims at bringing together researchers and practitioners interested in the theoretical and practical intersections between social action learning and participatory democracy, and their contribution to nurturing both an enlightened and active citizenship, and stronger and deeper democracies. The deadline for submissions of 300 word abstracts is March 2, 2008. The deadline for submission of papers is July 31, 2008.

Sponsors wish to attract presentations that examine past or present innovative and progressive practices of transformative citizenship learning and participatory democracy in different settings, including formal and non-formal educational institutions, civil society organizations, municipal governments and workplaces. They encourage presentations that pay attention to the strengths as well as to the weaknesses of those initiatives, placing them in their particular social and historical contexts.

The deadline for early [lower cost] registration is July 31, 2008. For further information, please visit: http://tlc.oise.utoronto.ca/wordpress/conferences/october2008

The **Office of Personnel Management** is offering several seminars that can provide key skills for leading, managing and communicating effectively when you hit those everyday speed bumps, as well as when unexpected crises and simmering interpersonal tensions suddenly detonate. Follow the links below to learn more.

-- **Interpersonal Communication for Workplace Success** at the Western Management Development Center, Aurora, Colorado, March 17 - 20, 2008. Find more information @ http://www.leadership.opm.gov/Programs/

-- **Planning for Unexpected Challenges** at the Eastern Management Development Center, Shepherdstown, West Virginia, and March 24 - 28, 2008. Find more information @ http://www.leadership.opm.gov/Programs/Specialized-Skills/CMS/Index.aspx

Featured Articles

CARE Grants

CARE is a community-based, community-driven, multi-media demonstration program. The program helps communities form collaborative partnerships, develop a comprehensive understanding of the many sources of risk from toxics and environmental pollutants, set priorities, and carry out projects to reduce risks through collaborative action at the local level. CARE's long-term goal is to help communities build self-sustaining, community-based partnerships that will continue to improve human health
and local environments into the future.

The 2008 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency CARE Cooperative Agreement Request for Proposals (RFP) is now available on-line at: http://www.epa.gov/air/grants_funding.html#0802 This year the application time line has been extended to 3 months and the **deadline** is **March 17**, **2008**.

The CARE website has additional information related to the CARE RFP, including Q&A Webcasts, so also visit: http://www.epa.gov/CARE

About $3 million will be available in 2008 to support community-based partnerships to reduce pollution at the local level through the Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program. EPA anticipates awarding CARE cooperative agreements in two levels. Level I cooperative agreements range from $75,000 to $100,000 and will help establish community-based partnerships to develop local environmental priorities. Level II awards, ranging from $150,000 to $300,000 each, will support communities which have established broad-based partnerships, have identified the priority toxic risks in the community, and are prepared to measure results, implement risk reduction activities, and become self-sustaining.

In 2007, $3.4 million in cooperative agreements were made available to more than 20 communities through the CARE program, a community-based, community-driven program that builds partnerships to help the public understand and reduce toxic risks from numerous sources. Examples of projects include addressing abandoned, contaminated industrial and residential properties in Gary, Ind., dealing with agriculture-related toxics in Yakima County, Wash., and reducing air emissions from diesel trucks and buses in Woonsocket, R.I. Since 2005, the grants to reduce toxics in the environment have reached almost 50 communities in over 20 states.

Eligible applicants include county and local governments, tribes, non-profit organizations and universities. The request for proposals is on-line at www.epa.gov/air/grants/08-02.pdf .

The next item is taken, with permission for use, from articles that appeared in ICMA's e-newsletter, Local Government Matters. ***["****Teach Someone to Fill Your Shoes," and "Developing Existing Talent to Ensure a Future Leadership Pipeline"]*

Developing Existing Talent to Ensure a Future Leadership Pipeline

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, by 2006, there were 151 million jobs in the U.S. economy but only 141 million people in the workforce to fill them.[1] The greatest turnover in aging workers, says Frank Benest, city manager, Palo Alto, California, will be in executive, administrative, and managerial occupations.[2] The U.S. General Accounting Office reports that 53 percent of middle managers in the federal workforce qualified for retirement in 2004.[3]

As the baby boomers leave, a much smaller group of young professionals is in line and prepared to fill their shoes. Compounding this vacancy is a staggering number of nonprofits and public-service-oriented private companies that did not exist 20 and 30 years ago that are competing for the new workforce talent. Technology's edge increases the ease of being an independent worker or entrepreneur today, further dwindling the attractiveness of government

public service.

Many seasoned local [federal and state] government managers started their careers as interns and entry-level analysts. Local governments [federal and state] across the country cut back these positions due to funding constraints and increasing community needs. These cutbacks combined with increasing opportunities to make a difference outside government have withered the supply of ready-to-go managers.

Because five out of eight public sector employees work in local government, city and county governments are particularly at risk.[4] In 1971, for example, nearly 71 percent of professional city, town, and county managers were age 40 or younger. By 2006, that percentage had fallen to only 13 percent![5]

In addition to issues related to the aging and impending retirement of many public sector managers, local governments face a number of demographic challenges. The ethnic, racial, and gender composition among local government chief administrative officers (CAOs) has changed slowly over the last three decades while our communities have become more diverse. In 2006, 20% of city, town, and county CAOs were women, 4% were African American, roughly 3% were Hispanic, and another 10% were either Asian or Native American.[6]

To address the changes that must take place within the local government workforce, organizations such as ICMA have launched programs designed to help communities attract and develop a wide and diverse group of people into the local government management profession by

1. Promoting awareness of the local government management profession and encouraging individuals to consider careers in the field.
2. Helping new and early careerists land their first jobs in local government.
3. Engaging local government management professionals in professional membership organizations such as ICMA and state managers' associations early in their careers.
4. Building the leadership pipeline by engaging and developing promising individuals so that they are prepared to step into leadership roles, both in their local governments and their professional associations.

Local government civics education, internship, and fellowship programs help communities attract students, recent graduates, and career changers to positions as public service managers. Communities also must create and implement succession plans that develop and retain those individuals currently in their organizations.

Finally, local [state and federal] governments can advocate the important role that senior executives play in developing talented individuals already in the leadership pipeline. ICMA engages its members whose experience, adherence to high standards of integrity, and assessed commitment to lifelong learning and professional development have earned them distinction as Credentialed Managers by recruiting them as Legacy Leaders. These individuals enrich the profession by coaching and mentoring young professionals and assistant/deputy managers.

The time for public sector organizations to develop new leadership talent is now! Visit ICMA's Next Generation Web site for information on the organization's activities and programs for students and early careerists. Or contact Rob Carty, Next Generation program manager at rcarty@icma.org; 202/962-3560.

Look around you – you'll find some managers who are aware of these challenges and working diligently to help fill this gap. They've asked themselves: "Have I identified great people I can help build-up and move on? Am I making myself available as a coach and mentor? Do I have a snapshot of my organization's upcoming retirements? Am I readying my organization for workforce changes?"

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[1] Selbert, Roger, "The New Workforce," *Growth Strategies* No. 954 (June 2003): 4.

[2] Benest, Frank, ed., "A Call to Action," in *Preparing the Next Generation,* ICMA (International City/County Management Association), 200TK.

[3]*Federal Employee Retirements: Expected Increase over the Next 5 Years Illustrates Need for Workforce Planning,* report no. GAO-01-509 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Accounting Office, April 2001), 17–18.

[4] Ehrenhalt, Samuel M., *Government Employment Report* 6 (June 1999): 19–22, quoted in Marnie E. Green, "Beware and Prepare: The Government Workforce of the Future," www.managementeducationgroup.com/frames/articles/beware.html.

[5] ICMA's 2006 State of the Profession Survey results.

[6] 1989 ICMA membership data.

Democracy Helpline: Connecting Public Managers with the Resources They Need to Reach Citizens

by Matt Leighninger

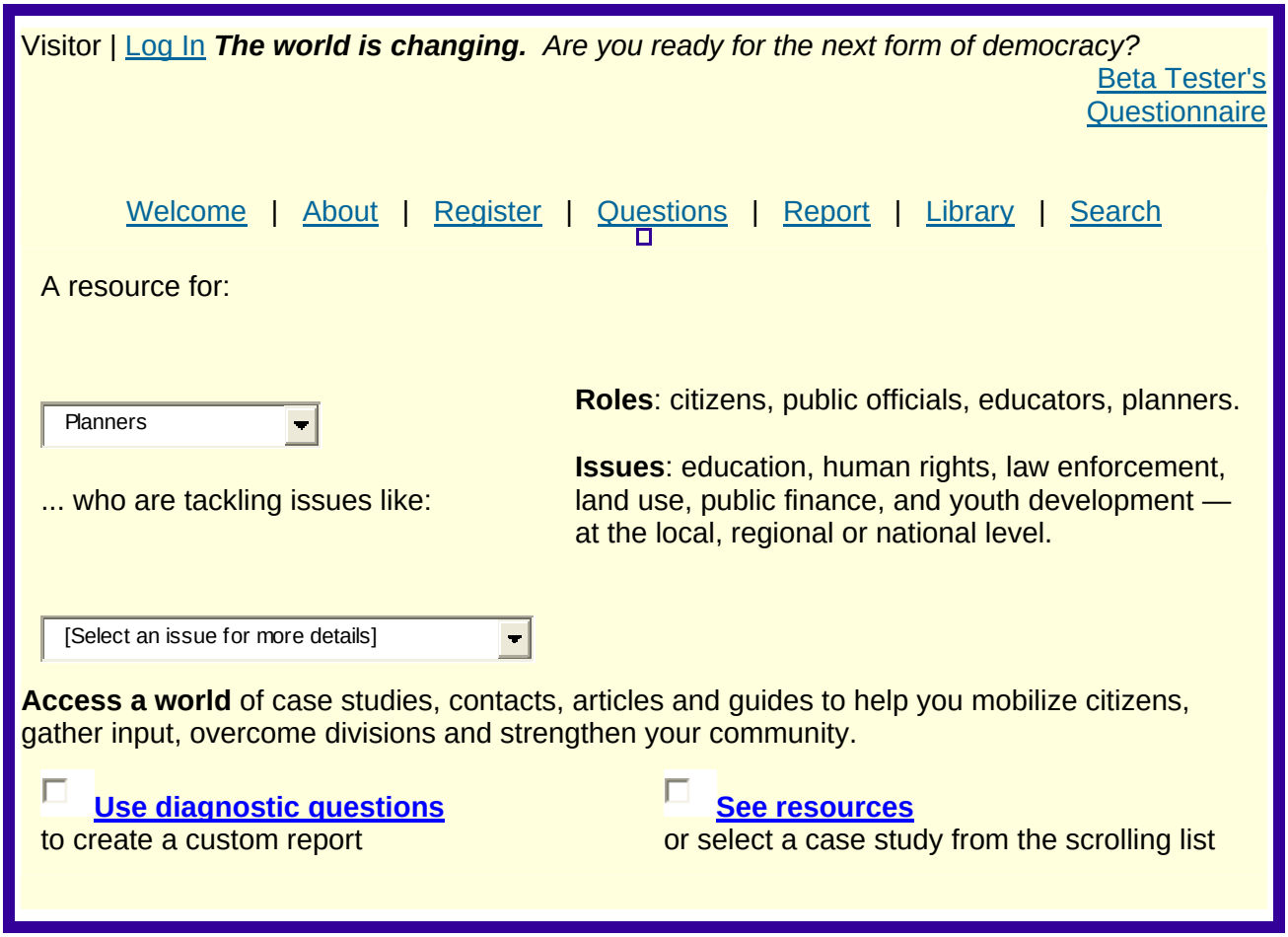
Beneath the national radar, democracy is undergoing a dramatic and critical shift in its development. Citizens are more educated, skeptical, capable, and diverse; they are better at governing, and worse at being governed, than ever before. Public managers and other leaders are tired of confrontation and desperate for resources. To address persistent challenges like land use planning, environmental protection, education, race relations, crime prevention and economic development leaders are trying to find new ways for people and public servants to work together.

Hundreds of these civic experiments have coalesced around a core set of strategies. Elected officials, federal agency personnel, school administrators and other leaders are recruiting large, diverse numbers of people and involving them in small, deliberative groups, big action forums and ongoing structures like neighborhood councils. They are creating new arenas where citizens can compare notes on their experiences, analyze different options, find common ground, make decisions and take action.

The proliferation of this kind of democratic governance (with a small 'd') has produced a wealth of new stories, lessons, tools and other resources. Partly because the growth has been so diffuse, it has been very difficult for new potential innovators and pioneers to find out what others have done. Many of these leaders have very little connection to the either the scholarly research or the national nonprofit organizations that focus on democracy.

The promise of the Democracy Helpline, a project of the Deliberative Democracy Consortium (DDC), is to help potential democracy-builders find the powerful stories, strategies and principles they need to be successful in their efforts. The Beta version of the Helpline can now be viewed at http://helpline.deliberative-democracy.net.

The DDC is a network of practitioners and researchers representing more than 30 organizations and universities, collaborating to strengthen the field of deliberative democracy. The DDC seeks to support research activities and to advance practice at all levels of government, in North America and around the world (see www.deliberative-democracy.net).



Helpline home page

The idea for the Helpline first emerged at a 2003 DDC meeting. At that gathering, participants started talking about ways to deliver some of the key lessons learned by practitioners and researchers in a way that would help people 'on the front lines' who were just beginning to think about how to work differently with citizens.

The Helpline has also attracted support from a number of other national associations. Several DDC Partners – including the National League of Cities, League of Women Voters, Grassroots Grantmakers, and National School Public Relations Association – have committed to featuring the Democracy Helpline link on their web-sites, and promoting the Helpline through their other internal communication vehicles, such as newsletters, e-mail bulletins and conferences.

The Helpline is now an unprecedented resource that people can access through the Internet (and, in the future, by phone). Stories are the essence of the Helpline: the most valuable way

to inspire and prepare new organizers is to give them narratives of existing projects that give them inspiration and useful lessons. The backbone of the Helpline is a database of these kinds of narratives, along with deliberation-related publications and links to resource organizations all over the world.

Many of the resources were contributed by Pat Bonner and her colleagues at the EPA. Others were provided by the Policy Consensus Initiative, Public Agenda, Everyday Democracy, the Collaborative Governance Initiative and the National League of Cities.

On the Democracy Helpline section of the DDC web-site, users encounter some diagnostic questions that help them think through the specifics of their citizen involvement projects. Using the answers to these diagnostic questions, the site then offers a set of publications, organizations and program examples that matched their needs and interests.

In the future, the Democracy Helpline will also have a more traditional side: a telephone number that connects callers with a knowledgeable resource person, the Helpline Manager. The Helpline Manager will use the same kinds of diagnostic questions to probe the interests and needs of the caller. This initial conversation, coupled with continued use of the online database, might be enough to meet the needs of some callers. For those with more complicated questions, the Helpline Manager will summarize the situation in a report to the DDC's director and an expert panel of practitioners, who will evaluate the request and respond within a set number of days.

Some examples of how the Helpline works:

- A neighborhood organizer who wants to know how to mobilize residents around crime and trash pickup concerns is presented with how-to ideas and stories of what happened when neighborhoods in Yonkers, New York, and Delray Beach, Florida addressed these issues.
- A high school student interested in working with her peers on intergroup tension finds about the way that youth leaders initiated school-based projects in Silver Spring, Maryland, and launched a community-wide effort in Kuna, Idaho.
- A city planner who indicates a desire to work with residents in low-income neighborhoods is presented with case studies like the Neighbors Building Neighborhoods process in Rochester, New York, and the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative in San Jose, California.
- A parent who wants to help other parents work more constructively with the school their children attend learns about examples from school districts in Kansas City, Kansas and Inglewood, California.
- A federal official who shows an interest in involving citizens in complex science-based policy questions is given examples like the Danish Technology Boards, the engagement efforts of the Centers for Disease Control on pandemic influenza, and the work of the National Nanotechnology Initiative.

As a Beta site, the Helpline is very much a work in progress. Users can give their comments and suggestions by using an online survey accessible through the front page. In addition, the DDC is actively collecting more stories and resources; send your submissions to mattleighninger@earthlink.net.

Matt Leighninger is executive director of the Deliberative Democracy Consortium and the author of The Next Form of Democracy: How Expert Rule is Giving Way to Shared Governance – And Why Democracy Will Never Be the Same.

Smart Growth Conference Focuses on Collaboration

by Carlton Eley, EPA Development, Community, and Environment Division, OPEI

Nearly 1,400 people attended the 7th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth Conference held at the Marriott Wardman Hotel in Washington DC., February 7 - 9, 2008. It was a diverse gathering of participants and speakers who crossed disciplines to share experiences, insights and valuable tools and strategies to encourage Smart Growth implementation.

The conference program included over 100 sessions and more than 300 speakers. It had a dynamic mix of seminars, interactive breakouts, implementation workshops, specialized trainings and optional tours of local model projects. The event featured the latest on cutting-edge Smart Growth issues such as LEED-ND [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Design], implementation tools and strategies, best practices, interactive learning experiences, new partners, new projects and new policies.

Partially due to the government's response to Katrina and disinterest in joining the Kyoto Protocol, many speakers voiced strong beliefs that America must change at the federal level to achieve any advances in stemming our overwhelming contribution to global warming.1

The need for greater collaboration and cooperation was another common theme during the conference. The session "Building Great Communities Through Collaborative Problem Solving" featured William Ngutter, an architect; Jair Lynch, a developer; and Sanford Garner, an urban designer. The experts discussed why understanding social diversity and responding to social change are keys to effective physical planning of communities and neighborhoods. They shared successful examples, based on their own work, to leverage better community outcomes through partnerships that address equity and inclusion from the jump-start of the development process rather than as an afterthought. For example, Sanford Garner offered remarks about the Fall Creek Place HUD Homeownership Zone in Indianapolis, and he discussed how the community was redeveloped while meeting the needs of incumbent residents and new residents.

The conference also featured the session "Equitable Development is Smart." Carlton Eley, an EPA employee in the Smart Growth Program, moderated a discussion that explained how technical assistance, advocacy and capacity building are tools that can be applied to improve quality of life within distressed communities. The panelists included Karen Torain, the Chief Asset Development and Preservation Officer for the City of Newark and Representative Harold Mitchell of the South Carolina Legislature. Harold is also the executive director of ReGenesis, and the work of ReGenesis has been documented in the EPA report "EPA's Environmental Justice Collaborative-Problem Solving Model -- http://www.epa.gov/Compliance/resources/publications/ej/grants/cps-manual-12-27-06.pdf. Both presenters discussed local initiatives to revitalize communities while inspiring a renewed sense of public engagement, stewardship, and cooperation among citizens and institutions.

The New Partners for Smart Growth Conference wrapped up on Saturday, February 9. In 2009, the conference will be held in New Mexico. Presentations from the 7th Annual Conference will be posted to Smart Growth Online -- http://www.smartgrowth.org/. To access presentations from previous years, visit to the following sites:

- http://www.smartgrowth.org/newpartners/NPSG2007.asp
- http://www.smartgrowth.org/library/articles.asp?art=1490

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1 Vision Long Island, Smart Growth Newsletter, February 11 – 15, 2008.

Collaboration Training Coming in 2008

by Patricia Bonner, NCEI staff

Collaboration skills are a core competency vital for all, in both our professional and personal roles. William Ruckelshaus, EPA's first Administrator, recognized that only by working with our co-regulators, stakeholder and the public could we hope to achieve our mission to protect public health and the environment. For thirty-seven years EPA has been experimenting with collaborative decision making processes and partnerships with varying degrees of success.

Understanding and mastering collaborative skills, knowledge and behaviors will enable EPA to improve relationships and increase capacity to leverage resources, both internally and externally. By enhancing their collaboration capacities, the next generation of EPA leaders can become more successful professionally, help build a Stronger EPA and improve the agency's ability to build effective partnerships.

The Working Together workshop is itself the result of collaboration. National Center for Environmental Innovation (NCEI) staff partnered with the Office of Human Resources and the Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center as well as with internal and external practitioners to develop the content. In November 2007, twenty-four people participated in a beta test of the material. A revised workshop was very well received at the Innovation Symposium in January 2008..

The ***next*** step is to prepare people to present the course all across EPA. Offering the workshop in many regions and offices should enable the agency to put into place a common language and a common set of behaviors and skills that can foster partnerships and more successful collaborative actions.

The National Center for Environmental Innovation is now recruiting up to 30 EPA individuals who will be certified to facilitate the workshop during a 2.5 day Train-the-Trainer event to be held May 6-8 in room 4870 of EPA's Potomac Yard Conference Center facility [2777 Crystal Drive, Arlington, Virginia 22202]. The completed applications [only on EPA Intranet site] are due to Patricia Bonner by March 31, 2008.

If you are an EPA employee who is interested and would like to participate, please complete the form. You are also welcome to share the link with others in the agency who, in your opinion, would be effective trainers.

Soon after the May event, individuals within EPA can take the first step in improving their collaborative capabilities by registering for the one-day workshop **"Working Together: An Introduction to Collaborative Decision Making"** [only on EPA Intranet site] when it is offered in their offices, regions and laboratories. In a single day there will be the opportunity to better understand collaborative processes; use situation assessment to determine when, which process[es] to use and their likelihood of succeeding; explore key collaborative skills and behaviors and grow their ability to be a collaborative leaders.

[If you are an individual outside EPA and interested in the workshop, send an e-mail to bonner.patricia@epa.gov requesting she add you to a mailing list of people outside the agency who

wish to track the progress of this effort and its possible extension to our partners. Pat will also send you the Working Together course flyer]

SELECTING THE RIGHT TOOL FOR EVALUATIONS: GUIDANCE FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PRACTITIONERS

by Seth Tuler, Caron Chess, Susan Santos, Stentor Danielson and Thomas Webler

Community involvement is a priority for EPA, particularly in efforts to remediate contaminated sites. It is also emphasized in watershed management, environmental impact assessments and a range of other programs. Practitioners benefit from a large amount of guidance about how to plan and organize community involvement activities.

But, how often is community involvement evaluated? Not often enough (Chess 2000, EPA 2001, NRC 1996, NRC 2001). Evaluation is one of the seven steps in EPA's Public Involvement Policy2 and experienced practitioners know evaluation is important. But, when you are juggling a lot, and resources are limited, evaluation can be all too easy to drop. Often, evaluation is done informally, which can limit the usefulness of the feedback.

Evaluation of public participation is evolving and the subject of much discussion among practitioners and academics. In this article we provide guidance about evaluation that is informed by research (our own and others) as well as our EPA-sponsored study (see Box 1) in which we are exploring the usefulness of three evaluation tools or methods: surveys, focus groups and Q Method, a promising approach that some academics have been using.

For an overview of the three tools, see Box 2 (Guidance documents for focus groups and Q method were also produced as part of this project and can be downloaded at www.seri-us.org/pubs/FGGuidance.pdf and www.seri-s.org/pubs/QMethodGuidance.pdf , respectively). Oftentimes interviews are used to gather feedback as well; in fact, in our project we used interviews to gather background information to inform and complement the focus groups and Q method approaches. In this paper, however, we do not discuss them further.

We describe some of their strengths and limitations and provide some suggestions about when to use them. Of course, a lot has been written about how to conduct focus groups and surveys (Morgan 1998, Patton 1987, Dillman 2000, Charnley and Engelbert 2005), and we don't cover a lot of those basics. Instead, after providing a brief rationale for evaluation, we explore the strengths and limitations of these evaluation tools, so that better decisions about what tool to use can be made. Our presentation is framed around three key questions:

1. What do you want to know?
2. Who do you most want to understand?

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2 EPA's public involvement policy is available at www.epa.gov/publicinvolvement/pdf/policy2003.pdf . A brochure about when and how to evaluate is available at http://www.epa.gov/publicinvolvement/brochures/evaluate.pdf

3. How will you use the information?

WHY EVALUATE?
There are several reasons to evaluate community involvement efforts.

Share lessons learned. Evaluation can be conducted at the end of a project (such as a site remediation effort) to determine whether the community involvement effort was "successful" and whether other goals were achieved. This evaluation (termed "summative evaluation") is potentially useful to the agency and other participants to validate community involvement efforts and provide "lessons learned" for other community involvement projects (EPA 1999, Industrial Economics 2004).

Box 1. Overview of our project.

EPA asked us to explore evaluation methods not only to benefit agencies but also to improve "community empowerment."

We conducted a study that explores how feedback can improve the quality of community involvement efforts and clean-up decisions at Superfund sites. The premise of our research is that effective methods for providing feedback can improve the exchange of information and interactions among different stakeholders including agencies, responsible parties, and local citizens. Improvements to information exchange and stakeholder interactions may ultimately lead to better clean-up decisions.

Our project has explored the strengths and weaknesses of three methods for getting feedback from those who participate in the Superfund clean-up process. We applied apply and critically examined each of these methods at two separate Superfund sites where there is an ongoing community involvement process. The first case study was of the Ciba-Geigy site in Toms River, New Jersey. The second case study was of the Waukegan Harbor Area of Concern in Illinois.

In each case we had representatives of the community, government agencies, and potentially responsible parties give us feedback using the three methods. After the focus groups and Q sorts people filled out a written evaluation. In addition, after we gathered and analyzed the results, we presented the findings in each community to a "feedback group." The purpose of the feedback groups was to gather additional information about how the usefulness of the findings and how people felt about participating in focus groups, surveys, and Q method. Participants in the feedback groups were highly involved community members and federal, state, and local agency staff.

For further details about the project and to download publications and presentations visit www.seri-us.org/projects/superfund.html .

Improve community involvement during the project. Evaluation during a process, known as "formative evaluation," gives feedback throughout your project so you can improve it. The feedback can positively influence remediation efforts as well as community involvement, when preferences of stakeholders are revealed (Bradbury et al. 2003)

Box 2: Overview of the three methods

Focus Groups: A focus group is a carefully guided group discussion intended to generate a rich understanding of participants' experiences and beliefs. Focus groups are a proven research technique appropriate for a project that is exploratory and/or descriptive in nature (Morgan and Krueger 1998). They are particularly well suited to evaluation research (Morgan 1998). They are essentially group in-depth interviews with 8 to 12 individuals who are brought together at a location convenient and comfortable to them to discuss a particular topic under the direction of a trained moderator. Focus groups are an important way to listen to people, to learn about their views and concerns, or to explore topics of interest. The information generated in the focus group is the opinions expressed by group members in their own words. Participants in a focus group may have limited information on the specific topic or question to be explored or they may be quite familiar with the topic and issue. Focus groups can also be a useful tool when the subject matter is sensitive -- such as concerns over health or disagreements that might occur in the cleanup of hazardous waste sites.

Additional resources:

- Morgan, David L. & Richard A. Kruger 1998. *The Focus Group Kit* (6 volumes). Sage.
- Patton, Michael Quinn 1987. *How to Use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation*. Sage.
- Santos, S., Danielson, S., and Chess, C. 2007. Guidance on the use of focus groups for evaluation of public involvement programs at contaminated sites. Greenfield, MA: Social and and Environmental Research Institute. Available online at: www.seri-us.org/pubs/FGGuidance.pdf .

Mail surveys: Mail surveys are questionnaires sent out to a statistically representative sample of people in the population of interest – in this context, usually residents of the area around the site whose community involvement is being evaluated. Questions are usually quantitative, such as asking people to rate their agreement with statements on a scale of 1 to 7, or checking boxes for yes/no answers. In the context of a site cleanup, a survey usually aims at taking 15-20 minutes for the respondent to complete. Some respondents may have little to no knowledge about the site, and one of the main aims of a survey is often to explore the prevalence of ignorance about the site. The results can be analyzed with statistical tests like T-tests, correlations, ANOVA, or chi-squared. These simple tests can be done in a spreadsheet like Microsoft Excel.

Additional resources:

- Dillman, D. A. 2000. *Mail and internet surveys: the tailored design method*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Resources are available online at www.epa.gov/publicinvolvement/feedback/index.html

Q Method: Q method is a technique for revealing shared viewpoints that exist on an issue or topic. A study using Q method, often called a Q study, can be a useful way of evaluating a public involvement process because it clarifies the different views of various stakeholders about the process. It is also a useful way of assessing the different views of stakeholders about their preferences for particular outcomes or satisfaction with them. Q methodology, like the survey method, is a technique to explore peoples' subjective beliefs and attitudes. However, unlike a survey it allows participants far more flexibility to express their beliefs. Q method can help you go beyond the simple idea that some people are happy with the way things are while others are opposed, or the assumption that all people in a certain group think the same way. A Q method study begins by identifying all the things people are saying about the topic. From this, a sample of Q statements is strategically selected. People with clearly different opinions are asked to express opinions about the Q statements by sorting them, i.e. "doing a Q sort." Typically one or two dozen Q sorts are collected. The Q sorts are analyzed using statistical techniques that group together similar viewpoints. The product of that analysis is interpreted to define different viewpoints, or "social perspectives," among those in the group. We also learn how the individuals who did the Q sorts agree or disagree with these perspectives.

Additional resources:

- Q Method website: http://qmethod.org. This website contains information about Q as well as links to join the Q Method listserv (a useful place to ask questions about doing Q) and to download the PQMethod and MQMethod programs.
- Brown, S. R. 1986. Q technique and method: principles and procedures. In Berry, W. D., and M. S. Lewis-Beck (ed.), *New tools for social scientists: advances and applications in research methods*. pp. 57-76. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage

Gather feedback on process and outcomes. We will side step the questions of the difference between community involvement process and outcomes (Webler and Tuler 2002, Chess and Purcell 1999). For example, some would see public education as part of the process and some would see it as an outcome. Regardless of what you call it, you can explore the effectiveness of facilitation, outreach mechanisms, forums, materials, etc. Or, you might want feedback on who is involved and why. In addition, you can gauge participants' satisfaction with remediation, trust in agencies, level of understanding…and the reasons behind them.

Promote dialogue among stakeholders. Discussion about the results of an evaluation effort can in itself be an important catalyst for of interaction between an agency, a community, and other stakeholders or parties. The process of evaluation provides opportunities for the agency and engaged participants to discuss issues – in a more structured way. An example of this was in the context of Department of Energy evaluations of Site-Specific Advisory Boards at nuclear weapons facilities (Bradbury et al. 1999, Bradbury et al. 2003).

Agencies have received anecdotal information about these and related issues for years. But evaluation can be more "scientific," formal, and systematic, with the attendant strengths and limitations.3

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

You never have enough time, money, (and participants' patience) to find out everything you would like to know. Often, you need to cut down your "want" list in half or even more. As researchers, we work backwards: what will be the most useful information for improving a situation or process? If the most important issue is how worried people are, we will spend less time focusing on the effectiveness of public meetings and more time trying to assess concerns. This seems obvious. But every time we can't figure out how to reduce the load, one of us remembers to ask: What do we really need to know? For examples of questions, see Boxes 3, 4, and 5.

Finding out what you need to know is not merely a matter of identifying key issues. We compared the information yielded by the three tools. We asked: what is different about the kinds of information we can find out from using focus groups, surveys, or Q method? If we

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3 Much of the information agencies receive is anecdotal (e.g., "several people came up to me after the meeting") or potentially biased ("A representative from the union or local Chamber of Commerce told me..."). Such information is not inconsequential. However, many professionals, who have spent their entire lives conducting evaluations, say it can be misleading and therefore dangerous. As those who study community involvement (including evaluation) as opposed to evaluators (who actually do the evaluations), we can see both sides of the issue. We have several thoughts on the issue. The evaluation should be in keeping with the scale of the community involvement effort (both in resources and geography) and the needs of the agencies and other participants. If the agency is going to scrutinize the results of the project, more than anecdotal evidence is called for. Potential for other forms of controversy, differences in cultures and ethnicities, and the weight of other factors that make community involvement especially difficult, may make formal evaluation very important. Regardless, don't get trapped into thinking that anecdotal evidence constitutes answers. Or that evaluation can be tacked onto the end of the community involvement effort (no more than community involvement can be effectively tacked on to the end of the remediation effort.) Or that you need a PhD to do it. Or conversely, that it is easy.

asked about similar topics, would we find out similar things? We discuss some of our key findings below.

Box 3. Types of questions asked in a focus group.

A comprehensive and well-structured discussion guide is essential for facilitating an interactive session that nets valuable information. The guide spells out the topics that will be covered and provides a logical flow of questions that are initially broad and open-ended to reduce the likelihood of biasing answers. Reponses are then followed by probes to elicit more detail. The guide must also organize the time in a fashion that makes the focus group comfortable and interesting for participants. It is important to remember, however, that the guide is *not a script*. A skilled moderator will use it as a guide, exploring or further probing the comments participants make and manage the dynamics of a group as necessary.

The following are example questions from a discussion guide for officials (including local and state officials and agency staff).

Moderator: As I said earlier, we want to talk about community involvement in the clean up process at the Waukegan Harbor Area of Concern and Waukegan River Watershed. I'd first like to ask what are the different environmental problems/issues that need to be addressed in the clean up of the Waukegan AOC and watershed.

- What can you tell me about the different things being done to address some of these concerns? [Probe for comments on separate clean up initiatives, studies, etc]
- How have you heard/learned about these things [probe for sources, specific groups, individuals, agencies vs. media, etc.]

Moderator: Before we talk more about some of the things you have mentioned, I'd like to talk a little more specifically about some of the opportunities and ways that different stakeholder groups have been involved in the clean up process [and decisions about re-use] for the AOC and watershed.

- What are some of the different stakeholder opinions or concerns about the different clean up initiatives that are occurring? [probe for specific concerns differentiate clean up from re-use issues]. Is that a concern you think is shared by other stakeholder groups? Which ones? Are you aware of those who might have a different perspective?
- What types of opportunities/activities exist regarding the Waukegan Harbor Area of Concern and Waukegan River Watershed for people to learn about the various environmental issues and different clean up [and re-use?] initiatives]? [Moderator will list on flip chart]
- Do you think most people in the community are aware of these? Which ones would you say they are least/most aware of? Can you give me an example?

Moderator: Before we talk more about some of the things you have mentioned, I'd like to talk a little more specifically about some of the information or activities that have existed/exist for community involvement?

- What types of CI activities are people aware of? Has anyone participated in any activities (moderator will probe for the following: Public meetings? Public Availability Sessions? Technical Review meetings, site tours, comment on documents, etc). How did you find out about these activities/opportunities?
- Have your expectations or needs related to CI ever changed? How/why? Did that ever get communicated to EPA/PRP/Other? If so, was there a corresponding change in the CI activities to meet them?

Focus Groups

Focus groups can provide a rich and in-depth understanding of viewpoints. The moderator can probe for additional information about priorities and preferences of focus group participants. Group dynamics can lead to deeper and richer information being discussed. New lines of inquiry can emerge. In fact, you can even ask about the fundamental purpose of the community involvement effort.

For example, in Toms River, New Jersey, we found that the focus group of highly engaged participants saw the primary purpose of community involvement as keeping the officials and agencies "at the table" to reach agreement. Participants also saw this as a way to educate the agencies to facilitate better decisions.

Focus groups can provide insights into participants' views about the specifics of a community involvement process. For example, we learned in Toms River that uninvolved residents thought a community advisory group would be helpful but those who were highly engaged did not see it as useful at this stage of the remediation. We also learned that the experience of a failed remediation at a nearby site led people in a focus group of highly involved participants to be somewhat skeptical of the chosen remedies at the Ciba Geigy site. On the other hand, while participants in a focus group of "officials" acknowledged such concerns they did not see community outreach efforts as being able to address them and they discounted comparisons between the two sites.

Box 4. Types of questions asked in a survey.

The following are some of the questions we asked in our survey for the Waukegan Harbor Area of Concern case study. After each of the questions a list of options were provided and the respondent was asked to rank the familiarity, satisfaction, etc. on a 6-point scale.

- Compared to all of the other issues facing Waukegan, how important do you think the harbor cleanup is?
- The overall harbor cleanup is made up of several connected parts. How familiar are you with the different components of the harbor cleanup?
- How satisfied are you with the progress of the cleanup of each of these parts of the harbor cleanup? Check "D/K" if you don't know what progress is being made on a part of the cleanup.
- How have you have learned about the harbor cleanup? (Check all that apply)
- How would you prefer to receive site information? (Check the ONE you most prefer)
- How interested are you in obtaining information about the following topics? (Circle one answer for each question)
- What is the best way to get your participation? (Check the ONE you most prefer)

Surveys

Surveys provide data about specific topics. For example, our surveys asked respondents for their sources of information, as shown in Box 6. Based on these responses, evaluators can assess whether their efforts are reaching people including whether there are differences among specific subgroups in the population (e.g., Caucasian vs. Latino residents). These results suggest that newspapers are a much more important source of information about the harbor for Latinos than for Caucasians. However, the survey does not tell you why. It also cannot tell you how people feel about a particular source of information – if they trust it or if they understand it. Nor can it tell you anything about the quality of the information provided by the source. A focus group could tell you a lot about what a few people feel about the news coverage of the harbor area.

Because surveys ask about specific topics, important concerns, problems, or ideas may be missed. For example, we asked about people's preferences about how to obtain information concerning remediation activities, including preferences for "presentations at local clubs and

organizations." We could not find out from the survey results that some segments of the Latino population were most likely to go to the social clubs. Instead, the focus group was the source of that insight. Surveys ask questions evaluators think are important, but evaluators might miss important questions.

Box 5. Types of questions asked in Q Method.

The sorting instruction defines the context in which the Q participant's perspective is being sought. For example, one sorting instruction might ask the person to sort the statements based on how well each statement describes the actual situation, while another may ask the person to sort the statements based on how well each describes how they would like things to be. If you are evaluating an on-going process then your sorting instruction should specify whether people should be giving their views on the things that have happened so far or on what should happen moving forward.
For our case studies at Ciba-Geigy and Waukegan Harbor we had each person conduct two Q sorts – one about the public involvement process and one about the clean-up outcomes. The sorting instructions we used at Ciba-Geigy were:

> Process: When you think about where the process is now, what should happen next? Sort the statements according to most like I think the process needs to be to least like I think the process needs to be.
> Outcomes: When you think about the remediation of the Toms River Ciba Geigy site, what do you think about what has been done in the past and is being done currently? Sort the statements according to most like I think to least like I think.

Q Method

Q method provides a holistic representation of people's views on a topic and the relative importance of those views. However, the evaluator must choose in advance to ask about certain issues—which are the basis of the Q statements that respondents prioritize. Thus, Q shares some of the same limitations of surveys. For example, like the survey our Q statements did not include anything about the use of social clubs (or churches) to reach the Latino community in Waukegan. Therefore, we could not find out anything about the relative benefits of clubs versus churches. Even if we included a statement about this issue, we might not learn much. For example, suppose we included the following statement: "Social clubs should be used for outreach to the Latino community." This statement may not have been ranked among the "most important" by enough respondents for it to become a distinguishing statement in any of the perspectives that emerged. It would be unlikely that its relevance and importance would be understood by the evaluator. This means that evaluators may not learn about some important issues if they do not know to ask. As one participant told us, he felt "captive of the statements."

Q can more dramatically highlight differences among perspectives than either focus groups or surveys. Q requires each person to rank the same set of statements. In addition, people prioritize statements without the potential for the 'bandwagon effect' that can be found in groups and which can hide differences. Also, people may reveal more outside of the group setting. For example, despite the trusting relationships in Toms River, we found two different perspectives about desired outcomes. People associated with one perspective are more

concerned about the current bioremediation and groundwater treatment efforts. They also feel that the air monitoring system is adequate and that the air monitors are state-of-the-art. The second perspective is most concerned with drums in a nearby landfill that is not slated for remediation. Respondents
associated with this view also fear that the air monitoring systems at the current site are not adequate and that the community may not be appropriately warned in case of an emergency.

Box 6. Number of 'yes' and 'no' responses regarding past sources of information (Waukegan Harbor AOC survey).

	All respondents		Latino		Caucasian		X^2 *for Latino vs. Caucasian*
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
a. Mailings from the responsible agencies	28	93	14	29	10	49	0.066
b. Mailings from the Community Advisory Group (CAG)	25	95	11	33	10	47	NS
c. Newspaper articles	91	32	26	18	48	11	0.013
d. Radio or TV news	62	61	20	24	31	29	NS
e. Family or friends	66	55	21	23	30	28	NS
f. The internet	23	96	7	35	10	49	NS
g. Public meeting or information session	14	104	4	38	7	51	NS
h. Direct conversation with someone from the responsible agencies	15	105	5	38	5	53	NS
i. Direct conversation with someone from the CAG	9	110	2	40	2	56	NS
j. Information about the lakefront is "common knowledge"	42	77	17	26	15	42	NS
k. Know someone who worked at the lakefront	23	97	5	38	11	47	NS
l. Participation on one or more citizen groups	12	109	4	40	4	54	NS
m. Events at the school (either directly or through your school-age children)	16	103	10	33	3	54	0.008

Q also can reveal conflicts about process. For example, in the Waukegan Harbor case study we found a few points of strong disagreement between the two perspectives. Both perspectives strongly endorsed having clear standards for remediation. But, one perspective saw the importance of asking for public preferences, while it was rejected fairly strongly by those who were members of the second perspective. Respondents associated with the second perspective feel strongly that community involvement may delay the process and cost agency personnel too much time that could be spent solving problems.

WHO DO YOU MOST WANT TO UNDERSTAND?

There are many people who may be interested in or affected by a community involvement process and site remediation decisions. Sometimes it is useful to gather feedback about how the entire community feels. In other cases, you may want to target your efforts to gather feedback about specific groups within a community. There are a number of possibilities, including the general public, highly involved community members, environmental justice populations, local elected officials, staff of local government agencies, staff of state and federal agencies, etc. There may also be great diversity within some of these categories. For example, the general public can include people who live within a certain radius of a site, who have attended prior events (e.g., public meetings), or whose native language is not English.

Our project explored what we could learn about various groups using the three different tools. While in theory any of the tools could have been used for the same groups – some tools are better suited to learning about particular people. We asked: what groups are the tools most useful for gathering feedback from? We discuss some of our key findings below.

Focus Groups

Focus groups gather feedback from a wide range of stakeholders. But some people may not feel comfortable sharing their views in a group. Participation in a group of "similar folks" can make some more comfortable about sharing their views. However, others are more reluctant to speak publicly. This is not merely shyness. We found, for example, that elected officials were less likely to attend a focus group and speak openly in what is essentially a public venue. Similarly, discussion in a focus group may be hampered by the presence of staff from the agency sponsoring the community involvement effort or from the responsible party. Some people may not be used to anyone asking them what they think or may not have experience with similar forums. This may or may not be an impediment, as the following quote from a Latino leader in Waukegan illustrates:

> They [Latinos] didn't know at the beginning what is a focus group. They thought the facilitator would answer their questions. It took time for them to figure out that facilitator wanted to know what they think. They are not used to that, it was a positive experience for them. They learned a lot. They got in touch with their feelings, what else they want to learn. They got to hear what neighbors think. [It was] very positive.

Focus groups can be challenging if there are significant conflicts among participants in the same group. For example, according to participants in our Tom's River case study, when the remediation began, focus groups would have been problematic because of the level of conflict among some people. However, after spending years dealing with the site, opponents developed better relationships and could discuss issues openly in a focus group. There is also a risk that members may sidestep conflicts and underlying problems may never surface. On the other hand, they also felt a skilled moderator might be able to create a safe enough environment for discussion. Another option is to organize the groups carefully so that people with conflicts are not present in the same focus group; the key is not to have too many extremes in a single group.

Focus groups may not attract the uninvolved or uninterested. They may not want to invest their time. However, civic organizations have been known to recruit members for focus groups in exchange for a contribution to their organization. In this case, their sense of community overcomes their apathy about the topic. Another strategy to overcome this obstacle is to frame the focus group discussion in a broader context. For example, rather than

say “come to a group to discuss community relations at the site,” you might invite people to come talk about issues of importance to their community.

Surveys

Surveys gather information from a broad sample of people, but obtaining a representative sample can be challenging. . Decisions must be made in advance, for example, if race, gender, ethnicity, proximity to the site, or other characteristics are important to consider. If so, the sample must be designed so that adequate responses are obtained from each sub-group of interest.

In Waukegan we needed to make sure that we adequately sampled the Latino population, which used the waterfront but was relatively uninvolved in making decisions about the remediation. For example, when comparing Caucasian respondents with Latinos, Latinos were more likely to have heard about the site through school meetings. The differences were large and statistically significant. This suggests that outreach via schools is a good way to reach members of the Latino community. Caucasians were statistically more likely to have learned about the remediation activities from newspaper articles than Latinos.

Surveys can be effective with the uninvolved or uninterested. In our two cases, surveys worked well to gather information from people who had otherwise not participated in site remediation activities (including community involvement activities; also see Charnley and Engelbert 2005). For example, in the Waukegan Harbor case we found that many of our respondents were not engaged with the remediation or community involvement activities, yet they returned completed surveys (see Box 7).

Surveys require an appropriate response rate. While researchers may argue about what constitutes a reasonable response rate, they will all agree that a survey with a low response rate is likely to be biased or otherwise invalid (Dillman 2000). If the response rate is low, generalizing the results to the full population is inappropriate. You are unlikely to know what kind of people failed to respond to your survey. Was it the harried moms? Or, people who live further from the site? The usefulness of survey results is very dependent on who responds to the survey. If despite best efforts responses are not obtained from a certain group, say families with young children, the results will say very little about how that group thinks or about how that group’s thinking differs from others in the population. For example, our survey is Waukegan was appropriately criticized for missing “the black community – they are a relatively large minority within Waukegan.” Because we asked respondents to indicate their race, we know our response rate for this group was not representative of their actual numbers in the population.

Box 7. Surveys may be a good way to reach the uninvolved.

The responses to our survey in Waukegan indicate that people generally feel themselves to be uninformed about issues that might affect their concerns about risks. We asked "The cleanup effort addresses contamination and environmental health risks from several different sites through a variety of activities. How familiar are you with each of these activities?" A relatively large number of surveys were returned without a response to this question or with a response of "Don't know." Latino respondents were much more likely to not response or to indicate "Don't know." Thus, lack of knowledge did not preclude their completing the survey.

Question 4			
	All respondents	Latino	Caucasian
a. Dredging of the harbor	8%	16%	5%
b. Cleanup of the OMC Superfund site	11%	22%	5%
c. Cleanup of the Johns Manville Superfund site	13%	29%	5%
d. Cleanup of the Yeoman Creek Superfund site	12%	24%	5%
e. Planning for the Waukegan River watershed	14%	31%	5%
f. Revitalization of downtown Waukegan	10%	22%	3%
g. Redevelopment of the Waukegan harbor area	11%	22%	5%
h. Development of recreational facilities	11%	24%	3%
i. Cleanup of beach areas	10%	20%	5%
j. Delisting of Waukegan Harbor	15%	31%	8%

The results also indicate that people do not appear to be familiar with government agencies or other groups involved in the remediation effort, as shown in the Table below. It is not just that they are unfamiliar with these groups – they are also not familiar with what is being done to remediate the sites and the lakefront area.

Table 3. Question 6: Familiarity with different government agencies and groups involved in the clean-up effort in the Waukegan lakefront area.
(scale: 1 = very unfamiliar, 6 = very familiar).

	All respondents	Latino	Caucasian
a. US EPA	2.9	2.7	2.8
b. Illinois EPA	2.9	2.6	2.8
c. Lake County Health Department	3.0	2.6	2.8
d. City of Waukegan	3.2	2.8	3.1
e. Waukegan Harbor Citizens Advisory Group	2.8	2.6	2.5
f. Waukegan Main Street	3.0	2.9	2.9
g. US Congressman Mark Kirk	3.1	2.6	3.1

While data in the two tables reveal that people were unfamiliar with clean-up activities or groups involved in the remediation effort, they still responded to the survey. It would have been a challenge (but not impossible) to invite such people to participate in an evaluation based on Q method or focus groups.

Q Method

Q method is useful for gathering information from people with a broad range of perspectives. But, as with focus groups, if you don't know the community, you can fail to identify important perspectives. When using Q method (and focus groups) the evaluators must develop a sense about the variation in views among the population of interest – and why these differences are

likely to exist. For example, institutional affiliation and group membership are often used as an indicator for different points of view – but they may not be an accurate predictor of meaningful differences about preferences for community involvement. Neither may race, gender, etc. The differences may arise from fundamental values about, for example, democratic participation or the role of expertise in decision-making. Unlike surveys, Q method allows you to involve additional participants that you have previously overlooked so that you can adapt as you learn more.

Q method does not effectively elicit opinions of people who are uninvolved or uninterested in the process or site remediation. If people are uninvolved or not interested, they are unlikely to have strong opinions about the statements, so it will be hard for them to express clear preferences. They are also less likely to enjoy the process. Sorting Q statements can be challenging and some people reported not liking to have to make choices about how to rank statements. Others enjoyed the process tremendously. We heard from some of our participants it would be hard to get other people in the community to spend time doing a Q sort and that "you need something, some knowledge first to do Q. You cannot just do it." However, we have found that in exchange for a contribution to their organization some people can be motivated to spend their time doing a Q sort.

HOW WILL THE INFORMATION BE USED?

The goal of an evaluation should be to gather feedback that can make a difference. But, there can be many purposes for an evaluation. Tools may be better suited for some purposes than others. Focus group data cannot be easily condensed to a graph, as can surveys. Conversely, graphs don't speak to everyone, while information from focus groups is relatively easy to understand. Similarly, if an agency wants to compare data across sites, quantitative data can be easier to represent. Q method by virtue of its uniqueness can attract attention when others do not.

In this section we discuss differences in the kind of information that is produced by each tool, and how that affects how the information can be used. In addition, we found that the tools elicited different ideas about how they can be used to engage and empower community residents and support outreach efforts.

Focus Groups

Focus groups provide qualitative information that can be easily interpreted by a wide range of audiences. They have a certain "face validity". Focus group findings are usually reported in the own words of the participants. When we presented the results of our focus groups, participants found it easy to understand the results. Use of narrative quotes made the findings more salient.

On the other hand, focus group results can be difficult to compare systematically. Data derived from different groups and within groups may be a challenge to compare systematically. Comparability depends to a great extent on the moderator, who can direct the participants in different groups to discuss the same topics. But it is often the case that different groups will discuss different content, even if the same general topics are raised by the moderator. For example, one group's discussion about access to data might focus on fairness and trust, another on limitations of the data. This can happen because a participant may be responding to the specifics of what another person said, and the same issues will not

necessarily be discussed in each focus group or by all the people within the same focus group. Lack of comparability may also result because of a purposeful decision by the moderator – to explore, for example, an issue that was not included initially in the discussion guide but was raised by participants in one of the groups. Thus, information obtained may not be consistent across groups.

Focus groups provide an opportunity for people to meet and learn, which can be particularly important for people that have been uninvolved. Participants in both of our case studies noted this benefit. In Toms River one person told us that "focus groups promote a lot of give and take among participants – generate ideas and new thoughts. But there is a danger of opening up animosities." In Waukegan we were told that "people left the focus group asking" 'what is next'? We had their interest, awareness, they wanted to know what they can do now." Participants in the Spanish language focus group felt more strongly that the focus group stimulated their thinking about remediation options than did participants in the other groups. In Toms River participants found the focus groups stimulated their thinking and provided a sense of how others think.

Surveys

Surveys provide quantitative measures of responses that facilitate comparison and they can provide information that is generalizable to the larger population of interest. In a survey people respond to the same set of questions and response options. When enough responses are obtained it is possible to make claims about the general population of interest as long as the sample is not biased, as we discussed above.

Surveys provide an opportunity for outreach. This was a point made in our feedback groups, and by written comments on some surveys. For example, participants in our feedback groups told that the questions were a good way to spark learning and that the "process of doing survey may perk interest among those that have yet to be very involved."

Q Method

While Q method facilitates both quantitative and qualitative comparisons of perspectives about community involvement and about specific process features, the method does not allow claims to be made about how many people hold those perspectives. In Q method everyone who participates responds to the same questions and must express their preferences in the same way. This allows comparisons to be systematic. However, Q method is not geared toward gathering data from representative samples of respondents (like focus groups). Instead, the approach is used to find differences among people with different perspectives; it works best when data are gathered from people representing all the important perspectives in the population of interest. But, because of the small number of people providing data, the prevalence of the perspectives cannot be determined.

Q method can help individuals think about what is important to them because the process forces them to make choices about their preferences. For example, people often report that the effort stimulates their thinking. However, not everyone thinks so. When asked about this issue in the questionnaire completed after doing a Q sort, we found that Q sort participants in both Toms River and Waukegan were divided as to whether the group Q sorts stimulated their thinking about the community involvement process or the remediation options.

Conclusion

While *ad hoc*, informal evaluation is often done, more systematic efforts are usually called for. They are more likely to produce "useable knowledge" and build a basis for making improvements.

There can be a bias toward gathering as much information as possible. Our cautionary note, however, is to be selective. Focus on what will help make specific kinds of improvements – what is useful for your particular purpose.

Many tools, or methods, can be used to gather such information. They form a kind of tool-kit. Practitioners should be clear about their choices, considering the trade-offs of each. In this article we have presented information about three effective tools that can be used to gather feedback about community involvement efforts and people's preferences for outcomes: focus groups, surveys, and Q method. Other evaluation tools, such as one-on-one interviews, should also be considered and can be readily incorporated into the other methods. Being systematic in whatever approach is selected is important to ensure results are robust and credible.

Usually, you will not be facing an either-or choice. In fact, adopting a multi-method approach can be very useful. There are three reasons.

First, information gathered using one method may inform further evaluation using a second method. You can use focus groups (or interviews) to generate statements for Q method or identify important questions to ask in a survey. In our project we did background interviews in each case to identify statements for the Q study.

Second, one approach may be better suited for a particular moment in time. For example, interviews may be useful at the beginning of a process, because they will help you build relationships with key people. Focus groups can also be used effectively mid-stream to give you a broad feel for what is working, what's not, and enable you to make changes. Q method is not going to be an effective tool unless people have gained experiences they can reflect on. Later in the process it can be used to uncover differences that might be critical to moving forward with remediation decisions or to refine community involvement efforts to address possible roadblocks.

Third, the methods work well in gathering feedback from some groups, but not so well with other groups. For example, focus groups and Q method are very effective for gathering input from people that are really engaged in the process – people that have strong opinions. Focus groups allow such people to give meaningful input. Q method works best with people who have rich experience to inform their preference about statements. Of course, focus groups can also be a useful way of gathering input from less involved people. Surveys are also effective in gathering feedback from the hard to reach, disinterested, or uninvolved.

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